

## THE VISION.

Poem on the slaughter of Mr. Richard Cameron, and others, at Ayrsmoss, on the 22d of July, 1680. Written by an Ayrshire shepherd lad.

In a dream of the night I was wafed away  
To the miltlands of mist, where the martyrs lay;  
Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen,  
Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green.

'Twas a dream of those ages of darkness and blood,  
When the minister's home was the mountain and wood;  
When in Wellwood's dark valley the standard of Zion,  
All bloody and torn, 'mong the heather was lying.

'Twas morning; and summer's young sun, from the east,  
Lay in lovin' repose on the green mountain's breast;  
On Wardlaw and Cairn-tale the clear shining dew  
Glisten'd sheen 'mong the heath-bells and mountain flowers blue.

And far up in heaven, near the white sunny cloud,  
The song of the lark was melodious and loud,  
And in Glenmuir's wild solitudes, lengthen'd and deep,  
Were the whistling of plovers and bleating of sheep.

Then Wellwood's sweet valley breath'd music and gladness;  
The fresh meadow blooms hung in beauty and redness;  
While its daughters were happy to hail the returning,  
And drink the delights of a sweet July morning.

But, oh! there were hearts cherish'd far other feelings,  
Illum'd by the light of prophetic revealings,  
Who drank from the scen'ry of beauty but sorrow;  
For they knew that their blood would bedew it to-morrow.

'Twas the few faithful ones who with Cameron were lying,  
Conceal'd 'mong the mist, where the heath-fowl was crying;  
For the horsemen of Earishall around them were hovering,  
And their bridle-reins rung through the thin misty covering.

Their faces grew pale, and their swords were unsheath'd,  
But the vengeance that darken'd their brow was unbreath'd;  
With eyes turn'd to heaven, in calm resignation,  
They sung their last song to the God of salvation.

The hills with the deep mournful music were ringing,  
The curlew and plover in concert were singing;  
But the melody died 'mid derision and laughter,  
As the host of ungodly rush'd on to the slaughter.

Though in mist, and in darkness, and fire, they were shrouded,  
Yet the souls of the righteous were calm and unclouded,  
Their dark eyes flash'd lightning, as firm and unbending,  
They stood like the rock which the thunder is rending.

The muskets were flashing, the blue swords were gleaming,  
The helmets were cleft, and the red blood was streaming,  
The heavens grew dark, and the thunder was rolling,  
When in Wellwood's dark murlands the mighty were falling.

When the righteous had fallen, and the combat was ended,  
A chariot of fire through the dark cloud descended;  
Its drivers were angels on horses of whiteness,  
And its burning wheels turned on axles of brightness.

A seraph unfolded its doors bright and shining,  
All dazzling like gold of the seventh refining,  
And the souls that came forth out of great tribulation,  
Hastily mounted the chariot and steeds of salvation.

On the arch of the rainbow the chariot is gliding,  
Through the path of the thunder the horsemen are riding,  
Glide swiftly, bright spirits! the prize is before ye,—  
A crown never fading, a kingdom of glory!

A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE.—Addison, in one of his beautiful papers in the "Spectator," says that he has been very forcibly struck by this epitaph, written as if by the man for himself, after death had unfolded to him the realities of another world.

What I spent, I wasted:  
What I lent, I lost:  
What I gave, I have."

## AUSTRALIAN SKETCHES.

(From the *Emigrant's Guide*, by Rev. David Mackenzie, M. A.)

## THE BLACKS IN AUSTRALIA.

Among the blacks infanticide is and has been frequent. It is sometimes difficult to point out the motives which lead to the commission of this crime. It is not always to be ascribed to the want of affection on the part of the mother, except, perhaps, in the case of half-caste male children. Captain Sturt, while on the journey down the Murray in 1830, witnessed a black fellow kill his infant child by knocking its head against a stone, after which he threw it on the fire, and then devoured it. Here was an instance of infanticide, committed apparently from the want of food, as well as from the want of affection.

The want of affection is beyond all doubt a frequent cause. A black woman, who was seen committing this act by knocking her child's brains out against a tree, was once pointed out to me; and on my asking her why she had committed such a crime, she quickly and coolly replied, "Pickaninny too much cry."

The famous Bennilong, whose society was so much courted in England, assigned a totally different reason for murdering his infant child. Having followed his wife's body to the grave, he astonished the bystanders by placing the living child along with the dead mother, in the same grave, which was instantly filled up by the other native blacks in attendance. The defence which the father (Bennilong) made for this unnatural act was, that the mother being dead, no woman could be found willing to nurse the child, and that therefore it would soon die a worse death.

There is apparently very little trouble in rearing black children. The child is generally carried by the mother on her shoulder, sometimes in a bag of net-work made of bark filaments; and sometimes the child is seen slung over her shoulder, and held by one leg, the little black head swinging like a pendulum athwart the mother's back as she walks. I have been assured by an eminent medical practitioner, who had various opportunities of observing the fact, that there is one part of the original curse which the black mothers are not doomed to experience to the same extent as European mothers.

At a very early age the male children learn a variety of gymnastic exercises. I have seen a boy, whose age, I was told by the mother, was just four times as many moons as she had fingers on both hands, or about three years and a quarter, dance, wrestle, swim, throw the spear and boomerang, and sing their famous national tunes. The happy little fellow had never in his life been subjected to the bondage of wearing any clothing. It is an amusing spectacle to witness half a dozen little boys and girls stark naked, engaged in a sham fight with their yam sticks. They display an amazing degree of presence of mind, agility, and good humour, while they thrust parry, and ward.

There is one respect in which the blacks far excel the Europeans, namely, in the perfection in which they (the blacks) possess the five senses, especially sight, hearing, and smelling. A European would be quite astonished at their sharpness of sight, quickness of hearing, and keenness of smell. They can trace a man or beast over rocks or hard ground, where a white man could see no mark whatever. Among thousands of objects of every shape, size, and hue, the black fellow's quick eye can detect, some hundreds of yards off, an opossum sitting on a limb of a tree. And they put their ears to the ground, and can tell you if there is anything moving within an immense distance of the spot. This quickness of hearing has enabled many of them living among us to pick up many words and phrases in the English language, in an incredibly short time.

Their smell is nearly as keen as that of a Scotch terrier, and they turn this natural qualification to an equally good account, smelling at the cavities of stringy bark trees, when hunting opossums, their favourite food. I have not had equal opportunities of proving whether these people possess the remaining two senses, those of touch and taste, in equal perfection. The necessity which they are under of constantly exercising, at least three of their senses, both in providing their daily food, and in guarding against sudden attacks from their enemies, may have contributed to improve these senses; but these causes are insufficient to account for the very great superiority, in this respect, of the black man over the white. I fully believe that this superiority is partly inherent or natural, not acquired.