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POETRY.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY IN INDIA.

BY BISHOP HEBER.

From Britain's green and flowery vale
To India's bright and burning soil,
Gently transplanted, bathed in dew,
A lily of the valley grew;

The sun beheld it in the shade,
Vexing its pure and lowly head,
From glare of day retiring soon,
Within its leaves a shelter seek;

The cup of white, the leaf of green,
In spite of effort, would be seen;
And after all seclusion did,
Fragrance and grace could not be hid.

Death wafted on the eastern blast—
Pass'd by—and kiss'd it as he pass'd;
It humbly bow'd its drooping head,
And faded on its foreign bed.

But though to every passer by
It withered seemed, it could not die;
A few days gone, and those who sought
The blighted flower found it not.

For there came one who lov'd the dew,
And took it home, to deck his bow,
Bore it away beyond the skies,
To blossom in his paradise.

ELLEN.

BY MISS MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

A very small gift may sometimes cause great pleasure. I have just received a present which has delighted me more than any thing ever bestowed on me by friends or fortune. It is—but my readers shall guess what it is, and, that they may be enabled to do so, I must tell them a story.

Charlotte and Ellen Page were the twin daughters of the rector of N., a small town in Dorsetshire. They were his only children, having lost their mother shortly after their birth; and as their father was highly accomplished, and possessed a good church preferment, with a considerable private fortune, they were reared and educated in the most liberal and expensive style. Whilst mere infants they had been uncommonly beautiful, and as remarkably like as occasionally happens with twin sisters, distinguished only by some ornament of dress. Their very nurse, as she used to boast, could hardly tell her pretty "couplets" apart, so exactly alike were the soft blue eyes, the rosy cheeks, the cherry lips, and the curly light hair. Change the turquoise necklace, for the coral, and nurse herself would not know Charlotte from Ellen. This pretty puzzle, this inconvenience, of which manna and aunts, and grand-mamas love to complain, did not last long. Lither from a concealed fall, or from original delicacy of habit, the little Ellen faded and drooped almost into deformity. There was no visible defect in her shape, except a slight and almost imperceptible lameness when in quick motion; but there was the marked and peculiar look in the features, the languor and debility, and above all, the distressing consciousness attendant upon imperfect formation; and, at the age of twenty years, the contrast between the sisters was even more striking than the likeness had been at two.

Charlotte was a fine, blooming, noble-looking girl, rather above the middle height; her eyes and complexion sparkled and glowed with life and health; her rosy lips seemed made for smiles, and her glossy brown hair played in natural ringlets round her diamond face. Her manner was a happy mixture of the playful and the gentle; frank, innocent, and fearless, she relied with a sweet confidence on every body's kindness, was ready to be pleased, and secure of pleasing. Her artlessness and naivete had great success in society, especially as they were united with the most perfect good breeding, and considerable quickness and talent. Her musical powers were of the most delightful kind; she sang exquisitely, joining to great taste and science, a life, and buoyancy, quite unusual in that artificial personage, a young lady. Her clear and ringing notes had the effect of the milk-maid's song, as if a mere ebullition of animal

spirits; there was no resisting the contagion of Charlotte's glee. She was a general favorite at home—the apple of her father's eye, the pride and ornament of his house, and the delight and comfort of his life. The two children had been so much alike, and born so nearly together, that the precedence in age had never been definitely settled; but that point seemed very early to decide itself. Unintentionally as it were, Charlotte took the lead, gave invitations, received visitors, sat at the head of the table, became, in fact, and in name, Miss Page, while her sister continued Miss Ellen.

Poor Ellen! she was short, and thin, and sickly, and pale, with no personal charm but the tender expression of her blue eyes, and the timid sweetness of her countenance. The resemblance to her sister had vanished altogether, except when very rarely some strong emotion of pleasure, a word of praise, or a look of kindness from her father, would bring a smile and a blush at once into her face, and lighten it up like a sunbeam. Then for a moment, she was like Charlotte, and even prettier—there was so much of mind, of soul, in the transitory beauty. In manner she was unchangeably gentle, and distressingly shy—shy even to awkwardness. Shame and fear clung to her like her shadow. In company she could neither sing, or play, nor speak, without trembling, especially when her father was present. Her awe of him was inexorable. Mr Page was a man of considerable talent and acquirement, of polished and elegant manners, and great conversational power—quick, ready, and sarcastic. He never condescended to scold; but there was something very formidable in the keen glance, and cutting jest, to which poor Ellen's want of presence of mind frequently exposed her—something from which she shrank into the very earth. He was a good man and a kind father—at least he meant to be so—attentive to health and comfort, strictly impartial in favors and presents, in pocket money and amusements, making no difference between the twins, except that which he could not help, the difference in his love. But to an apprehensive temper and an affectionate heart, that was every thing; and while Charlotte flourished and blossomed like a rose in the sunshine, Ellen sickened and withered like the same plant in the shade.

Mr Page lost much enjoyment by this unfortunate partiality; for he had taste enough to have particularly valued the high endowments which formed the delight of the few friends to whom his daughter was intimately known. To them not only her varied and accurate acquirements, but her singular richness of mind, her grace and propriety of expression, and fertility of idea, joined to the most perfect ignorance of her own superiority, endered her an object of as much admiration as interest. In poetry, especially, her justness of taste and quickness of feeling were almost unrivalled. She was no poet herself, never, I believe, even ventured to compose a sonnet; and her enjoyment of high literature was certainly the keener for that wise abstinence from a vain competition. Her admiration was really worth having. The tears would come into her eyes, the book would fall from her hand, and she would sit lost in ecstasy over some noble passage, until praise, worthy of the theme, would burst in unconscious eloquence from her lips.

But the real charm of Ellen Page lay in the softness of her heart and the generosity of her character; no man being was ever so free from selfishness, in all its various and clinging forms. She literally forgot herself in her pure and ardent sympathy with all whom she loved, or all to whom she could be useful.—There were no limits to her indulgence, no bounds to her candour. Shy and timid as she was, she forgot her fears to plead for the innocent, or the penitent, or even the guilty.—She was the excuser-general of the neighborhood, turned every speech and action the sunny side without, and often in her good-natured sweetness hit upon the real principle of action, when the cunning and the worldly-wise, and

the cynical, and such as only look for bad motives, had failed. She had, too, that rare quality, a genuine sympathy; not only with the sorrowful—there is a pride in that feeling, a superiority; we have all a plenty of that—but with the happy. She could smile with those who smiled, as well as weep with those who wept, and rejoice in a success to which she had not contributed, protected from every touch of envy, no less by her noble spirit than by her pure humility; she never thought of herself.

So constituted, it may be imagined that she was, to all who really knew her, an object of intense admiration and love. Servants, children, poor people, all adored Miss Ellen. She had other friends in her own rank of life, who had found her out—many; but her chief friend, her principal admirer, she who loved her with the most entire affection, and looked up to her with the most devoted respect, was her sister. Never was the strong and lively tie of twin-sisterhood more closely knit than in these two charming young women. Ellen looked in her favored sister with a pure and unjealous delight, that made its own happiness, a spirit of candor and of justice that never permitted her to cast a shade of blame on the sweet object of her father's partiality; she never indeed, blamed him; it seemed to her so natural that every one should prefer her sister, Charlotte, on the other hand, used all her inheritance for Ellen, protected and defended her, and was half tempted to murmur at an affection which she would have valued more if shared equally with that dear friend. Thus they lived in peace and harmony; Charlotte's bold temper and higher spirits leading and guiding in all common points, whilst on the more important she yielded implicitly to Ellen's judgment. But when they had reached their twenty-first year, a great evil threatened one of the sisters, arising—strange to say—from the other's happiness. Charlotte, the reigning belle of an extensive and affluent neighborhood, had had almost as many suitors as Penelope; but light-hearted, happy at home, busy and gay, she had taken no thought of love, and she always struck me as a very likely subject for an old maid; yet her time came at last. A young man, the very reverse of herself, pale, thoughtful, gentleman like, and melancholy, wooed and won our fair Euphrosyne. He was the second son of a noble house, and bred to the church; and it was agreed between them the fathers, that as soon as he should be ordained—for he still wanted some months of the necessary age—and settled in a family living held for him by a friend, the young couple should be married.

In the mean while Mr. Page, who had recently succeeded to some property in Ireland, found it necessary to go thither for a short time; and unwilling to take his daughters with him, as his estate lay in the disturbed districts, he indulged us with their company, during his absence. They came to us in the bustling spring-time, on the very same day with the nightingale; the country was new to them, and they were delighted with the scenery and with our cottage life. We, on our part, were enchanted with our young guests. Charlotte was certainly the most amiable of enamoured dancels, for love with her was but a more sparkling and smiling form of happiness; all that there was of care and fear in this attachment fell to Ellen's lot; but even she, though sighing at the thought of parting, could not be very miserable whilst her sister was so happy.

A few days after their arrival, we happened to dine with our accomplished neighbours, Colonel Falkner and his sister. Our young friends, of course, accompanied us; and a similarity of age, of liveliness, and of musical talent, speedily recommended Charlotte and Miss Falkner to each other. They became immediately intimate, and were soon almost inseparable. Ellen at first hung back.

"The house was too gay, too full of shifting company, of titles, and of strange faces. Miss Falkner was very kind; but she took too much notice of her, introduced her to lords and ladies, talked of her drawings, and

pressed her to joining; she would rather, if I pleased, stay with me, and walk in the copse, or sit in the arbour, and one might read Spenser while the other worked—that would be best of all.—Might she stay?"

"Oh, surely! but Colonel Falkner's Ellen, I thought you would have liked him?"

"Yes?"

"That yes sounds exceedingly like no,"

"Why, is he not almost too clever, too elegant, too grand a man! Too mannered, as it were? Too much like what one fancies of a prince—too high and too condescending?"

"These are strange faults," continued she, laughing—"and it is a curious injustice that I should dislike a man merely because he is so graceful, that he makes me feel doubly awkward so tall, that I am in his presence a conscious dwarf—so alive and eloquent his conversation, that I feel more than ever puzzled and unready. But so it is. To say the truth, I am more afraid of him than of any human being in the world, except one. I may stay with you—may I not; and read of 'The Annals of Brunismark'—that prettiest scene where her old nurse soothes her to sleep? I may stay."

And for two or three mornings she did stay with me; but Charlotte's influence and Miss Falkner's kindness speedily drew her to Holygrove, at first shyly and reluctantly, yet soon with an evident though quiet enjoyment; and we were that our young visitors could gain nothing but good in such society, were pleased that they should so vary the humble home-scene.

Colonel Falkner was a man in the very prime of life, of that happy age which unites the vigor and spirit of youth with the firmness and grace of man-hood. The heir of a large fortune, he had served in the peninsular war, fought in Spain and France, and, quitting the army at the peace, had loitered about Germany, and Italy, and Greece, and only returned on the death of his father, two or three years back, to reside on the family estate, where he had won "golden opinions from all sorts of people." He was, as Ellen truly described him, tall and graceful, and, well-bred rather too much in the mere forms of politeness, in cloaks and bowings, and landings down a stairs; but then he was thoroughly imbued with its finer essence—considerate, attentive, kind in the most comprehensive sense of that comprehensive word. I have certainly known men of deeper learning and more original genius, but never any one whose powers were better adapted to conversation, who could blend more happily the most varied and extensive knowledge with most playful wit and the most interesting and amiable character. Fascinating was the word that seemed to me for him. His conversation was entirely free from trickery and display—the charm was—or seemed to be—perfectly natural: he was an excellent listener; and when he was speaking to any eminent persons—statesmen, artists, or poets, I have sometimes seen a slight hesitation at momentary diffidence. It was, as attractive as it was unexpected. It was this astonishing evidence of fellow-feelings joined to the gentleness of his tone, the sweetness of his smile, and his studious avoidance of all particular notice or attention, that first reconciled Ellen to Colonel Falkner. His sister, too, a charming young woman, as like him as Venus to Sebastian, began to understand the sensitive properties of this shrinking and delicate flower, which, left to itself, repaid their kind neglect by unfolding in a manner that surprised us all. Before the spring had glided into summer Ellen was as much at home at Holygrove as with us; talked and laughed, and played, and sang, as freely as Charlotte. She would, indeed, break off, if visibly listened to either when speaking or singing; but still the ice was broken; that rich, low, mellow voice, untroubled in pathos and sweetness, might be heard every evening, even by the colonel, little more present, not to disturb her by praise or notice, than would be used with her fellow-warbler the nightingale.

[To be concluded in our next.]