

POETRY.

TO A WATERFOWL.

WHITEN, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the Fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted in the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or margin of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side.

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and thumable air,—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height the cold thin atmosphere;
Yet, stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone; the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given
And shall not soon depart.

Ho, who, from zone to zone
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone,
Will lead my steps aright.

MISCELLANY.

From "Sketches by Boz."

THE CRIMINAL'S LAST NIGHT ON EARTH.

WHEN the warrant for a prisoner's execution arrives at Newgate, he is immediately removed to the cells, and confined in one of them until he leaves it for the scaffold. He is at liberty to walk in the yard, but both in his walks and in his cell he is constantly attended by a turnkey, who never leaves him on any pretence whatever. We entered the first cell. It was a stone dungeon eight feet long by six wide with a bench at the further end, under which were a common horse rug, a bible and prayer book. An iron candle stick was fixed into the wall at the side; and a small high window in the back admitted as much air and light as could struggle in between a double row of heavy crossed iron bars. It contained no other furniture of any description.

Conceive the situation of a man spending his last night on earth in this cell. Buoyed up with some vague and undefined hope of reprieve, he knew not why—indulging in some wild and visionary idea of escaping, he knew not how—hour after hour of the three preceding days allowed him for preparation, has fled with a speed which no man living would deem possible, for none but this dying man can know. He has wearied his friends with entreaties, exhausted the attendants with importunities, neglected in his feverish restlessness the timely warnings of his spiritual consolers; and now that the illusion is at last dispelled, now that eternity is before him and guilt behind, now that his fears of death amount almost to madness, and an overwhelming sense of his helpless, hopeless state, rushes upon him, he is lost and stupefied, and has neither thoughts to turn to, nor power to call upon, the Almighty Being from whom alone he can

seek mercy and forgiveness, and before whom his repentance can alone avail.

Hours have gleed by, and still he sits upon the same stone bench with folded arms, heedless alike of the fast decreasing time before him, and the urgent entreaties of the good man at his side. The feeble light is wasting gradually, and the deathlike stillness of the street without, broken only by the rumbling of some passing vehicle, which echoes mournfully through the empty yards warns him that the night is waning fast away. The deep bell of St Paul's strikes—one! He heard it; it has roused him. Seven hours left! and he paces the narrow limits of his cell with rapid strides, cold drops of terror starting on his forehead, and every muscle of his frame quivering with agony. Seven hours! He suffers himself to be led to his seat, mechanically takes the bible which is placed in his hand and tries to read and listen. No! his thoughts still wander. The book is torn and soiled by use—how like the book he read his lesson in at school just forty years ago! He has never bestowed a thought upon it since he left it as a child; and yet the place, the time, the room, nay, the very boys he played with, crowd as vividly before him as if they were scenes of yesterday; and some forgotten phrase, some childish word of kindness, rings in his ears like the echo of one uttered but a minute since. The deep voice of the clergyman recalls him to himself. He is reading from the sacred book its solemn promises of pardon for repentance, and its awful denunciation of obdurate men. He falls upon his knees and clasps his hands to pray. Hush! what sound was that? He starts upon his feet. It cannot be two yet—Hark! Two quarters have struck—the third—the fourth. It is! Six hours left! Tell him not of repentance or comfort. Six hours' repentance for eight times six years of guilt and sin! He turns his face in his hands, and throws himself on the bench.

Worn out with watching and excitement, he sleeps, and the same unsettled state of mind pursues him in his dreams. An insupportable load is taken from his breast; he is walking with his wife in a pleasant field with the bright blue sky above them, and a fresh and boundless prospect on every side—how different from the stone walls of Newgate! And she is looking, not as she did when he saw her for the last time in that dreadful place, but as she used to do when he loved her long ago, before misery and ill treatment had altered her looks, and voice had changed his nature. And she is leaning upon his arm, and looking up into his face with tenderness and affection—and he does not strike her now, nor rudely shake her from him. And oh! how glad he is to tell her all he had forgotten in that last hurried interview, and to fall on his knees before her and fervently beseech her pardon for all the unkindness and cruelty that wasted her form and broke her heart! The scene suddenly changes. He is on his trial again, there are the judge and jury, and prosecutors and witnesses, just as they were before. How full the court is—what a sea of heads—with a gallery, too, and a scaffold—and how all those people stare at him! Verdict, "Guilty." No matter; he will escape. The night is dark and cold, the gates have been left open, and in an instant he is in the street, flying from the scene of his imprisonment like the wind. The streets are cleared, the open fields are gained, and the broad wide country lies before him. Onward he dashes in the midst of darkness, over hedge and ditch, through mud and pool bounding from spot to spot with a speed and lightness astonishing even to himself. At length he pauses; he must be safe from pursuit now; he will stretch himself on that bank and sleep till sunrise.

A period of unconsciousness succeeds. He wakes cold and wretched. The dull grey light of morning is stealing into the cell, and falls upon the form of the attendant turnkey. Convinced by his dreams, he starts from his uneasy bed in momentary uncertainty. It is but momentary. Every object in that narrow cell is too truthfully real to admit of doubt or mistake. He is the condemned felon again, guilty and despoiled; and in two hours more he is a corpse.

APPRENTICES.—How extremely difficult it has in all ages been found, to convince the Apprentice that his own interests and prosperity are advanced exactly in proportion to the degree of faithfulness with which he discharges his duties to his employer, and the exertion he makes to promote his master's interests. This arises in a measure, from the proneness of young men to be thought only for the present. They do not generally give themselves the least anxiety about the future, and seem to forget that they too may at some period not far distant become masters and employers and called upon to occupy responsible stations in society.

We have often been pained to witness the want of respect manifested by apprentices for employers, and the degree of indifference and neglect shown by the former towards the interest of the latter. Indeed so extensive has been the mischief arising from this ruinous and mischievous course of apprentices, that the question is already agitated among employers whether the trouble and perplexity of boys at the present day, do not overbalance all the value of their services.

These things ought not so to be, and it need not be thus. Let our young friends reflect on what we have said, and each ask himself if all and more is not true; and let him resolve it once that it shall be no longer true of him. We beseech you be faithful and respectful to those under whose charge and guardianship you have been placed, for by so doing you will not only secure the confidence and respect of all around you, but it will prepare you for a course of faithfulness to yourselves in after life, and place within your reach important advantages when you come to act for yourself.

The whole human race, if collected in one spot, would not occupy a space equal to that in which London now stands. For supposing the population of the globe to amount to 1,000,000,000 souls, and the average space occupied by each individual to be one square foot, the whole of the human race collected together in one column would cover a square of 31,620 feet, or of about six miles. They would all easily be contained within the circumference of London.

Marriage is considered the *bridle* state; and indeed, it puts a *curb* upon most persons.

Why are the majority of women like facts? Because they are "stubborn things."

BAREFACED ATTEMPT.—A man was discovered in Middle street, on Saturday morning picking his own pockets, but as he had found nothing to speak of, he was suffered to escape.

The sword of wit is like the scythe of time; cuts friend and foe, and attacks every thing that accidentally lies in its way.

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