



ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

FEMALE HERMIT.

The subjoined interesting sketch of a most singular woman is furnished the *National Intelligencer* by a gentleman who has recently explored the source of the Potomac river. A character so remarkable should not be allowed to remain in her seclusion. We admire particularly the forcible and simple expressions of her Christian faith, and doubt whether the ablest theologian could improve the confession:—

"Delighted, however, and deeply impressed as I have been by the scenery of this Alpine land, I have been far more interested in an old woman, whom I have had the pleasure of seeing. Her name is Elizabeth Golding, or Goldizon, and she resides in a log cabin, entirely alone, directly at the foot of the gorge which has taken her name. She is of German origin, and represents herself as one hundred and twelve years of age. She was born, according to her own words, "within two days' ride of Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania," and her father was a soldier in the Revolution under Washington, and she herself was in the vicinity of the American camp at the defeat of General Braddock, of which event she habitually recounts a great number of interesting and thrilling incidents, closing the paragraph with the remark that the field was wet, very wet with blood. She has been husbandless and childless for nearly a century, and for many years has lived in the solitude of the mountains. Indeed everything about the old woman is peculiar and strange. In stature she is tall and her hair (which is white as snow), is very long, when engaged in conversation, her countenance fires up exceedingly, and she accents each sentence with the most animated gestures, her voice, though still strong, is altogether beyond her control, having an unnatural tone, and the wrinkles running entirely over her face and neck are as deep as we might imagine them to be after having been furrowed by the ways of even one heart for so long a time as a century.

She was clothed in the simplest manner, having upon her head a cap made of common brown cotton, a frock of blue homespun cloth, and upon her feet nothing but woolsen socks. During the whole time we were in the cabin she was smoking some better weed in a corn pipe, and, though haggard and worn to a marvellous degree, she had a pleasant smile, and when either of

her guests happened to utter something that was novel to her ear, she would exclaim, "Oh, yes, that is wonderful!"

Her only means of subsistence for years past had been obtained by making livery brooms, but even this business she had been compelled to give up, for she could no more climb the mountains to obtain the proper material; and, though she seemed to be perfectly certain that she would be provided for, she expressed the greatest dread of the county almshouse. We inquired as to her appetite, and she replied, Oh, I eat very little, I never eat much, sometimes nothing in a whole day, and never more than once a day, and I am well acquainted with hunger."

As to her sleep we also questioned her, and she said, "that's what troubles me most, I cannot sleep now, I am so old, and so I lay on my bed all night thinking of my great and good Father in Heaven." We asked her how she managed to obtain the necessaries of life, and she said she did not know, only that people who travelled on the road sometimes stopped in to give her a little coffee or flour, her man-of-stay being a small garden of vegetables, the brush fence around which had been built by her own hands, and this garden was just exactly the nearest I ever beheld. As to her sight, it was as good as ever, and she was unacquainted with the use of spectacles. We asked her how much money she would want to support her a year, and she replied that ten dollars would take care of her a long time, more than a year. As a matter of course, my companion and I made up a little purse for her benefit, and when we gave it to her it seemed as if she would embrace us in spite of us. Indeed we made her a number of trifling presents, and she expressed her gratitude by weeping, and assuring us that her "Father in Heaven" would bless us and make us happy wherever we might go.— And I can assure the reader that the tears shed by that old woman of five score years and ten were not the only ones that sprung into eyes on that occasion, albeit we were unused to weeping.

But I have not yet given the reader an idea of the home of this lonely being, in truth it baffles description. Her nearest neighbor is some four miles off, and her companions in her solitude are a true dog and a cat.— Her cabin stands near the water's edge, and directly on the hill-side, it is without a window, but light in abundance comes in from the gaping roof and sides of the black mouldering log habitation, the chimney to which



THE RED BLOOMING HEATHER OF SCOTLAND.

Oh delight in the rose in the garden that grows,
The daisy, carnation, and pink,
But dearer than either to me is the heather
That waves on the wild rocky brink.

Oh sweet little plant! to thee I will chant,
For thou art the gem of our mountains,
Thou adornest our hills and steep sloping vales,
Where run the clear winding fountains.

Oh sweet Lamas day, when all nature looks gay,
And the sportsman goes out with his gun,
Oh sweet is the smell of the red heather bell,
When warm'd by the bright summer's sun!

Whenever I view thy red blooming hue,
The days of my youth I remember,
When often I've trod on the soil hoathy sod,
And the blackberry bushes so slender.

For many a scramble I've gained the wild tramble,
As through the deep glen I did wander,
While tending the flocks among the steep hills,
Where the streamlets so sweetly meander.

Oh soft is the gale that swoons through the vale
Which the tourist and sportsman do breathe,
Oh pure are the rills that descend the steep hills,
That defend our old Scotia from skath!

Oh oft have the men of the heath-covered glen
In defence of their country here stood,
When carousal did roar, and the flashing claymore
Made the heath with the foe'sman's blood!

Oh sweet be the smell of the red heather bell,
That blooms on the warrior's grave,
Who defended our land from the tyrant's rude hand,
Choosing death to the life of a slave.

Oh green be the heath long after my death,
On the hills where in boyhood I stray'd,
When in some foreign strand, I'll muse on the land,
With the red blooming heath all array'd.