

HALIFAX PEARL,

A VOLUME DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE, SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Fifteen Shillings per Annum, in advance.

VOLUME TWO.

SATURDAY MORNING, JANUARY 20, 1838.

NUMBER THREE

From the "Christian Keepsake."

TO THE QUEEN.

Far climes of Earth, Islands that gem the Sea,
In torrid, temperate, and arctic zone,
Shores 'mid the polar icebergs dim and lone,
Spice-bearing lands, whose tribes once bowed the knee
In giant caves of dark idolatry,
New world, not to the "Tuscan artist" known,
Isles which the sea laves with pacific tone,
The classic haunts of old mythology,
With Britain's soil, yield homage to thy crown,
Pearls from the wave, gold, gems from the dark mine,
"Kings from the East" an offering prepare!
From realms, on which the sun goes never down,
Thrice daughter of a Royal Line!
In thousand tongues, for thee ascends one prayer.

F. R. C.

THE VICTIM OF EXCITEMENT.

BY MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ.

Author of "The Blind Girl's Story."

Intemperance is a vice which is generally considered of the masculine sex. In the pictured scenes of the ravages it has wrought, woman is seldom introduced but as the patient victim of brutality, or as the admonishing angel of transgressing man. There are instances on record, however, of a sad reverse. Not alone in the lower classes of life, amid the dregs of society, but in higher walks, where intelligence, wit, beauty and wealth, virgin worth, wedded love, and Christian grace, are all cast as unvalued offerings at the beastly shrine of intemperance. One of these fatal examples, (of which to the honor of our sex, be it said, there are so few,) once came under the observation of the writer. Her character and history form the subject of the following sketch.

Mr. Manly first met Anne Weston in a ball room. It was on the eve of the fourth of July, and the fairest ladies of the country were assembled to celebrate the national jubilee. He was a lawyer, and had been the orator of the day; an eloquent one, and therefore, entitled to distinguished attention. He came from an adjoining town, of which he had recently become an inhabitant, and now found himself in a scene which scarcely presented one familiar countenance. He was a very proud man, and had the air of one who felt himself too superior to the multitude to mingle in the general amusement. He stood with folded arms, as remote as possible from the dancers, desising those who were engaged in that exercise on such a sultry night. In vain the obsequious master of ceremonies begged to introduce him, to this and that fair lady. He declined the honour with a cold bow, declaring his utter disinclination to dancing. He was told that his disinclination would cease as soon as Miss Weston arrived. She was the belle of the place, the daughter of the richest gentleman in town—had received the most finished education, and refused the most splendid offers. In short, she was irresistible, and it was predicted that he would find her so. It cannot be denied, that the fame of this all conquering lady had previously reached his ears, but unfortunately he had a detestation of belles, and predetermined to close his eyes, and shut his ears, and steel his heart against her vaunted attractions. He had never yet sacrificed his independence to women. He had placed his standard of female excellence very high. He had seen no one that reached its altitude. "No," said he to himself, "let me live on in singleness of heart and loneliness of purpose, all the days of my life, rather than unite myself with one of those vain, flimsy, garrulous, and superficial beings who win the smiles, and fix the attention of the many. I despise a weak woman, I hate a masculine one, and a pedantic one I abhor. I turn with fear from the glittering belle, whose home is the crowded hall, whose incense the homage of fools, whose altar the shrine of fashion. Can she sit down contented in the privacy of domestic love who has lived on the adulation of the world, or be satisfied with the affection of one true heart, who has claimed as her due, the vows of all? No, better the fool, the pedant, than the belle. Who can find that woman, whose price is above rubies? Ah! 'tis certain I shall never marry." He was aroused from these reflections, by a movement in the hall, and he felt a conviction that the vaunted lady was arrived. In spite of his boasted indifference, he could not repress a slight sensation of curiosity to see one who was represented as so transcendaut. But he moved not, he did not even turn his eyes towards the spot where so many were clustering. "The late hour of her arrival," said he, "shows equal vanity and affectation. She evidently wishes to be conspicuous—studies every thing for effect." The lady moved towards that part of the

hall, where he was stationed. She held the arm of one gentleman, and was followed by some half dozen others. He was compelled to gaze upon her, for they passed so near, the folds of her white muslin dress fluttered against him. He was pleased to see that she was much less beautiful than he had expected. He scarcely thought her handsome. Her complexion was pale, even sallow, and her face wanted that soft, flowing outline, which is necessary to the perfection of beauty. He could not but acknowledge, however, that her figure was very fine, her motions graceful, and her air spirited and intellectual. "I am glad she is not beautiful," said he, "for I might have been tempted to have admired her, against my sober judgment." Oppressed by the heat of the apartment, he left the hall and sauntered for a long time in the piazza, till a certain feeling of curiosity, to know, whether a lady whose bearing expressed so much pride of soul, could be foolish enough to dance, led him to return. The first object he beheld, was the figure of Miss Weston, moving in most harmonious time, to an exhilarating air, her countenance lighted up with an animation, a fire, that had as magical an effect upon her features, as the morning sunbeams on the face of nature. The deepest colour was glowing on her cheek,—her very soul shining forth from her darkening eyes. She danced with infinite spirit, but equal grace. He had never witnessed any thing to compare with it, not even on the stage. "She dances entirely too well," thought he; "she cannot have much intellect, yet she carries on a constant conversation with her partner through all the mazes of the dance. It must be admirable nonsense from the broad smiles it elicits. I am half resolved to be introduced and invite her to dance—from mere curiosity, and to prove the correctness of my opinion." He sought the introduction, became her partner in the dance, and certainly forgot, while he listened to her "admirable nonsense," that she was that object of his detestation—a belle. Her conversation was sprightly, unstudied and original. She seemed more eager to listen than to talk, more willing to admire than to be admired. She did not tell him that she admired his oration, but she spoke warmly on the subject of eloquence, and quoted in the happiest manner, a passage of his own speech, one, which he himself judged superb. It proved her to have listened with deep attention. He had never received so delicate or gratifying a compliment. His vanity was touched, and his pride slumbered. He called forth those powers of pleasing, with which he was eminently endowed, and he began to feel a dawning ambition, to make the conquest of a heart, which so many had found indomitable. He admired the simplicity of her dress, its fitness and elegance. A lady's dress is always indicative of her character. Then her voice was singularly persuasive in its tones, it breathed of feminine gentleness and sensibility with just enough spirit and independence for a woman. Mr. Manly came to these wise conclusions before the end of the first dance—at the termination of the second, he admired the depth, as well as the brilliancy of her mind, and when he bade her adieu for the night, he was equally convinced of the purity of her feelings and the goodness of her heart. Such is the strength of man's wisdom, the stability of his opinions, the steadiness of his purpose, when placed in competition with the fascinations of a woman, who has made the determination to please. In after years Mr. Manly told a friend of a dream, which that night haunted his pillow. He was not superstitious, or disposed to attach the slightest importance to dreams. But this was a vivid picture, and succeeding events caused him to recall it, as one, having the power of prophecy. He lived over again the events of the evening. The winning accents of Miss Weston mingled in his ear, with the gay notes of the violin. Still, ever and anon, discordant sounds marred the sweet harmony. The malicious whisper, the stilled, deriding laugh, and the open scoff came from every corner. Sometimes he saw through the crowded hall, the slow finger of scorn pointing at him. As he turned, with a fierce glance of defiance, Miss Weston seemed to meet him still, holding a goblet in her hand, which she pressed him to drain. Her cheeks and lips burned with a scarlet radiance, and her eyes sparkled with unnatural brightness. "Taste it not" whispered a soft voice in his ear, "it is poison." "It is the cup of immortality," exclaimed the syren, and she drained the goblet to its last drop. In a few moments, her countenance changed—her face became bloated, her features disfigured, and her eyes heavy and sunken. He turned with disgust from the former enchantress, but she pursued him, she wound her arms around him. In the vain struggle of liberating himself from her embrace, he awoke. It was long before he could overcome the sensation of loathing and horror, excited by the unhallowed vision, and even, when overcome by heaviness and exhaus-

tion, he again slept, the same bloated phantom presented her intoxicating draught. The morning found him feverish and unrefreshed. He could not shake off the impression of his dream, and the image of Miss Weston seemed deprived of the witchery that had enthralled his imagination the preceding evening. He was beginning to despise himself, for having yielded up so soon his prejudices and pride, when an invitation to dine at Mr. Weston's interrupted the severe tenor of his thoughts. Politeness obliged him to accept, and in the society of Miss Weston, graceful, animated and intellectual, presiding with unaffected dignity and ease at her father's board, he forgot the hideous metamorphose of his dream.

From that day his fate was sealed. It was the first time his heart had ever been seriously interested, and he loved with all the strength and ardour of his proud and ardent character. The triumph too, of winning one, whom so many had sought in vain, threw a kind of glory over his conquest, and exalted his estimation of his own attributes. The wedding day was appointed. The evening previous to his nuptials, Anne Weston sat in her own chamber, with one of the chosen friends of her girlhood, Emily Spencer. Anne had no sisters, and from childhood, Emily had stood to her almost in that dear relation. She was to accompany her to her new home, for Anne refused to be separated from her, and had playfully told Mr. Manly, "that if he married her, he must take Emily too, for she could not and would not be parted from her."

The thought of the future occupied the minds of the two friends. Anne sat in silence. The lamp that partially illumined the apartment, gave additional paleness to her pale spiritual countenance. Her thoughts appeared to have rolled within herself, and from the gloom of her eye, did not appear to be such, as usually rest in the bosom of one, about to be wedded to the object of her affection and her trust.

"I fear," said she at length, as if forgetting the presence of her friend, "that I have been too hasty. The very qualities that won my admiration, and determined me to fix my regard, now cause me to tremble. I have been too much accustomed to self indulgence, to bear restraint, and should it ever be imposed by a master's hand, my rebellious spirit would break the bonds of duty, and assail its independence. I fear I am not formed to be a happy wife, or to constitute the happiness of a husband. I live too much upon excitement, and when the deep monotony of domestic life steals on, what will become of me?"

"How can there be monotony?" answered Emily, warmly, "with such a companion as Manly? Oh, trust him, Anne, love him as he merits to be loved, as you yourself are loved, and your lot may be envied among women."

"He has awakened all the capabilities my heart has of loving," cried Anne, "but I wish I could shake off this dull weight from my spirits." She rose as she spoke, approached a side table, and turning out a glass of rich cordial, drank it, as if conscious from experience, of its renovating influence. Emily's anxious gaze followed her movements. A deep sigh escaped her lips. When her friend resumed her seat, she drew nearer to her, she took her hand in her's, and while her color heightened, and her breath shortened, she said—

"Anne Weston, I should not deserve the name of friend, if in this hour, the last, perhaps, of unrestrained confidence between us, I did not dare—"

"Dare what?" interrupted Anne, shame and resentment, kindling in her eye.

"To tell you, that the habit you indulge in, of resorting to artificial means, to exhilarate your spirits, though now attended with no obvious danger, may exercise most fatal influence on your future peace. I have long struggled for resolution, to utter this startling truth, and I gather boldness as I speak. By all our friendship and sincerity, by the past splendour of your reputation, by the bright hopes of the future, by the trusting vows of a lover, and the grey hairs of a father, I pray you to relinquish a habit, whose growing strength is now only known to me." Emily paused, strong emotions impeded her utterance. "What is it you fear," asked Anne, in a low, stern voice, "speak, for you see that I am calm." "You know what I dread," continued Emily. "I see a speak on the bright character of my friend. It may spread and dim all its lustre. We all know the fearful strength of habit, we cannot shake off the serpent, when once its coils are around us. Oh, Anne, gifted by nature with such brilliancy of intellect and gaiety of heart, why have you ever had recourse to the exciting draught, as if art could exalt the original buoyancy of