

(For the Maple Leaf,

## NOTES OF A SIX YEARS RESIDENCE IN MADEIRA.

## NO. II.

One of the Madeira peculiarities which annoyed me much on my first landing was, that every poor peasant thinks it only politeness to speak to you in passing. "Com s'ta?" "Sta haa." "Passon bein o' noite?" "How are you?" "Quite well." "How did you pass the night?" This is the unvarying salutation, and seeing I knew nothing of the language, or of the meaning of what was said, I did not feel quite at ease to be stopped at all times in my rambling expeditions. The Portuguese gentlemen again think it their duty to take off their hats to every lady, if she will only give them the opportunity by raising her eyes in passing them, a circumstance which sometimes prevented my recognizing my own English friends, so afraid was I of countenancing these impertinent Signors, who are always to be found in clusters at corners of streets, or in the (Prasas) public walks, ready to pervert any poor silly servant girl who, being newly come out, is foolish enough to permit their attentions. The Portuguese manner of disposing of property has something to do with the idle and useless life the Morgado or nobleman leads. When the proprietor of an estate dies, the property is equally divided amongst the heirs, and though there is but a bare subsistence, still he must not soil his hands by trade. Their custom is to make a bargain with a wine merchant for the proceeds of their estates, which are all cultivated with a view to the Madeira wines, so famed in all countries. The wine merchant consents to divide the sum agreed upon into twelve portions, and the Morgado calls every month to receive his stipulated payment. The estate itself is farmed out to some industrious man, the invariable arrangement being, that after the church has received a tenth, the landlord and tenant divide the profits, while the tenant at the same time has to bear all the expense for trellis-work, out-houses, or anything required. The Portuguese are very affectionate in their greetings to one another; and it certainly is somewhat startling to see great black-bearded men rush into each other's arms, and hug and kiss each other from ear to ear. The Portuguese are all Roman Catholics, and even some of the English residents have been led astray. Of course there are numberless holidays which the English resi-