

THE ERRING.

BY JULIA A. FLETCHER.

Think gently of the erring!
We know not of the power
With which the dark temptation came,
In some unguarded hour.
Ye may not know how earnestly
They struggled, or how well,
Until the flour of weakness bane,
And sadly thus they fell.

Think gently of the erring!
Oh do not thou forget,
However darkly stained by sin,
He is thy brother yet.
Hail of the self-same heritage!
Child of the self-same God!
He hath but stumbled in the path,
Thou hast in weakness trod.

Speak gently to the erring!
For is it not enough
That innocence and peace have gone,
Without thy censure rough?
It sure must be a weary lot
That sin-crushed heart to bear,
And they who share a happier fate,
Their chidings well may spare.

Speak kindly to the erring!
Thou yet may'st lead them back,
With holy words, and tones of love,
From misery's thorny track.
Forget not thou hast often sinned,
And sinful yet must be,—
Deal gently with the erring one,
As God hath dealt with thee!

Read at the Annual Review.

THE STREAM OF TIME.—VALEDICTORY.

FROM primeval nothingness a stream gushed forth—broad, deep, no chain to bind its overwhelming flood. On, on, this stream has rolled; remorselessly engulfing earth's most glorious trophies—and onward still its stayless, reckless waves shall glide, till powerless, 'tis lost in the ocean of eternity.

Melancholy it is, to trace its course; to mark the stranded wrecks of empires, nations, which, like bubbles rose—then sunk, unconfined and unknelt.

Among the things that were, before us rises, in Imperial glory, Leviathan Assyria. She sinks. But ere the vision passes, pyramidal Egypt rises—and as, in imagination, we wander through the "thousand doors, and thousand winding ways" of her mazy labyrinth; or contemplate her giant Thebes, whose hundred gates seemed scoffingly to mock at Time's overwhelming tide—we exclaim, surely *such strength must stand unimpaired amid the waste of ages*. But, her massy gates have fallen; her labyrinth mingles with the dust; and though still stand a few relics of her ancient grandeur, yet her glory is departed. Memnon's spirit of music has flown. Yes! Egypt, the supremacy of whose knowledge and power triumphed over all: "the cradle of the sciences and arts;" from the fountains of whose wisdom even the immortal Homer drank invigorating draughts, has sunk beneath the wave. And while yet, upon the far off hills, we see the blazoned flash of Cambyses' scymeter, and hear the distant thunder of his troops, majestic Persia rises. Proudly she stands. We gaze, and turning, gaze again—but she is gone. Persepolis has disappeared. Alike with Darius and Xerxes, her noted founders, she moulders with Persia's clod. And now, in solitary grandeur, rise only a few grey columns, which have withstood Time's crumbling hand. Yet, still they stand in ruins—for the water-courses of the Tucht are choked—no longer do the Kour Abb supply its thousand aqueducts; and the plain which it overlooks is but a wilderness; for the great city which once poured its population over Merducht's wide expanse, has sunk to nothingness. Hitherto obscure, the Macedonians now rise, and under the conquering Philip, that nation becomes at once the arbiter of Greece; under his son the arbiter of all Asia. But like her predecessors, she rises, only to fall.

Rome—Roman Rome—the "iron kingdom," leading kings captive at her chariot wheels, next shines forth the brightest star in the galaxy of ancient empires. Once proud mistress of the world she stretched her arms over all the nations, and madly believed herself "eternal."

But alas! the last of her long line of Cæsars has doffed his crown to the universal lovelier, and haughty Rome has bowed her head to kiss the iron sceptre. No longer is the huge Coliseum stained with the blood of "human victims, butchered to make a Roman holiday;" for now, amid its tottering ruins glide the "familiar forms of the world's to-day," and the mellow moonbeams glimmer through the ivy-crowned walls and gloomy galleries.

Such are some of the wrecks of Time's impetuous stream. But one we've passed of melancholy aspect, which, looming thro' the gathering shades of many ages, compels the exclamation—Oh, Greece, whither is thy spirit fled! In quick review before us pass ambition's fire, flashing from the eyes of the competitors for the Olympic palm; the heroes of Thermopylae and Marathon, struggling for the glory of their country; the words of wisdom sweetly falling from the lips of Socrates; and the forum shaken by the eloquence of Demosthenes. Oh! Greece, once "the Albion of thy studded sea," we weep thy downfall. Where now is thy Eleusis' temple? Where now thy sturdy sons?—the heroes of thy battlefields?

The mighty tide rushed on, and all are gone. Thus all earth's glories pass away; and, as their wavering shadows flit along, a superstitious dread steals o'er us; a dark foreboding, lest, in some future hour, our own dear homes may be laid desolate; our own loved Canada mingle with the accumulated dust of ages—lest where now sits our noble queen, on her, apparently, rock-built throne, and no less firmly seated in her people's hearts, beneath whose benign auspices the mother, in conscious security, sweetly hums her lullaby, may, at some future day, be heard a wail, for the desolation of England's happy homes.

Sad, sad, it is to look through the dark vista of the future. We know not what awaits us. From the past, we can hope nothing; and in the present, every thing seems to betoken some awful crisis.

What mean those earthquake heavings of political commotion, by which already has been hurled from his castellated throne, that monarch, who, five months ago, was saying in his blindness, "I have built my nest on high, and never shall be moved?" To-day, a king; to-morrow, a fugitive, or a beggar—this is man's destiny—these are Time's changes. He waves his sceptre o'er the beautiful—and they are not. He treads the hall of revelry, where throng the bright and joyous—and the tearful wail of stricken ones breaks on the air, where hitherto resounded laughter's merry peal. He passes o'er the battlefield—and the "serried hosts" are passed away, and the green grass waves unstained above the mouldering skeletons. He knows no pity; feels none; and each breath, though viewless, bears its millions to their long, last home. And even now, methinks yon mountain-mist is wreathing winding-shoots for many, whom that mountain seems to shield.

'Tis ever thus; men come and go; whirled away like "winnowing chaff" before the rude wind's blast. Every thing here is stamped with the signet of mortality. Even nature heralds our speedy dissolution—the last leaf falls; the day smiles its departing death-smile; the year grows grey with age, and fades from the earth forever; isles leap from the ocean, and retire to their mysterious caverns; cloud-capped mountains rear their huge heads to heaven, and bow themselves to meet the lowly plain. Even the very stars, those brightest symbols of God's glory, glitter awhile in their "eternal depths," then, like the Pleiad, loveliest of their train, shoot away to "darkle in the trackless void," leaving no trace behind. And thus shall earth herself soon vanish, "as a dream when one awaketh."

Aye, do not all things here admonish us, that even now our life is quivering towards its close; and that Time, ruthlessly as he has brought this *parting hour*, shall soon have borne away the period for preparation? And is it really so, that the parting hour has come; that the period of our final separation has arrived? Oh! would it were a dream. In a few hours more