

THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCER.

VOL. I. No. 90.]

QUEBEC, SATURDAY, 22ND SEPTEMBER, 1838.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

ORIGINAL POETRY

(FOR THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT.)

ALCIBIADES.

I.

The ships are manned, the soldiers arm'd,
The waves are bending to the oar,
Each warrior heart for battle warm'd
Now beats a long adieu to shore;
While Sol looks down and brightly smiles,
And Pallas seems to bless their toils.

Six times ten hundred men there were,
Athena's bravest and her best;
The chosen of the earth were there,
For Athens girl within her breast,
While yet her sons were were wise and free,
The noblest of the earth and sea.

On yonder foremost vessel's prow,
Who stands, that high and lonely one,
With gleaming eye, and glorious brow,
Lord of all basins save his own!
The darling and the slave of praise,
The Kingly Alcibiades!

What trace ye in that burning eye,
That heaving breast, and dauntless air!
Joy, hope, ambition, daring fire,
All passion's bowels glow'd there,
And stir within a rapture strange
For torpid peace, on who would change!

The wine is poured, the Gods invoked,
The keels are cutting through the foam,
The purple banners proudly float,
Sweet music wafts them from their home,
The galley bands like steeds loose,—
"Away, away, for Syracuse!"

II.

Mouths slowly rolled their foam away,—
Prow'd bars a crowd appear,
A shattered bark is in the bay,
And brimful news of grief and pain—
"Athena's bravest children low
And Alcibiades her foe!"

From stern to stern is heard the wail,
The matron's sob, the widow's cry,
And many a man's cheek is pale
For those who study that
And Socrates grave in far away,
For "Chilias" now is going yet!"

III.

Again the streets resound with joy,—
A glorious argument appear;
Restored again her darling boy,
Athena wipes her former tears,
To welcome back with glowing smiles
The victor from his bloody toils.

How noisy on each vesper side
In stately pomp before the wind,
With burnished shields around her sides,
And compared dyes that droop'd behind,
From Cyzicus, Mydas' wave,
Athena's glory, Sparta's grave.

A hush is o'er the mighty crowd,
Till he appears to greet their eyes;
Then burst their thumbs ere long and loud,—
Again, again, to yonder skies!—
While clashed the shields and trumpets peeped,
Oh! were not all his toils repaid?

A. G. L.

When Alcibiades was informed that the Athenians had passed sentence of death upon him, he replied, "But I will show them I am yet alive."

DANGLERS.

"By the bye, do you know that general looking young man is, that I see constantly hanging about the Wilsons? Go where I will, I am sure to see him along with one or other of the young ladies. Last Wednesday night, having occasion to call on Mrs. Wilson about the character of a servant, when did I see stuck up in a corner of the sofa but his same young gentleman, discussing with Miss Jessy, if I understood it rightly, the merits of a patent thread paper; I next night saw him with them in the pit of the theatre, the third seat from the orchestra; and I am positive that he is ten times oftener in their seat at church than in his own, wherever that may be." Such is the sort of question

that some well meaning, but curious female controller-general of society puts, on observing a dangler in high practice. The danglers are a class of young men belonging to some idle professions, who are never happy unless they be on terms of intimate acquaintance in families having one or two daughters come to a marriageable time of life. Having effected an introduction, it is impossible to tell how—most likely at a soiree, where he made quite a sensation by dancing the *Lancers* in a private style, or through means of another dangler or friend of the family, or what is more likely still, through an acquaintance with a brother of the young ladies, picked up at a fencing school—the dangler, in a short time, from being a good looking young man, and of tolerable address, becomes a privileged person in the household. If there be any dinner, tea, or supper party, Mr. Brown is sure to be put down first on the list, or is there of his own accord, and from his frequent appearance on such occasions, a certain kind of understanding as to his motives, prevails among all descriptions of regular visitors. The dangler thus makes himself a species of necessary evil in the family. He brings all the floating small talk of the town to the young ladies; speaks to them about concerts, plays, actors, and charity sermons; helps the tea in a kettle, and has a habit of saying "allow me," not making a movement as to rise, when any thing is to be done; converses on the prevailing colour in the new winter dresses, and he is, as the lurch when any thing small is mentioned. When Miss Jessy and Miss Sally go out for a walk, or on any necessary piece of duty, the dangler has a knack of hitting the exact time they are to leave the house, with an incantation, offers his arm, but always has a tendency to be on the side next Miss Jessy.—At "kick or at market," the dangler acts the obliging young man, being equally ready to carry a parcel, or look out the place in the Bible or Psalm-book. The dangler, in short, is ubiquitous in his services, and so, as a matter of course, all the world put him down as a favoured suitor of one or other of the young ladies. "Take my word for it," says Mrs. Goswin, to her friend Mrs. Brotherton, "it is not that young Tom Brown is after Miss Wilson, and there's no doubt he'll get her too. I'm sure they've been long enough in making it up at any rate; for by my certain knowledge, he used to call when they lived in George Street, and that is more than three years since." "Indeed," replies the party addressed, "I'm not so sure about it as all that. I have always had my own opinion that he is one of those flirting fellows that never know their own mind for three minutes at a time, and whatever they do, take always good care never to come to the point. However, I dare say he gets enough of encouragement, and they may take their own way of it for me.—Had the father not been a poor silly man, he would have settled the matter long ere this." There is strong ground to believe that Mrs. Brotherton is not far from the truth in her opinion of our hero, Mr. Brown. Under the indistinct idea that he is in love with a young lady, when he is no such thing, the dangling gentleman young man haunts her wherever she goes, gets recognised by her father and mother as a suitable enough match for their daughter, flirts about her for a year or two, without, he it remarked, ever having spoken a word to her of personal esteem or attachment, yet insinuated himself so far into her good graces by his actions and looks—his everlasting dangle—that he knows he could get her at any time for the asking; then behold, when he sees he can secure another with a better fortune, or, in his eyes, some other great recommendation, he leaves the long assiduously courted young lady to pine over her solitary fate. How often is this the case in the middle ranks of life! How many hard-dressed and thousand-dollar amiable young women have had cause to rue that they ever gave any permanent encouragement to a dangler. Such a character acts like a blight on the fate of a young lady; for he not only consumes her valuable time, and

distracts her feelings, but prevents real and modest admirers from making advances; whereas, in the end, she has perhaps to marry a person of inferior respectability, or remain on the list of old maids. Such a result forms the worst feature in the case of the dangler. Heedless of the havoc he is committing in the fate of the young lady; not reflecting that what has been simple killing of time or amusement to him, has been protracted torture to a sensitive female, who, probably, all the while pardons him from the impression that he is only waiting till he can conveniently make a declaration, he either starts off after a new object, or grows cool in his attentions, after the bloom of her youth is fled. Yet, we have known danglers, deservedly caught in their own cunning devices. The eldest daughter of the family, to whom he has long been, in his own opinion, attached, is carried off, as it were, out of his very grasp, when he thought himself most secure; and he probably enters into a campaign of dangle with the younger; but she is also married before he has time to make up his resolution, and he is left in a querish, desolate condition.—In such cases we have known the dangler of half a dozen years pretend to feel hurt, and actually "wonder" how Miss Wilson or Miss Anybody-else "was in such a hurry to get off, for it was well known to her that no body" (it so much attached to her as herself). Such is the devil of a disconcerted dangler. He breaks his acquaintance with the family, which has used him so very ill, and looks about him for means of revenge in marrying some extraordinary great match. He procures an acquaintance with the accomplished and elegant Miss Blankitt, who, it is currently reported, has three thousand pounds at her own disposal, besides expectations from her uncle, the Lieutenant Colonel, in India. The aunt, who is a knowing band in the science of dangle, encourages his addresses, but takes care not to be long in fixing him by asking him with an air (some day about twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, when he had called in a pair of waxed gloves to escort the young lady to an exhibition of pictures) "what his intentions are regarding her niece." Of course Mr. Brown protests—rather in a flutter, however—that his "intentions" are beyond all measure "honourable." The marriage, in such a case, soon ensues, and the dangler is beautifully noosed with a girl who, according to the report of the controllers-general of the neighbourhood, "cannot put on her own clothes;" who has all kinds of bad habits; "not a penny of fortune, no expectations from her uncle in India—she being a married man with five mulatto daughters—and, consequently to sum up the story, makes the dangler miserable for all the rest of his life.

NOT AT HOME.

"Not at home," said her ladyship's footman, with the usual air of *malchance*, which says, "You know I am lying, but—" "Impertinent!"

"Not at home," I repeated to myself, as I sat under the door in a careless fit of abstractness. "Not at home!" how universally practised is this falsehood! Of what various, and what powerful import! Is there any one who has not been preserved from annoyance by its adoption? Is there any one who has not been preserved from annoyance by its adoption? Is there any one who has not rejoiced, or grieved, or smiled, or sighed, at the sound of "Not at home!" No! every body—that is, every body who has any pretensions to the title of *somebody*—acknowledges the utility and advantages of these three little words. To them the lady of ton is indebted for the undisturbed enjoyment of her *spours*; the philosopher, for the preservation of solitude and study; the spendthrift, for the repulse of the unfortunate dun.

It is true, the constant use of this sentence savours somewhat of a false French taste, which I hope never to see engrained upon our true English feeling. But in this particular who will not excuse this imitation of her re-

finéd neighbours? Who will so far give up the enviable privilege of making his house his castle, as to throw open the gates upon the first summons of inquisitive impertinence, or fashionable intrusion? The "morning calls," of the dun and the dandy, the belle and the badiff, the poet and the petitioner, appear to us a species of open hostility, carried on against our comfort and tranquillity; and, as all stratagems are fair in war, we find no fault with the ingenious device which fortifies us against these insidious attacks.

While I was engaged in this mental soliloquy, a carriage drove up to Lady Mortimer's door, and a footman in a most appalling splendid livery roused me from a reverie by a thundering knock. "Not at home!" was the result of the application. Half a dozen cards were thrust from the window; and, after due inquiry, after her ladyship's cold, and her ladyship's husband's cold, and her ladyship's lapdog's cold, the carriage resumed its course, and so did my cogitations. "What," said I to myself, "would have been the visiter's perplexity, if this brief formula were not in use?" She must have got out of her carriage; an exertion which would ill accord with the *virtus* of a lady; or she must have given up her intention of leaving her card at a dozen houses to which she is now hastening, or she must have gone to dinner even later than *fashionable* punctuality requires! Equally annoying would the visit have proved to the lady of the house. She might have been obliged to thank the "Abbot" into the drawer, or to call the chandler from the nursery.—Is she taciturn? She might have been compelled to converse. Is she talkative? She might have been compelled to hold her tongue; or, in all probability, she sees her friends to-night; and it would be hard indeed if she were not allowed to be "not at home" till ten at night, when from that time she must be "at home" till three in the morning.

A knock again recalled me from my abstraction. Upon looking up, I perceived an interesting youth listening with evident mortification to the "Not at home" of the porter. "Not at home!" he muttered to himself as he retired. "What an I to think? she has denied herself these three days!" and with a most lover-like sigh, he passed on his way. Here again, what an invaluable talisman was found in "Not at home!" The idol of his affections was perhaps at that moment receiving the incense of adoration from another, possibly a more favoured votary, perhaps she was balancing, in the solitude of her boudoir, between the vicar's bands and the captain's epulettes; or weighing the merits of gout with a plum, on the one side, against those of love with a shilling, on the other. Or, possibly, she was sitting unprepared for conquest, unadorned by cosmetic aid, wrapt up in dreams of to-night's assembly, where her face will owe the evening's expected triumph to the assistance of the morning's "Not at home!"

Another knock! Another "Not at home!" A fat tradesman, with all the terrors of authorized impertinence written legibly on his forehead, was combating with petulant resolution the denial of a valet. "The captain's not at home," said the servant. "I saw him at the window," cried the other. "I can't help that," resumed the lazed Cerberus—"he's not at home."

The foe was not easily repulsed, and seemed disposed to storm. I was in no little fear for the security of "the castle," but the siege was finally raised. The enemy retreated, sailing forth from his half-closed teeth many threats, intermingled with frequent mention of a powerful ally in the person of Lawyer Shax—"Here," said I, resuming my meditations, "here is another instance of the utility of my theme. Without it, the noble spirit of this disciple of Mrs. would have been torn away from reflections on twenty-pounds, by a demand for twenty pounds; from his pride in the King's commission, by his dread of the King's Bench. Perhaps he is at this moment entranced in dreams of charges of horse and foot! He might have been roused by a charge for boots and shoes. In fancy, he is at the