

THE GARLAND.

"TO RAISE THE GENIUS AND TO MEND THE HEART."

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POPULAR TALES:

Original.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

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"The dearest object of my young heart was a maiden—she was the object of my thoughts resting or awake, and her image was written on my heart as its most precious idol. Beautiful she truly was; every grace that could fascinate, she possessed in a high degree. I gave her my love with enthusiasm—I worshipped at her shrine, and a mutual return of such affection I long thought I had, but alas! after a year's expectancy of the consummation of such bliss, my hopes were blighted in a day! Another had won her heart and led it astray by perfidy and the envenomed tongue of slander. He seduced her and left her a beggar on the world. Yes! left my Mary the flower of my existence, a spectacle of shame and pity. What could I do in such a case? My bosom beat high with indignation, and my lip quivered for revenge. Villainy! villainy! could I let it pass? Did not the sanctity of woman's character call upon me to be avenged on the guileful usurper of my soul's dearest charms? With clenched fist and angry brow, I vowed that justice should be done. I called the coward out, and bade him face me as a man. Sunset was the appointed time to meet. We were regular; for as the deep shade of the forest, that was tipped with the golden rays of nature's animation, fell upon the selected fields, all was prepared for death. All was still save the forest's roar, or the twittering farewell of some little songster to Apollo's smile, I clenched my teeth with impatience. * * * 'All ready—fire!' was no sooner said than bang went the weapons of death. I reeled and fell senseless to the ground; from which situation I recovered not until many hours after. I was shot through the thigh, and the pain, loss of blood and fear, operated in stupifying me to my situation..... The seconds, thinking us both dead, had fled in fear and left our bodies on the field. The moon shone full on the scene, and displayed the bloody ground; her orbit was full, gloomy and melancholy. At a distance lay my opponent, who I once thought my friend. His face looked grimly pale—spotted with blood, and his dark eye-brows were set in a scowl; he was shot through the breast. I raised myself up and gazed on him for a moment—my eyes grew dim, and I lost myself in horror..... Again I saw him open his eyes, glassy and dim, "Barclay, Barclay," he feebly said, "are you still alive? God bless you, and forgive you, gallant Barclay! I was in the wrong—I

deserve my fate;" which was almost inaudible. I stood as a marble figure—I saw his lip quiver, his eye open and shut to all eternity. I rushed, feeble as I was, from his presence, until fainting on my way, I awoke in the arms of my parents the next morning at home. O, the horror of my situation, who could tell? For this crime I was tried by the laws and acquitted; but I never forgave myself. This, my son, has been a canker-worm in my heart. O, youthful folly, mark this! But as if fate was against me, I have to recount other sorrows. I was at this time in my twenty-second year. Although I could never efface from my mind the remembrance of the sad scene I have just mentioned; still the sanguine hopes of youth, and the seductive pleasures that drown the thought of care and sorrow at this changeful season of our life, left but little room for its chilling effect on my heart. In a few years all was forgotten, and I was again a wrestler with worldly strife, and thoughts. I commenced business in another part of the world and was sanguine as ever in my success. There lived in my neighborhood an old man, comfortably settled on a farm, with a beautiful cottage on it. The solace, the pride and animation of his venerable age, was an only daughter. Catharine! charming Catharine! bewitching girl! her form is still lovely and bright in my recollection; though the dark clouds of age and distance of time, shadow o'er my soul, I still can remember the time I first saw thee—saw thee cling with filial affection round the neck of thy aged parent, whilst he spoke of thy mother and the big tear trickled down his time-worm cheek.—Ah! thou airy sunshine of the past, glimmering through the gloom of time! Why does thy fairy dream come o'er the soul of time-beaten Barclay?"

Here the old man hesitated, turned his eyes on high and a faint smile lit up his face, he gazed abstractedly; then rousing from his reverie, he sprang upon his feet. * * "Oh, my son, forgive the dotage of years. Shall I tell thee, the next time I saw Catharine Mavor was in her garden; a garden which she superintended. She was in the midst of flowers, herself the fairest of them. Her dress was a pink-satin gown, and her sash of a silvery-white. Her auburn hair hung in tresses, delicately curled round her shoulders, and in her bosom a garland of flowers, an emblem of its inward innocence. On one side of her there was a bed of sweet peas, and on the other a motley display of pinks; over the latter she was bending, humming a melodious tune, the first verse of which I could only hear: