

POETRY

FEMALE FAITH.

BY MISS LANDON.

She loved you when the sunny light
Of bliss was on your brow;
That bliss has sunk in sorrow's night,
And yet she loves you now.

She loved you when your joyous tone
Taught every heart to thrill;
The sweetness of that tongue is gone,
And yet—she loves you still.

She loved you when you proudly slept
The gayest of the gay;
That pride the blight of time has swept,
Unlike her love away.

She loved you when your home and heart
Of fortune's smile could boast,
She saw that smile decay—depart—
And then she loved you most.

O such the generous faith that grows
In woman's gentle breast;
'Tis like the star that stays and glows
Alone in night's dark vest.

That stays because each other ray
Has left the lonely shore,
And that the wanderer on his way
Then wants her light the more.

THE FAIRIES' SONG.

Let us wander, let us wander,
Where the dewdrop glistens sheen;
Where the pearly rills meander
Through meads of brightest green
We'll trip it by the fountain
That waters yonder plain;
We'll scale the rocky mountain—
A merry merry train!

Where the ivy bough is clinging
To the grey and time-worn stone,
Our tiny voices ringing
Shall wake the echo's moan.

Where the purple heath is growing
On the wild hill's lonely side,
When the midnight breeze is blowing,
We'll feath'ly feath'ly glide.

When the crystal billow gleameth
Beneath night's silver ray,
Whilst each weary mortal dreameth
His cares and toils away.
Beside the lake we'll linger,
Beneath the spreading fern,
Till Aurora's rosy finger
Shall herald in the morn.

When the moping owl is hooting
His melancholy cry,
We'll watch the meteor shooting
Across the starlit sky:
Yes—we'll trip it by the fountain,
And o'er each mossy plain;
We'll scale the rocky mountain—
A merry, merry train!

CHOOSING A WIFE.

I like to write about things that are, and 'tis a passing belief with me that very few people would find occasion to wander into the region of dreams, if they would only use their senses when wide awake. Perchance my inclination is quite unfashionable; but carefulness on this head saves a world of trouble. 'Tis with this view that I have laid the scene of the following tale neither in Germany nor New Holland; but have sat down with a calm mind, to sketch one of the commonest occurrences in a new England village; and which in every location, follows the settlement of a new minister, as surely, and sometimes as swiftly as the ordination dinner. In short, I propose to tell of such a one's 'choosing a wife,' and all about it; and if the reader possesses one spice of curiosity, or if he happens to be a Yankee, he will read on. Perhaps he may revolt at the title, or speak harshly of his native land,—so do not I.—New England people are still fresh in my recollection: even the peculiarities of her children endear the memory more. And there are some habits of thought which denote the source from which they sprung; which tell of the pilgrim band who sought in those wilds a refuge from oppression. Time is a sad innovator, but some things resist his power, and though the pilgrim's step is heard no more on the New England hills, and songs of praise float up no longer from her ancient forests, though the neat church tells of undisturbed security and the refinement of modern taste, still there is a trace of the pilgrim's spirit and the pilgrim's feelings left on the whole land broadly marked and visible on all her children. It is a vestige of this feeling which gives such peculiar even worldly honour to the profession of the ministry, which makes it an object of every boy's ambition, and every father's hope.

This is perhaps seen more in small villages than large towns; and if any one doubts the truth of this assertion, let him go to a village where they had just settled, or are about settling a minister. Let him go to the village of B— and see the Rev. Edward Melville, a young, handsome, and unengaged man, our hero; one who, when undertaking the various duties of minister to the second church in B— agreeing to preach, pray, bury the dead, visit the poor, never dreamt that the people of his charge considered him bound to perform a harder duty than all—actually to choose a wife amidst the blooming maids of his congregation; certainly he was an ignorant young man, for he did not think of this. Perhaps it was sufficient that his people did. The very evening after his ordination he was inquiring of a lady, who had I confess, passed the silly age of eighteen, concerning the talents and character of a neighbouring minister; was he not a very fine man, and possessed of genius?

"Oh yes! he was a very fine man, though not possessed of genius; but his wife was so good that she gained the hearts of all. A good wife was very requisite for a minister, it increased his usefulness so much!" Here the speaker paused, for she dared say no more. It was a gentle hint, but might be forgiven one who was tired of living on the interest of sixpence a year, and setting her cap for all the old bachelors in the neighbourhood. Her remark was taken up by a gentleman who sat opposite, who had a rich ill-tempered sister to dispose of, and wished like many others, to get rid of a bad article as soon as possible: "twas a great thing for a lady in that station to have a fortune to dispose of, then the minister had the satisfaction of relieving the temporal as well as spiritual wants of his people."

In perfect innocence, Melville admired the correctness of both observations, making no personal application; but other days were to come. Invitations to dinner and tea crowded upon him. Parties were made and nosegays offered in vain, it was literally 'much ado about nothing,' he seemed intent on other thought, though perfectly aware of their intentions. How could it be otherwise? when even a note simply and briefly written to a lady in his society, requesting her to take a class in his Sunday school, was answered with great haste and very ready compliance on pink paper. There was a dream of a lovely being Edward had met in B— accidentally, a short time before his settlement, that sometimes haunted him. There was a recollection of a sparkling blue eye, a witching smile, and the silvery tones of a young and innocent maiden thanking him with the overflowing warmth of a grateful heart for saving the life of her companion, a fine boy, who heedless of her remonstrance went too near the edge of a projecting rock, and would have fell into the water, had not Edward saved him, and brought him to her. Perchance the excitement of the moment tended to deepen the feeling; certainly Melville remembered the circumstance long after it occurred, and feeling that he had then met his kindred spirit, the somewhere ludicrous idea of falling in love with a young lady whom he knew only by the name of CAROLINE, as her brother had called her, never struck him. But Melville seemed destined to love in fancy only; for though he knew that Caroline resided somewhat in the village, and though he had made every possible exertion to see her, it had been all in vain. Two long months had passed since his settlement, and though in that time he had visited every family in his parish, attended every social circle to which he had been invited, and sedulously sought the face of his lady love under the shade of every pretty bonnet that was seen in his church, he had not met her, but remained in his state of primitive ignorance. Perhaps this confirmed him more in his romantic dreams; certainly what was at first idle fancy began to take a serious aspect; and feeling the whole vexation and disappointment which rushes over the enthusiast when amidst common voices his ear has been strained for a musical cadence which is not found there,—Melville, tired of the dull realities of common people, and with the full intention of waiting the good pleasure of fortune, and letting patience have her perfect work, resolved to renounce dining out, eschewing taking tea with any one, and devote himself wholly to the high and holy work in which he had engaged. Vainly did the well among his people plead for aught but friendly calls, vainly did the sick remonstrate against taking up his valuable time.

He became the idol of his people, every day his character rose not only amongst those under his care but in the opposite parish, where a bitter feeling of hatred had before prevailed. The dissent was unhappy, and he led it. Yet alas! every day his deportment towards the fair sex became colder, though still gentle and polite as ever. What could be the reason? Every one had tried to attract him. Miss Marvin was rich and would gladly have made him so; Miss Wilson was wonderfully polished, and would have done the honors of his table most gracefully; Miss Benson was very domestic, and would have ordered his house sweetly; Miss Linden was sentimental, and at his

first call, meaning to be irresistible, entered the room with the leaf of a stunted orange tree twirling in one hand, and a new novel in the other, but it would not do. All their endeavours to be taken were thrown away. The whole parish agreed that his conduct was unaccountable; some conjectured that he had made a prior engagement, but for some strange reason the parents who had daughters to dispose of, seemed unwilling to admit the truth of this very natural supposition, and for one equally strange, the young ladies bore them company in belief. At any rate it was not ascertained. There were two ladies in the parish, who out of mere good nature, were particularly grieved to see the lonely condition of Melville. A minister without a wife, why, the like was never heard! poor man! how lonely he must be in that house. 'Twas plain he had never seen a lady to his mind; what a deed of charity it would be to find one suitable for him. They were true matchmakers, and did as much harm in their line as that class always perform, and like many others of the same stamp, all out of pure good will. The question was decided by them, that he ought to have a wife, some one ought to interest herself in getting one for him, *par consequent*, they would do it themselves. Who should she be? After much deliberation the choice fell on a young widow of their acquaintance, a very accomplished, and feeling woman, but unhappily, both the ladies forgot that Mrs. L. was not one that would ever marry a second time; it entirely escaped their memory that the loss of her husband was still fresh in her recollection. They concluded that a whole year contained sufficient to lament it, to wear mourning, learn forgetfulness and lay plans for the future.—Accordingly Mrs. L. was invited, and it may be necessary to state here that she belonged to the other society, and that though a reconciliation was effected, the people had just begun to visit together. Mrs. L. was very charitable. The smiles and winks and nods of Mrs. F. told Melville that her views of informing him of Mrs. L's visit and her praise so violently bestowed upon the lady, were all intended for his special benefit, but he had now grown a philosopher, and bore matrimonial trials with the spirit of a martyr, besides he really wished to become acquainted with Mrs. L. for he had heard her name spoken in the haunts of misery with a blessing, and her praise trembling on the lips of disease. She had been represented to him as an angel of mercy, and he had seldom made a visit to the house of mourning without finding Mrs. L. or Miss Crawford (who, from hearing them always linked together, he had supposed to be her sister,) had been there before him. Neither of the ladies he had yet seen, and he eagerly embraced the opportunity of meeting one of them, though without the remotest idea of bettering his condition thereby.—Mrs. F. was delighted, her friend and coadjutor Mrs. O. was no less pleased; they were both in raptures; and the good women forgot in their excessive joy that they had concluded it was most prudent not to inform Mrs. L. of the reason of her visitation.—Caution was gone, out came the secret to the lady before his arrival.

Imagine their surprise, when hurt, and insulted, Mrs. L. declared she should go home forthwith, and rose to depart; for though at any other time she would have been happy to see the young man, a set, declared spouse-seeking visit, was too revolting. The inviters were amazed, protested their good intentions, and declared she should not go. But Mrs. L. was determined, bade them good bye, and went to get her bonnet. A knock was heard at the door—Melville entered! What a meeting! The delighted Mrs. F. caught her hand and introduced her. Mrs. L. had determined to be at the freezing point, and turned with an air almost haughty in its reserve and dignity to speak to Melville, but his first words reassured her. The friendly, and almost grateful manner in which he addressed her, and the latent flattery contained in his passing regret at never before meeting one who was so well loved by his flock, did wonders. Mrs. L. laid her bonnet down, was sure he had no designs upon her, and soon felt towards him as a friend and a sister. The visit was delightful to both.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. O. "how soon they became sociable! 'tis plain they were destined for one another!—What a couple they will make!"

"How thankful we should feel to be the means of bringing it about!" rejoined Mrs. F.; and they were thankful. So was Edward, for Mrs. L. was really a fine woman, and became one of his most esteemed friends. Perhaps he committed some slight imprudences in walking with her, visiting at her house, and quoting her opinions; certainly many people in the little village of B. began to expect an invitation to a wedding.

The proceeding was premature, neither of the parties had any such views. One beautiful afternoon in summer, as Melville was walking out with Mrs. L. the thought of his heart rose uppermost. He wished to speak of "Caroline" but the word would not come.

"I wonder," exclaimed Mrs. L., "if Miss Crawford has returned from —, she

meant to be here this week. Her house is just here, I will look as I pass by. Oh yes she is there and quite a party too."

Melville looked in the direction; they drew nearer—there was no mistake: he saw Caroline sitting in an open window talking to two young ladies. How his ear drank in the music of her long lost ones; how his heart thrilled and his cheek burnt when he met her glance of recognition, and bowed in return! Mrs. L. spoke too, but no answer came from the blushing girl. They passed by.

"Are you acquainted with Caroline Crawford, Mr Melville?" said the lady. The secret of his heart was unlocked by the question; he told her all.

"Bless me!" said Caroline's companion, Miss A, who being acquainted with Edward took the bow to herself, "how handsome our new minister looks! I never saw him have such red cheeks before."

"O! what a beauty he is!" said the flattered Miss W. making the same conclusion about the bow in question, "you must know him Caroline."

Poor Miss Crawford, there she sat with a burning cheek and a downcast eye and a trembling heart fancying every one was quizzing her, every one looking at her with scarcely the power to answer with a smile the sagacious remark of a lady who sat near that she guessed Mr Melville was striking up a bargain with the widow. Bargain, oh it is the curse of this life that the hand of avarice should scatter its golden sands where there should flow the holy fountains of human love; it is the bane of all happiness that the polluting thought of worldly gains cones and mingles itself with higher things, in the view of that union which, when entered into by pure hearts, would give a semblance of a blessing hereafter, of a state of existence where heart flows out to heart, and spirit meets spirit in high and blissful communion. It is these earthly thoughts that profane that sanctity of love—it is these earthly worshippers, who have burnt false incense on a holy altar; but this is a digression. There sat Caroline, till the voice of her little brother called her to the garden, a most blessed relief. Not that she was in love, as the word goes,—but she felt flattered, perhaps nervous, and to say truth, there was a little interest connected with Melville to her.

"How amiable Caroline is," said Mrs W who always saw the best of every thing, "to run so quick to that child."

In the walk home, Melville learned all the particulars about Caroline that he wished.—She was an orphan, and with her brother had resided with her aunt in B—, ever since the death of her parents. Her aunt was a gay careless woman, and proud of her beautiful niece, suffered her to do entirely as she pleased, sparing neither pains nor expense to give her every accomplishment and refinement. She was the idol of the circle in which she moved, and her graceful winning manners made her a favourite wherever she went. The next day Mrs L. was called from B. a contagious fever broke out in the next town, and the whole village was in council to prevent its spreading. Woe to him who falls sick in a season of prevailing alarm. One woman was doomed to drink of this bitter cup in the village of B. Every one stood aloof from her who would not peril their lives by going into the infectious atmosphere. "Old Mrs. H's sister was with her," said the good people "and that was enough." The news was told to Melville of her sickness—his feelings were interested by the desolate condition, and determined to see that she did not suffer, he went to her house. There, in the abode of sickness—in that region of fear—with a pale cheek but a fair heart, sat Caroline. Undismayed by report, she had gone there the night before, and finding the only attendant exhausted, and knowing the impossibility of filling her place with another, she had supplied it herself.

One in this situation feels always like a sacrificed being; a seal seems set on every thing around him. But Caroline Crawford shrank not, and turned not from her duty. The poor patient recovered, and when Melville heard afterwards her blessing fall on the lovely being who had saved her in all probability, from the grave, a deep and holy rapture thrilled his heart, and when he gazed on Caroline, who unharmed by her exertions sat by with the bloom of health and sat by with the rich glow of beauty mantling on her cheek, a kindling admiration and strange pride came over him. In a short time the question was settled. The village of B.— was supplied with materials for a year's gossip; the engagement of Edward was declared, and his marriage followed. Mrs. F. and Mrs. O. were amazed, yet delighted to have a marriage in any manner; the two parishes became united, and all the young ladies and all the old agreed that marriage was the strangest affair in the world, and that people went about it in the strangest way. Such a surprise!

It is resolved to erect a light-house on the dangerous rock called Skerryvore, situated in the Atlantic Ocean, twelve miles south of the Island of Tiree, in Argyleshire. *Greenock Paper.*