

me to make one of an evening party given in celebration of Halloween I attended, mingling in the rites of the evening with the enthusiasm of one of Scotland's most ardent sons and Superstition's firmest votary. All was hilarity, with two lonely exceptions. A maiden something short of forty was an inmate of the house; and as Fate would have it—for nothing else could have drawn him to the place on such an occasion—a certain old Donald who was some ten years across the LINE, chanced to call there,

"Upon that night, when faeries light  
On Cassid's Downies dance."

Decorum required that these two isolated beings should remain in the company, though all were touched with sympathy at the singular embarrassment which they evidently experienced, seated in opposite corners of the room.

"At length one of the young ladies said, laughingly, and giving a meaning wink, 'I'll try a trick for cousin Margaret'" "Good!" rejoined another; "and I'll have uncle Donald over the coals!" "Down went the shovel, over the embers, and on it were placed two plump chestnuts, named after the parties concerned. Presently they gave a simultaneous crack, and both jumped off the shovel in the same direction. Margaret blushed to the eyes; and Donald, perhaps for the first time in his life, cast an ogling look. 'It was to be so'."

"But shall I enter into the details of a week's courtship? The kind looks—the modest advances—the endearing words—may hold. My letter is already nearly full: to be brief, then, last evening they were married!"

## ESSAYS.

"The soft amusement of the vacant mind."

FOR THE CASSETT.

### 'THOUGHTS ON THE COURSE.

The passion for sporting is as deep-rooted as it is ancient. We have not the means before us of giving the particulars of its origin and progress; but, as the design of our present essay is more to speculate upon certain positions, than to detail incontestable facts, we shall not be nice about matters of history. Neither shall we venture upon the very nice question, whether the practice of horse-racing exerts an immoral influence on community; rather leaving that to greater masters of Ethics, and closer observers of manners.

Among the celebrated games of the Grecians and Romans, foot races were favorite feats; and not unfrequently supremacy in one of these races was a sure precedent to greater preferment. When men became more luxurious and consequently less hardy, less patient of fatigue and more cunning in the arts which subserve great physical exertion, the horse race was preferred to the old plodding way of coursing; and this method is so perfectly congenial to the spirit of this species of competition, that it is not likely any other will take its place. The speed may be excelled, but the animation is imitable. The modern invention of rail ways and steam carriages has been substituted for the noble animal to a great extent, but can never rival him in this respect; for compared with the buoyant energy and instinctive ambition of the flying courser, the operations of these vehicles are groveling, and monotonous.

There is something in this practice so nearly allied to second nature, that we find it accompanied with the same enthusiasm whosoever resorted to. The fierce Arab, mounted on his milk-white steed, and tracing a line on the desert—the grave phlegmatic Dutchman, in uninvited conviviality, urging on his untrained favorite, in a region better adapted to swimming than in flying—and the exquisite English sportsman, on his courser that finds no equal, describing the circle on his rich green turf—all evince a similar ardor.—

Those considerations suggest a moral.—Now, what is life but a course, in which every one is ambitious to outstrip his contemporaries? From the king to the peasant, each imagines some goal of wealth, rank or power, at which he resolves to anticipate his neighbor,

When Caled applied to Omar for the master key of his successful career, the sage replied, "young man, it is of little use to form plans of life." But we are at liberty to dissent from his opinion. Ten distinguished characters have attained to greatness by persevering diligence, where one has owed his eminence to mere chance, and he who has early marked out his *line* of life has generally succeeded best. There should, however, be a careful exercise of judgment in selecting the *ground*. The statesman and the soldier, the hero of rare adventures, win the most renown, but the private walks of life are beset with fewest thorns, and lead through least uncertainty. A skillful sportsman will chose the plainest *turf*. Then, much depends on the *starting*. If we stop to witness the outset of our fellow, we may pursue in vain if his speed equal our own: We can only enhance his triumph by allowing him a *close run success*. Profit by the experience of your predecessors; but if you attempt to shape your own *course* by the progress of a cotemporary, you will always be behind the world. Take no undue advantage in the starting; otherwise you may lose the prize though you arrive first at the *goal*. Take your fair share of *weight*, or you will still be found wanting in the balance of your judges.—The man who is unwilling to bear his share of the burdens of society, however brilliant his career, is deserving of no esteem, and must fail at the end of the *course*. Above all things, beware of *bolting*. Remember Obidah's unfortunate digression from the main road. When once you have taken the line, preserve it with your eye, and pursue it with unabated ardor, remembering always that there is rest at the goal. Lastly never be discouraged while any thing remains to be gained. Though you find yourself in the rear, you may still *save your distance*, if

not become the winner; for to be distanced is disgrace. And now, should this analogy be judged a plausible one, the ardor of the course is explained by man's love of a picture of life.

A SPORTSMAN.

## MISCELLANY.

"Various, that the mind of desultory man,  
Studious of change and pleas'd with novelty,  
May be indulg'd."

WRITTEN FOR THE CASSETT.

### A FRAGMENT.

The fresh breeze was curling up dark ripples on the bosom of Ontario; the last gleam of day rested upon the towering forest like gok'un loaf, when forth from a corner of the wood, and from a narrow creek was seen to glide a boat, small, and swimming like a swan upon the water. Its motion was like the arrow from the Indian bow, propelled by a tall and ghastly figure, which stood erect, and used a paddle, as if taught to despise the ordinary power with which the common race of beings would use it. In the stern sat a form, with countenance far brighter than the twilight which shadowed all around, her face to heaven turned, her luxuriant hair floating wildly in the wind. She raised her hands as if to employ high heaven to forgive, then breathed to the wind a short but fervent prayer. All now was hush—he who propelled the boat threw from him his paddle, then turned to his companion, and with voice, sweet, and mild, much unlike what his countenance would indicate, exclaimed, "we are now near, too near eternity, my Helen; would that the mystery which hangs over you were dissipated!"—"Oh 'tis this mystery that brings death upon us!"

"Mystery! Mystery!! is there a mystery that hangs over me or conduct of mine?" replied this lovely being, "Oh if there is say what, and I will free myself from it; and perchance, Henry, it may alter your dread resolution."

Henry then raised from his seat, and from his bosom drew both a poniard and a letter, and giving the latter to Helen, he says "read this, and if one word not true thou dare to utter, this steel shall drink thy blood."

Trembling and half fainting, Helen receives, and reads the letter then bares her bosom, and exclaims "stick me dead, for I would not live and have thee suppose me false." "Thy ring I lent thee, and thou entrusted it to a sister. I am innocent."

"Good heavens! what have I done?" Henry cries, "the mystery's gone—thou art innocent. I have wronged thee, wronged thee much."

LORENZO.