

# COLONIAL PEARL.

A VOLUME DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND RELIGION.

Published every Friday evening, at 17s. 6d. per Annum.

VOLUME THREE.

FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 4, 1839.

NUMBER FORTY.

## ANCIENT REMINISCENCES.

In King's Chapel, in Tremont-street, Boston, is a monument to the memory of Frances Shirley, wife of Governor Shirley. There are none of the contemporaries of this lady remaining. We know but little of her except from this monument, and the faint and visionary sketches that become more and more indistinct, as they pass through successive generations. After a panegyric on her virtues, this record follows:

"Near this excellent mother, lie the mortal remains of her second daughter, Frances Bullen, late wife of William Bullen, Esq., the King's Advocate in the Vice-Admiralty Court of the Province of Massachusetts, whose virtue and great beauty, prudence, piety, cultivated understanding, and gentle manners, were the delight of all while she lived.

"The too brief space of her life was passed ere she had attained her twenty-fourth year, and she died on the twelfth of March, 1744; deeply lamented by her husband, parents, and friends."

It is truly said we live a second time in our children. Of the daughter of this lady and grand-daughter of Governor Shirley, Frances Shirley Bullen, there is much known that is interesting. A friend of hers is still living at an advanced age.

Her mother died while she was very young, and her father, being appointed agent for Massachusetts to the court of St. James, went to England, and left her to be educated in this country. The property which she was to inherit made it proper to appoint guardians of distinguished respectability. These were Judge Trowbridge, Judge Russel, and her uncle, Mr. Temple.

With Judge Trowbridge, at Cambridge, she principally resided. Her wealth and beauty attracted admirers at an early age; but it was well understood, that her father was averse to her forming any matrimonial connexion in America, and that he looked forward to her making a splendid alliance in England.

The early part of her life was passed in innocent gaiety, unclouded by thought of the future. She formed those associations with friends of her own sex, to which the youthful mind so naturally turns, and felt as if her world of happiness existed on this side of the Atlantic. At the age of eighteen, she received a summons from her father to come to him; and, with deep sensibility, she parted with Mrs. Trowbridge, who had supplied to her the place of her own mother. There was no mother to welcome her to the strange land to which she was going; of her father she had but a slight remembrance; and, if friends were in store, they must be new ones. She made a thousand promises to write constantly; and said, "that to lay open her whole heart" to those she had left behind "would be her greatest solace."

Soon after her arrival in England, letters came; but they were not the transcripts of her warm and affectionate heart; it was evident to her friends, that they were written in a depressed and constrained manner. At length, all correspondence ceased, and they heard of her only by report. It was soon understood, that her father did not wish her to continue her intercourse with her American friends, and was continually haunted by fears that she might defeat his ambitious project by forming some alliance beneath her. This led him to keep a constant guard upon her movements, and to prohibit her from general society. One solace, however, he allowed her, and that was the privilege of passing a few days with Mrs. Western, a female friend of great respectability and influence. This lady became fondly attached to Frances, who acquired, from her elegant and cultivated manners, a polish that she could not have gained in her father's family.

Mrs. Western resided a few miles from the city, and it was happiness to her young friend to quit its noise and dust and enjoy those scenes in the country, that reminded her of her early walks in Cambridge, and the winding course of Charles river. Mrs. Western had sons, but they were absent from home, and the father's apprehensions, with regard to them, seem not to have been awakened. One of them returned home on a visit to his mother, while Frances was staying with her. Mrs. Western immediately made arrangements to restore the young lady to her father's residence the next day, knowing his extreme anxiety on the subject.

The breakfast hour, with her, was one of cheerful meeting. She took her seat as usual at the table, and, after waiting some time in pain for the appearance of her guest, sent a summons to her room. The messenger returned with the intelligence, that she was not there, and that the room did not appear to have been occupied during the night. She sent to her son's room; the young student was not to be found, the truth flashed upon her mind,—they had eloped together! Nothing remained but to send a despatch to the father, acquainting him with her suspicions.

He lost no time in repairing to her mansion, and loaded her with

reproaches. His accusations were violent and unfounded, and he more than hinted, that she was accessory to the elopement. Mrs. Western preserved a calm and dignified deportment, and replied, "that the measure was as unpleasant to herself as to him; that her son had not yet finished his education, and a matrimonial connexion might prove a blight to his future exertions." She also observed, "he was not of age, and could not, for some time, come into possession of his own property. That now as the thing was irremediable, they had better submit to it with magnanimity."

Necessity is a never-failing counsellor. The father contented himself with solemnly protesting he never would forgive, or see, his daughter. Mrs. Western, on the contrary, received the young couple with gentleness when they returned, which they did after a few days' absence, and endeavoured, by maternal counsel, to obviate the evils of this rash and disobedient step.

Years passed on; and they had several children. Though the father still adhered to his determination of not forgiving his daughter, in the tenderness of her husband and his mother, and surrounded by blooming and healthy children, her life was tranquil and happy.

Some months after the birth of the youngest child, Mr. and Mrs. Western set out on a journey, taking the infant with them. At an inn, where they stopped, Mr. Western got out of the phaeton. At that moment the horses, which were usually perfectly gentle, took fright, and ran with his wife and child, notwithstanding all his own and his servant's attempts to stop them.

The mother's first thought was for her infant, and seizing an opportunity when the speed of the horses was a little checked, by a hill, she threw it upon a hedge of foliage. A mother's ears are quick, she distinguished the cry of the child; it was not one of distress, and she felt new courage, and, springing herself from the carriage with but slight injury, was able to hasten immediately back to recover the child. She found it safe and unhurt, and it recognised its mother with the joyous welcome of infant affection. With a heart filled with gratitude for their preservation, she walked on to meet her husband, knowing he must be enduring dreadful anxiety.

The first person she met was her own servant, "We are safe and uninjured," she exclaimed, "hasten back and tell your master."

He neither moved nor spoke, and as she looked in his face she perceived signs of deep distress. "What has happened? what have you to tell?" she exclaimed. He was unable to evade her eager inquiries, and the information he gave her was abrupt and overwhelming. Mr. Western, in endeavouring to stop the horses, as they rushed furiously forward, received a violent blow on the breast, from the pole of the carriage, and fell dead on the spot. His wretched wife fainted at the intelligence, and so dreadful was the shock, that for many months her reason was partially estranged. Her father could not resist this accumulation of distress. He went immediately to see her, and continued the intercourse, soothing her grief by parental tenderness.

After these melancholy events took place, she resided wholly in the country, devoting herself to the education of her children. She died many years since; and only one of her American friends still survives her.—*New York Mirror.*

## THE BARONESS DE DRACEK.

A CELEBRATED FRENCH SPORTSWOMAN.

Having heard of a lady of the name of Drack (for thus is her name pronounced) who was famed for her love of the chase, and the destruction of wolves and boars, as well as for hunting the wild stag and fox, in this department of France, I determined on visiting the place of her late residence, with a view of ascertaining some particulars of her history, which I could not otherwise have become acquainted with. It being only fourteen years since her death took place, I thought I might meet with some domestic about the chateau who could give me information respecting her, and in this I was not disappointed; the gardener, now in charge of it, having commenced his service in her establishment as whipper-in and feeder. What I saw and heard I will now proceed to detail.

The chateau at which Madame Drack (I will keep to that pronunciation of her name, as such she was generally known by,) resided, is situated about sixteen miles from Calais, about three to the left of the road between Ardres and St. Omer, and in a rich and well-timbered country, in which Henri Quatre, of France, once had a hunting-seat; but the approach to it is by a road by no means adapted to a top-heavy coach. Being in a carriage, how-

ever of a different sort, namely, a low one-horse phaeton, I arrived in safety at the gates, over which were displayed a considerable number of wolves' heads, one of which was of surprising dimensions. On ringing at the bell I was admitted, and I will commence by giving a description of the domain and the chateau, and a few relics of its late most extraordinary possessor.

Her maiden name was Marie Cecile Charlotte De Lauretan, and, I have reason to believe, an heiress to a considerable amount in her own right. Her husband was Baron De Drack, whom she survived thirty-six years; and never having been *enccinte*, she left no immediate heir. Their joint annual income when married, amounted to 60,000 francs (£2400 of our money), reduced to 40,000 at her death, the old lady having, I conclude, rounded the corners of her estates, as she advanced in life, to meet the expenses of her hospitality, and various other claims upon her purse; for, be it known, she was one of the kindest and best of her sex. Her old servant spoke of her in the highest terms of praise, not only as to her accomplishments of field and flood, but of her kindness to her servants, and great care of the poor. Of her person I am unable to say much. It had rather a masculine appearance; and her face was distinguished by a large wart.

The domain,—including the house, stables, and offices, a small flower-garden, a kitchen-garden of five acres, in which there were some peculiarly fine orange-trees, and a paddock in front of the house,—was enclosed by a high wall, and entered by a double set of large pannelled gates, the whole together not covering an extent beyond ten acres of ground. As for the house, it has no pretensions to architectural ornaments, but its means of affording accommodation may be imagined, from the fact of my having stepped thirty paces an end, a good yard to a step, through the rooms and passages of the first floor.

On the left of the entrance-hall is the dinner-room, in which amongst others, is a picture of Madame with her hounds. She is mounted on a gray gelding, said to have been her favorite hunter, and is thus equipped:—A green coat with a gold band round the waist; hat with a high crown and a small gold band; her hair appearing behind in rather large curls, leather breeches and boots, and seated, of course, *a la Nimrod*. In addition to all this, she has the *couteau de chasse* by her side, and the figure of the wolf on the buttons of her clothes denoting the *chef-d'œuvre* of her pursuits. Her best hunting-dress, richly ornamented, cost 1200 francs; but, with the exception of one button, there was not a remnant of it to be found. There were likewise in this room a portrait of Baron de Drack, mounted for the chase, in an olive-colored coat, faced with silver, and in a full cocked hat; and one of a priest, who had been preceptor to Madame in her youth.

But I cannot quit this room without the mention of a very melancholy occurrence that took place in it, one of a very opposite nature to those of which it had for so many years been the scene. I was shown the spot, in one corner of it, on which this extraordinary person fell, stricken with apoplexy, in her seventy-fifth year, and the next day she died. I also saw her tomb—or rather the grave in which her remains are laid—between two elm trees, in a small churchyard hard by; with nothing but a wooden cross at its head, on which the following inscription appears:— *Ici repose le corps de noble Dame Marie Cecile Charlotte de Lauretan, Baronne de Dracek. Decedee le 19 Jan. 1823, age 75.*

In the drawing-room are several pictures on various subjects; amongst them a very good one of an ancestral general officer, in armor, with a beautiful ruff round his neck; his hand resting on his helmet, and his coat of arms appearing on one corner of the canvass. There were others of hunting the wolf, the boar, the stag, and the fox, in all of which Madame is conspicuous; as well as one in which she is represented in the act of fishing, in which she was a great adept. My informant spoke in great praise of her favorite *pecheur*, and how much his loss was lamented by his mistress. Her huntsman also appears in one of those pictures, mounted, and blowing his horn, in a fine laced coat.

I now proceeded to the kitchen, which bore evident traces of the good cheer that for so many years existed in this hospitable chateau; forasmuch as, exclusive of a large fire-place, oven, etc., there were six hot hearths of more than usual dimensions. But when I state that, during the widowhood of Madame Drack—and no doubt such was the case in the Baron's day—she had three dinner parties every week, that is, after each day's hunting, these appendages to good cooking were not more than were requisite. There was in this kitchen the largest head of a stag I ever saw or heard of; the antlers were three and a half feet in height, and the length of his face and forehead measured sixteen inches. He