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CONTENTS.

The Rising Tide.—Another of Mrs. Ellis' delightful Tales commenced.

National Temperance Society.—An interesting account of last anniversary meeting, held in Exeter Hall, London.

The Drunkard's Wife.—An eloquent appeal by the learned Blacksmith.

Art of Healing without Alcohol—Earnestly recommended to such physicians as prescribe alcoholic drinks to their patients, and thereby sometimes cause them to experience that the remedy is worse than the disease.

Father Mathew in Waterford.—Shewing no abatement of temperance zeal in Ireland.

PROGRESS.—Sixth anniversary of the Toronto Reformation Society.—We notice by this interesting report with extreme satisfaction, that the Rev. Dr. Burns an influential Divine of the Free Church of Scotland, now of Toronto, gave his adhesion to the total abstinence cause, immediately on his arrival in that city. This cannot fail to have a good influence in Scotland.

Miscellaneous Items.

POETRY.—*There is joy in a thousand hearts.*
The Rumseller.

EDITORIAL.—Various articles.

EDUCATION.—*Rollo Philosophy.*
Mary Lundie Duncan.

AGRICULTURE.—*Advantage of deep Cultivation.*
News, Money List, Price Current, &c.

THE RISING TIDE.

BY MRS. ELLIS.

The stranger who visited the residence of Mrs. Falkland on the western coast of England, could not fail to be struck with the picture of peace and comfort which her home presented. She was a widow lady; but her solitude was cheered by the society of a son and daughter, whose characters were now sufficiently matured to render them in all respects companions to their mother.

It was on one of the loveliest evenings of September, that Mrs. Falkland and her daughter, in company with an elderly gentleman, who had once been a friend of her husband's, sat upon a balcony which ran along the western part of her house, commanding the view of a wide expanse of ocean, and of the radiant sky, where the sun was just sinking below the horizon; while slanting rays of yellow light glanced over the shallow bay, where the receding tide had left the sands so smooth and wet, that they reflected as in a mirror, the shadows of some fishermen who were gathering up their baskets, and preparing to return to their homes in the village.

The residence of Mrs. Falkland was one of a number of little villas, or genteel cottages, with their ornamental gardens, scattered over the woody hills that sloped down to the beach, where a line of rocks, in some parts majestically high, and in others accessible to the foot-passenger, formed a barrier against the waves, which, when the tide was high, dashed up amongst the many little bays and hollows of the shore.

The village to which the fishermen were returning, and which gave its name to many distant groups of houses, lay in a narrow dell, through which an impetuous little river forced its way along a bed of rocks into the sea; and though the sands on either side

of the stream looked as safe and solid as the earth itself, they were said to be uncertain and dangerous to cross in the vicinity of this stream. Still it was a thing of such frequent occurrence for horses and travellers on foot to pass that way, that no one thought much about the danger; and especially as the road along the beach was so much nearer than any other from the village to the neighbouring market town. The chief difficulty arose from some of the rocks jutting so far out into the sea, that all passengers were obliged to pay attention to the state of the tide, or the probability was, that even while plenty of space remained within the bay, they might find themselves hemmed in at these points by the waves having reached the rocks.

The country people, however, knew these dangers well, and strangers were under less temptation to seek the nearest way to the town; so that all the record of accidents on this spot, were a few stories of by-gone days, kept up by the fishermen and old women of the village.

"You must be happy in such a home as this," observed the gentleman, who looked with Mrs. Falkland and her daughter upon the scene above described.

"We are indeed happy," replied the daughter. "At least, we would not exchange our home for a palace." And she went on expatiating upon the many enjoyments the scenery and neighbourhood afforded; while her mother, observing that the air was growing cold, took the opportunity of withdrawing from the balcony.

"We who live in the midst of the noise and the tumult of cities," resumed the visiter, "may almost be allowed to envy you the repose of a life like this—so free from anxiety, so tranquil, and so calm."

"And yet," said Miss Falkland, "we have our cares"

"Impossible! Julia. What can they be?"

"As a friend of my father's, I need scarcely scruple to speak to you of anything connected with the happiness of our family. You know my brother?"

"Yes; and a finer youth I never saw, than George Falkland, when he was last in town."

"He is, indeed, the kindest of sons, the best of brothers. But even he may have his faults."

"The faults of youth—mere thoughtless follies. You must not make too much of them. He will grow wiser with advancing years."

"I wish it may be so. But at present he seems so much fonder of gay company than of his quiet home, that my mother seldom knows a happy day. Not that he is addicted to any particular vice, at least that we know of; but wherever he goes, he has a habit of staying out late at night, which throws my mother into such a state of nervous anxiety that her health is seriously injured; while he, on the other hand, is so annoyed by what he calls her unreasonable solicitude, that he will not deny himself a single hour of convivial enjoyment for the sake of her peace of mind. Now it is such troubles as these, common and trifling as they may appear to others, which destroy the comfort of our otherwise happy home; and it seems the more to be regretted, that they should exist where there is so much affection and good feeling on both sides, and nothing else to mar our happiness."

"Youth and age," replied the visiter, "are apt to differ on such points; and perhaps both are capable of making sufficient allowance for the feelings which operate with the other. Yet, so long as your brother visits only in respectable families, and does not attach himself to any companion of bad principles, I should feel great hope of his ultimate recovery from these errors."

"But there is the root of our anxiety," said Miss Falkland, with increased earnestness. "My brother, I am sorry to say, does attach himself, by a very close intimacy, to a young man of the worst principles—a Ralph Kennedy, the only son of a worthy old man in this village, whose gray hairs may truly be said to be