

POETRY.

WHAT IS LIFE?

What is life? a glow of pleasure,
Vision'd on a dreamer's brain—
While he sleeps a fadeless treasure,
When he wakes a burst of pain.

What's earth's greatness? but a vapour,
A cloud before the summer wind—
A flickering that from the taper,
Breaks and leaves no trace behind.

Bright the meteor plays before us,
Dazzling with its distant flame;
And while we gaze comes dancing o'er us,
Deceitful as the meteor's gleam.

Future holds a world of beauty,
Wild we rush to grasp the prize—
Reach'd and grasped the with'ring booty,
Sinks and fades before our eyes.

Life is short—the spray of Ocean
On the wave is emblem fit;
Rolling with the wind's commotion,
Sinking while we gaze on it.

'Tis like the lighted lava booming,
Down the fierce Volcano's side,
With its course itself consuming,
In its own relentless tide.

Who would seek to make a treasure,
Of a world so frail as ours?
When the gayest brightest pleasure,
More fleeting is, than summer's flowers.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

The brightness of a Mother's love
Can never pass away,
It watcheth like the brooding dove
From even-tide till day;
It sitteth by the couch of pain
With quiet placid eye,
'Tis free from every darkening stain,
Of man's infirmity!

A mother's love! oh, who may breathe,
Oh! who can tell its worth,
Its patient suffering until death,
E'en from our childhood's birth.
'Tis chainless, fathomless, and deep;
It is its lot to sigh,
To wake and watch our feverish sleep,
When none, save God is nigh.

A SAILOR'S STORY.

And they did give way too. They were a set of as stout oarsmen as ever manned a frigate's first cutter; but they never showed themselves afore, as they did that night.—The boat fairly jumped out of the water every clip, and the foam that she dashed off from her bows, formed a long white streak in her wake, as bright and dazzling as the tail of a congreve rocket. You may think it wasn't many minutes before they reached the shore, going at that rate as if the devil had sent them an end. Merry, steered her head right on, and never cried, "rowed off all," till she struck the sandy beach with such force, that she ran up high and dry, pitching the two bow oarsmen, who had got up to fend her off, about half a cable's length from her. At the first grating of the keel upon the gravel, he leaped ashore, and without stopping to say one word to the men darted off like a wounded porpoise, running with all speed to the bank. For two or three minutes, the boat's crew looked at each other with their eyes stretched wide open, like the mouth of a dying fish, as much as to say what the devil's all this? At length they began to consult together in a low grumbling tone, as they were afraid to hear themselves speak, and Bill Williams who was coxswain of the cutter, was the first to offer a suggestion that met the approval of the rest. "Only hark," said he, "how his feet go, clatter clatter clatter, as fast as the flopping of a jib-sheet in the wind. I'm feared my hearties, that Mr Merry's runnin' 'mongst the breakers, and if you'll stay by the boat, I'll give chase—and if so needs be lend him a lift."

The proposal of the honest coxswain was relished by all, and he accordingly, set off in the same direction that his young officer had taken. But Bill Williams, though he could run about a ship's rigging like a young monkey in mischief, was no match for Merry in a land chase. His sea legs was't used to such business, and he went pitching and heaving a-head like a Dutch lugger before the wind, and seemed at every step, to be watching for the weather-roll.

In the meantime Merry linked it off like a Baltimore clipper going large. He had proceeded perhaps about a mile from the boat, along the road which he had struck into directly after reaching the beach, and instead of shortening sail, appeared to be crowding more and more canvass all the time, when all of a sudden, he luffed up and hove to on hearing the clatter of an approaching carriage. The noise of the wheels sounded nearer and nearer, as they came rattling along the rough road, and it wasn't long before the quick trampling of the horses' feet and the clicking of their shoes against the stones, indicated that they were near at hand. The place where Merry had passed was about midway of a steep hill, and if he had chosen a spot it couldn't have better suited his purpose. The road which had

been rough and uneven from the first, was at this point broken into deep gullies by recent heavy rains, rendering apart from the difficulty of the ascent, extreme caution necessary in passing with a vehicle. On one side a steep wooded bank rose to a considerable height; and on the other, the surface of the ground gradually descended to the water, which was not quite excluded from view by a few scattering trees that occupied the immediate space. Behind one of these trees, that grew close to the road-side, and threw a deep shadow over it; Merry gritting and grinding his teeth, crouched down like a young shark watching for its prey. The carriage had already gained the foot of the hill, and was slowly labouring up, when a deep gruff voice cried out to the driver from within, bidding him drive faster. At the sound of that voice, Merry's eyes flashed fire. The black, with instinctive obedience cracked his whip, and was about to make more effectual application of it, when a figure suddenly sprang from the road-side, and seizing the reins, commanded him to halt; the command however, was scarcely necessary: The jaded horses had reached a short level stage in the ascent, and not even the sound of the whip had excited any indication that they intended shortly to leave it.—Merry, with a sailor's quick eye, perceiving this favourable circumstance, in an instant was at the side of the carriage, within which a voice of a very different one from that which had last issued thence, was earnestly beseeching succour.

"Help! for heaven's sake help! save me from a ruffian!" cried a female in imploring accents. The last words were scarcely articulated, and were uttered with a smothered sound, accompanied with a noise of struggling, as if the ruffian were endeavouring to hold the lady still, and to silence her cries by pressing his hand upon her mouth.

The incentive of this well known voice seemed hardly wanting to add more fury to the rage of Merry. Choking with mingled emotions, he called to the ruffian to hold off his hand, and with an effort of desperate strength, tearing open the door, the fastenings of which he did not understand, he seized the inmate by the collar, and dragged him to the ground.

"Scoundrel!—ruffian!"—he cried, I have you in the toils, and dearly you shall rue this night's violence.

"Mr Merry!—I command—you shall suffer for this—a court martial—and various similar broken ejaculations were uttered by the wretch, who violently struggled to get loose from the strong grasp in which he was held. Merry though not of a robust constitution, yet possessed much muscular strength. In the present contest, every fibre received tenfold vigour, from the energy of the feelings that raged within him, and made him an overmatch for the guilty being who writhed in his arms. The faces of both were inflamed and convulsed with mighty passions, though of a widely and obviously different character; for the rage of the one as fierce as ten furies, had yet something noble and commanding in it, while that of the other, seemed kindled by a demon. The captain, for his useless to tell you 'twas he) struggled hard, but was evidently becoming exhausted. In the excess of his emotion, he had bitten his lip nearly in twain; and the blood which, in their tossing to and fro, had been smeared over the faces and clothes of both, gave additional wildness to their appearance.

The female, who by this time had recovered from the swoon into which she had fallen when the voice of Merryville first reached her ear, now screamed as she saw the blood with which he was so profusely stained, and imagining him to be mortally wounded, she sprang from the carriage, and tottered towards him across the road. A sudden movement of the combatants at the same moment, changed their position in such a way, as to bring the back of Merryville towards the approaching female, and at this instant his antagonist, having succeeded in releasing his arm from his grasp, hastily drew a pistol from his pocket, cocked, and fired it; the ball whizzed through the air, only slightly grazing the neck of the intended victim; but a piercing shriek from the lips of the female, heard above the loud report, announced that it had done more fatal execution in another quarter. As if by mutual consent, both parties ceased from their struggle for a moment, and rushed towards her. She staggered two or three steps forward, mumbled a few scarcely audible words among which, the name of Merryville was the only intelligible sound, and fell bleeding to the earth. In the meantime, the horses which had been scared by the near and loud report of the pistol, pranced suddenly round and dashing down the hill, were soon lost to sight. Poor Merryville, with a groan of agony which he could not, which he did not seek to repress, bent over the form, which lay pale and stretched before him, and raising it partly from the ground, gazed for a moment in utter unconsciousness of all things else, upon the features of her still lovely face. The ball had passed directly through her heart, from which life had already bubbled out in a crimson tide, though a few darker drops continued to ooze from the livid orifice of the wound. Merryville whispered

her name, but she answered not. In vain he leant his ear to her lips, or bent his eyes upon them, till their hot tearless balls seemed bursting from their sockets—no sound—no motion, made reply. He laid his hand upon her heart—but its pulse was still. He looked into her eyes—but they returned not, as they were wont, an answering look; their light had gone out—the spirit had departed from its house of clay, she was dead, quite dead! as this fact impressed itself upon his brain, a maddening consciousness of the cause, seemed slowly to return; his eyes rolled up, till the balls were nearly hid, his face became a livid darkness, and his teeth were clenched together, as of one in mortal agony. Suddenly starting up, he turned quickly round, and with his arms extended, and his fingers curved like the talons of an eagle, he sprang wildly towards his guilty commander. The motion seemed to have been anticipated, for the wretch had prepared himself with another pistol, which as his antagonist approached, he deliberately aimed at him, and fired.

Whether the ball took effect or not, it did not defeat poor Merry's object. He darted like a tiger on the wretch, and, with both hands, seized him round the throat, he dragged him down to the earth. In vain his victim struggled—the sinews of his antagonist seemed hardened into steel. He tried to shriek for aid, but the grasp around his neck choked his utterance, and his words died away in a rattling sound, like gurgling in the throat of a drowning man. With a strength that seemed supernatural, Merryville raised him from the earth, and dragged him along the road. The struggling of the wretched man grew fainter and fainter, but still an occasional convulsive quivering of the limbs told that he yet lived. His face was almost black, his tongue lolled out of his mouth like a dog's, and his eyes, blood-shot and glassy, were protruded a full inch from their sockets. Blood had started from his nostrils in his mortal agony, and a thick wreath of mingled blood and foam stood upon his lips, which, while distended, seemed stretched in a horrid laugh.

In silence, and with a strength that seemed more than human, Merryville continued to drag his victim along, till he reached the boat. He had been met by Williams not far from the scene of the first part of the contest, but he appeared not to see him. Williams, on his part was too much awed to speak.—The firing of the pistols had prepared him for some fatal event; for he had a dim and dark suspicion of the object of Merryville's errand, inasmuch as he had been the bearer of several notes between him and his betrothed; and had heard also, that his captain was a rejected suitor, for the same hand.—One glance at the group served to show him the dreadful nature of the burden, Merryville dragged along with him; he saw that his commander was already a corpse, and besides he was too much intimidated by the unnatural lustre of Merryville's eye, by his pallid and unearthly hue, and by his still and terrible bearing to interrupt the silence with a word. As they approached the boat, Williams waved his hand to the crew, who were anxiously waiting on the beach, and signified by an expressive nod, that they must not speak. Silently and sorrowfully, they followed the young officer to the water's edge, entered after him the boat and commenced rowing back to the ship. Poor Merry still holding the body by the throat, took his seat in the stern-sheets, and leant his head down on the gunwale in such a way that his garments concealed his face. The face of the corpse, however, was exposed in the broad moonlight; and as the head hung partly over the seat, with his features distorted and bloody, his hair matted with clots of earth and blood and earth, and his glassy eye-balls apparently staring at the men, a superstitious shudder crept over them, which with all their manhood, they could scarcely repress.

In this way, and in silence, they drew near the ship. The sentinel hailed them; but no answer was returned. As they came to the gangway, the officer of the deck, called Mr Merry by name; but still no reply. He saw by the terror painted on the countenances of the crew, that something dreadful had occurred, and descended quickly into the boat, where the whole terrible truth was revealed. They were both dead! By the discharge of the second pistol, Merry had been mortally wounded, and his life had oozed away while his hands were still grasped with desperate energy around the throat of his victim. Even after death his fingers did not loose their tenacity. The officer tried to unlock the death-grasp, but without effect; and the two bodies, locked in an embrace, which stronger than that of love, had outlasted life, were obliged to be hoisted in together.

Shortly after the assassination of the Emperor Paul, his son, the conniver at the murder, and the friend of the murderer, the present Emperor Nicholas, was heard to say "I think the Constitutions of England and France the best in Europe." "Why so?" asked a Russian nobleman. "Because they bring their Kings to a fair trial and execute them if they are guilty." That appears to me the very reason, of all others, why your

Majesty should execrate them," rejoined the nobleman. Far from it.—continued the Emperor, "for I hold that it is much better to be fairly tried and publicly executed, by the hand of justice, than to be foully flattered, and privately murdered by the hands of courtiers: and this has been the fate of all my ancestors in Russia."

During the trial of a man who was capitally indicted for murder at an Irish Assizes, the chief witness on his examination detailed the leading incidents—his being awakened by cries for help—his rising, striking a light, opening his door, and finding a man dead upon the threshold. "And what did you do next, my friend?" interrogated the Crown lawyer. "Why, (replied the witness with amusing sang froid, I called out—'Are any ye there that kilt the boy? By J—, I'll give a thirteen to him who'll tell me who it was that had the impudence to murder a man at my door.'"

We copy the following from a magazine for July, 1790: "Dublin, June 26.—This day Mr Cooney, printer of the *Morning Post*, stood in the pillory, in College-green, for copying from a London paper the following paragraph: 'The * * * * * was formerly a very domestic woman, but now gives up too much of her time to politics.'"

The following is among the regular toasts at the celebration of St. George's Day in Quebec, "England and the United States of America—may the Atlantic which rolls between them always be a *Pacific Ocean*."

A gentleman subject to the gout, on being told that this disease gave a long lease of life, answered, that the disease was at a *rack-rent*.

A gentleman speaking to a friend of a man who had injured him. "But," said he, "I won't get angry, for if I should"—"I suppose," said his friend, "you would chastise him?" "No, I would not flog him," "but I would let him alone most severely."

Mr Madden, in his "Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia, &c." tells us many remarkable things: but one of the most remarkable is connected with his visit to the grave of Troy's ancient hero. After various details, he says "We breakfasted on the tomb of Hector." Hard fare!

CONFESSION OF AN IRISH PEASANT.—Luke M. Geoghan being at confession, owned among other things that he had stolen a pig from Tim Carrol. The Priest told him he must make restitution. Luke couldn't—how could he, when he had eaten it long ago? Then he must give Tim one of his own.—No; Luke didn't like that—it would not satisfy his conscience—it would be the downright identical pig he stole. Well, the Priest said, if he would not he'd rue it, for that the *corpus delictum*, Tim's pig, would be brought forward against him at his final reckoning. "You don't mane that, father?" Indeed but the father did. "And may be Tim himself will be there too?" "Most certainly." "Och, then, why bother about the trifle *this* side the grave? If Tim's there and the pig's there, sure I can make restitution to him then you know."

ANECDOTE OF CURRAN.—The most severe retort Mr Curran ever experienced was from Sir Boyle Roche, the celebrated member of the Irish Parliament (who, a scelerate, and a good-hearted person, could scarcely speak, a sentence without making a blunder.) In a debate where Mr Curran had made a very strong speech against sinecure offices, he was very tartly replied to by Sir Hercules Langrish. Curran, nettled at some observation, started up, and warmly exclaimed, "I would have the Baronet to know, that I am the guardian of my own honour." Sir Boyle instantly rejoined, "Then the gentleman has got a very pretty sinecure employment of it, and so he has been speaking all night on the wrong side of the question."

ANOTHER "MODERN ANTIQUE."—Did the reader ever hear the tale of "Caesar's Stile?"—that of Agricola's long ladle he may probably have read in the "Antiquary." Dr Stukeley, or some other antiquarian, was travelling through England, when he heard that on a certain hill there was a stile called "Caesar's Stile." "Ay," said the Doctor, "such a road, mentioned in Antoninus, passed near here; and the traditional name of this stile confirms the probability of a Roman camp on this spot." Whilst he was surveying the prospect, a peasant came up, whom the Doctor addressed:—"They call this Caesar's Stile, my friend, do they not?" "Ees, zur," said the man, "they call it so arter poor old Bob Caesar, the carpenter (rest his soul!); I helped him to make it when I was a boy."

THE CHOICE OF A WIFE.—I knew a wise old man, who used to advise young friends to choose a wife out of a *bunch* for where there were many daughters, he said, they improved each other, and from emulation, acquired more accomplishments, knew more, could do more, and were not spoiled by parental fondness, as single children often are.—Franklin.

"Emancipate the Jews, indeed!" said a noble Lord on Thursday night, on the presentation of a petition—"I wish to God the Jews would emancipate some of us.

Intellectual and moral excellence are the pole of the axis around which the globe of humanity revolves.