

# THE GARLAND.

"TO RAISE THE GENIUS AND TO MEND THE HEART."

VOL. I.

HAMILTON, SATURDAY, NOV. 24, 1832.

NO. 6.

## POPULAR TALES.

### THE WAGGONER.

CONTINUED.

He was lying one afternoon in the darkness and solitude to which he was now painfully accustomed, watching the dull flicker of the lamp, and the crackling of the embers of the fire. He was too weak to be able to raise himself from his bed. His thoughts were vainly pondering for the thousandth time, over the unaccountable situation in which he was placed. He could not conceive, any more than at the moment of his seizure, what were the reasons of it; he was a poor, ignorant, unoffending man, who had never injured or quarrelled with any one; and what, then, could be the meaning of what had been done to him? Was it true, or only a recollection of delirium, that he had heard a female declare her belief that he intended to murder her? If it were true, how could she come to form such a preposterous opinion? If it were false, what in the name of Heaven, could be the aim and scope of all this plotting? He tried to think over every action of his life for years past: whether he had incurred the ill-will of any of his companions or acquaintances who to be revenged on him had taken these means of ruining him, by persuading a lady that he had threatened her life—But again if that were so, why was he not lawfully arrested, examined openly in a court of justice and at once acquitted or convicted? What could the person, or persons in whose custody he was want, to do with him, or require him to do? What concern had they with his family and mode of life? If his death were their object, why was he still living, after they had so many opportunities of easily and secretly killing him? All these conflicting conjectures served only to bring on him a deeper doubt and darkness? and in the extremity of his misery, he closed his eyes, and fervently besought the protection of Providence. While thus piously engaged, the door of his prison was opened, and the old woman who attended him entered. She did not speak, as indeed she rarely did, but proceeded to tie the bandage over his eyes, by which he knew that he was going to receive a visit from his tormentors; and sure enough in a few moments, he heard some one step into the room, bringing with him a chair, on which he sat down close beside Fowler.

"William Fowler, how are you?" enquired the voice, whose tones were now fearfully familiar. "Weaker than yesterday," was the reply in a feeble voice; "and well it may be? Your cruelty is breaking my heart as well as

my health. May God forgive you; for if I die of this illness, I am a murdered man!"

"Fowler—Fowler," continued the person beside him, with some faltering of manner; "I have anxiously striven to find means of explaining all that has befallen you, and even setting you at liberty; but I cannot. I am, God knows, more sorry than otherwise, that ever I undertook what has been done;—but having gone thus far—" "Ha!" gasped Fowler in a fierce but feeble under-tone of exultation, "the devil is deep! He has you!"

"Well," proceeded the speaker, sternly; "be that as it may, I cannot now stop, or undo what has been done. It would be both ruin and death to me; for of course you would, immediately on getting your liberty, tell all;" "Ay!" gasped Fowler, unable to control himself, or dissemble.

"Well, then, now you have at once put it out of my power to free you, even were I so disposed. I cannot jeopardise my life to save yours. Fowler, you are a stubborn, and, had you the means, a revengeful man: you will therefore be well looked after. I must be short; for I thought I should have found you subdued into reason, but I am disappointed. This is, perhaps, the last time you will ever hear me speak to you; listen, therefore. To-night, whether you be well or ill, you will be removed from this place, by men fully armed, and set out on a journey to foreign parts.—You will be taken to America; and fifty pounds will be put into your hands the moment you land. A month afterwards you will receive five pounds; and then that sum will be paid you regularly every month. You are to live in America, mark me, for at least twelve years, possibly for the remainder of your life; and sure means are taken to prevent you ever attempting to send word to England, or escaping thither yourself. You will certainly not live one hour after you shall have set sail from America. I tell you this, William Fowler, not more solemnly than truly, that you may be neither rash nor foolish. Only continue in America, and you shall be both a rich and happy man. There are deep and dreadful reasons for all this, many of which you must not at present be made acquainted with. The lady whom ——" On hearing these last two words, William Fowler attempted to spit in the face of the speaker, making use of a ghastly imprecation.

"Well," continued the visitor, calmly, "I grieve to see your temper so fierce, as you are yourself the only one whom you can hurt. Farewell, William Fowler; farewell!"