

(ORIGINAL.)

THE SAILOR'S RETURN; OR, REMINISCENCES OF OUR PARISH.

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No. I.

As one of the chroniclers of my parish, it behooves me to act like a faithful and impartial biographer, not merely regarding with interest the memoirs of the rich and great, but condescending to men and women of low estate. Uninfluenced by worldly motives, to put a restraint upon their feelings, the lower classes follow more implicitly the dictates of nature; and their thoughts, words, and actions, in consequence, flow more immediately from the heart. Their affections are stronger, because money, in nine cases out of ten, cannot direct them in their choice of a partner for life. They meet upon equal terms, both having to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow; and their courtships generally commence in the field, where necessity, the stern nurse of the hardy, may accidentally have thrown them together. Their friendships are few, and generally confined to those of their own kindred; but, they are sincere and lasting; and I have witnessed with emotion the generous sacrifices which they will make to assist each other, in seasons of distress and difficulty. The peasant's world is contained in the rude hut which shelters his aged parents, and his wife and little ones. And in this little circle he centres and concentrates all the affections and kindly feelings of the heart.

Woodville is a large parish, and it contains many poor families of this description, whose simple histories have often awakened in my bosom the deepest interest and commiseration. It is not exactly of one of these that I am about to speak; for old Caleb Morris had seen better days, and had been reduced by a train of agricultural calamities, to receive wages for working on those lands which he once called his own. I was but a child at the period to which I allude; and my reminiscences of old Caleb are all confined to the pleasant little cottage in which he lived, by the side of the common, with its neat willow enclosures, and the beautiful wallflowers and pinks, and cloves, which grew in his pretty garden; not forgetting the tall sunflowers, that lifted their broad yellow faces over the hedge, as though they were ambitious to attract the observation of the foot passenger, and tempt him by their gorgeous apparel, to stop and ask for a nosegay. And then there was Caleb's pretty daughter Amy, who was the pet and darling of the whole village; the best scholar, and the best scampstress in the Sunday school; and her cou-

sin, Arnold Wallace, a fine rosy checked, curly headed, black eyed boy, the orphan son of old Caleb's sister, whom the good man had taken to his fire side, and brought up as his own. Arnold, used to follow Amy like her shadow—he carried her book bag to school for her, and gallantly lifted his little cousin over all the stiles and puddles in their way to the church. I used to call Amy, Arnold's little wife; but the high spirited lad early bade adieu to his fair haired playmate, and went to sea. As the cares of womanhood came on, and mellowed the sunny expression of Amy's brow, her heart received other impressions, and the boy she had ever regarded as a brother, was only remembered with that interest, which generally clings through life, to those with whom we have passed our early years, and who shared with us the hopes and the fears, and the sports of childhood.

I will tell you Amy's simple story as I heard her accidentally relate it to her cousin Arnold. One fine spring evening, I happened to be employed in taking a view of our village church, and its picturesque burial ground. The sketch was for a friend in India, who had been born at Woodville; and he wished to refresh his eyes in that far land, with a simple outline of the quiet secluded spot, where the fathers of his native village slept. My seat was a green bank covered with primroses. A high hawthorn hedge sheltered me behind from the fresh but chilling breezes which generally prevail near the sea at this season of the year; and a little rill, not half a foot wide, ran singing at my feet, discoursing sweet music to the flowers and grass, that crowded about its fairy margin. Enamoured with my employment, I scarcely noticed the entrance of a stranger, till the shadow of Amy Morris fell between me and the light, and I looked impatiently up from the paper. She did not see me, and moved slowly forward to the chancel end of the church, and kneeling down at the head of a high turfed, but stoneless grave, she began planting a young ash tree, which she seemed anxious should serve for a monument for the dead. Poor Amy! sorrow had pursued her hard for the last four years, and stolen the rose from her cheek, and the smile from her lip; and what was far worse, had robbed her of the gay, light heart, she once possessed. Caleb Morris had been dead about eighteen months, and the solitary mourner had been forced to quit their neat