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Poetry.

THE DEPARTING SPIRIT.

Come nearer, dearest, it has been a long and bitter day :
Those hours of agonizing pain, thank God have passed
away.

I rest, for very tenderly upon my moistened brow
is laid the pale and icy hand of death's kind angel now.

Oh! fold me to thy bosom once again ere I depart,
And let me feel the beating of that ever-faithful heart,
Whose very life tide long hath been that pure and perfect
love
For which my : et are lingering yet from the bright walks
above.

I have been musing on the past, and with a vision clear
Each by-gone scene of wedded bliss—my early love was
here.

I have been thinking of the past—affection's morning hour :
It was the lovely rose-bud then, but now it is the flower.

Each day, blessed day, since then hath seen our spirits
closer twine,
Till my soul to-night seems wrapped up in the inner folds
of thine.

Nay, weep not thus, beloved, if immortality could die
Perchance I might forget thee midst the glory of the sky.

I shall not wander far, for Zion's holy hill is near ;
The perfume of thy hushed bowers is wafted even here.
As beams the guiding star upon a dark and stormy sea,
My spirit presence shall be light and joy, dear love, to thee.

How calmly now our children sleep, all folded in their rest,
And not one thought of coming ill, disturbs the dreamers
breast ;
Yet will they weep another morn—those little dovelets fair—
When their sweet voices call, and no fond mother greets
them there.

But time shall deck those sudden brows once more with
smiles of glee ;
For God, our God, shall care for them my own, and
comfort thee.
And when their arms entwine thy neck with their dear
guileless love,
Thy spirit shall look up, and feel my blessing from above.

Oh! should those precious ones from truth's pure blissful
way depart,
As erst their erring mother, fold them to thy noble heart.
They will turn back, and mourn with sad repentant tears
That they have dimmed the promise of their earlier, hap-
pier years.

Nay, weep not, dearest, that my day of life is nearly o'er,
And soon thy loving eyes shall look upon my face no more.
A purer, gladder welcome than is breathed on earthly sod,
Ere long, shall greet thee home, unto the dwelling of thy
God.

Literature.

THE POOR OLD MAN.

(Concluded from our last.)

THE FIFTH STAGE.

This is the state of man ; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him,
The third day comes a frost—a killing frost
And, as he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening,—rips his root
And then he falls.

It may be as well in the outset of this stage
to leave Joseph for a little, while we journey
along with Charles, once more prepared for
sea. His father purchased for him a fine
barque called the Laurel, in which he set sail
from the West of Scotland. But, alas! his
malignant star accompanied him. His preca-
rious position after he returned from London,
created the deepest interest among his friends,
and every other day some new pursuit was en-

gaged in, to withdraw his mind from the con-
sciousness of its former self, and endeavor to
obliterate all reflections.

They succeeded while he was with them,
but again at sea, the absence of external ex-
citement, caused a powerful reaction, ap-
proaching almost to despair. A few days
sailing brought them to the Atlantic Ocean,
where they encountered a severe gale, which
continued two days; accompanied with light-
ning and thunder, and a tremendous deluge
of rain, sweeping the decks, and deranging
everything. There was nothing to relieve
the eye, on the right hand or on the left—
nothing to be seen but the deep swelling bil-
lows, that raise their frothy crest in wild
majestic fury, and sink again in deep and
deeper undulations. Yet, even in this monoto-
nous scene of wildest grandeur, where forming
surges swell and rise and roll for ever, there
was enough to occupy his mind to the exclu-
sion of all home affairs. But the storm sud-
denly died away, and was succeeded by a
ground swell,—that most irksome of all irk-
some things to a sailor. Thus becalmed, the
barque plunged and reared alternately, with
a most disagreeable motion, without making
the slightest headway, and the Captain's
mind became vapid. Home sickness com-
menced. Internal enjoyments he had none.
How true is it that

First impressions oft endure
When future ones are not secure.

Consciousness,—so long kept in abeyance
by the society and excitement of his friends,
at last prevailed. He looked back upon his
former career; but the two prominent events
of his life,—his blighted love, and his suicidal
act,—were all that he could summon from the
shades of a treacherous memory,—and oh!
how much better, had it been, if these two
events had also been effaced from the deeply
graven tablet. To render them oblivious was
impossible. The more he endeavored to flee
from the consciousness of them, the more
vividly they appeared before him, till moulded
into gigantic form by a distorted fancy, they
appeared too powerful for his enfeebled
strength. He attempted to fortify his mind
by drowning his thoughts in brandy, but the
deeper the draughts the greater the subsequent
melancholy. His mind in its more healthy
state, was unable to contend singly, against
the ideal representations of bitter events, and
when that mind became weakened by daily
indulgence, all contention was vain. A
feverish heat pervaded his brain, which all the
liquid in his possession could not cool, and he
seemed daily to pour oil on the blazing fag-
got to extinguish the flame. The attempts
made by the chief mate, to change the cur-
rent of his thoughts were fruitless. Sunk in
gloom, and depressed a thousand fold beyond
endurance he plunged into the dark blue sea.
In a brief moment, the relentless waters closed
upon him, and the eddying circles, dwindled
away upon the long deep swell of the ocean
wave.

Thus perished in the bloom and vigour of
manhood, the pride of Mr. Marshall's family,

—a victim to despondency; and his untimely
end was a fatal presage of the misery which
awaited the family group.

Shortly after the unwelcome tidings reach-
ed the village, Mrs. Marshall closed her ac-
count with time, and the double bereavement
told powerfully on the surviving parent.

Time passes on apace, and we find Joseph
acting as captain of the Laurel, and Alexander
somewhat resuscitated, sailing with him as
mate. But this was an ill-judged union, and
it had been better they had sailed in separate
vessels. One thing prevented this. No one
would give Alexander a situation. He could
not be trusted. Still, necessity rendered it
imperative that he should do something.

Many a sad altercation ensued between the
brothers; but as they were both fond of spirits
they generally smothered their differences
in flame. Any description, adequate to convey
an idea of the miserable life they led, and
which was so miserably terminated,—even if
possible to pourtray it, would too much harrow
the feelings. We come however to one day
more direfully eventful than all the others. It
matters not, that on that day, the sky,—accord-
ing to the log book,—was black and portentous,
that the wind was right a head, and that two pe-
trels were wheeling round the maintop, and that
a large shark was ever and anon descried drag-
ging lazily astern, and that all these things
combined, filled the minds of the superstitious
sailors with a kind of semi-horror at thought
of the inevitable fate, which attended some
one of their number, for who could divine
that he himself was secure. Such was how-
ever, the day. The brothers were upon the
quarter deck labouring under a sort of tempo-
rary mental derangement,—the effects of a
severe bouse. They quarrelled about some
trifling thing;—from words they proceeded to
blows; they closed upon each other, and
Joseph in the infuriated madness of dissipation,
lifted his brother in his arms, and, with a wild
oath, plunged him in the briny surge.

The wretched murderer stood aghast, at
what he had done. A boat was immediately
lowered and manned; but all in vain. The
nerveless state into which Alexander had been
brought by inebriety, prevented him from sus-
taining himself above water, and he almost
immediately disappeared, thus lamentably
closing an unhappy existence.

Not so, the wretched Joseph. In despair;—
for he had somewhat sobered by the transac-
tion—he threw himself down upon the hon-
coops, and burst into tears. The horrid crime
stretched itself in unmasked and hideous out-
line before him. A murderer's doom,—a mur-
derer's punishment awaited him. In imagi-
nation he saw the crowd assembled to witness
the death of a monster, who in a moment of
phrenzy, had laid wicked hands upon his own
brother. The prospective punishment was
too much for him, and the tears still rolled
down his cheeks. But they were not tears of
penitence. They moistened the eyes; but they
softened not the heart. He muttered aloud some
sentiments of horror, and descended to the cabin.
The first thing which presented itself was a Rus-
sian decanter half filled with brandy. Seemingly