

THE
ODD FELLOWS' RECORD;

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE,

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF THE INDEPENDENT
ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS.

VOL. I.

MONTREAL, MARCH, 1846.

No. III.

(For the Odd Fellows' Record.)

RECOLLECTIONS OF A CONVICT.*
BY "Y-LE."

CHAP. II.—PARENTAL AND INCIDENTAL.

"A weeping mother!" What recollections are called up with these words. Now, while I write, an involuntary tear forces me to pause. While I do so, I cannot help thinking that there is a wide difference between a "weeping woman," and a "woman in tears." The one is real, the other fictitious. Anger, malice, spleen, envy, or any other of such evil emotions, may cause a woman to shed tears, but this cannot be called *weeping*. It is recorded in sacred writ that "Jesus wept." Will any one suppose that the Apostle states this merely because our Saviour shed tears? Oh, no, he who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs," had great cause to weep. Let us think of this. But to return.

When we entered our small, cold-looking comfortless dwelling, a scene sad enough was exhibited. There sat my poor mother surrounded by her sorrowful young family. No stir was made when we approached them; and, young as I was, I could see that had my mother endeavoured to rise, she must have fallen in a faint in the attempt. There she sat, the youngest on her knees, its little tiny hand moving playfully backwards and forwards across its mother's woe-stricken face. Oh, what a heaving was in the breast to which my little brother was pressed! What a load of sorrow on that heart! If I may use the expression, it was like the inward commotion of a volcano previous to the belching forth of its burning lava. There was deep and severe internal suffering, as if the very heart would burst; and when a little relief was yielded by a flow of tears, she turned her face towards my penitent father, and in accents of tender severity mildly exclaimed, "Oh, William, William, ye're unco, unco cruel!"

There is little use in dwelling on the explanations which followed. I may merely state, from that night forward, my father was an altered man. There was no more sorrow or suffering on his account, and so long as he lived, ours was the happiest family in the neighbourhood. Ultimately we became, instead of re-

ipients, capable of administering healing balm to many a wounded heart.

Two years elapsed, as happy as ever were spent during the bud of boyhood. At the end of this time a strong and unaccountable fancy took possession of my mind—a growing desire to visit the sea-shore. I had been often told of the mighty power and the vastness of the waters of the sea, but I had never seen it, and every additional particular which I learned concerning the wonders of the ocean, only rendered the desire more intense. I had, on the occasion alluded to, got a glimpse of a few vessels at the Broomielaw of Glasgow, but I was told that they were not to be compared to what could be seen at Greenock. I knew that my father had a relation in Rothsay, and that both Rothsay and Greenock were "down the water": this, however, was the maximum of knowledge which I then possessed regarding the situation of both places. For weeks the desire was nursed, till at last I could withstand the temptation no longer, and resolved that my wish should be gratified, and this, too, without the consent of my parents. This was my first *actual* transgression. To carry my purpose into execution money was necessary, and the devil having been allowed a lodgement in my heart, beat about so keenly that he soon possessed himself of my whole mind; and, as money was necessary, he argued that as I had none, nor any means of procuring it honestly, the only alternative would be to *borrow* it from the family repository. This point being settled to the satisfaction of myself and the Wicked One, I took the first opportunity of my mother's absence, stole the money, and, thus provided, I took my passage to Greenock in a steamboat from a place known to "Paisley bodies" as the "water neb."

In my anxiety to carry this plan into operation, I never once thought of the agony such a step would cause my parents, or of the fearful crime I had committed. I only thought of gratifying a curiosity, innocent in itself, but made altogether reprehensible by the means used to gratify it. Nevertheless, after the steamer was set in motion, I could not help running first to one side, then to the other, in order to watch the boiling of the water caused by the splashing of the paddle-wheels. Every thing I saw was new to me; and in my search after the power which propelled the vessel, I at last alighted on the man at the helm, and set him down as being the party who compelled the boat to

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