

# THE PEARL.

DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION.

Vol. I.

HALIFAX, N. S. SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1837.

No. 7.

## A THOUGHT IN SOLITUDE.

Where is the queenly ship,  
That in her beauty flew  
Over the harbor's emerald waves,  
To her home, the deep and blue?  
Like a bride she bounded forth,  
With music and with glee;  
Proud were the men who guided her  
To combat with the sea!

Can her high pride be tamed?  
Where are her streamers gone?  
Doth she lie where the south-breeze cannot reach,  
Nor the storm-wind's awful tone?  
Where is the queenly ship,  
With her crew of gallant men?  
Are they in silence laid to sleep,  
But once to rise again?

Or is she bounding on  
As on that parting day;  
Doth the noble bark, like one of life,  
The skill of man obey?  
O! there were hearts within her  
That warmly beat for me—  
But their God and mine 'holds in his palm'  
Their enemy, the sea!

Quebec, April, 1837.

A. A. M.

## SINGULAR VICISSITUDE OF FORTUNE.

As illustrative of the sudden and singular vicissitudes of fortune which men sometimes undergo in that place, (Stock Exchange) I may mention a curious instance in the case of Mr. F——, the present proprietor of one of the most extensive estates in the county of Middlesex. He had been for some years a member of the Stock Exchange, when, on becoming unfortunate, he had to suffer the indignity of having his name chalked on the black board; an indignity to which poverty more frequently than dishonourable conduct is subjected. The loss of a handsome fortune, coupled with the treatment he had received from the committee, worked his feelings up to such a state of frenzy, that chancing to pass London bridge a few days after the battle of Waterloo, he, in his despair, threw the last shilling he had in the world over the bridge into the water. For a few moments afterwards he stood motionless on the spot, leaning over the parapet, and gazing vacantly on the water. The emotions which then passed through his mind were of a nature which no second party could describe; and which, indeed, even he himself could not by possibility convey with anything like their vividness or power, to the minds of others. His predominant feelings—but no idea can be formed of their burning intensity—were those of envy of the insensate stones, and of a wish that he himself were, like his last shilling, at the bottom of the river. That moment, but for the crowds of persons who were repassing, he would have thrown himself over the parapet of the bridge, and ended his woes by ending his existence. From that instant, he did form the purpose of committing suicide; and he began to move slowly towards home with that view. Before he had reached the other end of the bridge, he was met by a Frenchman with whom he had been on terms of great intimacy. He would have passed by the Frenchman, so absorbed was he with the wretchedness of his condition, without recognizing him. The latter, however, advancing towards Mr. F——, seized him by the hand, and inquired how he was. He managed to lisp out an 'O, how are you.'

"This is a most important affair to both countries," said the Frenchman.

"What affair?" inquired the other, partially recovering himself from the frightful reverie to which he had been giving way.

"Why, the great battle," observed Monsieur.

"The great battle! What great battle?"

"The battle of Waterloo."

"You are surely dreaming. I have not heard a word about it: the newspapers make no mention of any battle having been lately fought.

"I dare say they do not. How could they? Intelligence of it has only reached town within the last two hours. The foreign secretary and the French ambassador alone know anything of it. Government have received the tidings of it by telegraph: it is not an hour since I parted with the French ambassador from whom I had the information. Napoleon is signally defeated."

Mr. F—— felt as if he had started from a deep sleep. He felt as if he had become a new man. The advantage to which such important intelligence might be turned on the Stock Exchange, the scene of so many disasters and so much degradation to him, immediately shot across his mind.

"And the battle was an important one?"

"Most important," said the Frenchman, with great emphasis. "It will prove fatal for ever to the prospects of Buonaparte. His usurpation is at an end," he added, with evident joy, being a great adherent of the Bourbon family.

"Were the numbers on either side great?"

"I have no idea of the exact numbers, but the battle was the greatest which has been fought in modern times, and it lasted a considerable part of three days."

Mr. F—— cordially shook the Frenchman by the hand, and said he would call on him in a day or two. Hastily returning to the city, he hurried to a certain firm on the Stock Exchange, informed them that he had just become exclusively possessed of most important information, and expressed his readiness to communicate it to them on condition that he should receive the half of whatever profits they might realize on any operation they might have in the Stock Exchange in consequence of that information. They agreed to his proposal: he told them the result of the battle of Waterloo: they rushed into the market and purchased consols to an enormous amount. In the meantime Mr. F—— proceeded to another large house, and told them also that he possessed information of the most important character, of which he was sure they had heard nothing. They admitted they knew of nothing that was not in the public prints. He made the same proposal to them he had done to the other firm: they also, not supposing Mr. F—— had spoken to any other party on the subject, at once closed with the offer, and, on the intelligence being communicated to them, one of the partners called the other aside—there were only two in the counting house at the time—and whispered to him, not on any account to let Mr. F—— out of his sight, lest he should allow the important intelligence to transpire to some one else,—adding that he would that instant hurry to the Stock Exchange, and employ various brokers to purchase consols to a large amount. "You'll recollect what I have said," he observed to his partner, as he hastened out of the counting-house. "I'll take special care of that," said the other. "Leave such matters to me," he added in his own mind. A thought struck him. "Mr. F——, will you just step into the parlour," pointing the way, "and have a lunch?" Mr.

F. assented. They both proceeded to an apartment in another part of the house. A lunch was brought. Mr. F——, whose state of mind had deprived him of all appetite for some days past, now ate rather heartily. While busy with the tidings set before him, the other, rising from his seat, said, "You'll excuse me for a moment, Mr. F——, while I transact a small matter in the counting-house." "Certainly," said Mr. F——, "take your time." The other quitted the room, and on getting to the outside, locked the door, unknown to Mr. F——, and put the key in his pocket. In about half an hour the first partner returned from the Stock Exchange, and stated that the funds had already, from some cause or other, risen in an hour two or three per cent. The cause, it is unnecessary to say, was the immense amount of consols which had been purchased by the first house to whom Mr. F—— gave the information. Both partners proceeded to the apartment in which they had shut up their prisoner, and apprised him of the rise which had taken place, adding that they did not think it advisable to purchase at the advanced price. He urged them to do so, expressing his firm belief that when the news of so important a victory by the allied powers had been received, the funds would rise at least ten or twelve per cent. The parties acted on his advice, and made immense purchases. The event justified the soundness of Mr. F——'s counsel, and the accuracy of his opinion; for on the day on which intelligence of the battle was made general, the funds rose to the amazing extent of fifteen per cent., which is the greatest rise they were ever known to experience. Mr. F——'s share of the profits between the two houses in one day exceeded £100,000. He returned next day to the Stock Exchange, and very soon amassed a large fortune, when he had the wisdom to quit the place for ever, and went and purchased the estate I have alluded to, which he still possesses.—From the Great Metropolis.—Second Series.

EDIBLE BIRDS' NESTS.—"On entering the harbour (says Mr. Earl), I perceived a small hut, perched upon the steep side of one of the heads, and upon making an enquiry concerning it, was informed that it had been erected for the residence of the men who guarded the sarong burung (birds' nests), which abound in an extensive cavern in the immediate vicinity, this hut having been constructed at the mouth of one of these subterraneous recesses.

"The manufacturers of the nests, so greatly in esteem in China, are small swallows, which are supposed to collect the glutinous substance of which they are composed from the sea. The nests resemble small tea-saucers in form, the rim being about the size of that of a tumbler. The best that is, those collected before the eggs of the bird have been laid are of a light red colour, and nearly transparent, bearing almost a perfect resemblance to isinglass, except that they are rather more brittle. China is almost the only market for this delicacy, the nests being greatly in demand throughout the Celestial Empire, in consequence of their supposed nutritious qualities. They are of three different degrees of excellence, and the best kind is sold in China at the rate of nine shillings an ounce. When used for culinary purposes, they are dissolved in water, and made into a tasteless soup. I have eaten them several times at the table of rich Chinese, but must confess that they did not strike me as being at all agreeable to the palate: in fact, it is difficult to distinguish the slightest flavour. The collection of these nests is a work of danger and difficulty; they are taken periodically, and it is necessary to station proper persons at the mouths of the caverns to prevent the birds from being disturbed by intruders."