

THE  
LITERARY GARLAND.

Vol. II.

MARCH, 1840.

No. 4.

(ORIGINAL.)

DRAMATIC SCENE.

BY E. L. C.

NAOMI.

Sweet daughter, urge it not,—  
For well I know, though severed one fond link,  
That bound thee to this land, a thousand more,  
By tender nature wove with holy joys,  
And pleasant memories, knit thy youthful heart  
To this loved spot of earth. For me, alas!  
Naught doth it now contain, save the green graves  
Of my dead household; and my parting step,  
Joyless and sad, turns wearily away,  
To distant Bethlehem, city of my birth.  
Then, wherefore join thy destiny with mine?  
Why cleave to her, who like a barren tree  
Stands of its glory shorn, branchless, and bare,  
Unightly, and unsought as once it was,  
For its protecting shade,—a blasted trunk,  
Seared by the lightnings, riven by the bolts  
Of judgments dark and stern.

RUTH.

Can I forget,  
That once, dear mother, from that blighted trunk  
Sprang goodly boughs, whereon the golden fruit  
Of love, and joy, and sweet affections grew?  
And now that all are withered, mute the lips,  
And cold the loving hearts, that would have lent  
With their fond ministry, a summer's glow,  
E'en to the frosty winter of thy life,  
Shall I forsake thee? I, who mourn with thee,  
The lost, the loved, and daily with my tears,  
Embalm the dust o'er which thy sorrows flow,  
Sharing thy griefs, as we the joys once shared,  
Now buried with our dead.

NAOMI.

My fond, fond child!  
The with'ring touch of grief chills not the glow  
Of pure and gushing love, that like a fount  
Dwells in thy heart, sending its chrystal streams  
O'er many a waste to bless the lone and sad.  
Worthy thou wert of him, my eldest born,  
My bright, and beautiful, who first awoke  
Within my soul, that joy, of all earth's joys,

Most exquisite,—a mother's rapturous love.  
Yet, wherefore clingest thou to her who bore  
Thy cherished one? No Mahlon still remains  
To bless thy youth—the quiver of my hopes  
Is empty quite—each goodly arrow  
Parted from my bow, and left it all unstrung.  
Never again within my desolate home,  
Shall the glad voice of filial love be heard,  
Nor e'er, for son of mine, these aged hands  
Light the gay bridal lamp, or round the brow  
Of his young bride, as once, dear child, round thine,  
Twine wedlock's mystic crown.

RUTH.

Dear mother, cease!  
For ah, a host of rainbow memories,  
Thy words invoke. Like the magician's spell,  
They bear me back to the unclouded past,  
Rich with its clustered joys, its sunny hopes,  
Its promises of rapture yet to come,—  
Bright promises, but vain,—how vain, alas!  
Let the cold grave declare, in whose dark bosom;  
Lie our precious ones, all, all unconscious  
Of the pangs we feel.

NAOMI.

Repine not, daughter,  
God has chastened us, and to His will,  
In meekness let us bow. But few more suns,  
Shall glad this laughing earth, ere my worn frame,  
Wearied with pain and grief, shall cease from toil,  
And in the shelter of the quiet tomb  
My aching head be pillowed to its rest.  
Yet thou, my child,—still on thy youthful brow,  
Childhood's sweet graces dwell, and the dark clouds  
That shade thine early dawn, shall all dissolve,  
Ere thy meridian sun has climbed its height,  
And leave thy sky one bright expanse of blue.  
Cherish the memory of thine early loved,  
Yet let time yield a balm to soothe the pang  
Of thy first grief, intensest though it be,  
Of all that after years in their swift flight,  
May bring to wound. Bright hours shall yet be thine,