

MISCELLANEOUS.

From the Library Garland.

BY MRS. J. E. SPOONER.

SYMPATHY.

"A holy thing from heaven."

WHAT a pleasing emotion is sympathy! What a source of gratification is the reciprocity of this feeling! It is positively necessary to the happiness of a benevolent and refined mind. It is essentially an unselfish sentiment, and one that does honour to our nature. What can better serve to bind man to his fellow-man, than the ties of sympathy? The Apostle Paul, no doubt, bore this in mind when giving the admonition, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

How soothing to the mourner is the tear of sympathy—and next to the blessed consolations of religion, it is felt and appreciated. And how does affliction unite the hearts of those who have suffered in the same manner,—for they alone can truly enter into the feelings called forth by trials which they too have experienced.

Our Saviour manifested this feeling on several occasions; and touching indeed is the simple recital of his visit to the grave of Lazarus. He knew that he possessed power to restore him to life, and intended doing so; yet the sight of the tomb—the thoughts of the sufferings he had undergone—the grief of the mourning sisters and friends affected him, and *Jesus wept*.

How beneficial it is to visit the house of mourning, sad and solemn though it be. If God, in his merciful Providence, has not yet permitted our own homes to be made desolate by the angel of death, and if our hearts have not been chilled and cast down by the disappointments and cares of earth, it is well that we should sometimes be brought to turn aside, and consider our latter end—to feel that we too must go to that bourne from which no traveller returns; and be warned to reflect on the instability of all earthly blessings, that we may in some measure be prepared to abide the shock, when we shall also be called to separate from those loved ones who now make life so dear to us.

The feelings that are called forth by a visit to the house of mourning,—the contemplation of the work of sickness, of suffering, and of death, have a tendency to chasten and refine the heart and affections; and while endeavouring to pour the balm of consolation into the wounded spirit, we are led to consider how we should feel under similar circumstances, and to think how soon death may lay his cold hand on some dear member of our own family circle! And this reflection will render us more kind and attentive to our friends, and will occasion us to overlook the little failings to which all are more or less subject; and while we realize how feeble is the tenure by which we hold life's dearest ties, they become, from that very circumstance, to be better appreciated and more dear; and verily, "by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better."

Happiness is also increased by sympathy. On all joyous occasions we feel inclined to call our friends around us, that they may partake of our satisfaction. Indeed we are so constituted, that we cannot, if we would, take pleasure in anything which is not participated by another,—excepting the solitary miser, counting o'er his hoards, (and we have always been sceptical as to his enjoyment.) The poet truly says:

"Joy is an exchange;

Joy flies monopolists—it calls for two;

Rich fruit! Heaven planted! never plucked by one;

Needful auxiliaries are our friends, to give

To social man true relish of himself.

Full on ourselves descending in a line,

Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight;

Delight intense is taken by rebound,

Reverberated pleasures fire the breast."

It has often been remarked, that deep and lasting friendship has frequently taken place between two persons, whose dispositions, pursuits, and tastes, were perfectly dissimilar; and this may be, but we cannot conceive that their intercourse can be marked by the

same degree of pleasure which is experienced by those whose minds possess a reciprocity; which, with electric power, causes each to sympathise with the other in thought and feeling.

"Like sister flowers of one sweet shade,
With the same breeze that bend."

Let us suppose that two friends are taking a morning walk together: one an ardent admirer of nature, who feels what a glorious temple we inhabit, made by the hands of God himself, and that every part of it is eloquent of Him; the other has not this taste,—and when his friend, warmed by the influence of the scene, exclaims, in the language of Milton:

"Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth,
After soft showers;"

will he not feel the want of the sympathy which the mental blindness of the other prevents him from entertaining? And will he not experience a feeling of regret and disappointment, that the love of nature, which is to him a never failing source of enjoyment, should not be shared by the friend at his side?

How pleasing is the reflection to one who takes delight in the great and glorious works of nature, that however our minds may be affected, whether by joy or sorrow, we are never disappointed in seeking for sympathy amid the harmonies of earth! Are we the subjects of deep trials and afflictions? Does not the mournful sighing of the midnight winds, the quiet of the dark and shady forest, the pensive murmuring of the mountain stream, and the stars looking down upon us "like thoughtful eyes," exert a calm and soothing influence upon our agitated spirits? Aye, even the lightning's dash, and the pealing thunder, we no longer shrink from with solemn awe, for the storm and the tempest speak to us with the eloquence of Heaven, and seem to say to our troubled minds, "peace—be still!"

And when we are happy, and look out upon the world with joyful feelings, are they not increased by the cheerfulness that pervades the vast creation around us? The bright sunshine, the merry warblings of the birds, the wild bees' hum, the clear blue sky, the many tinted flowers of the field,—all seem to sympathise in our emotions, with "the perfection of beauty—the joy of the whole earth;" and we are led to lift our hearts in renewed thankfulness to a God of love, "who hath made every thing beautiful in his time."

THE BELLS OF LIMERICK.—CURIOUS TRADITION.

THERE is a curious and interesting tradition connected with the bells of Limerick cathedral. The story is prettily told, and will bear repetition. They were, it is said, brought originally from Italy, where they were manufactured by a young native, who grew justly proud of the successful result of years of anxious toil expended in their production. They were subsequently purchased by the prior of a neighbouring convent: and with the profits of this sale the young Italian procured a little villa, where he had the pleasure of hearing the tolling of his bells from the convent cliff, and of growing old in the bosom of domestic happiness. This, however, was not to continue. In some of those broils, whether civil or foreign, which are the undying worm in the peace of a fallen land, the good Italian was a sufferer among many. He lost his all; and, after the passing of the storm, found himself preserved alone amid the wreck of fortune, friends, family, and home. The convent in which the bells, the *chefs-d'œuvre* of his skill, were hung, was razed to the earth, and the bells were carried to another land. The unfortunate owner, haunted by his memories, and deserted by his hopes, became a wanderer over Europe. His hair grew gray, and his heart withered, before he again found a home and a friend. In this desolation of spirit, he formed the resolution of seeking the place to which the treasures of his memory had been finally borne. He sailed for Ireland, proceeded up the Shannon, the vessel anchored in the pool near Limerick, and he hired a small boat for the purpose of landing. The city

was now before him; and he beheld St. Mary's steeple, lifting its turretted head above the smoke and mist of the old town. He sat in the stern, and looked fondly toward it. It was an evening so calm and beautiful as to remind him of his own native haven in the sweetest time of the year—the death of the spring. The broad stream appeared like one smooth mirror, and the little vessel glided through it. On a sudden, amid the general stillness, the bells tolled from the cathedral; the rowers rested on their oars, and the vessel went forward with the impulse it had received. The aged Italian looked toward the city, crossed his arms on his breast, and lay back in his seat: home, happiness, early recollections, friends, family—all were in the sound, and went with it to his heart. When the rowers looked round, they beheld him with his face still turned towards the cathedral; but his eyes were closed, and when they landed they found him dead!—*Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall's Ireland.*

IT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY.

It is written of a gentleman who died very suddenly, that his jester ran to the other servants, and having told them that his master was dead, he, with much gravity, added, "There! and where is he gone?" The servants replied, "Why, he is gone to heaven, to be sure." "No," said the jester, "he is not gone to heaven, I am certain." The servants, with much warmth, asked, how he knew that his master was not gone to heaven? The jester then replied, "Because heaven is a great way off, and I never knew my master to take a long journey in my life, but he always talked of it some time beforehand, and also made preparation for it: but I never heard him talk about heaven, nor ever saw him make preparation for death; and, therefore, I am sure he is not gone to heaven."

LIST OF BRITISH PREMIERS SINCE 1820.

THE following is a list of the several noblemen and gentlemen who have held the office of Prime Minister since the year 1820, according to the order of their succession to the Premier, viz., the Earl of Liverpool, (deceased,) Viscount Goderich, (now Earl of Ripon,) Mr. Canning, (deceased), the Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, Viscount Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel once more, the latter gentleman being now installed for the third time as head of the Government of the British empire. Thus it will be seen, that the majority of the above Premiers were members of the house of Lords. Viscount Melbourne has been made Prime Minister no less than than three times; first, in 1834, on the resignation of Earl Grey; second in May, 1835, after Sir R. Peel had been driven from office by the divisions on the Irish Appropriation Clauses, and thirdly, in May, 1839, after the temporary resignation of the Whig Ministry upon their defeat on the Jamaica Bill. Sir R. Peel was first made Premier by his late Majesty King William IV., in November, 1834, and was intrusted by Queen Victoria with the formation of the new Government in May, 1839, which was, however, abruptly terminated by the return of the Whigs to office.

SUNSET.

I HAVE thought a thousand times, that if I were an angel, and had wings, and no specific gravity, I would soar so far upward, that I could see the evening glimmering o'er the edge of the earth; and while I flew around on the earth, and, at the same time, against its motion on its axis, would hold myself in such a position, that for a whole year long I could look into the mild, broad eye of the evening sun; but, at length, I would sink down, drunk with splendour, like a bee over-fed with honey, in sweet delirium, on the grass.—*Jean Paul.*

INFLUENCE OF TEMPER ON THE VOICE.

THE influence of temper on tone deserves much consideration. Habits of querulousness or ill nature will infallibly communicate a like quality to the voice. That there really exist amiable tones, is not an unfounded opinion. In the voice there is no deception: it is to many the index of the mind, denoting moral qualities; and it may be remarked, that the low soft tones of gentle, amiable beings, seldom fail to please.