

## THE UNKNOWN GRAVE.

Man comes into the world like morning mushrooms—soon thrusting up their heads into the air, and conversing with their kindred of the same production, and as soon they turn into dust and forgetfulness.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Who sleeps below? who sleeps below?—

It is a question idle all!—

Ask of the breezes as they blow,  
Say, do they heed, or hear thy call?  
They murmur in the trees around,  
And mock thy voice, an empty sound!

A hundred summer suns have shower'd  
Their fostering warmth, and radiance bright;  
A hundred winter storms have lower'd  
With piercing floods, and hues of night,  
Since first this remnant of his race  
Did tenant his lone dwelling-place.

Say, did he come from East—from West?  
From Southern climes, or where the Pole,  
With frosty sceptre, doth arrest  
The howling billows as they roll?  
Within what realm of peace or strife  
Did he first draw the breath of life?

Was he of high or low degree?  
Did grandeur smile upon his lot?  
Or, born to dark obscurity,  
Dwelt he within some lonely cot,  
And, from his youth to labour wed,  
From toil-strung limbs wrung daily bread?

Say, died he ripe and full of years,  
Bowed down, and bent by hoary old,  
When sound was silence to his ears,  
And the dim eye-ball sight withheld—  
Like a ripe apple falling down,  
Unshaken, 'mid the orchard brown;

When all the friends that bless'd his prime  
Were warr'd like a morning dream—  
Pluck'd one by one by spareless Time,  
And scatter'd in oblivion's stream—  
Passing away all silently,  
Like snow-flakes melting in the sea;

Or, 'mid the summer of his years,  
When round him throng'd his children young,  
When bright eyes gush'd with burning tears,  
And anguish dwelt on every tongue—  
Was he cut off, and left behind  
A widow'd wife, scarce half resign'd?

Or, 'mid the sunshine of his spring,  
Came the swift bolt that dash'd him down—  
When she, his chosen, blossoming  
In beauty, deem'd him all her own,  
And forward look'd to happier years  
Than ever bless'd their vale of tears?

Perhaps he perish'd for the faith—  
One of that persecuted band,  
Who suffer'd tortures, bonds, and death,  
To free from mental thrall the land,  
And, toiling for the Martyr's fame,  
Espoused his fate, nor found a name!

Say, was he one to science blind,  
A groper in earth's dungeon dark?—  
Or one, whose bold aspiring mind  
Did, in the fair creation, mark

The Maker's hand, and kept his soul  
Free from this grovelling world's controul?

Hush, wild surmise!—'tis vain—'tis vain—  
The Summer flowers in beauty blow,  
And sighs the wind, and floods the rain,  
O'er some old bones that rot below;  
No other record can we trace,  
Of fame or fortune, rank or race!

Then, what is life, when thus we see  
No trace remains of life's career—  
Mortal! whoe'er thou art, for thee  
A moral lesson gloweth here;  
Put'st thou in aught of earth thy trust?  
'Tis doom'd that dust shall mix with dust.

What doth it matter then, if thus,  
Without a stone, without a name,  
To impotently herald us,  
We float not on the breath of fame;  
But, like the dew-drop from the flower,  
Pass, after glittering for an hour.

Since soul decoys not—freed from earth,  
And earthly coils, it bursts away—  
Receiving a celestial birth,  
And spurning off its bonds of clay,  
It soars, and seeks another sphere,  
And blooms through Heaven's eternal year.

Do good—shun evil—live not thou  
As if at death thy being died;  
Nor Error's syren voice allow  
To draw thy steps from truth aside;  
Look to thy journey's end—the grave!  
And trust in Him whose arm can save.

## THE MOST ENTERTAINING OF BOOKS.

Two gentlemen of acknowledged taste, when on a visit to a gentleman of rank, were each desired to write a list of the ten most interesting works they had ever read. One work found its way into every list—this was Gil Blas.

Had Dr. Johnson been present, and been previously heard on the subject, the preference would probably have been given to Don Quixote. The Doctor used to say, that there were few books of which one ever could possibly arrive at the last page; and that there was never any thing written by mere man that was wished longer by its readers, excepting Don Quixote, Robinson Crusoe, and the Pilgrim's Progress. After Homer's Iliad, he said, the work of Cervantes was the greatest in the world as a book of entertainment.

Shakspeare himself has, until within the last half century, been worshipped only at home; while translators and engravers live by the hero of La Mancha in every nation; and the walls of the miserable inns and the cottages, all over England, France and Germany, are adorned with the exploits of Don Quixote.

This practice is not confined to European towns; as an instance of taste in this respect may be found in the good city of Montreal—where the walls of Mr. Swords' handsome dining-room are ornamented with the most striking incidents that befel the Knight of La Mancha and his Squire in their whimsical and gallant expedition.

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