

mass till a blaze of brightness dazzled all their eyes, and made Luath start up from his slumbers on the hearth.

"Come Alice," said the father, "we must not be cheated out of our music as usual, as our money; let us have your song as usual, my bonny Linnet—something that suits the season—cheerful and mournful at the same time—'Auld lang syne,' or 'Lobchaber no more.'" I will sing them both father, first the one and then the other; and as her sweet silver pipe trilled plaintively along, now and then other voices, and among them that of old Abel himself, were heard joining in the touching air.

What think you o' the singing this night my gude-dog Luath! quoth little cunning Abel, taking the dumb creature's offered paw into his hand. But do you know Luath, you greedy fellow, who have often stolen my cheese and bread on the hill when my head was turned, though you are no thief either Luath—I say, sir, do you know that we are all going to be starved? Come, here is the last mouthful of cake you will ever have all the days of your life, henceforth you must eat grass like a sheep. Hold your nose, sir—there— one, two, three! Steady—snap—swallow! well caught! Digest that and be thankful.

Children, said the old man, suppose we make a Family Trust, which, if we be all alive, let us religiously keep—aye, religiously, for it will be a day either of fast or of thanksgiving. Let us all meet on the term day, that is, I believe, the twelfth of May come a twelvemonth, on the green plot of ground beside the Shaw Linn, in which we have for so many years washed our sheep. It is a bonny, low, quiet spot, where nobody will come to disturb us. We will all meet together before the gloaming, and compare the stories of our year's life and doings, and say our prayers together in the open air, and beneath the moon and stars." The proposal was joyfully agreed to by all.

Family worship was now performed. Abel Alison prayed as fervently, and with as grateful a heart as he had done the night before. For his piety did not keep an account current of debtor and creditor with God. All was God's, of his own he had nothing. God had chosen to vary to him the mode and place of his few remaining years on earth. Was that a cause for repining? God had given him health, strength, a loving wife, dutiful children, a good conscience. No palsy had stricken him, no fever devoured him, no blindness darkened his path. Only a few grey hairs were as yet sprinkled among the black. His boys could bear being looked at, and spoken to in any company, gentle or severe; and his daughters, they were like the water-lilies, that are serene in the calm clear water; but no less serene among the black and scowling waves. So Abel Alison, and all his family, lay down on their beds, and long before midnight they were all fast asleep.

The time came when the farm, the bonny farm of the How was given up, and another family took possession. Abel's whole stock was taken by the new tenant, who was a good, and honest, and merciful man, at a fair valuation. With the sum thus got, Abel paid all his debts, that large fatal one, and his few small ones at the carpenter's shop, the smithy, and Widow Anderson's; the green, grey, black, brown, and white grocer, of the village; and then he and his family were left without a shilling. Yet none pitied them, they were above pity. They would all have scorned either to beg or borrow, for many of their neighbours were as poor, and not a great many much richer than themselves after all: and therefore they set their cheerful faces against the blast, and it was never felt to touch them. The eldest son immediately hired himself at high wages, for his abilities, skill, and strength, were well known, as head servant with the richest farmer in the next parish, which was famous for its agricultore. The second son, who was of an ingenious and thoughtful cast of character, engaged himself as one of the under gardeners at Pollock-Gasle; and the third, Abel, the wag, became a chapberd with an old friend of his father's, within a few

hundred yards of the How. The eldest daughter went into service in the family of the Laird of Southfield, one of the most respectable in the parish. The second was kindly taken into the Manse, as a nurse to the younger children, and a companion to the elder; and Alice, who from her sweet voice, was always called the Linnet, became a shepherdess along with her brother Abel. The mother went to the Hall to manage the dairy—the Baronet being a great man for cheese and butter—and the father lived with her in a small cottage near the Hall-gate, employing himself in every kind of work that offered itself, for he was a neat handed man, and few things, out of doors or in, came amiss to his fingers, whether it required a delicate touch or a strong blow. Thus were they all settled to their hearts' content before the hedge rows were quite green; and though somewhat scattered, yet were they all within two hour's journey of each other, and their hearts were all as close together as when inhabiting the sweet, low, bird-nest like cottage of the How.

The year, with all its seasons, passed happily by; the long warm months of summer, when the night brings coolness rather than the shut of light, the fitful, broken, and tempestuous autumn—the winter, whose short, but severe days of toil in the barn, and cheerful fireside nights, with all their work, and all their amusements, soon, too soon, it is often felt, give way to the open weather and active life of spring; the busy, working, enlivening spring itself were now flown by, and it was now the day of the Family Trust, the dear twelfth day of the beautiful but capricious month of May.

Had any one died whose absence would damp the joy and hilarity of the Family Trust, and make it a meeting for the shedding of tears? No. A kind God had counted the beatings of every pulse, and kept the blood of them all in a tranquil flow. The year had not passed by without many happy greetings—they had met often and often at church, at market, on chance visits at neighbour's houses, and not rarely at the cottage at the Hall gate. There had been nothing deserving the name of separation. Yet now that the hour of the Family Trust was near at hand, all their hearts bounded within them, and they saw before them all day that smooth verdant plot, and heard the delightful sound of that waterfall.

The day had been cheerful, both with breezes and with sunshine, and not a rain cloud had shown itself in the sky. Towards the afternoon the wind fell, and nature became more serenely beautiful every minute, as the evening was coming on with its silent dews. The parents came first to the Trysting place, cheered as they approached it down the woody glen, by the deepening voice of the Shaw Linn. Was that small turf built Altar, and the circular turf seat that surrounded it, built by fairy hands? They knew at once that some of their happy children had so employed a few leisure evening hours, and they sat down on the little mound with hearts overflowing with silent, perhaps speechless gratitude.

But they sat not long there by themselves, beloved faces at short intervals came smiling upon them—one through the coppice wood, where there was no path, another across the meadow, a third appeared with a gleesome shout on the cliff of the Waterfall, a fourth seemed to rise out of the very ground before them; and last of all came, preceded by the sound of laughter and of song, with which the calm air was stirred, Abel and Alice, the fairies who had raised that green grassy Altar, and who, from their covert in the shade, had been enjoying the gradual assemblage. "Blessings be to our God, not a head is wanting," said the father, unable to contain his tears. This night could I die in peace.

Little Abel and Alice who, from their lying so near the spot had taken upon themselves the management of the evening's ceremonial, brought from a bush where they had concealed them, a basket of bread and cheese and butter, a jar of milk, and another of honey, and placed them upon

the turf as if they had been a rural gift to some rural deity. "I thought you would be all hungry," said Abel, after your trudge; and as for Simon there, the jolly gardener, he will eat all the kibbock himself, if I do not keep a sharp eye upon him. Simon was always a sure hand at a meal. But, Alice, reach me over the milk-jar—Ladies and gentlemen, all your very good healths. "Our noble selves." This was felt to be very fair wit of Abel's and there was an end to the old Man's tears.

(To be continued.)

TO OUR READERS.—Mr. Hutton has been appointed collecting agent for the Herald.—Our City friends will therefore be waited upon by and by for their subscription, and as the sum is small, we are satisfied, that parties only require an opportunity to pay to one authorized to receive it.

TO OUR READERS.—The Canadian Family Herald is published by Mr. Charles Fletcher, Bookseller, No. 54, Yonge Street. It is kindly requested therefore that all communications intended for the Herald be addressed to the publisher, in order to prevent confusion, or delay in attending to them.

CANADIAN FAMILY HERALD.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1853.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

At the annual meeting of the Mechanics' Institute on Monday evening, the following gentlemen were elected as officers for the ensuing year:—

- President, - - Frederick Cumberland, Esq.
- 1st Vice-Ps., - - Thos. J. Robertson, Esq.
- 2nd Vice-Do., - - Mr. William Edwards,
- Treasurer, - - Mr. John Harrington.
- Cor. Secretary, - - Patrick Freeland, Esq.
- Rec. Secretary, - - Mr. Robert Edwards,
- Librarian, - - M. James Rogers.

COMMITTEE.

- Messrs. Samuel Rogers,
- " Henry Y. Hind,
- " Sandford Fleming,
- " Vincent Parkes,
- " John M. Bean,
- " William Atkinson,
- " John Elliot,
- " John Carter,
- " Hiram Piper,
- " Thomas Henning,
- " George Duffett,
- " William J. Slater.

A Report of the year's proceedings was read, from which we shall select a few passages for next number. Meantime, we this day present a few more extracts from Cockburn's Life of Jeffrey, an ample subject, most ably and eloquently treated. Jeffrey was the glory of the literati of Edinburgh and the pride of his country, and no one was better fitted to estimate his character and genius, or to dilate upon the warmth and kindness of his heart than Lord Cockburn, who witnessed the development of that character, and sunned himself under the glowing fires of Jeffrey's eloquence, and shared in the delights of his social recreations.