THE LITERARY TRANSCRIPT,

AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCER.

Vol. 1. No. 57.] QUEBEC, SATURDAY, 7TH JULY, 1838. [Price One Penny.

POETRY.

TO A LOVER OF AUTUMN.

BY MISS E. M. HAMILTON.

You blame me, sister, when I say,
That autumn makes me sad ;
But quicklier still you silence me,
For thinking Spring is glad ;
Does it not prove, howe'er we blame,
We all are very much the same ?

There is in every breast that lives
A sadness of its own,
That reason neither cures nor gives,
Whose fountain is unknown ;
A something that we seldom tell,
But that we cannot conquer well

Why is the joyous Spring to thee
A melancholy thing ?
And why does Autumn unto me
Such gloomy feelings bring ?
Neither can answer, but we know
We do not merely fancy so.

It may have been some single hour,
That colour'd them to both ;
Some vivid moment's lightning power,
That, growing with our growth,
Made that to one for ever sad,
Which to the other seems all glad.

Perhaps the heart was beating fast,
With bliss too deep to say,
When on a hawthorn bough we cast
Our happy eyes away ;
Perhaps when tears were ill-restrain'd,
That look on a dead leaf was chain'd.

We mark'd not then the hawthorn bough,
Nor then the wither'd leaf ;
But they are felt intensely now,
In silent joy or grief ;
Let us compassionately see,
Man's spirit is a mystery !*

* "Who knoweth the spirit of man ?"—Ecclesiastes, iii. 21.

DORA.

BY MISS MARY R. MITFORD.

Few things are more delightful than to saunter along these green lanes of ours, in the busy harvest-time ; the deep verdure of the hedge-rows, and the strong shadow of the trees, contrasting so vividly with the fields, partly waving with golden corn, partly studded with regular piles of heavy wheat-sheaves ; the whole population abroad ; the whole earth teeming with fruitfulness, and the bright autumn sun careeing over-head, amidst the deep blue sky and the fleecy clouds of the most glowing and least fickle of the seasons. Even a solitary walk loses its loneliness in the general cheerfulness of nature. The air is gay with bees and butterflies ; the robin twitters from amongst the ripening hazel-nuts ; and you cannot proceed a quarter of a mile, without encountering some merry group of leasers, or some long line of majestic wains, groaning under their rich burden, brushing the close hedges at either side, and knocking their tall tops against the overhanging treess ; the very image of ponderous plenty.

Pleasant, however, as such a procession is to look at, it is somewhat dangerous to meet, especially in a narrow lane ; and I thought myself very fortunate one day last August, in being so near a five-barred gate, as to be enabled to escape from a *cortege* of labourers and harvest-wagons, sufficiently bulky and noisy to convey half the wheat in the parish. On they went, men, women, and children, shouting, laughing, and singing, in joyous expectation of the coming hearvesthome ; the very wagons nodding from side to side as if tipsy, and threatening every moment to break down bank, and tree, and hedge, and crush every obstacle that opposed them. It would have been as safe to encounter the car of Juggernaut ; I blest my stars ; and after leaning on the friendly gate until the last gleaner had passed, a ragged rogue of seven years old, who, with hair as white as flax, a skin as brown as a berry, and features as grotesque as an Indian idol, was brandishing his tuft of wheat-ears, andshrieking forth, in a shrill childish voice, and with a most ludicrous gravity, the popular song of "Buy a broom." After watching this young gentleman—the urchin s of my acquintance—as long as a curve in the lane would permit, I turned to examine in what spot change had placed me, and found before my eye another picture of rural life, but one as different from that which I had just witnessed, as the Arcadian peasants of Poussin from the boors of Teniers, or weeds from flowers, or poetry from prose.

I had taken refuge in a harvest field belonging to my good neighbour, Farmer Creswell ; a beautiful child lay on the ground at some little distance, whilst a young girl, resting from the labour of reaping, was twisting a rustic wreath of enamelled corn-flowers, brilliant poppies, snow-white lily-bines, and light fragile hare-bells, mingled with tufts of the richest wheat-ears, around its hat.

There was something in the tender youthfulness of these two innocent creatures, in the pretty, though somewhat fantastic occupation of the girl, the fresh wild flowers the ripe, and swelling corn, that harmonized with the season and the hour, and conjured up memories of "Dis and Proserpine," and of all that is gorgeous and graceful in old mythology ; of the lovely Lavinia of our own poet, and of that finest pastoral of the world, the far lovelier Ruth. But these fanciful associations soon vanished before the real sympathy excited by the actors of the scene, both of whom were known to me, and both objects of a sincere and lively interest.

The young girl, Dora Creswell, was the orphan niece of one of the wealthiest yeomen in our part of the world, he only child of his only brother ; and having lost both her parents whilst still an infant, had been reared by her widowed uncle as fondly and carefully as his own son Walter. He said that he loved her quite as well—perhaps he loved her better ; for though it was impossible for a father not to be proud of the bold handsome youth, who, at eighteen, had a man's strength and a man's stature, was the best rider, the best crickter, and the best shot in the country ; yet the fairy Dora, who, nearly ten years younger, was at once his handmaid, his housekeeper, his plaything, and his companion, was evidently the apple of his eye. Our good farmer vaunted her accomplishment, as men of his class are wont to boast of a high-bred horse, or a favourite greyhound.

She could make a shirt and a pudding, darn stockings, rear poultry, keep accounts, and read the news-paper ; was as famous for gooseberry wine as Mrs. Primrose, and could compound a syllabub with any dairy-woman in the county. There was not so handy a little creature any where ; so thoughtful and trusty about the house, and yet out of doors as gay as a lark, and as wild as the wind ; nobody was like his Dora. So said, and so thought Farmer Creswell : and before Dora was ten years old, he had revolved that in due time she should marry his son Walter, and had informed both parties of his intention.

Now Farmer Creswell's intentions were well known to be as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. He was a fair speciment of an English yeoman, a tall, square-built, muscular, stout and active man, with a resolute countenance, a keen eye, and an intelligent smile ; his temper was boisterous and irascible, generous and kind to those whom he loved, but quick to take offence, and slow to pardon, expecting and exacting implicit obedience form all about him. With all Dora's good gifts the sweet and yielding nature of the gentle and submissive little girl was undoubtedly the chief cause of her uncle's partiality. Above all, he was obstinate in the highest degree, had never been known to yield a point, or change a resolution ; and the fault was the more inveterate, because he called it firmness, and accounted it a virtue. For the rest, he was a person of excellent principle and sagacious ; fond of agricultural experiment, perfect integrity ; clear-headed, prudent, and which he pursued cautiously, and successfully ; a good farmer, and a good man.

His son Walter, who was in person a handsome likeness of his father, resembled him also in many points of character, was equally obstinate, and far more fiery, hot, and bold. He loved his pretty cousin, much as he would have loved a favorite sister, and might very possibly, if let alone, have become attached to her as his father wished ; but to be dictated to, to be chained down to a distant engagement, to hold himself bound to a mere child—the very idea was absurd ; and resraining with difficulty an abrupt denial, he walked down into the village, predisposed, out of sheer contradiction, to fall in love with the first young woman who should come in his way : and he did fall in love accordingly.

Mary Hay, the object of his ill-fated passion, was the daughter of the respectable mistress of a small endowed school at the other end of the parish. She was a delicate, interesting creature, with a slight, drooping figure, and a fair, downcast face, like a snowdrop, forming such a contrast with her gay and gallant wooer, as Love, in his vagaries, is often pleased to bring together,

The courtship was secret and tedious, and prolonged from months to years ; for Mary shrank from the painful contest which she knew that an avowal of their attachment would occasion. At length her mother died, and, deprived of home and maintenance, she reluctantly consented to a private marriage ; an immediate discovery ensued, and was followed by all the evils, and more than all, that her worst fears had anticipated. Her husband was turned from the house of his father, and in less than three months, his death, by an inflammatory fever, left her a desolate and pennyless widow—unowned and unassisted by the stern parent, on whose unrelenting temper neither the death of his son, nor the birth of his grandson, seemed to make the slightest impression. But for the general sympathy excited by the deplorable situation and blameless demeanour of the widowed bride, she and her infant might have taken refuge in the workhouse. The whole neighbourhood was zealous to relieve, and to serve them ; but their most liberal benefactress, their most devoted friend, was poor Dora. Considering her uncle's partiality to herself as the primary cause of all this misery, she felt like a guilty creature ; and casting off at once her native timidity and habitual submission, she had repeatedly braved his anger, by the most earnest supplications for mercy and for pardon ; and when this proved unavailing, she tried to mitigate their distresses by all the assistance that her small means would permit. Every shilling of her pocket-money she expended upon her poor cousins ; worked for them, begged for them, and transferred to them every present that was made to herself, from a silk frock to a penny tartlet. Every thing that was her own she gave, but nothing of her uncle's ; for, though sorely tempted to transfer some of the plenty around her, to those whose claims seemed so just, and whose need was so urgent, Dora felt that she was trusted, and that she must prove herself trust-worthy.

Such was the posture of affairs at the time of my encounter with Dora and little Walter, in the harves field ; the rest will be best told in the course of our dialogue.

"And so, madam, I cannot bear to see my dear cousin Mary so sick, and so melancholy ; and the dear child, that a king might be proud of—only look at him !" exclaimed Dora, interrupting herself, as the placid dignity of infancy, looked up at me and smiled in my face ; only "look at him," continued she, "and think of that dear boy, and his dear mother living on charity, and they my uncle's lawful heirs, whilst I, who have no right whatever, no claim at all—I, that, compared to them, am but a far-off kinswoman, the mere creature of his bounty, should revel in confort and in plenty, and they starving ! I cannot bear it, and I will not. And then the wrong that he is doing himself, he that is really so good and kind, to be called a hard-hearted tyrant by the whole country side. And he is unhappy himself too ; I know that he is ; so tired as he comes home, he will walk about his room half the night ; and often at meal times, he will drop his knife and fork, and sigh so heavily. He may turn me out of doors, as he threatened, or, what is worse, call me ungrateful or undutiful, but he shall see this boy."

"He never has seen him then ? and that is the reason you are tricking him out so prettily."

"Yes, ma'am. Mind what I told you, Walter ! and hold up your hat, and say what I bid you."

"Gan-papa's fowers ! stammered the pretty boy, in his sweet childish voice, the first words that I had ever heard him speak.

"Grand-papa's flowers !" said his zealous teacher.

"Gan-papa's fowers !" echoed the boy.

"Shall you take him to the house, Dora ?" asked I.

"No, ma'am, for I look for my uncle here every minute, and this is the best place to ask a favour in, for the very sight of the great crop puts him in good humour ; not so much on account of the profits, but because the land never bore half so much before, and it's all owing to his management in dressing and drilling. I came reaping here to-day, on purpose to please him ; for though he says he does not wish me to work in the fields, I know he likes it ; and here he shall see little Walter. Do you think he can resist him, ma'am ?" continued Dora, leaning over her infant cousin, with the grace and fondness of a young Madonna ; "do you think he can resist him ? poor child ! so helpless, so harmless ; his own blood too, and so like his father, no heart could be hard enough to hold out, and I am sure that his will not. Only," pursued Dora, relapsing into her girlish tone and attitude, as a cold fear crossed her enthusiastic hope, "only, I am half-afraid that Walter will cry. It's strange, when one wants any thing to behave particularly well, how sure it is to be naughty ; my pets especially. I remember when my lady countess came on purpose to see our white peacock, that we got in a present from India, the obstinate bird ran away behind a bean-stack, and would not spread his train, to show the dead white spots on his glossy white feathers, all we could do. Her ladyship was quite angry. And my red and yellow marvel of Peru, which used to blow at four in the afternoon, as regular as the clock struck, was not open the other day at five, when dear Miss Ellen came to paint it, though the sun was shining as bright as it does now. If Walter should scream and cry, for my uncle does sometimes look so stern ; and then it's Saturday, and he has such a beard ! if the child should be frightened !—Be sure, Walter, you don't cry !" said Dora, in great alarm.

"Gan-papa's fowers," replied the smiling boy, holding up his hat ; and his young protectress was comforted.

At that moment the farmer was heard whistling to his dog in a neighbouring field, and fearful that my presence might injure the cause, I departed, my thoughts full of the noble little girl and her generous purpose.

I had promised to call the next afternoon, to learn her succees ; and passing the harvest-field in my way, I found a group assembled there, which instantly dissipated my anxiety. On the very spot where we had parted, I saw the good farmer himself, in his Sunday clothes, tossing little Walter in the air ; the child laughing and screaming with delight, and his granfather apparently quite as much delighted as himself. A pale, slender, young woman, in deep mourning, stood looking at their gambols with an air of intense thankfulness ; and Dora, the cause and sharer of all this happiness, was loitering behind, playing with the flowers in Walter's hat, which she was holding in her hand. Catching my eye, the sweet girl came to me instantly.

"I see how it is, my dear Dora ! and I give you joy from the bottom of my heart. Little Walter behaved well, then ?"

"Oh, he behaved like an angel."

"Did he say, gan-papa's fowers ?"

"Nobody spoke a word. The moment the child took off his hat, and looked up, the truth seemed to flash on my uncle, and to melt his heart at once—the boy is so like his father. He knew him instantly, and caught him up