

SATURDAY EVENING MAGAZINE.

PRICE TWO PENCE.

Vol. I.]

MONTREAL, MARCH 15, 1834.

[No. 17.

THE "THREE MIGHTY."

Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim. And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Bethlechem. And David longed, and said, Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlechem, that is at the gate! And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlechem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lords, and said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.—1. CHRON. xi.

Watch-fires are blazing on hill and plain
Till noon-day light is restored again—
There are shining arms in Rephaim's vale,
And bright is the glitter of clanging mail.

The Philistine hath fix'd his encampment here—
Afar stretch his lines of banner and spear—
And his chariots of brass are ranged side by side,
And his war-steeds neigh loud in their trappings of pride.

His tents are plac'd where the waters flow,
The sun hath dried up the springs below,
And Israel hath neither well nor pool,
The rage of her soldiers' thirst to cool.

In the cave of Adullam King David lies,
Overcome with the glare of the blazing skies;
And his lip is parch'd, and his tongue is dry,
But none can the grateful draft supply.

Though a crowned king, in that painful hour
One flowing cup might have bought his power—
What worth, in the fire of thirst, could be
The purple pomp of his sovereignty!

But no cooling cup from river or spring,
To relieve his want, can his servants bring—
And he cries, "Are there none in my train or state,
Will fetch me the water of Bethlechem-gate?"

Then three of his warriors, the "mighty three,"
The boast of the monarch's chivalry,
Uprose in their strength, and their bucklers rung,
As with eyes of flame on their steeds they sprung.

On their steeds they sprung, and with spurs of speed
Rush'd forth in the strength of a noble deed,
And dash'd on the foe like a torrent-flood,
Till he floated away in a tide of blood.

To the right—to the left—where their blue swords shine,
Like autumn-corn falls the Philistine;
And sweeping along with the vengeance of fate,
The "mighty" rush onward to Bethlechem gate.

Through a bloody gap in his shatter'd array,
To Bethlechem's well they have hewn their way,
Then backward they turn on the coarse-cover'd plain,
And charge through the foe to their monarch again.

The king looks at the cup, but the crystal draught
At a price too high for his want had been bought;
They urge him to drink, but he wets not his lip—
Though great is his need, he refuses to sip.

But he pours it forth to Heaven's Majesty—
He pours it forth to the Lord of the sky;
'Tis a draught of death—'tis a cup blood-stain'd—
'Tis a prize from man's suffering and agony gain'd.

Should he taste of a cup which his "mighty three"
Had obtain'd by their peril and jeopardy?
Should he drink of their life?—'Twas the thought of a king!
And again he return'd to his suffering.

DEPARTED FRIENDS.

A sentiment—one of the most amiable of our nature—
forbids that we should soon or altogether forget the friends
who have gone down before us to the dust. To forget is to
injure—and who would injure the dead? They cannot, it
is true, resent any injury. They can never chide us either
for neglect, or for any more positive kind of wrong. Yet,
just because we are thus safe from their wrath—just because
they lie thus powerless for the assertion of right or privilege
—we shrink from doing them injustice. For such an of-
fence our own affections would inflict an infinitely severer
punishment than any with which we could be visited by an
aggrieved party, however sensible of wrong, or eager to
avenge it.

There are lonely and silent moments, when we have only
ourselves to commune with, and when the memories of de-
parted friends rise before us, like ghosts, but welcome and
pleasant ones, each bringing back his own well-remembered
face, with a long train of associations, by which he is more
or less endeared to us. Such shadowy reviews have a mar-
vellous pleasure in them; for in the very act of thus pro-
tracting, as it were, the existence of the departed, we assure
ourselves so far that it is a duty which the living are not apt
to neglect, and consequently that when we ourselves shall
have submitted to the stroke of fate, there will be some kind
survivors who will not let us all or suddenly die; but, erect-
ing a shrine for our image in the temple of their hearts,
carry us in some measure victorious over the grave. Even
as the spring-flower comes and sits on the bed of the dead,
so does the sweet memory of a departed friend steal into our
thoughts, and flourish and blossom there. It will no doubt
be in time trodden down by the rude feet of worldly necessi-
ties; or as one floral year succeeds another, even so will the
remembrance of one set of friends be displaced by new griefs
and new recollections. But still let us cling as long as we
can to these pleasing images, and afford them all the space
and breadth in our souls, which the pressure of existing
things will by any means admit of.