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POETRY.

THE SLEEPERS.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

Oh! lightly, tread!
A holy thing is sleep,
On the worn spirit shed,
And eyes that wake to weep.
A holy thing from heaven,
A gracious dewy cloud,
A covering mantle, given
The weary to enshroud.
Oh! lightly, lightly tread!
Reverse the pale still brow,
The meekly drooping head,
The long hair's withowy flow!
Ye know not what ye do,
This! call the slumber-bark,
From the world unseen by you,
Into Life's dim faded track.
Her soul is far away,
In her childhood's land perchance,
Where her young sisters play,
Where shines her mother's glance.
Some sweet old native sound
Her spirit happily weaves;
A harmony profound
Of woods with all their leaves:
A murmur of the sea,
A laughing tone of streams—
Long may her sojourn be
In the music-land of dreams!
Each voice of love is there,
Each gleam of beauty fled,
Each lost one still more dear—
Oh! lightly, lightly tread!

A STORY OF REAL LIFE.

If wealth is full of pleasures, it is also full of danger. I should wish my son to possess riches, but not until after he had suffered poverty. A man can best examine human nature from a low level or beneath an humble dress. He will then make a thousand discoveries, which are secrets to one bred up in luxury. He will detect the worthlessness of much that is showy, and find greatness of soul and beautiful displays of virtue and talent where he least expected. The flatterer pulls off his mask when he comes into his presence. The virtues of the meek and the good shine out to his eyes with their true lustre. The deceits, the hollow show, and all the artificial appearances kept up before the powerful, are laid aside for the humble, and he sees them in their real shapes and colors. Wealth exercises several bad influences upon young men. It deprives them of the stimulus to severe application, and crowds their path with temptations to pleasure. How many strong intellects must have lain idle thus, like labourers in the sunshine, their work undone because their servants were supplied! How many noble characters, now seen through past history, would have gone down to obscurity undistinguished, but that want urged them to exertions, in the course of which their talents were developed, and their integrity brought to the test! Plutarch relates that when Mark Antony was in adversity, he voluntarily yielded to the severest toils and privations to which the meanest of his troops were subjected, and discovered so many noble qualities, that had we seen no more of his life, we might justly set him down as a great and virtuous hero; but when the tide of fortune again turned in his favour, he became again enervated, licentious, and cruel, so that he now appears one of the most degenerate of men.

To the conclusion which we naturally draw from this occurrence, there are doubtless many exceptions. The rich are not necessarily bad, or the poor great, but we speak only of the influences of the two circumstances of being.

George and Thomas were friends at school. Both were young, clear-headed, and god-hamoured, neither being remarkable for any quality of person or mind. They were just like other boys, having nothing in their bearing to indicate whether they were to turn out comers, poets, or orators. If there was observable in them any thing worthy of remark, it

was the general similarity of their tastes, minds, and dispositions. They were both satisfied to beat the hoop, fly the kite, and spin the top, without wearing out their school books by any unnecessary application, for both would rather have their ears boxed than study a lesson. The two boys at school were however, early handed over to the different influences which coloured their future career, and these were not long in becoming perceptible in their conduct and character. George and Thomas were placed at school by their parents at about the same period. Thomas was brought by his mother. The carriage door was opened by a footman, who helped the young master down the steps with particular care, paying him at the same time the most respectful deference.

"I have brought you my boy Master Thomas, Mr Robertson," said the fond parent to the conductor of the academy, while her eyes glistened with maternal affection. "I have brought you my boy, and I shall leave him in your care, I hope, for several years."

"We will do all we can to repay your confidence, Mrs Green. What are your particular wishes respecting his studies? Will you have them selected with a view to any particular profession?"

"Why, my dear sir, it has pleased Providence to endow us with an ample fortune, and he is our only hope; of course we wish him to receive the education of a gentleman; but it is not probable he will ever have to work for his living."

"Then I suppose a thorough English course of lessons. Let him be well grounded in rhetoric, mathematics, and—"

"Oh, my dear sir, no. There is no use of his straining his tender mind with such hard studies; make a gentleman of him, but not a pedagogue." Mr Robertson smiled and bowed.

"If there was the slightest possibility of his ever having to earn his own bread, it would alter the case; but you know my dear sir, there must be a difference between poor people and rich." "He must learn music then, I suppose?" said Mr Robertson. "Oh, music! certainly, divine music. I wish him to read it at sight. You will find a guitar among his things; and I wish you to see particularly that he practises. You know that keeps him busy, and does not hurt his eyes. See," she added affectionately placing her hand, glittering with jewels, beneath the youngster's chin, and pushing back the hair from his forehead, "dear little fellow, his eyes are already very, very, weak."

"Do you wish him to study any of the classical languages, madam?" "Who? what?" said Mr Green, looking up. "Latin and Greek, madam. Or should you prefer Spanish and French?" "Should you like to study Latin and Greek and Spanish and French, my dear Tom, or any of the other classical languages?"

The boy smirked a little, put his finger in his mouth, and looked down on the floor; the mother kissed him again. "Oh, do just what you like with him, Mr Robertson; only never punish him, if you please; he is very tender disposed, and can't bear to be whipped; and of all things make him attend to his music and dancing; and I wish very much to have him study Italian, it's so useful in singing. Pray my dear stand up straight, and be a good boy, and behave like a gentleman; and here's some money for you, my dear, and you shall often come home and see us."

So saying, although the tears were in her eyes (for mothers are still mothers, whether learned or unlearned), she smiled graciously on Mr Robertson; kissed little Tom again and again; went away a few steps, came back exclaiming, "the dear, dear little dear," kissed him again and disappeared. The boy was conducted among his companions in due form, and soon began to be interested in the sports.

A short time afterwards, a man, dressed in a plain grey suit, with a cane, and feet dusty from an apparently long walk, stopped before the door of the academy. He held by the hand a little boy. The new comers entered and the elder addressed himself to Mr Robertson, with whom he had been previously ac-

quainted, with the brevity of a man of business.

"My son, Master George Steele, sir. I wish to place him at your school. His trunk will be here immediately from the neighbouring town, where the stage left us." The conversation usual on such occasions then ensued. Inquiries into the boy's age, tastes, capacities, &c, were made and satisfied, and the directions of the parent given respecting the course of studies to be pursued.

"Above all things," said Mr Steele, "let him form habits of strictly moral conduct and of severe industry and subject himself to the discipline of the school, without a murmur. If he does not like the place, he may quit it; but while in it, he must make no disturbance of any kind, but treat every one with respect. He will have to make his own way through the world. I have been unfortunate, and have nothing whatever to leave him but a good education. If he is worth any thing, this will be sufficient; if he is idle and irresponsible, he will sink into poverty and neglect. Remember, George, what you learn here will be your only fortune. At an expense which I can scarcely sustain, I furnish you with this opportunity of obtaining credit in the world. For all else that makes man respectable and happy, you must depend upon yourself." They shook hands and parted, and so the two boys commenced their education.

The next important era in the lives of these young gentlemen, was the period of their quitting school. It was five years after the preceding circumstances, and they were both about sixteen years of age. It happened that at the same time there was a general examination in the academy, and the various attainments of George and Thomas were thereby disclosed. The latter showed to advantage in nothing except in declamation, recited with a considerable flourish of theatrical elegance, and a translation from the Italian, for which he received a medal. George, on the contrary, discovered a pervading knowledge in all necessary branches. He excited some astonishment by the rapidity and ease with which he replied to the casual interrogatories of several men of science, in arithmetic, algebra and the mathematics. Two essays from his pen, on law and political economy, were listened to with attention and interest; and in geography, and the various other ordinary departments of learning, he appeared perfectly at home.

The parents of both boys attended this exhibition, and both were pleased. "Come Tom," said the mamma, kissing her darling, "good bye to books and school for ever, and now for pleasure." "Come, George," said Mr Steele, shoving the modest boy by the hand, while a quiet smile of pride and pleasure stole over his features; "come, my boy, so far you have done well. I am satisfied with you. I am more than satisfied; I am proud of you. But," he added, checking himself, "my dear boy, you must not fall into the error that your education is completed. You have things to learn yet of which you have no idea. Do not be vain of what you have acquired. Although I am praising your past exertions, I praise you more for what I expect you to do than for what you have done."

"I know, father," replied George, "it would be foolish in me to be proud, for I recollect having read the other day that Sir Isaac Newton said even of all his knowledge, that it seemed no more than a pebble in the ocean." "Right, George, right, my son, perfectly right; so now let us return home, and teach you business and the world. All that you have learned here is but a weapon, which must now be used." "But, father, Tom says he has finished his education."

"No man's education is finished till he is in his grave," said the father; and the boys started in life.

We will imagine if the reader please, that another period of five years has elapsed. The schoolboys have now grown up to manhood, both acquired in all their studies, with the exception of their parents, a sense, that he would never have to work for his living,

the other, that "for all that makes a man respectable and happy, he must depend upon himself."

At the age of twenty one, George was taken into partnership with the house which for five years he had served with the purest integrity and the most unremitting care. While he devoted an ample portion of his time to the necessities of his avocation, he still found leisure occasionally to run through a book, keeping alive his taste, and amusing his fancy. He had reviewed his school studies with great profit. His more matured understanding and experience let in light upon many passages which were before dark to him. Sometimes, indeed, he sighed as he beheld the fine equipages around him, and wished heaven had blessed him with a fortune; but again he felt that he was exempted from many temptations which surround the path of those more prosperous. His necessities had drilled him into a severe system of economy and habits of abstemiousness, by which means his health remained firm and his mind cheerful, so that, when the rewards of his unceasing labours began to flow in upon him, he was prepared to avail himself of them to the best advantage.

While this gradual but steady improvement was working in the situation of George, Thomas was leading a life of pleasure. He had grown up into an elegant looking young man, of great taste in points of fashion. His will was law touching the cut of a coat or the shape of a beaver; and a woman might fall in love with him desperately till he opened his mouth, when his late sentiment would break the spell. How had he spent his life? What had he studied? What could he do? He was a proficient in horse-flesh. He could drive a landau superbly. You could not touch him at billiards, and his dress was always exact and perfect; but his mind was unutilized, and so was his heart. He was prodigal, not generous; and he had never known friendship, because he had never felt want.

He was once trying a pair of splendid bays before a gig, on a pleasant summer afternoon. The long train of gay promenaders on either side of the way looked, admired, envied. No one ever appeared better while driving.

A foot passenger, plainly but neatly dressed, paused in the middle of the street to give him ways. It was George. They had seldom met since their school-days, but nevertheless recognised each other, and bowed. George was carrying a large book under his arm.

"What a fool is that plodding fellow?" said Tom, as he quickened the pace of his horse with a resounding crack of the whip. "How I hate a bookworm! Step, you rascal!" "How finely Tom looks!" thought George. "I almost envy him those superb horses; but no matter."

They both passed on; one to spend afternoon and evening in smoking, drinking, and carousal; the other to his humble home, to drink in with sacred delight rich draughts of instruction from a work of genius.

At this period I happened to be well acquainted with them, and had an opportunity of watching the different degrees of happiness produced, or the one hand by industry, intelligent study, and moderation in all life's pleasures, and on the other by luxury and idleness. I caught Thomas one day alone. He seemed sad, and even thoughtful—a strange thing for him.

"Well, Tom, what's the matter?" He yawned, and stretched his limbs. "Really, I don't know, but I am wretchedly dull and stupid." "How can you be dull with every thing that is delightful at your command?"

"Well," he yawned again, "what you say is very true. I don't know how it is, but I am fairly tired out. I can't contrive to get rid of my time." "Have you nothing to do?"

"Nothing; positively nothing." "It's a fine day, why not walk?"

"I'm tired of walking. I hate walking. I never enjoyed a walk in my life." "Going has grown tedious, and walking a burden." "Suppose you try reading?"

"Oh, dreadful! I could no more sit down