

THE RAID OF ROXBURGH.

It is an old saying, as to the origin of which a good deal of controversy has taken place among quotation hunters, that him whom Jupiter wishes to destroy, he first deprives of reason; and, doubtless, it is a noble maxim, containing much knowledge of mankind, and indicating, in a few words of startling import, that imprudence is the author of the greater part of our misfortunes. The quotation, however, carries more than this, for it implies that the imprudence which proves prejudicial to our interests and happiness in this world, results from the attempted gratification of some ungovernable passion, which blinds us to the view of what is good for us, and drives us on through the dark valley of vice, until we are destroyed in the gulf of misery which lies yawning at its termination. This moral is often exhibited by the actions of the deluded votaries of sin; and one memorable instance we are now to submit to our readers, where the effects of evil passions not only proved destructive to an individual, but injurious to the community over which he enjoyed a jurisdiction.

In the town of Roxburgh there lived, a long time ago, a young man of the name of George Belford, by trade a cattle dealer, but who sometimes joined to that more extensive business, the occupation of killing the animals he could not sell, and retailing their carcasses in a shop in the town, which, in consequence of not being a freeman, he kept under the name of another person. Belford, though apparently a very plain and simple man, was ambitious of being known only as pursuing the more respectable part of the craft of procuring food for his fellow-men—a pride he derived from his ancestors, who were Yorkshire graziers, and plumed themselves on being never condescending, except for their own private use, to invert the nature of their business, by killing in place of rearing.

Belford, tho' possessed of this little failing of pride, was a good honest fellow—as big as a giant, as simple as a child, and, if a pair of roddy cheeks are of any importance to a eauty, as fair as the fisherman whom she apphloved, but who would not return the love of the little brown poetess. He was one of those people who generally disappear in a country in the progress of the art in getting

rich—a person who lived more for others than himself; reversing the original law of self-love, and endeavouring to do as much to his friends and his acquaintances as was in his power; while his broad good-humoured cheeks and ready laugh carried on a continual warfare against their melancholy, and plainly told that he himself did not know what the long, liquid, lugubrious word was meant to convey. The good nature he disseminated amongst all his acquaintances, was not so much a consequence of wit or humour—for he was too blunt and simple to have much of either—as of his unchangeable equability of temper—his openness, candour, and honesty—his perfect contentedness, and readiness to contribute to whatever might conduce to the happiness of those around him.

Such people as George Belford may truly be said to be benefactors of mankind. Ever happy themselves, they are the cause of much of that happiness that is in others.—The laugh of pure good-nature, disregarding the mere impulses of artificial humour, forces its way to the heart of lank melancholy, and makes the hypocondriac gather up his leathery cheeks into a reluctant smile. To few are awarded the blessings of simplicity and good-nature to the extent enjoyed by Belford; for, indeed, it must be admitted that it is not often that, amidst the depraving effects of worldly interests and seductions, the heart of a man is kept pure enough to be pleased at all times with himself and his own actions. But, in proportion as these children of nature are scarce, they are, by all good men, the more prized; and Belford was, accordingly, sought after by both young and old—the one to enjoy his laugh, from youthful sympathy, and the other to court an oblivion of cares amidst the effusions of a harmless merriment.

Not very distant from the place where Belford carried on his business, there lived an old widow woman of the name of Pringle, who had a daughter called Lucy, an interesting girl of about eighteen years of age. To this young woman great court was paid by the young men of the town, in consequence of her amiable character and engaging appearance. The dutiful and kind attentions