

EVENING.

As sinks yon glorious sun
Beneath the ocean's breast,
E'en so the Christian when his race is run,
Calmly and sweetly seeks his place of rest.

No wave is on the sea,
No cloud obscures the scene—
Nought mars the beauty and the majesty
Of the departing day—soft, still, serene!

There is in this blest hour
A something not of earth—
A spiritual, a supernatural power
Telling the soul of its immortal birth.

The sun has set—the star
Of evening in the West
Shines forth, e'en as a beacon from afar
Gladdening with hope the ocean-wanderer's breast.

Shadows below—above
The myriad stars appear,
Filling the soul with gentleness and love—
Making it meet for some far holier sphere.

Gaze on the glorious sky,
Gaze on the earth, and then,
Oh, tell me not if thou wert there on high,
One thought of thine would visit earth again.

I would that I could soar,
'Mid yon celestial spheres,
Rejoicing in the power all to explore,
Forgetful of the gloom of this dark vale of tears.

J. McP.

For the Pearl.

BRADGATE PARK.

BY A PILGRIM.

I have wandered (in the early days of my pilgrimage through the land of my fathers) successively to the various places of note with which merry England is so highly favoured. Yes, I have passed through the halls of the Abbey of Newstead, and rested on the couch occupied by Byron himself. I have had the famed skull cup pressed to my lips, and have carved my initials on the oak-tree planted by the poet Lord. I witnessed the lying in state of the hero of Missaloughi—and have leaned over his tomb—I have wandered by the residence of the minstrel of the north—have sat on the seat of the crowned prisoner of St. Helena—have traced the fated field of Bosworth, and quenched my thirst from the well where Richard himself drank on that fatal day. I have slept in the Abbey where Wolsey passed the last threshold in his life—aye, in the chamber where the corpse of Richard stiffened after the fray. I have threaded the forests of Sherwood, and traced the steps of Robin Hood and his men in the iron skull cap and leathern bottle left in the hermitage of St. Ann's—have lingered in the ruins of the castle of Ashby when the sounds of the tourney, and the joust, and the banquet, and the clash of mail, and the shouts of revel, have again sounded in my ear, as I have read the trials of the lady Rebecca and Rowena the beautiful—have wandered by night in the grove of Clifton, sacred to the memory of White—and last not least, I have stood in the Park at Bradgate—the scenes of the early youth of one famed in the annals of her country, and revered in the hearts of her countrymen—here I stand now—and the days of my youth are again present to my mind. There is the joyous party as of yore, the youth and the maiden—aye, youths and maidens many—all under the old oak tree on a bed of primroses, with the hum of bees—the music of the distant waterfall—and the song of the cuckoo—and the fragrant shade from the summer sun, all combining to add to the beauty of the scene—there, too, are distant stables: fit for princely trains. Here is the chapel, the only ruin left of former times—cold, sepulchral dim—there is the tiny fosse which marked the verdant lawn—here are the moss grown foundations of my lady's hall. Hark, what shout is that, aye, the picnic feast is o'er, and away, away to the brow of the hill, to the observatory; there, to that eminence with them I ascend. Ah, how many a time have I ascended there—no longer the watchman the livelong day peeps through the loopholes of the tower—no longer the monks of the neighbouring abbey in their accustomed walk, turn in and hold dispute or high discourse with this janitor of the keep. And yet, still there is the same well known scene—the wood-crowned hill of Bardon, lifts itself on the right—on the left, the towers of Leicester are distinctly seen—before me the forest of Charwood spreads its shade, and the spires of the monastery of Grace Dieu are visible in the distance—on the other side are spread the parks of the Bradgate, deep vista's opening through the distant woods, verdant meadows intersected with crystal streams; the mirrored lake, the herds of deer, the distant halls, the call of the servants, the horn of the huntsman, the hounds, the nobles, the— Ah, where is my mind; exchanging present scenes for those of former days, and peopling with my imagination these deserted lawns. The winter of life is coming over me. With me "Time is," and "Time was," and soon, with me, "Time will be past." Ere that,

let me recall the scenes of former times, as I have heard by tradition from those in whose paths I have trodden, but who now are mingled with the dust.

THE OLD MAN'S MESSAGE.

"The merry bells were all ringing; the royal standard of England flung forth its brodered folds from the tower's grim battlements: the old bridge with its tall overhanging houses, was crowded with holiday-drest spectators; and the fair river sparkling in the sunbeam, and reflecting a cloudless sky, glided proudly on, bearing, on his placid bosom, barges gay with pennon and streamer, and each filled with a gallant freight of high birth and beauty. King Henry had set out that day to hold "jousting" at Greenwich: and there, close beside the tower stairs, surrounded by rich-liveried serving men and silken coated pages, vainly striving to keep back the rude crowd from pressing round to gaze on her youth and beauty—stood Frances, eldest daughter of the chivalrous Charles Brandon, and wife of the wealthy Marquess of Dorset; her amber tresses were gently confined by a jewelled coil; she wore a collar of pearls, the diamond clasp whereof alone out-valued six manors; and a murray-velvet gown designated her rank as marchioness, by its double train—one reverently borne by two attendant maidens, and the other drawn in graceful folds through her broad girdle; with the mantle of rich ermine—a yet prouder symbol, attested her claim to royal blood.

There was a haughty smile on that high-born lady's brow as she passed along, receiving as her unquestioned right, the spontaneous homage always paid to nobility and beauty. She caressed the gallant merlin which sat on her jewelled glove, and looked up with eye undimmed by sorrow to that blue expanse, whose cloudless transparency seemed a meet emblem of her own lofty fortunes. Her gilded barge with its liveried band of rowers drew near; and leaning on the arm of her steward, conspicuous with his white wand and gold chain, she was preparing to descend the steps, when an old man, hitherto unnoticed amongst the crowd, came forward, close to her side, and said: "I have a message for thee." It was a look of mingled anger and wonder that this haughty lady cast on the meanly-dressed stranger: but the proud glance of the high-born marchioness quailed before his steady gaze; her cheek grew pale, and her eyelid drooped; "he held her with his glittering eye," and said:

"Wouldst thou safely sail life's sea?
Trust not to proud Argosie:
Broad sail ill can blast withstand,
Tall masts court the levin brand;
And wrecked that gallant ship shall lie
While safe the light bark boundeth by.
'Cloth of gold,' beware; beware;
High and wealthy, young and fair:
All these joys from thee must part,
Curb thy proud mind—school thine heart.
'Ware ambition: that shall be
The fatal rock to thine and thee."

"Who dares insult me with unsought counsel?" cried the lady, anger having conquered the transient feeling of awe, "Who dares to name chance or change? sooner shall this wild haggard, whom jesses and creance will scarce keep on my wrist, return to me again, than sorrow or change shall visit Frances Brandon!" With angry hand she snapped the tread which secured her merlin, unloosed the jesses—and up soared the gallant bird, while her haughty mistress gazed with triumph on her proud flight.

"Alas!" cried the old steward, "Alas! for the beautiful bird with her gorgeous hood and collar; may she not be reclaimed?"—"Speak not again of her!" proudly replied the marchioness, "onward! time and tide wait for no man!" She threw herself on the tapestried couch in her barge, the rowers seized their oars, the flutes and recorders made soft music; when, as if close beside her, she heard a clear whisper, "Pass on! What shall be, shall be; time and tide wait for no man!" She looked up: no one was near her; but the dark shadow of the tower frowned sternly in the sunshine, like an omen of ill. Onward glided the gilded barge to the soft strains of music and light dash of the oars, and like a summer cloud fled that solemn warning from the proud lady's mind.

There is high feasting at Bradgate; for princely Northumberland is there. Each day two hundred hounds were unkennelled, and two hundred knights and nobles range through the broad green alleys and fern-clad glades of Charwood Forest, and return ere eventide to lead the dance in the lofty halls. And now the bright autumn sun is sinking behind the purple heather-clad hills, and the gallant train are returning from the merry green-wood. On the broad sloping terrace that fronts the setting sun, the Lady of Bradgate, (with brow as haughty, and almost as fair, as when, fifteen years before, she stepped into her gilded barge,) and now Duchess of Suffolk, stands listening with glad ears to the lofty projects of that bold, bad man, she Duke of Northumberland. King Edward is dying: his sisters are at variance: the royal blood flows in the veins of the haughty duchess. "Why should not her eldest daughter, and his son, reach at once the very summit of their long cherished hopes?" The stake is high; and for it they may well venture a desperate game: the prize is no less than the crown of England.

Close behind them, unnoticed by the ambitious mother, save as the fittest instrument for her daring schemes, stands one, whose

touching and romantic history has thrown a spell around every relic of now ruined Bradgate. She, the nursling of literature, the young philosopher, to whose mind the lofty visions of classical antiquity were familiar as household faces; she, who in such early youth fled from all that youth mostly loves, to hold high communion with the spirits of long-buried sages; there stands Lady Jane, with a book in her hand, her nut-brown hair parted on her high intellectual forehead. Her bright hazle eye shrinks from the cold glance of her haughty and unloving mother, but dwells with girlish pleasure on the venerable features of that plainly drest man, in scholar's gown, standing close beside her. He is Roger Ascham, the tutor of three queens, who may well be termed the most illustrious of schoolmasters.

The sun had barely descended, when the steward appeared, bringing tidings that three messengers had just arrived, each demanding instant admission to the duchess. The daughter of that fortunate knight, whose "cloth of frize" had matched so highly and happily with "cloth of gold,"—the wife of that powerful noble, over whose broad lands 'twas fabled that the falcon could stretch his rapid wing right onward for a long summer day—the mother of a goodly family; each wedded or betrothed to the scions of the flower of the land's nobility—yet prouder in the plans and hopes she had framed than in all her enjoyed gifts of fortune, the duchess retired to receive the messengers with the feelings of a queen about to grant an audience. The first entered, and, kneeling before her tapestried footstool, presented a packet of letters. The silken string was soon loosed; the perfumed seal quickly broken; and she read, with uncontrollable delight, that the weak and amiable young king had determined to set aside his sisters' succession in favour of the powerful house of Suffolk.

This messenger being dismissed with rich gifts and kind speeches a second drew near. And more welcome than the former were his tidings; the king was dying: the active agents of Suffolk and Northumberland had ripened their plans for the instant proclamation of her daughter, ere the heiress of the throne could know of his decease. Wrapt in deep visions of regal splendour, half dazzled by the near prospect of the coming glories of her princely family, the duchess sat unconscious of the entrance of the third messenger. At length her eyes fell upon the well-remembered features of the mysterious stranger, seen long years back on a former occasion of triumph. "Yet one more warning—and the last!" said the old man, drawing from beneath his cloak the merlin she had loosed as an emblem of her soaring destiny. He placed it on her hand: her proud boast rushed over-poweringly on her mind. The very merlin, whose return she had linked with chance and change, as things alike impossible—that bird was before her, bright as when she had freed her wing, with her collar of gold filagree set round with turquoise, and hood of crimson silk netted by her own fingers—Whence come? What boding? As soon as she had recovered from the shock, she looked around: but the messenger was gone; and with heavy footsteps, her joy changed to anxious fear, she regained the terrace.

The dreams of ambition can wrap, in the calm apathy of fearless repose, even those who feel themselves doomed by a thousand omens, and ere three days were over, princely Bradgate rang with mirth and revelry. Northumberland and Suffolk had concluded a double alliance of their children: all the terrors of the duchess were forgotten; and her eye rested with proud complacency on the simple beauty of the Lady Jane, for she already saw the crown of England sparkling upon her gifted but sentenced daughter's sweet disapproving brow.

An iron lamp dimly shows a low vaulted room; the damp floor scantily strewn with withered rushes. The flickering light falls upon a rude couch, where lies in disturbed slumber, a woman, whose features, though wasted by long sickness and sorrow, yet show some faint traces of former beauty. A single attendant watches over her. Only by the ermined robe that wraps the sleeper, or by the gold-clasped bible, opened where the vellum leaf bears in beautiful characters the name of JANE GREY, would a stranger learn that the mother of that queen of a day—the proud Duchess of Suffolk lay before him—a prisoner in the tower. The bolts of the iron-barred door grate harshly; and the governor of the tower enters with an order, "For Frances Brandon to be sette at libertye, throve Queen's great clemencie." This once-powerful and dreaded woman is considered too weak and insignificant to excite the fears even of the jealous Elizabeth. Supported by the arm of her sole attendant, the half-awakened sleeper threaded her way through many an intricate long winding passage; until the cool damp night breeze, and the splash of oars, indicate their approach to the water-gate.

Here the liberated prisoner stood for a moment and looked wildly around her: the place brought vague and painful sensations to her memory, and dim remembrances of all that she had been and suffered, were crowded into a few hurried thoughts of agony.

"The boat waits, and the tide is on the turn," cried the rough waterman. "Come away, madam!"—"Ay," replied a distinct voice, close at her side, "onward! time and tide waits for no man." The voice was well-known; it had been heard when she stepped into her gilded barge, with a pride that repelled all thought of sorrow; it sounded when a royal crown was ready to clasp with delusive splendour the sweet brow of Lady Jane;—now, son, daughter, and husband, had fallen beneath the axe of the headsmen, and she