

# THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT,

## AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCER.

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### POETRY.

#### THE CONTRACT.

And this is love!  
Can you then say that love is happiness!

There were two portraits; one was of a girl  
Just blushing into woman; it was not  
A face of perfect beauty, but it had  
A most bewitching smile—there was a glance  
Of such arch playfulness and innocence,  
That as you looked a pleasant feeling came  
Over the heart as when you heard a sound  
Of cheerful music. Rich and glossy curls  
Were bound with roses, and her sparkling eyes  
Gleamed like Taskin's, when some quick device  
Of mirth is in her laugh. Her light step seemed  
Bounding upon the air with all the life,  
The buoyant life of one untouched by sorrow.  
... There was another, drawn in after years;  
The face was young still; but its colour look  
Was gone, the cheek had lost its bloom, and  
The lip its smile—the light that once had played  
Like sunlight in those eyes, was quenched and dim,  
For tears had wasted it; her long dark hair  
Flashed upon her forehead in loose waves  
Uncoloured, and upon her pale thin hand  
Her hand was bent, as if in pain—no trace  
Was left of that sweet gaiety which once  
Seemed as grief could not darken it, as care  
Would pass and leave behind no mark, and  
As youth will ever love—she sought her smile,  
And said sweet gentle things, although she knew  
Another had his vows—Oh! there are some  
Can trifle in cold vanity, with all  
The warm soul's previous throbs, to whom it is  
A triumph that a fond devoted heart  
Is breaking for them—who can bear to call  
Young flowers into weeds, and den crush them!  
Affection trampled on, and hopes destroyed,  
Tears wring from every bitterness, and sighs  
That waste the breath of life—these all were her's  
Whom mine a before, she had given  
Life's hope to a most fragile bark,—to love!  
Tears weeded—wrecked by love's treasury; she  
knew,  
Yet spoke not of his falsehood; but the drama  
It found her to existence was dissolved—  
Her days were numbered—she is sleeping now.  
L. E. L.

ELLEN DUNCAN.  
BY DENIS O'DONOVAN.

#### [CONTINUED.]

The jury retired, and Ellen's head, short  
breathless, alone told that she existed. Her  
head was thrown back, her lips apart, and  
slightly quivering, and her eyes fixedly gaz-  
ing on the empty bench with an anxious and  
will stare of hope and response. Owen's face  
was very pale, and his lips lifted—there was  
the all-thrust perceptible emotion about the  
muscles of his mouth, but his eye quailed not,  
and his broad brow had the impress of an un-  
quenchable spirit as firmly fixed as ever on its  
marble front. A quarter of an hour elapsed,  
and still the same agonizing suspense—another,  
and the jury returned not—five minutes,  
and they re-entered. Ellen's heart beat as if  
it would burst her bosom; and Owen's pale  
cheek became a little more flushed, and his  
eye full of anxiety. The foreman in a meas-  
ured, feelingless tone pronounced the word  
"Guilty!" and a thrill of horror passed  
through the entire court, while that sickness  
which agonises the very depths of the soul  
convulsed Owen's face with a momentary  
spasm, and he faltered "God's will be done."  
The judge slowly drew on the black cap, and  
still Ellen moved not—it seemed as if the very  
blood within her veins was frozen, and  
that her life's pulses no more could execute  
their functions! No man, however brave or  
hardened, can view the near approach of cer-  
tain death, and be unmoved; and as that old  
man, in tremulous tones, uttered the dread  
word of his fate, Owen's eyes seemed actually  
to sink within his head—the veins of his brow  
swelled and grew black, and his hands grasp-  
ed the iron rail that surrounded the dock, as  
though he would force his fingers through it.  
When all was over, and the fearful cap drawn  
off, Ellen seemed only then to awake to con-  
sciousness. Her eyes slowly opened to their  
fullest extent—their expression of despair was

absolutely frightful—a low, gurgling, half-  
choking sob forced itself from between her  
lips, and ere a hand could be outstretched to  
save her, she fell, as if quickly dashed to the  
ground by no mortal power—her piercing  
scream of agony ringing through the court-  
house, with a fearful, prolonged cadence.

Evening approached, and the busy crowd of  
idlers had passed away, some to brood over  
what they had seen, and others to forget, in  
the bustle of life, that there were woes and  
miseries in the hearts of their fellow-beings.  
Owen was remained to prison, as his execu-  
tion was not to take place till the commission  
was over, thus giving him more than a week  
to prepare for that final doom. The light  
that struggled through the bars of his cell  
rested fully on the stooping figure of his wife,  
as she bent over the rude bed on which he  
lay; and her hot tears fell fast down her  
cheeks, as she thought how soon they were  
doomed to part for ever. Hope was not how-  
ever, entirely dead within her, for the jury  
had strongly recommended him to mercy;  
and ignorant as she was of forms and cere-  
monies—helpless as lone woman in misfortune  
always is—she had determined on going to  
Dublin, to kneel at the feet of the Lord Lieu-  
tenant—and there to solicit his pardon.  
Hayter hesitated for some time as to the  
manner in which she should break it to him,  
and ask his advice, she thus began—

"Owen, dear Owen! do you know what  
I've been thinking of, an, where I've been  
thinking of going?"

There was no answer returned for some  
time, and on looking at him more earnestly,  
she was astonished to find, that he had sunk  
into a profound slumber. "Guilty," thought  
she, "is not these?" and her resolution was  
taken instantly—she would not wake him—  
she would not let him know her purpose—  
and if she succeeded, her eyes flashed through  
her tears at the anticipation of his rapturous  
surprise. Stooping lower, she gently pressed  
her lips to his; and kneeling beside his bed,  
poured forth a short but fervent prayer to  
him in whom alone we can put our trust—  
"In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,  
and the breath of all mankind"—"V he pre-  
serveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth  
right to the poor." There was something ex-  
ceedingly and touchingly beautiful in the at-  
titude of that young wife—her hands clasped,  
her lips moving with her prayer, like rose-  
leaves with the evening breeze, and her up-  
turned face, with its holy and deep religious  
expression. Having concluded her fervent  
petition, she noiselessly arose, and giving her  
sleeping husband one long and lingering look  
of affection, that death could not estrange, she  
silently glided from the cell.

On the third night from the events which  
we have narrated, a poor woman was observed  
wending her toilsome way through the streets  
of the metropolis. Her appearance bespoke  
fatigue and long travel; and as she neared  
the Upper Castle gate, she had to lean against  
the railing for support. The lamps were light-  
ed, carriages rolling to and fro, and all the  
buzz of life was ringing in her ears; but oh!  
from the expression of pain and suffering in  
her face, and the shivering with which she  
surveyed the sentinels pacing to and down,  
it was evident that her mind but little accord-  
ed with the scenes by which she was sur-  
rounded. She slowly and fearfully entered  
the wide court-yard—a flood of light was  
streaming from the windows of the vice-regal  
dwelling, and a crowd of idlers stood round  
about, viewing the entrance of the visitors,  
for it appeared as if there were a revel of  
some kind going on. Ellen's heart sank with-  
in her, as she heard the carriages rolling and  
dashing across the pavement, for she felt that  
amid the bustle of company and splendour,  
her poor appeal might be entirely unnoticed.  
As she waited, she saw several of the persons  
assembled, thrust rudely back by the soldiers  
that were on guard, and when she advanced  
a step or two for the purpose of entering, a  
brute in human shape pushed her with a blow  
of the end of his musket back against the pil-  
lar. He was about to repeat his violence

when the poor creature fell on her knees be-  
fore him, and screamed—

"O Sir, don't, don't stop me! I'm only  
going in to plead for my husband's life, an  
shure you wont prevent me? I've travelled  
many a weary mile to get here in time; an'  
oh! fur mercy's sake let me pass."

At this moment the carriage of the eccen-  
tric and beautiful Lady—, one of the wild-  
est, strangest, and best hearted females of the  
Irish Court, set down its lovely burden. She  
had seen the whole transaction of the sentinel,  
and heard Ellen's pathetic appeal, and her  
heart was instantly moved in her favour, for  
the example of fashion had not yet frozen up  
its finer feelings. Partly through the work-  
ings of a softened heart, and partly to make,  
what was then all the rage, a scene or sensa-  
tion, she resolved instantly to get her admit-  
ted to the presence of the Duke,—nay to  
present her herself. She was well known to be  
a favourite, and whatever whim of hers took  
place, so master how extravagant, was sure  
to meet his hearty concurrence. She  
desired Ellen to rise and follow her; and the  
poor creature's eyes streamed with tears as  
she invoked a fervent blessing on the head  
of her lovely protectress. While passing up  
the grand staircase, amid the whispering gaze  
and suppressed titter of many a paupered  
maiden, she instructed her how to proceed;  
and having received a hasty account of all,  
and desired her not to be faint-hearted, she  
turned to the smirking master of the cere-  
monies to tell him of her "dear delightful freak";  
there was a glad smile on her lip, and a glow-  
ing crimson on her cheek, but still there was  
a gleaming moisture in her fine eyes, that told  
of soft and womanish feelings.

The Duke was sitting on a chair of crim-  
son velvet; a cushion of the same costly material  
supported his feet; and he was looking with  
an appearance of apathy and ennui on the  
splendid group around him. The glitter of  
the lights, the lustre of the jewels, and the  
graceful waving of the many-coloured plumes,  
gave every thing a courtly, snappish ap-  
pearance, and the air was heavy with odours,  
the fragrant offering of many a costly exotic.  
Suddenly every eye was turned on the door  
with wonder and astonishment, and every  
voice was hushed as Lady— entered, her  
cheeks blushing from excitement, and her eye  
bright with anticipated triumph. She led the  
poor and humbly clad Ellen by the hand who  
dared not look up, but with her gaze riveted  
on the splendid carpet, was brought like an  
automaton to the feet of the Duke, who she  
mechanically knelt down.

"Will yer Excellency be pleased," began  
Lady—, piously mimicking the brogue,  
"to hear this poor crathur's complaint. Her  
husband has been condemned to die for a murder  
he didn't commit by no manner or means,  
as the sayin' is; an' as there was a strong  
recommindation to mercy, if you'll grant him  
a reprieve, you'll have all our prayers, and  
(in an under tone) yer Excellency knows you  
want them?"

The Duke seemed a little bewildered, as if  
he could not make out what it meant, and the  
glittering crowd now all surrounded the group;  
when Ellen, who had ventured to look timidly  
up, conceiving that the Duke looked im-  
patient about the pardon, (poor creature! she little  
knew that he had not even heard of Owen's  
trial,) eagerly grasped the drapery of his chair,  
and while the big tears rolled from beneath  
her eyelids, exclaimed—

"Oh! may the great and just Providence,  
that sees the workin' on all our hearts, pour  
a blessing on yer Lordship's head—may his  
holy grace be wid you for iver an' iver, an'  
do listen to my prayers! My husband is in-  
nocent—an' oh! as you hope for mercy at the  
last day, be merciful now to him."

"Lady—," said the Duke, "what is the  
meaning of all this—will you explain?"

"Your Excellency, answered she, in the  
natural sweet pathos of her tones, "it is a  
poor man who has been condemned to die on  
circumstantial evidence. He has been strong-  
ly recommended to mercy, and this weeping  
female is his wife. I found her outside pray-  
ing for admission, and have brought her

hither. She has travelled mostly on foot up-  
wards of ninety miles to ask a pardon; and I  
trust you will not refuse a reprieve, till your  
grace has time to inquire into the circum-  
stances." "This is the head and front of my  
offending,"

"May heaven bless yer Ladyship," burst  
from the depths of Ellen's grateful heart,  
"for ferfindin' that had no sup, er but  
his gracious mercy!"

Lady—'s suit was eagerly seconded by  
many a fair creature, who thronged around;  
and the Duke smiled, as he answered,

"Well, well! one could not refuse so  
many fair beseechers, so we will order him to  
be reprieved. And there now, let the poor  
woman be removed."

Ellen's heart was light, and her eye was  
glad, and her very inmost soul was thankful  
to the Omnipotent, as she that night rested  
for a few hours, ere she set out on her return;  
and Lady—, as she pressed her costly  
pillow, felt a fuller sense of happiness in being  
useful to her fellow-creature than ever she ex-  
perienced before. Oh! that all the wealthy  
in power were incited by similar feelings.

The remembrance of our simple tale is soon  
told. The reprieve arrived—and the very day ap-  
pointed for Owen's death was that of his  
wife's successful return. One week previous  
to the embarkation of those sentenced to trans-  
portation, a man was to be executed for  
sheep-stealing. On the drop he confessed  
his guilt, and that he, and not Duncan, was the  
murderer of Daly. Owen was immediately  
released, and a subscription raised for him,  
with which, as well as with a wealthy purse  
presented to Ellen by Lady—, he took a  
comfortable farm, and relouged "Black Pass."

### THE CORONATION.

The ceremony of the homage, which, it is  
understood, has produced diverse weighty dis-  
cussions among the gentlemen of the "Col-  
lege," with a view to its abolition or modifica-  
tion in the case of Her Majesty Queen Vic-  
toria, was also the occasion of much learned  
disquisition on the accession of William IV,  
who, it was said, entertained strong objections  
to being compelled to receive the lip service  
of his faithful Peers on so wholesale a scale.  
In 1831, the subject of the homage was fre-  
quently discussed in the Privy Council, and,  
on the 14th of August in that year, a rumour  
that it was intended to curtail this part of the  
ceremony occasioned a somewhat animated  
conversation in the House of Lords. It had  
been proposed in the Privy Council, that the  
homage should be confined to one Peer from  
each order of the Peerage, in pursuance of the  
plan which had been followed at the corona-  
tion of George IV.; but this homage by spon-  
sors was indignantly repudiated by Lord  
Strangford and the Duke of Wellington as  
"disrespectful and unseemly;" and the Mar-  
quis of Londonderry went so far as to declare,  
with much warmth, that "there were individ-  
uals in the Peerage who would transfer to  
no man their right of tendering homage to  
their Sovereign, which was a sacred and  
most important part of the ceremony." Ul-  
timately the homage by sponsors was aban-  
doned, and the ancient ceremonial observed,  
as follows:

The Archbishop of Canterbury knelt before  
the King, for himself and the other lords  
spiritual, pronounced the word of homage—  
"I, William, Archbishop of Canterbury, will  
be faithful and true, and faith and truth will  
bear unto you, our Sovereign Lord, and your  
heirs, Kings of Great Britain; and I will do  
and truly acknowledge the service of the lands  
which I claim to hold of you as in right of the  
Church. So help me God." The Arch-  
bishop then rose and kissed His Majesty's left  
cheek; the Bishop present did the like and  
retired.

"When the Lords Spiritual had performed  
homage, the Duke of Cumberland ascended  
the steps of the throne, and kneeling before  
the King pronounced for himself and the other  
Dukes of the Blood Royal the words of homage.  
—I, Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland,  
do become your liege man of life and limb,