

# SATURDAY EVENING MAGAZINE.

PRICE TWO PENCE.

VOL. I.]

MONTREAL, MARCH 22, 1834.

[No. 18.

## MEETINGS.

As we hasten on, and on, and on—  
Away through life, and away,  
We meet with joy, and love, and flowers,  
Inviting us to stay :  
We give the joy an anxious wish,  
And the love a gentle sigh ;  
We pluck a few of the fairy flowers,  
And bid the rest good bye.

We meet with bright and blessed things,  
And things unholy too ;  
With faces wearing demon smiles,  
And bosoms that are true ;  
Among the nameless, noteless crowd  
Of unremember'd men,  
We meet with those who waken thoughts  
That will not sleep again.

We meet with those whose memory,  
Like a nightmare on our sleep,  
Breathless o'er us ever and anon,  
A bitter curse and deep.  
Some write their names upon our hearts ;  
Some leave a few fair traces  
Of parting words and blank regrets,  
And once familiar faces.  
Yea, e'en the friendly greeting of  
A kind wayfaring one,  
Met only once, may long be felt,  
And loved and cherish'd on.

We meet with one whose heart from ours,  
No chance nor change can sever—  
The heart that flows with quenchless love,  
For ever, and for ever.  
But one shall be the meeting yet,  
And one the meeting day,  
When the trump of God shall tell the dead,  
That time hath passed away.

## SATURDAY EVENING.

" Surely if each man saw another's heart,  
" There would be no commerce,  
" All would disperse  
" And live apart."

If the assertion of this homely poet be correct, it augurs a perverse abuse of capacities alike honourable and productive of pleasure. It was the remark of a wise heathen, and he never quitted the society of men without feeling himself less a man. Strange, too, when we reflect that men instinctively seek to herd together, that the desire of kindly intercourse is laudable, and that the power of speech, the organ of that intercourse, is one of the noblest endowments of humanity. Is it possible that society, as a mass, is held in compact by a general system of concealment? It seems the sentence of a

harsh judge, to say, that were men sincere in the full extent of the word, they would fly each other's presence with hatred, or only meet to indulge emotions of indignation; yet who that for a moment looks within, and marks the severity with which he judges, how prone he is to harsh constructions of the actions which come before his cognizance, his hasty conclusions and his prejudices, but must instantly acknowledge that it would not be expedient to introduce the objects of his criticism into the secret recesses of his mind. Believe me, the fabulous window in the human breast would be an inconvenience to the most benevolent. A closer examination may perhaps discover to us some alleviating causes for this unpleasant fact; for though no blind apologist for human frailty, neither should my pen be employed in darkening it with unnecessary shades.—We have melancholy evidence that man has lost the brightness of his Maker's image; he not mine the gloomy task of disguising the faint traces of that glorious impression which remains. We must concede, that much of the censure which in our thoughts we pass upon men's character, springs from uncharitableness and prejudice, but much also is unavoidably the result of our perceptions of right and wrong. If we grant (and who so wayward as not to allow it) that imperfection is an ingredient in our nature, then is it impossible to avoid perceiving it; disapproval of others, may therefore be entertained in the mind without unkindness, although the expression of that sentiment might be cruel and offensive; the most attached friends must be often sensible of the errors of each; were their feelings of disapproval made known, the consequence might be a sudden termination of their intimacy; but lying dormant in the mind, they have not strength to engender dislike in the one, and are totally unknown to exist in the other. It follows that a veil of reserve around the thoughts is necessary, not only by reason of our nature's perversity, but of the constitution of our moral frame. To survey the subject in another light, were we empowered to read the passing reflections of our friends while in the interchange of civilities, we should doubtless see many opinions connected with our own characters, whose justice we would not impugn, and whose existence in the bosom even of a friend, we could not impute to want of affection; yet, the perusal would be any thing but agreeable. Self-love would be alarmed, and pride, the noxious serpent that infests every human heart, would raise its reptile head in anger. It is well, then, on every account, that our thoughts are to the observation of our fellow-beings as a sealed volume; and woe to him who should possess the fatal power of breaking the seal and mastering the contents. Let me not be understood to compromise sincerity, that jewel of the mind, in the absence of which all else is useless glitter. Sincerity, the conservative of social union, the staff of the mistrusting, the salt of life's feast, at once, its seasoning, and the pledge of confidence. It is, indeed, a wise sincerity, which is the great antidote to the evils which obtain in the intercourse of civilized society. Since "the flowers of Eden felt the blast," the consequence of man's defection, this virtue remains to us, the sure test of excellence, and its conscious possession alone bears us on unmoved amid the jarring and change, the inconsistencies and absurdities we daily witness. Singleness of intention