

THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT, AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCER.

Vol. I. No. 32]

QUEBEC, TUESDAY, 1st MAY, 1838.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

POETRY.

THE SOLDIER'S FUNERAL. BY MISS LANDON.

And the muffled drum rolled on the air,
Warriors with stately step were there;
Every carbine was turned to the ground;
Solemn the sound of their measured tread,
As silent and slow they followed the dead.
The rickless horse was led in the rear,
There were white plumes waving o'er the helm,
Helmet and sword were laid on the pall,
For it was a soldier's funeral.

That soldier had stood on the battle plain,
Where every step was over his slain,
But the brand and the ball had passed him by,
And he came to his own level to die.
'Twas hard to come to that fateful land,
And not clasp one familiar hand!
'Twas hard to be numbered amid the dead,
Or they could hear his welcome said!
But 'twas something to see his coffin come more,
And to lay his bones on his own level shore;
'O think that the friends of his youth might weep
O'er the green grass turf of the soldier's sleep!

The eagles ceased their warbling sound,
As the coffin was lowered into the ground;
A volley was fired, a blessing said—
One moment's pause—and they laid the dead!
I saw a poor and aged man,
His step was feeble, his lip was wan;
He knelt him down on the new raised mound,
His face was bowed—his cold damp ground,
He raised his head, his tears were done—
The father had prayed o'er his only son!

ANNABELL'S BRIDAL L.,

A LEGEND OF A DREAM.

(Continued.)

PART III.—THE END OF THE LEGEND.

And now the Spring had come—'twas fair—
ye young—as delicate—as if there were no crime
on the earth which she did not in beauty—no fire
of evil burning within her soul to which
her bloom were a fragrant. Hated, and re-
morse, and vengeance, had entered one house,
where but a twelvemonth before had dwelt
peace and confidence. From that hour forth,
when Annabel had disclosed her resolve to
her sister, the two looked on each other's
faces no more. The elder maiden, it was said,
dwelt chiefly within the solitude of her own
character, retired and penitential; for the lover,
whose heart she had stolen away, came but
sparingly. It may be that he who had been
once fickle was now even less likely to prove
constant, when his last fancy had cast him
the lands and wealth of his forefathers.

Daily were tales brought to Annabel—how
that her sister had pined to be forgiven—how
prayed that she would not, to inflict a less re-
venge, make herself the greater sacrifice; but
Annabel dismissed rumours and entreaties as
though her heart had become stone; and, re-
gardless of all that was said, awaited, in stern
obedience, the hour which was to consign her
to the arms of dotage and disease. One, and
only one, had she been seen to waver, when
Lord Orde's faithless son had sought an inter-
view with her. She trembled violently, as
she cried, "And he too, seeks me—!—his
—his name is not yet!"

But who can wonder that Annabel shrink
and sickened at heart, when the day appointed
for her ratification of the fearful compact
began to approach? One of her maid-servants
subtly remarked that, when her nights were
most troubled, she was in the morning most
pensive in contriving some new pumps and
splendours, which should gild the fate she
was about to embrace. Thrice had she chosen
her wedding clothes, thrice cast them
aside with contempt—"The last suit was of cloth
side with cotton—"Dear lady," said
of silver and diamonds. "Dear lady," said
the maid-servant, "of whom we have spoken, she
displayed these gorgeous garments to her sis-
ter and a stray mistress, "you will hardly
wear these robes twice, they are so heavy in
their exceeding richness!"

"And why should I wear them twice,
fool?" was the hasty answer. "Thinkest

thou I look forward to a second wedding-day?"
and she sighed, and sunk for a moment into
thought. The maiden, emboldened by the ap-
pearance of this gentler mood, ventured to
murmur, "The Lady Ida's page was here,
but a moment ago, in tears, for he says . . ."

"Be silent," broke in Annabel, in a tone
which brooked not remonstrance. "I hear
my Lord Orde's foot;—should the boy come
again, I will have him driven from my door
with a lash!"

"Alas! what a fearful change is here!
society, I should judge it?" murmured the sa-
cred maiden, making the sign of the cross,
while her haughty mistress nervously herself
to receive the distasteful crosses of her betroth-
ed!—and the poor Lady Ida, they say, dy-
ing!—Saints above! but she has a ruthless
heart!"

It was the wedding morning; the fairest
day of the fairest May; and the bride went
forth in such state as had never before been
seen at Courtenay Hall, albeit kings and
queens had made progresses thither. But
she went forth alone; for Sir Guy Courtenay,
always strange, that day left not his chamber;
and Ida, it was whispered by the maidens
who bore Annabel's jewelled train, had fad-
ed of some inward decline, till she was now
unable to raise herself upon her feet, and Her-
bert could hardly be expected to grace the
triumph of one who he had so falsely wronged.
The air was warm, and it was then the
felicity of her beauty had never been under-
stood, though there was a glance, and a col-
our, and a step, which made beholders sigh
and they back, as she was coming. The
procession was noble; the way to the church
strenged with flowers sable-deep; gold was
thrown in handfuls to the poor, who flocked
about to stare upon the pageantry but not to
bless its queen; and trumpets, and dulcimers,
and recorders went before her. But, in spite
of all this glitter and magnificence—in spite
of the merry sunshine and the gracious air of
spring—men felt that the gaiety of show was
a hollow mockery; and the Lady Annabel's
bridal train passed onward to the church in
silence.

For a moment, indeed, the line of march
was broken by a poor, wasted girl, pale with
night-watching, and clad in a faded suit, who
brought them to delay the ceremony but one
hour, for his mistress's sake; but a man-
agers, at Annabel's command, thrust him vio-
lently back, and he was left behind, crushed
and bleeding, upon the flowers over
which the remorseless one had swept. They
searched the church—they reached the altar,
beside which stood the sorrow, pained, Lord
Orde, apparelled in the gay colours which
left only youth and beauty. It was after-
wards said by some that Annabel closed her
eyes, as if to shut out some hideous spectacle,
when she approached the shrine; others no-
ticed, that when she placed herself before the
priest, in readiness for the ceremony, she
stood upon the tomb of the wicked Lady Ursula;
and the credulous have whispered of a
low sound under ground, heard at that mo-
ment of a strange shuddering, as though an
earthquake was at hand. But the maiden
noticed not these portents; she made the re-
quest with a cool cheek, and a steady eye,
and an unflinching lip. She submitted to the
embrace of her skeleton bridegroom, with a
grace which was well enough put on to de-
ceive all save one—that one herself. There
was a pause when the knot was irrevocably
tied; for the ablast of parasites among the
wedding guests recoiled from the sight of so
ill-matched a pair, and could utter no con-
gratulations. At that moment, the poor bleeding
page tottered up the aisle, and, making his
way through the crowd with a resolution that
would not be grieved, stood close to the la-
dy Orde's ear. "Joy to you, fair lady!"
cried he passionately with his last strength—
"joy to your gay wedding! The Lady Ida
is dead, and here comes a messenger who will
confirm my tale."

And, glistly as a corpse, Sir Herbert stood
before the newly-wedded pair. Annabel's
eyes wandered over his figure, as though she

were trying to trace the course of the air—
Some thought that in her pride she would
not recognize him; by others she was deem-
ed really to have forgotten him in the hurry
of the agitating moment. At length her
frame began to waver, for her heart was bro-
ken in the struggle; she only exclaimed,
"Had I but waited!"—the tone of misery
rang in the ears of her attendants to their dy-
ing day—and then sunk upon the pavement,
half buried in the rich velvet of her train, and
the diamonds upon her brow, which decked,
it was thought, a corpse. It was long ere
she stirred, or spoke, or breathed—long ere
they could raise her from the floor, no longer
the haughty-hearted Annabel, but a frowning,
timorous idiot!

The grass now grows thick on the floor of
Courtenay Hall.

THE SISTERS.

A SKETCH.

[From Wilson's Tale of the Borders.]

There is not a period of deeper luxury and
delight than the season when the nightingale
raises its charmed voice to welcome the glo-
rious spring, like the spirit of life riding upon
sunbeams, breathes upon the earth. Yielding
to its renewing influence, the feelings and the
facies of youth rush back upon our heart in
all their holiness, freshness and exultation,
and we feel ourselves a deathless part of the
joyous creation, which is glowing around us
in beauty beneath the smile of its God! Who
has seen the foliage of ten thousand trees
bursting into leaves, each kissed by a dew-
drop; who has beheld a hundred flowers of
varied hues expanding into loveliness, steal-
ing their colours from the rainbow's majesty
of the morning sun—who has listened to me-
lody from the yellow warbler;—to music from
every bush!—heard

"The birds sing love on every spray,"

and gazed on the blue sky of his own beau-
tiful land, swimming like a singing sea around
the sun!—who has seen, who has heard these,
and not been ready to kneel upon the soil that
gave him birth? Who has not then, as all
nature lived and breathed, and shouted their
hymns of glory around him, held his breath in
quivering delight, and felt the presence of his
own immortality, the assurance of his soul's
eternal duration, and wondered that sin should
exist upon a world so beautiful. But this mor-
tals keeps us from our narrative.

On one of the most lovely mornings of
the season we have mentioned several glad
girls were seen tripping lightly towards the cottage
of Peggy Johnston. Peggy was the widow
of a border fighter, who died young but left
her, as the phrase runs, well to do in the
world. She had two daughters, both in the
pride of their young womanhood, and the sun
shone not on a lovelier pair; both were grace-
ful as the lilies, that bowed their heads to the
brook which ran near their cottage-door, and
both were mild, modest, and retiring, as the
wee primrose that peeped forth beside the
threshold. Both were that morning, by the
consent of their mother, to bestow their hands
upon the objects of their young affections.
But we will not dwell upon their bridal; only
a few short months were passed, when their
mother was summoned into the world where
the weary are at rest. On her death-bed she
divided unto them equal portions, consisting
of a few hundreds. Their mourning for her
loss, which for a time was mingled with bit-
terness, gradually passed away, and long
years of happiness appeared to welcome them
from the bosom of futurity. The husbands of
both were in business, and resided in a mar-
ket town in Cumberland. The sister's names
were Helen and Margaret, and if a preference
could have been given, Margaret was the
most lovely and gentle of the two. But be-
fore the tree that sheltered her hopes had time
to blossom, the serpent gnawed its roots, and
it withered like the gourd of the angry
prophet. Her dark eyes lost their lustre, and the
tears ran down her cheeks where the roses
had perished for ever. She spoke, but there
was none to answer her—she sighed, but

there was no comforter, save the mournful
voice of selah. Her young husband sat car-
tousing in the midst of his boon companions—
where the thought of a wife, or of home ne-
ver enters, and night following night belied
them reel forth into the streets to finish their
debauch in a house of shame!

Such were the miserable midnight of Mar-
garet the beautiful, the neck, while Helen
beheld every day increasing her felicity in
the care and affection of her temperate hus-
band. She was the world to him, and he all
that that world contained to her. And often
as gloaming fell grey around them, still would
they

"Sit and look into each other's eyes
Silent and happy, as if God had given
Nought else worth looking at on this side heaven!"

A few years passed over them. But hope
visited not the dwelling of poor Margaret.
Her husband had sunk into the habitual drunk-
ard; and not following his business, his busi-
ness was become a wreck. And she, so late
the fairest of the fair, was now a dejected and
broken-hearted mother, herself and her chil-
dren in rags, a prey to filthiness and disease,
sitting in a miserable hovel stripped alike
of furniture and the necessities of life, where
the wind and the rain whistled and drifted through
the broken windows. To her each day the
sun shone upon misery, while her children
were crying around her for bread, and quar-
relling with each other; and she, now weep-
ing in the midst of them, and now cursing
the wretched man to whom they owed their being.
Daily did the drunkard reel from his haunt of
debauchery into his den of wretchedness.
Then did the stricken children crouch behind
their miserable mother for protection, as his
red eyes glared upon their famished cheeks.

But she now met his rage with the silent
scowl of heart-shaken and callous defiance,
which tending but to inflame the infuriated
madman, then! then burst forth the more
than fiendish clamour of domestic war; and
then was heard upon the street the children's
shriek—the screams and bitter revellings of
the long patient wife—with the cruel impreca-
tions and unnatural blasphemies of the mon-
ster for whom language has no name!—as he
rushed forward putting cowardice to the
blush) and with his clenched hand struck to
the ground, amidst the children she bore him,
the once gentle and beautiful being he had
sworn before God to protect!—she, whom
once, he would not permit!

"The winds of heaven visit her cheeks to rough
her,"

she, who would have thought her life cheap
to have laid it down in his service, he kicked
from him like a disobedient dog! These are
the every day changes of drinking habits—
these are the transformations of intemperance.

Turn we now to the friends of the happier
Helen—the business of the day is done, and he
perceives his fair children eagerly waiting his
approach, while delight beams from his eyes,
contentment plays upon his lips, and he
stretches out his hand to welcome them, while

"The expecting we-thing toddle stouter through
To meet their dad w' flintin' noise an' p'ice,
His wee bit ingle blinkin' bonny,
His clean heath-stane an' thirly wife's smile,
Does a' his weary carling cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour and his toil."

And while the younglings climbed his knee
"The envied kiss to share," the elder brothers
and sisters thronged around him, eager to re-
peat their daily and Sabbath-school tasks, and
obtain as their reward, the fond pressure of a
father's hand, and behold exultation and affec-
tion sparkling from his eyes; while the happy
mother sat by, plying her needle, and

"Garing and elies lock amiss as well as the new,"
and gazed upon the scene before her with a
rapture none but mothers know. Here there
was no crying or wailing for food—no quarrel-
lings—no blasphemies; but the cheerful is p-
per fore,—the voice of psalms was heard in
solenn sounds,—the Book of God was opened
—the father knelt, and the children bent their
knees around him. And could an angel gaze