

For the Pearl.

THE CRYSTAL DROP.

I stood one day at a crystal stream,
As it murmured gently by,
And it seemed a type—a shadow faint
Of infinite Purity.

As I musingly gazed—one pearly drop,
Disparting from its source,
Flowed idly away, and formed for itself
A separate, devious course.

And I followed, and saw that the purity
From that wayward drop was gone,
And it took the darken'd hue of the soil
Through which it hurried on.

More and more rapid its course became,
And I could not forbear to mourn
O'er the wandering one, for I sadly felt
That it never could return.

Till I saw, descending on Seraph's wing,
A messenger from above;
And I knew by his holy and gracious look
That his errand was one of love.

He put forth his hand to the erring stream,
And its onward course he stayed;
Then he formed a channel by which it might flow
To the source from whence it strayed.

Then I marked, and beheld with sweet surprise
That, as gladly, yet silently,
It returned to that bright unchanging stream—
It regained its purity.

Joyous it seemed to be thus restored
From its waywardness and pride,—
And I saw it no more—for the drop was lost
In the deep, transparent tide.

But I thought that drop was the soul of man,
That had wandered from its Lord,
And madly and sullenly hurried on
Nor asked to be restored.

And further and farther as it strayed
From its high and holy source,
More deeply polluted and stained it became
In that dark, defiling course.

Till One, with deepest pity touched,
And on love's swift pinion borne,
Stoop'd to mark out a new and living way
For the wanderer to return.

And then, like the dark and sullied wave,
Restored to its native sea,
'Tis absorbed as a drop in that boundless deep,
Th' unfathom'd Deity!

St. John, N. B.

NINA.

For the Pearl.

GRAY.

PERHAPS one of the greatest evils of the modern appetite for literary novelties, is, that a very superficial acquaintance with the writers of past times satisfies; men are prone to become content with a very vague notion of the peculiarities and productions of these departed oracles, instead of becoming imbued with their spirit, and making a direct personal property of the riches which they have left as a common inheritance. The desire for what is new and in accordance with the times, is too strong to be successfully combated, and it is too rife with benefits to be a fit object of opposition, however it may be of modification. A good counteraction to an extreme in this way, is, to occasionally turn back to the volumes of the olden time, refreshing our recollections, and concentrating our thoughts, and getting bird's-eye views of those interesting subjects.

Gray was born in London on the 26th December, 1716. He was educated at Eton, and from that went to Cambridge. In 1738 he proceeded to London, intending to devote his attention to legal studies. This design he surrendered, on the invitation of Mr. Walpole, and accompanied that gentleman in his travels. The companions quarrelled at Florence. Gray went on to Venice, and returned to England in 1741; soon after he went to Cambridge and took his bachelor's degree in civil law.

Here he produced most of his literary compositions. In 1757 he refused the office of Poet Laureat. Subsequently he resided for three years in London. In 1765 he took a journey to Scotland. In 1768 he was appointed Professor of Languages and History at Cambridge, at a salary of £400 a-year, but does not appear to have performed the duties of this office. He died in 1771 at Cambridge, aged 55.

Mr. Gray wrote for self-gratification rather than pecuniary profit. He gave much attention to the study of Architecture, and Natural History, and had a familiar acquaintance with the various branches of science and learning, except the pure Mathematics. Dr. Mason said of him, "His time passed agreeably; he was every day making some new acquaintance in science; his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shown to him without a mask, and he was taught to consider everything as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit of knowledge, and practice of virtue." A high eulogy,—and a happy fate,—to be able to live apart from the guilt and cares of the world, and to devote attention to the objects which give most pleasure and improvement.

Mr. Gray gave much labour to his literary compositions. His *Elegy in a Country Church Yard* is considered his master-piece, and is said to have been touched and re-touched with much care. The *Progress of Poetry*,—A Distant Prospect of Eton College,—and *The Bard*,—are the titles of others of his more celebrated productions, beside which he wrote many very elegant, short, "occasional" poems.

The *Elegy in the Church Yard* has recently received due honor; it is published in beautiful style, each stanza embellished with an engraving,—the whole forming an elegant small volume. The number of stanzas is twenty-nine, and we can easily imagine what a delightful series of pictures could be formed on these, by artists capable of appreciating them, and of embodying their feelings.

For instance, suppose the following,—The old church Tower overlooking the darkening landscape, and the ploughman hastening home to his cheerful cottage, and expecting family.

The dim obscurity settling on the sheep-fold, above which the beetle wheels his droning flight.

The ivy-mantled Castle, tenanted, only, by the moping owl. The rugged elms,—the solemn yew-tree,—and the turf-heaps, beneath which rest the forefathers of the hamlet.

Then the cheerful tints of incense-breathing Morn, the swallow darting from the straw-roofed shed,—the domestic cock arousing the farm-yard with his clarion,—and the huntsmen mustering in the distance, around the gate of the baronial mansion.

The blazing Hearth of evening, the housewife busy preparing her frugal board, and the children clambering about the knees of their just-returned sire.

The Corn-field, and the reapers bending to the golden spoil,—the plough breaking the long furrows,—the team urged by the jocund driver,—the forest trees bowing before the stroke of the woodman.

Ambition and Grandeur listening with respect and interest to the simple annals of the poor.

The end of all things,—Heraldry, Power, Wealth, Beauty, bending over the insatiate grave.

The long-drawn Aisle, and fretted vault, and inscribed urn, and animated bust,—the last proud refuge of the proud.

The Statesman grasping at universal power,—and the Poet entranced over his living lyre.

The blighting effects of Poverty,—the dull eye, dead to the ample page of knowledge, and bent on the miserable objects which claim every moment's attention.

The breaking of ocean's billows into the unexplored caves, reckless of the sparry Gems which make the gloom beautiful,—and the sweet Wild-flower bowing its head, all unnoticed, to the wind of the desert.

The Peasant withstanding wrong and oppression, without any thoughts of fame,—following his plough "in glory and in joy along the mountain side," his eyes attesting what unwritten poetry is passing in his soul,—or kindling at the rude ballads of other days, as if he too could have stormed a castle, or led the mailed host to the shock of battle.

The same, calm, contented, enjoying the evening of life,—and contrasted with the guilty great whose names sound over kingdoms, but who tremble amid the gorgeousness of their palaces; and contrasted also with the poor and proud and mean, who oppose truth, and flatter vice, for a livelihood.

Far apart from the crowded city, the Hamlet,—with its humble inhabitants moving along that cool sequestered vale of life.

The village Grave-yard, with its rude rhymes and sculptures, and texts of holy writ.

The dying man gliding momentarily into the realms of dumb forgetfulness, and imploring, by his lingering look, the remembrance of some fond breast.

The Poet hastening up the hill side, to catch the first beams of the sun, as they break on the subject landscape,—

The same stretched under the nodding beech, by the brook side,—
And, wandering by the wood, wrapped in his fancies, careless of observers, and observing nothing except scenes of the imagination.

All those haunts deserted, and the Funeral train winding through the church yard,—denoting how he, too, has passed that awful bourne, which admits of no return.

The rustic bending before the monumental stone, under the old tree, and pointing out the Epitaph to a sympathising enquirer,—closes the eventful history of the hamlet and its poet.

These, we imagine, might be some of the sketches which a painter would devise,—and they show how fruitful the *Elegy* is in materials for such embellishments. This is a peculiarity. Many stanzas might be enumerated, and almost some whole volumes of even light literature, which hardly yield a single picturesque situation.

The landscape painting of this piece of poetry,—its family scenes,—its advocacy of the unknown poor,—its wholesome truths for the rich and powerful,—its vividness, pathos, and morals,—all blent in most harmonious language, make it indeed one of the boasts of English literature, and familiar to the tongues of Englishmen of all classes.

"The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,—
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed—
The cock's shrill clarion, and the echoing horn,
No more will rouse them from their lonely bed."

But their memory is embalmed in the poet's verses, and will continue to be fondly reverted to, as long as their native language is known.

MARIA'S LETTER.

"I wish they would propose."

Halifax, December, 1839.

MY DEAR MISTER PEARL,

I AM but a young girl, but as you invite all persons to write, I have taken my pen, to complain of the men; who, I'm sorry to say, though ready to pay attention at times, and scribble bad rhymes, in which they applaud me at home and abroad, one word do not say about naming the day. It is all very well to hear a man tell how Juno would stare at my carriage and air, and that Venus would bite her nails off for spite, if she saw but my waist when my corsets are laced. There's Lieutenant Squeers, of the gay Fusiliers, who comes every morning, even rainy days scorning, and talks like a lover till luncheon is over. Mama says she's sure, that with cake and liqueur, we shall catch him at last; but six months have past, and although thrice a week, within limits to speak, we have asked him to dine, he has never once asked "will Maria be mine?" Such conduct, I'm sure, no girl would endure. Shall I fidget and pout till Tom calls him out, or say to his face what I think of the case, that I'm no longer partial to this kind of *Court Martial*?

Then there's Counsellor Trim, I'm sure you know him, he keeps pressing my hand, and will oftentimes stand and play with a flower by my side for an hour; but, with all his grimaces, his airs and his graces, his tales and his stories of Whigs and of Tories, while twirling his thumbs, to the point he ne'er comes. I have tried every art to soften his heart—have sung and have played, have danced and have strayed—have simpered and sighed—have laughed and have cried,—but yet he's as far from asking Papa as when he first strove to talk law and look love. Papa gives him fees, and we all strive to please—his obdurate heart, if he has such a part; I am sometimes afraid of asbestos 'tis made, for to set it on fire still puzzles Maria. You will long be my creditor, good Mr. Editor, if you'll reprove him, for as I don't love him, I'll thank him at New Year his visits to drop, if he does not intend soon the question to pop. Should the hint he then take, a slice of the cake, your much obliged friend will assuredly send.

MARIA.

For the Pearl.

STANZAS.

Our joys are like the hues
At summer-sunset seen,
Varied and bright, but ere the falling dews
As if they had not been.

Our hopes are like the things
Of midnight visions born,
Soft, shadowy, sweet and dear—but yet with wings
That vanish ere the dawn.

Our life—our outward life,
E'en to its dreaded close,
Is but one ceaseless round of toil and strife,
Of passion and repose.

Yet these are but of earth—
This life, these hopes and joys;
And there are these of higher, holier birth,
Which nothing here destroys.

The life unguessed, unknown—
And 'rounded by a dream,'
Unrecked by the world, and all our own—
Our fancy's hidden theme.

The joys of paths untrod
Except by spirits pure,
Communing oft with Nature and her God—
The high, the deep and sure.

The hopes that may not fade—
That hail the spirit-land;
The quenchless hopes in life's last hour that swayed
The hopes at God's right hand!

O if we could not soar
Above our little sphere,
How desolate were this world's mortal shore!
How dark our sojourn here!

Queen's Co. 1839.

J. McP.

CONS FOR THE PEARL.

WHAT place in Cape Breton does a young lady name when she tells her mother she is about to dress? I am going to *Be-deque*.

What place in Cape Breton is like every man's mouth? *Forked Harbour*.

What headland in Nova Scotia does the royal mast head of a man of war remind of? *Pennant point*.

Where is the philosopher's stone? In *Prospect*.

What place would I name in telling Tom to chew hard biscuit? *Tush it*.

Where should all the lawyers be sent to? *Advocate Harbour*.

To what river would I take my lapdog if I wanted to clean him? *Pug-wash*.

To what part of Colchester should spendthrifts be sent. To *Economy*.

Why is a poor loafer like a fishing harbour near Halifax? He is a *Bare Cove*, (Bear Cove.)

What harbour do I name when asked can I take cash. *Can so* (Canseau.)

Why is a fisherman like Louis Phillippe? He is master of the *Seine*.