

"LET YOUR TROUBLE TARRY TILL ITS OWN TIME COMES."

"She warbled Handel: it was grand,
She made the Catalani jealous;
She touched the organ: I could stand
For hours and hours and blow the bellows."

The poet then proceeds to say that "Laura Lily" kept an album, and enumerates and criticises its miscellaneous contents. He then goes on—

"Our love was like most other loves—
A little glow, a little shiver;
A rosebud and a pair of gloves,
And "Fly not yet," upon the river;
Some jealousy of some one's hair;
Some hopes of dying broken-hearted;
A miniature; a lock of hair;
The usual vows; and then we parted.

"We parted: months and years rolled by,
We met again some summers after;
Our parting was all sob and sigh!
Our meeting was all mirth and laughter!
For in my heart's most secret cell
There had been many other lodgers;
And she was not the ball-room belle,
But only Mistress—something—Rogers!"

Mr. Praed was the son of a wealthy London banker. He entered Parliament as a member for Truro, in 1830, where his political career was marked by his resolute opposition to the Reform Bill. He afterwards sat for Yarmouth, as also Aylesbury. In 1835, he held, for a short time, the office of Secretary to the Board of Control. His poetical pieces were contributed to periodicals, and were first collected by an American publisher, and issued in the year 1864. When Praed died, in 1839, at the early age of thirty-eight, a lament arose from a large circle of admiring friends that he had written so little.

DR. MAGINN AND MR. BLACKWOOD.

20.—It has been remarked of WILLIAM MAGINN, that—"whilst being learned amongst the learned, witty amongst the witty, and gentle and unassuming as a child among men of less ability," yet his life affords a melancholy instance of genius and talent impeded and crippled by the want of a little ordinary prudence and circumspection of conduct—he being utterly incompetent to the husbanding and turning to proper account his inestimable gifts. He was born at Cork in the year 1793. Under the careful tuition of his father he made such rapid progress that he was enabled to enter Trinity College, Dublin, when only ten years of age! Gifted with a strong and imaginative fancy, and great classical learning, he made literature his profession, and became one of the most fertile and versatile writers of modern times. He early took to periodical literature; and under a feigned name contributed various papers to *Blackwood's Magazine*; and this periodical owed much of its wit, eloquence, and learning to Dr. Maginn's pen. The following characteristic anecdote is related by Dr. Moir, of Maginn's first meeting with Mr. Blackwood:—

"Maginn had already contributed to the *Magazine* several incisive papers, which had excited considerable notice in the literary world; but the intercourse between him and his publisher had as yet been wholly by correspondence. Determined to have an interview with Mr. Blackwood, Maginn set out for Edinburgh, and presenting himself in the shop in Princes Street, the following conversation took place. (But to give a zest to the story, it must be observed that Mr. Blackwood had received numerous furious communications, more especially from Ireland, demanding the name of the writer of the obnoxious articles, and he now believed that this was a visit from one of them to obtain redress in *propria persona*.)

"'You are Mr. Blackwood, I presume?'—'I am.' 'I have rather an unpleasant business, then, with you regarding some things which appeared in your magazine. They are so and so' (mentioning them)—'would you be so good as to give me the name of the author?'—'That requires consideration, and I must first be satisfied that'

"'Your correspondent resides in Cork, doesn't he? You need not make any mystery about that.'—'I decline at present giving any information on that head, before I know more of this business—of your purpose—and who you are.'

"'You are very shy, sir. I thought you corresponded with Mr. Scott of Cork' (the assumed name which he had used).—'I beg to decline giving any information on that subject.'

"'If you don't know him, then, perhaps you could know your own handwriting' (drawing forth a bundle of letters from his pocket).—'You need not deny your correspondence with that gentleman—I am that gentleman.'

Dr. Maginn also contributed voluminously to *Fraser's Magazine*, and in addition he wrote some much and for so great a variety of works, that a mere enumeration would be tedious. In the latter years of his life he was involved in serious pecuniary difficulties, arising from his indiscriminate good-nature to others, and he repeatedly became the inmate of a debtor's goal; and in the spring of 1842 the misery and depression he had undergone terminated in a rapid decline. Returning from London to Walton-on-Thames his disease gradually gained strength, and in the month of August death kindly relieved him from his trials and sufferings—his frame having completely wasted to a shadow.

THE AUTHOR OF "THE SEASONS."

27.—JAMES THOMSON, the author of "*The Seasons*," was born at Ednam, in Roxburghshire, in 1700—his father being at that time minister of the parish. The gift of poetry came early to Thomson, but probably the scenes of agricultural life which in this beautiful district surrounded him in his childhood, as well as those of the pastoral parish of Southdean, to which his father afterwards removed, had some influence in developing his poetical fancies. The following is a brief retrospect of the poet's life and writings:—

After passing through the borough school at Jedburgh, Thomson, at the age of eighteen, went to Edinburgh, with the view of preparing himself for the church; but, after remaining several years at the university, he is said to have abandoned his intention as to the ministry in consequence of a censure passed upon one of his exercises by a theological professor. His father dying, the young poet, with his poem of "*Winter*" in his pocket, and hopeful of obtaining literary employment, started for London, as many others have done before and since, to "seek his fortune," and fortunately he had one friend in the great metropolis, David Mallet,* who materially assisted him, and, by so doing, did greater service to literature than by his own writings. Thomson now offered his "*Winter*" to a bookseller, and, being hard pressed for money, not having enough wherewith to buy himself a pair of shoes, of which he was sadly in need, congratulated himself on receiving for it the modest sum of three guineas. It was published in 1726; and, after some notice in literary circles, became rapidly popular. His "*Summer*" appeared in 1727, and "*Spring*" in the year following. "*Autumn*" was added in 1730, and the four poems were then printed together under their common title of "*The Seasons*." In the year 1731 Thomson was chosen as travelling companion to Mr. Talbot, and during the three years over which the engagement extended he visited nearly all the courts of Europe. On his return, the father of his pupil, Lord Chancellor Talbot, nominated him secretary of briefs in his court, which was almost a sinecure. His patron's death soon afterwards deprived him of this office, and he was again constrained to write for the stage. It is said that the succeeding Chancellor bestowed the appointment Thomson held on another person, as from characteristic indolence he had not solicited a continuance of the office. The Prince of Wales now bestowed upon Thomson a small pension, which raised him just above penury; and in 1745 he was made Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands by his friend Lord Lyttleton, at a salary of three hundred a year, and the duties of which he was allowed to perform by deputy. This raised him to a position of comparative affluence, and he then took a cottage at Kew, near Richmond. Here he fully entered into the enjoyment of social pleasures and lettered ease, whilst retirement and nature became to him mind and more his passion every day. He wrote to a friend:—"I have enlarged my rural domain;



ARBOUR IN THOMSON'S GARDEN.

the two fields next to me, from the first of which I have walked—no, no, *poet* in—about as much as my garden consisted of before, so that the walk runs round the hedges, where you may figure me walking any time of the day, and sometimes at night." It was here that he wrote his beautiful poem, "*The Castle of Indolence*," which was printed in 1748. This was his last literary work, for he died the same year from the effects of a cold caught whilst sailing up the Thames.

* DAVID MALLET was a Scotch poet, whose memory, it has been remarked, is now only kept in remembrance as one of the fossils of literary history. In 1740 he published a "*Life of Lord Bacon*," which is a very insignificant work, and totally unworthy of the subject. The Duchess of Marlborough left Mallet a legacy of one thousand pounds to write the life of her husband; on which it was observed, that as Mallet had forgotten that Bacon was a philosopher, so he would probably omit to notice Marlborough as a general; of this life, however, he never wrote a line! Mallet's poetical works were collected and published by himself in 1765.