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"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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GENERAL LITERATURE.

POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF ISAAC EMERSON. THE PRINCE OF M——.

It was early in the forenoon of a summer's day, that I left the ancient city of E——. My road lay first by the side of a magnificent river, by degrees expanding into an estuary, and mingling its waters ere long with the ocean. It was dotted with picturesque islands, some green and smooth, and some rugged and rocky, with the mouldering remnants upon them of castle or convent. After journeying a few miles, I crossed the river by a ferry, and proceeded through a champaign country, diversified occasionally with dark heathy hills of no great height, beneath which lay here and there a village or a small country town. In the distance, glimpses were caught from time to time of a long range of lofty blue mountains, in exploring the scenery of which I purposed spending the next two or three weeks.

But, though it was July, the day was singularly unpropitious to a tourist. The preceding night had been stormy, and black clouds were lowering on the heights we passed, threatening the return of rain. In fact, just as, after traveling about forty miles, I had reached an eminence from which I expected to see the whole mountain chain stretching at no great interval before me, the tempest recommenced with so much fury that I was glad, instead of pausing to enjoy the splendid prospect, to push on as quickly as possible to some place of refuge. This I found at a tolerable inn in a small decayed town, seated at the foot of the first lower range of the mountains; and here I was absolutely forced by the unabating storm to continue till the next day. I was afterwards very glad of the delay; for I found in the town and in its neighbourhood much to interest me, which otherwise, as it had not been my original intention to stop there, I should have missed.

Receiving from mine host the account of a ruined cathedral, and a princely seat close at hand, I devoted the following morning, which was happily fair, to the examination of these objects. I first proceeded up the ill-built, ill-paved street of the town, till in the centre of it I stood before the outer gate of the domain of the prince of M——. It was a lofty gothic archway, surmounted by the shield of arms and other heraldic insignia of the family. On giving my name at the lodge, I received permission to view the grounds, and a forester of the prince's was appointed to attend me. We first visited the church, which stands as it were in a garden, a little behind the street, and near the banks of a clear brawling stream. A side door admitted us into the choir, which was fitted up in a modern style for present use; but passing from this into the nave, I found myself in the midst of a venerable ruin. There were the massy columns and the pointed arches that divided off the aisles, but the roof was entirely destroyed; the central tower was overgrown with ivy, and a western tower was half fallen.—There were fragments of tombs about; for here reposed those whose deeds had been emblazoned in the rolls of

fame, though now the battered shields and the half defaced inscription were their only memorial. The whole building was of imposing magnitude, for it had once been a cathedral; and prelates known in ecclesiastical and civil history had here had their seat. But in the wars of religion it had been torn to pieces; and now, with the exception of the small part kept in use, it served but as an ornamental ruin to the domain of the great feudal chief on whose property it stood.

Issuing from the grove in which the cathedral was embosomed, I traversed, conducted by my guide, much beautiful scenery. Sometimes we ascended craggy rocks; sometimes we were deep in the recesses of a pine forest which stretched away many miles in different directions. Now we were beside a river, broad, calm, and smooth, and glassy; next we came upon the same stream confined in a narrow channel, and boiling with impetuosity as it forced its headlong way. Here on an elevated platform we gazed on mountains whose heads were veiled in clouds, or tipped with snow; there we looked out upon a rich expanse of champaign country. My attendant, who was an old retainer of the house, assured me that nearly all I saw belonged to his lord. And, as he was well acquainted with local history and traditions of the neighbourhood, in all of which the ancestors of the prince of M—— bore a leading part, he had perpetually some anecdote of interest to tell. Different spots that we visited had each its appropriate legend. In one place, just beneath where a spire rock, crowned with firs, shot upwards to the sky, an ancient sovereign of the country was fond of placing himself to destroy the deer which his hunters drove by him through the hollows. In another not far off, another monarch had nearly perished from the assault of an infuriated stag.

It struck me as remarkable that the forester made no mention, in all his tales and anecdotes, of the present prince. I once or twice asked some questions relating to him, for I was quite ignorant of his condition, but the retainer returned an evasive answer, and immediately spoke of some other topic. This, I must fairly own, a little whetted my curiosity; and I could not help, when surveying the prospects of highest grandeur, hazarding repeatedly a remark upon the good fortune of the noble owner of such a territory. My companion replied not, but his features assumed always a peculiar expression. At last, having for some time traversed a winding path among deep plantations, through which I occasionally caught a glimpse of a torrent dashing tumultuously over masses of rock that impeded its progress, a sudden turn brought me in front of a kind of grotto. It stood in a small open space, surrounded by the trees, and was built in a rustic style. I advanced to the door, which was opened by the forester, and I found myself in an apartment of tolerable size, the walls of which were ornamented with pictures. While I was contemplating one of these, it suddenly slipped aside, and I saw in its stead a splendid cataract foaming before me, and multiplied

on all sides by the mirrors placed round and above a larger hall, into which I passed through the opening thus unexpectedly made for me. The end of this hangs quite over the gulf into which the river precipitates itself, and from it I could see, a little below, a bridge of a single arch, thrown picturesquely across the stream, while all around rose hills of graceful outline covered with pine woods, and far away, through an opening between two, soared the snowy peaks of the more distant mountains. I stayed long viewing the noble scenery, and enjoying the thoughts which it suggested. It was a place to muse in, a place to forget the world in. The forester observed my gratification, and said—"This is where my honoured lord in happier days used to love to come. He often breakfasted here, and spent the morning with his books in this hermitage. Those were pleasant times; but you, sir, have more enjoyment of these woods and this place than he has." "What then," I asked, "is the reason, my friend? For I have observed that hitherto you have carefully avoided any allusion to the prince. Has any misfortune happened to him?"

"Follow me, sir," said the man, "and you shall see."

I followed round a low hill, and soon perceived that he was bringing me near to the point where I had entered the domain. We shortly came to a flat space, where a new building beautifully situated seemed to be erecting. It was of large extent. Large quantities of the finest hewn stone were lying about ready for use. The palace, for such it promised to be, was not far advanced: in some parts the walls were but a few feet above the ground, but other portions had risen higher; and it was easy to believe that when completed it would be a most magnificent structure. But I saw no workmen engaged upon it: no noise of business was heard. There were all the materials; there were the builders' huts and offices; but there was no builder near, and an air of desolation seemed to reign over the whole, as I perceived a kind of covering, of slate, upon the unfinished walls, as if to show that the building was not soon to be resumed.

"You are surprised, sir," said the forester, "I see, and cannot understand the meaning of this.—This palace was begun by my late lord, the last prince, who pulled down the ancient castle; and it was advanced as you see when he died. His death, sir, stopped the works at once; for my present lord—may God restore him!—and here the tears trickled down his weather-beaten cheeks—"my present lord is far away, and I fear he never will return. He has been many years in confinement, for he, sir, is insane."

It was even so. The heir of a long line of nobles, the feudal chief, beloved of his vassals, possessed of vast estates, whose family had once been a sovereign house—he was an incredible lunatic. Never with such effect did the striking language of the scripture flash upon my mind as at that moment: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, what shall I cry?"