

A PSALM OF LIFE.

What the heart of the young man said to the Psalmist.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

Tell me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us better than to-day.

Art is long, and time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, how'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footsteps in the hand of time;

Footsteps, that perhaps another
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.

RIGHT AND WRONG.—A SKETCH AT SEA.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

The rights of man, whether abstract or real, divine or vulgar, vested or contested, civil or uncivil, common or uncommon, have been so frequently discussed, that one would suppose there was nothing new to be felt and expressed on the subject. I was agreeably surprised, therefore, during a late passage from Ireland, to hear the rights of an individual asserted in so novel a manner, as to seem worthy of record. The injured party was an involuntary fellow passenger; and the first glance at him, as he leisurely ascended the cabin stairs, bespoke him an original. His face, figure, dress, gait and gestures, were all more or less eccentric; yet, without any apparent affectation of singularity. His manner was perfectly earnest and business-like, though quaint. On reaching the deck, his first movement was towards the gangway; but a moment sufficed to acquaint him with the state of the case. The letter bags having been detained an hour beyond the usual time of departure, the steam had been put on at a gallop, and her majesty's mail packet the *Guebre*, had already accomplished some hundred fathoms on her course. This untoward event, however, seemed rather to surprise than annoy our original, who quietly stepped up to the captain with the air of demanding what was merely a matter of course.

'Hallo, skipper!—Off she goes, eh? but you must turn about my boy, and let me get out.'

'Let you get out?' echoed the astonished skipper, and again repeating it, with what the musicians call a staccato—'Let—you—get—out?'

'Exactly so. I'm going ashore.'

'I'm rather afraid you are not, sir,' said the skipper, looking decidedly serious, 'unless you allude to the other side.'

'The other side?' exclaimed the oddity, involuntarily turning toward England. 'Poo! poo! nonsense, man; I only came to look at your accommodations. I'm not going across with you: I'm not, upon my word!'

'I must beg your pardon, sir,' said the captain, quite solemnly, but it is my firm opinion that you are going across!'

'Poo! poo! all gammon; I tell you, I am going back to Dublin.'

'Upon my word, then,' said the skipper, rather briskly, 'you must swim back, like a grampus, or borrow a pair of wings from the gulls.' The man at the helm grinned his broadest, at what he thought a good joke of his officer's; while the original turned

sharply around, parodied a hyena's laugh at the fellow, and then returned to the charge.

'Come, come, skipper, it's quite as far out as I care for, if you want to treat me to a sail!'

'Treat you to a sail?' roared the indignant officer. 'Zounds! sir, I am in earnest—as much in earnest as ever I was in my life.'

'So much the better,' answered the original; 'I'm not joking myself, and have no right to be joked upon.'

'Joke or no joke,' said the captain, 'all I know is this. The mail bags are on board, and it's more than my post is worth to put back.'

'Eh? What? How?' exclaimed the oddity with a sort of nervous dance. 'You astonish me! Do—you—really mean to say—I'm obliged to go—whether I've a right or not?'

'I do, indeed, sir; I'm sorry for it, but it can't be helped. My orders are positive. The moment the mail is on board, I must cast off.'

Indeed! well—but you know—why—why, that's your duty, not mine. I have no right to be cast off! I have no right to be here at all! I've no right to be any where, except in Merriam Square!

The captain was bothered. He shrugged up his shoulders, then gave a low whistle, then plunged his hands in his pockets, then gave a loud order to somebody to do something, somewhere or other; and then began to walk short turns on the deck. His captive, in the mean time, made hasty strides toward the stern, as if intending to leap overboard; but he suddenly stopped short, and took a bewildered look at the receding coast. The original wrong was visibly increasing in length, breadth, depth, every minute; and he again confronted the captain.

'Well, skipper, you've thought better of it; I've no right in the world, have I? You will turn her round?'

'Totally impossible, sir; quite out of my power!'

'Very well, very well, very well, indeed!—The original's temper was getting up as well as the sea. But mind, sir, I protest; I protest against you, sir, and against the ship, and the ocean, sir, and every thing! I'm getting farther and farther out; but remember I have no right! you will take the consequences. I have no right to be kidnapped; ask the crown lawyers if you think fit.'

After this denouncement, the speaker began to pace up and down, like the captain, but at the opposite side of the deck. He was on the boil, however, as well as the engine; and every time that he passed near the man that he considered as his Sir Hudson Lowe, he gave vent to the inward feeling in a jerk of the head, accompanied with a sort of pig-like grunt. Now and then it broke out in words, but always the four monosyllables, 'This—is too—bad!—'—with a most emphatic fall of the foot to each. At last it occurred to a stout pompous looking personage, to interpose as a mediator. He began by dilating on the immense commercial importance of a punctual delivery of letters; thence he insisted on the heavy responsibility of the captain, with the promise of an early return packet from Holyhead; and he was entering into a congratulation on the fineness of the weather, when the original thought it time to cut him short.

'My dear sir, you'll excuse me. The case is nobody's but my own. You are a regular passenger. You have a right to be in this packet. You have a right to go to Holyhead, or to Liverpool, or to Gibraltar, or to the world's end—if—you—like. But I choose to be in Dublin. What right have I to be here, then? Not—one atom—atom! I've no right to be in this vessel; and the captain, there, knows it. I've no right (stamping) to be on this deck! I have no more right to be tossing at sea, (waving his arms up and down,) than the Pigeon House!'

'It is a very unpleasant situation, I allow, sir,' said the captain to the stout passenger; 'but, as I have told the gentleman, my hands are tied. I can do nothing, though nobody is more sorry for his inconvenience.'

'Inconvenience be hanged!' exclaimed the oddity in a passion, at last. 'It is no inconvenience, sir!—not—the—smallest! but that makes no difference as to my being here. It's that and that alone, I dispute all right to!'

'Well, but, my dear, good sir,' expostulated the pompous man, 'admitting the justice of your premises, the hardship is confessedly without remedy.'

'To be sure it is!' said the captain, 'every inch of it. All I can say is, that the gentleman's passage shall be no expense to him.'

'Thankee—of course not!' said the original with a sneer. 'I've no right to put my hand in my pocket! Not that I mind expense! but it's my right I stand up for, and I defy you both to prove that I have any right to be in your company!—I'll tell you what skipper—but before he could finish the sentence, he turned suddenly pale, made a most grotesque wry face, and rushed forward to the bow of the vessel. The captain exchanged a significant smile with the stout gentleman; but before they had quite spoken their minds of the absent character, he came scrambling back to the binnacle, upon which he rested with both hands, while he thrust his working visage within a foot or two of the skipper's face.

'There, skipper! now, Mister What—d'ye-call! what do you both say to that? What right have I to be sick—as sick as a dog? I've no right to be squeamish; I'm not a passenger; I've no right to go tumbling over ropes and pails, and what not, to the ship's head?'

'But, my good sir,'—began the pompous man.

'Don't sir me, sir! You took your own passage. You have a

right to be sick; you have a right to go to the side every five minutes; you have a right to die of it; but it's the reverse with me; I have no right of the sort.'

'O, certainly not, sir,' said the pomposity, offended in his turn.

'You are indubitably the best judge of your own privileges. I only beg to be allowed to remark, that where I felt I had so little right, I should hesitate to intrude myself.' So saying he bowed very formally, and commenced his retreat to the cabin, while the skipper pretended to examine the compass very minutely. In fact our original had met with a choke pear. The fat man's answer was too much for him, being framed on a principle clean contrary to his own peculiar system of logic. The more he tried to unravel its meaning the more it got entangled. He didn't like it, without knowing why; and he quite disagreed with it, though ignorant of its purport. He looked up at the funnel, and at the deck, and down the companion stairs; and then wound up by a long shake of the head as mysterious as Lord Burleigh's at the astonished man at the wheel. His mind seemed made up. He buttoned his coat up to the very chin, as if to secure himself to himself, and never opened his lips again till the vessel touched the quay at Holyhead. The captain then attempted a final apology, but it was interrupted in the middle.

'Enough said, sir, quite enough. If you've only done your duty, you've no right to beg pardon, and I've no right to ask it. All I mean to say is, here am I, in Holyhead instead of Dublin. I don't care what that fellow says, who don't understand his own right, I stick to all I said before. I have no right to be up in the moon, have I? Of course not; and I've no more right to stand on this present quay, than I have to be up in the moon!'

IRISH PATHOS.

The London and Westminster Review recently gave some amusing specimens of *Irish Humour*; from the same source are extracts below on the equally striking characteristic of the Irish character—PATHOS:

There are many melancholy aids in the country that give Pathos birth, which naturally increase its effect; but it does not need them in the same proportion that Irish humour does; it goes straight to the heart, while its opposite works on the imagination; it follows or precedes the jest with extraordinary rapidity—the smile bursts forth before the tear is dry, but its sadness is certainly augmented by witnessing the cause that produces it. There is a depth of pure and holy poetry in Irish pathos which cannot be surpassed; its metaphors are appropriate, and attack our reason by the force of their beautiful simplicity. We remember once passing by an Irish cottage on the estate of an absentee landlord, whose agent had distrained for rent; the family were of the very poor. A mother, whose husband was only recovering from the "sickness," as typhus fever is always called, staggered from beneath the doorway, not from any weakness of her own, but from her efforts to support the wreck of what had been, three years before, the finest young man in the parish. She was followed by two little children, the small remnant of her family—three had been carried to the grave by the disease from which the father was recovering; it was beautiful to see how that pale, thin, deep-eyed woman suffocated her own feelings with the affection she bore her husband.

"Don't cry after the poor place, childre dear; sure th' Almighty is above us all—and this last trouble has been sent in good time, when there's not so many of us to bear it. The could earth is heavy enough on Kathleen and Matty and Michael, or the trouble of this day would be heavier—for they were made up of feeling. Sure, my darlings, if there's power given by the landlord now, he'll not have any in the world above, and Heaven be praised for the same! Don't cry after the pig, Ellen, avourneen, what signifies it? May the little boy take the cat itself, sir?" addressing the half tipsy man who had taken the inventory of the contents of their miserable cabin. "Never heed it, my darlint, though to be sure it's only natural to like the dawshy cat that lay in his bosom all the time of his sickness. Keep up, Michael," she whispered to her husband, who, overpowered by illness and mental suffering, resisted her efforts to drag him into the high road; he glared upon the bailiff with the look of a famished tiger, so famished that it has not the power to spring upon its foe, impotent in all but the fierce and racking thirst for blood. "What signifies it? sure we'll be happier than ever by'n bye," she added, while the haggard smile upon her lips was the bitter mockery of hope. "Come away, Michael, I wonder that you wouldn't be above letting the likes of them, without a heart, see that you care about them or their goings on. Oh! where's yer pride gone?—That, and the silence together, put many a trouble over us that's known only to ourselves and the Almighty—blessed He is! He knows the troubles of the poor, and keeps their secrets. Come away, Michael! and don't let them tame Nagurs see that it's the woman that puts courage in ye!"

But the peasant heeded her not—the home affections were tugging at his heart. He kept his eyes fixed upon the furniture of his once comfortable cottage, that were dragged out previous to being carried away: he pointed to the potatoe kish which was placed upon the table—that indispensable article in which the potatoes are thrown when boiled, and which frequently, in the wilder and less civilized parts of Ireland, is used as a cradle for the "babby." "Heaven bless you!" he exclaimed to the man.