

POETRY.

THE ROBBER.

By William C. Bryant.

Beside a lonely mountain path,
Within a mossy wood
That crowned the wild wind-beaten cliffs,
A lurking robber stood.
His foreign garb, his gloomy eyes,
His cheek of swarthy stain
Bespoke him one who might have been
A pirate on the main
Or banded on the far off hills
Of Cuba or of Spain.

His ready pistol in his hand,
A shadowing bough he raised,
Glared forth, as crouching tiger glares,
And muttered as he gazed—
"Sure he must sleep upon his stool—
I deemed the laggard near;
I'll give him for the gold he wears,
A sounder slumber here;
His chair, or when I press his flank,
Shall leap like mountain deer."

Long, long he watched, and listened long,
There came no traveller by,
The ruffian growled a harsher curse,
And gloomier grew his eye.
While o'er the sultry heaven, began
A leaden haze to spread,
And, past his noon, the summer sun
A dimmer beam to shed,
And on that mountain summit fell
A silence deep and dread,

Then ceased the bristling pine to sigh,
Still hung the birchen spray;
The air that wrapped those mossy cliffs
Was motionless as they.
Mute was the cricket in his cleft—
But mountain torrents round
Sent hollow murmurs from their glens,
Like voices under ground,
A change came o'er the robber's cheek,
He shuddered at the sound.

'Twas vain to ask what fearful thought
Convulsed his brow with pain;
"The dead talk not," he said at length,
And turned to watch again.
Skyward he looked—a lurid cloud
Hung low and blackening there;
And through its skirts the sunshine came,
A strange, malignant glare,
His ample chest drew in, with toil,
The hot and stifling air.

His ear now caught a distant sound—
But not the tramp of steel;
A roar as of a torrent stream,
Swollen into sudden speed.
The gathered vapors in the west,
Before a rushing blast,
Like living monsters of the air,
Black serpent-like and vast,
Writhe, roll, and swooping o'er the sun,
A frightful shadow cast.

Hark to that nearer, mightier crash!
As if a giant crowd
Trampling the oaks with iron feet,
Had issued from the cloud.
White fragments of discovered rock
Go thundering from on high,
And eastward, from their eyrie-cliffs,
The shrieking eagles fly;
And lo! the expected traveller comes,
Spurring his charger by.

To that wild warning of the air,
The assassin lends no heed;
He lifts the pistol to his eye,
He notes the horseman's speed.
Firm in his hand, and sure his aim—
But ere the flash is given,
Its eddies filled with woods upturn,
And spray from torrents driven,
The whirlwind sweeps the crashing wood—
The giant pines are riven,

Riven, and wrenched from splintering cliffs,
They rise like down in air:
At once the forest's rocky floor
Lies to the tempest bare,
Ridder and steel and robber whirled
O'er precipices vast,
Along trunks and boughs and shattered crags,
Mingled and crushed, are cast,
The calamant and eagle made
At morn, a grin repeat.

A Terrific Joke.—I was one day, when a boy, at the Anatomical Theatre in Dublin, with a party of young friends, pupils to surgeons. Whilst I was gazing about, absorbed in wonder and curiosity, they, in their waggery, contrived to slip out one by one, and leave me alone in the middle of the room. Anon, I heard a rattling sort of noise close at my ear. I turned round, and there, at my elbow, stood a complete full grown skeleton, nodding his head, shaking his bones, and grinning at me! He had descended from his usual place (that part of the roof immediately over the centre of the room,) by means of a cord and pulley, through which appliances he could be occasionally let down so as to stand upon the floor.

A Gigantic Effort.—Cornelius Magrath, the Irish giant, made a show of himself in a room in College Green, on the left hand, going to the Parliament House. There he died; whereupon a party of the college lads got into the house, and up stairs, with a view of carrying off the body to be dissected at their anatomy-house.—Finding that they could not conveniently get the dead giant down stairs, they actually took out the window sash, and hoisted him out, body and bones, into the street, and thence to the college. Subsequently I saw his skeleton there, up against the wall in the anatomical theatre, among other skeletons of all ages and dimensions. I was one of the crowd under the window viewing the above enthusiastic exploit, which the parties to the "abduction" averred was for the improvement of surgery.

Why is a Surgeon setting a dislocated ankle, like a fellow running away? Because he's pulling heel.

Why is a man coming from under the doctor's hands like a certain news-paper in this town? Because he comes out weekly (weakly.)

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