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## Poetry.

### LINES BY MILTON IN HIS OLD AGE.

This sublime and affecting production was but lately discovered among the remains of our great epic poet, and is published in the recent Oxford edition of Milton's Works.

I am old and blind !  
Men point at me as smitten by God's frown ;  
Afflicted and deserted of my kind :  
Yet I am not cast down.

I am weak, yet strong :  
I murmur not that I no longer see :  
Poor, old and helpless, I the more belong,  
Father Supreme ! to Thee.

O merciful One !  
When men are farthest, then Thou art most near,  
When friends pass by, my weakness shun,  
Thy Charlot ! bear.

Thy glorious face  
Is leaning towards me ; and its holy light  
Shines in upon my lonely dwelling place,  
And there is no more night.

On my bended knee,  
I recognize thy purpose, clearly shown .  
My vision Thou hast dimm'd that I may see  
Thyself—Thyself alone.

I have naught to fear :  
This darkness is the shadow of Thy wing :  
Beneath it I am almost sacred . here  
Can come no evil thing.

O ! I seem to stand  
Trembling, where foot of mortal ne'er hath been,  
Wrapp'd in the radiance of Thy sinless land,  
Which eye hath never seen

Visions come and go :  
Shapes of resplendent beauty round me throng .  
From angels' lips I seem to hear the flow  
Of soft and holy song.

It is nothing now  
When heaven is opening on my sightless eyes  
When airs from Paradise refresh my brow  
The earth in darkness lies.

In a purer clime  
My being fills with rapture—waves of thought  
Eol in upon my spirit—strains sublime  
Break over me unsought.

Give me now my lyre !  
I feel the strings of a gift divine .  
Within my bosom glows an earthly fire,  
Lit by no skill of mine.

## Literature.

### THE POOR OLD MAN.

(Continued from our last.)

#### THE THIRD STAGE.

"In the passion hour of youth  
The lip may breathe its holiest vow  
Yet shadows dim the spirit's truth."

Some three miles distant to the Northwest of the little village there stands a solitary little house on the acclivity of a gentle hill, from the gable of which was swung out a heavy sign-board with the rather attractive motto :—

"My liquor's good and hinders nose,  
Refresh, and pay, then toddle on."

This was the rendezvous of many a weary pedestrian who on the faith of the motto, turned in to refresh himself as he journeyed to the hill country. From this point, a road led off to

the left hand, through a thick shrubby plantation, near the centre of which another road struck off at a nearly right angle, still towards the left. Along this road one evening in early spring, a tall, athletic, and somewhat weather beaten youth, was slowly wandering, with quivering step and agitated look. Now and again he would pluck a twig from a fir shrub, and suck its resinous juice while he muttered something to himself, the import of which could not be gathered. He passed the little house without his accustomed salutation, and just as the sun was making the summit of the Argyloshire mountains, he turned off to the left, and pursued his course until he reached Ivy Bank the residence of Mr. Edward Ramsay.

Here in rural retirement lived Helen Jeffrey the niece of Mr. Ramsay, a handsome young lady, with somewhat of a pensive cast of countenance, occasioned partly, perhaps, by its being continually shaded by a rich profusion of raven colored tresses, loosely curled all round, and flowing gracefully, around her finely sloping shoulders. She had been trained with pious care by an affectionate mother ; but that kind parent had fallen a victim to excessive grief occasioned by the sudden death of her husband, the Rev. Mr. Jeffrey, who was thrown from his horse, one evening in returning from a meeting of Presbytery, and was dragged in the stirrup until life was extinct. Their only child thus left an orphan in the world, was consigned to the care of her uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, by whom she was much beloved. Mr. Ramsay having been fortunate in his mercantile pursuits, had some years previous to this purchased the small estate of Ivy Bank, and retired to enjoy the sweets of relaxation and solitude.

To this sequestered spot Charles Marshall, had frequently turned his steps, and often did he, and the thoughtful Helen wander in the coppice-wood when the moon's pale beams had spread a silvery sheen o'er fern and furze. But on the night in question there was something in his look which betrayed considerable emotion. The secret, however, was soon explained. The return of his dissipated brother rendered it necessary that he should on the following day depart to take charge of the vessel. A twofold weight, thus preyed upon his spirits,—the disgrace of his brother, and his abrupt departure. He felt deeply at thought of parting so unexpectedly from one around whom all his affections had centred ; yet they consoled each other with the sweet reflection that at the conclusion of another voyage their union would be sealed. All was quiet as midnight, ere he again passed the little house, even the creaking sign-board was still and motionless, so that his reverie was not disturbed, until the streaks of light in the northern sky reminded him that a new day had dawned. Having vowed eternal fidelity, he had parted—he to pursue his trackless course through the Indian Ocean,—and the lovely Helen to her silent chamber, there to feed her imagination with fond thoughts of that endeared one,—who, should fate a pro-

pitious gales, waft once more to his native shore, was on his return to lead her to the hymeneal altar.

How truly has the poet said,

Alas ! the course of true love never did run smooth.

Often has this sentiment been fully verified ; but, perhaps, never more so than in the present instance. Spring with its genial showers, and blinks of sunshine glided swiftly past, and summer with all its refulgence and its languishing heat had fully come, when a visitor arrived at Ivy Bank,—Mr. Andrew Thompson a distant relative of Mr. Ramsay's—a merchant in the Metropolis, came to spend a few weeks with his friends, among the rural scenery of the North.

Never before could Mr. Thompson be prevailed upon to leave the counting-house. The one idea, of making money gave all his thoughts a golden tinge, and so absorbed his mind that he could think seriously of nothing else. Two smart attacks of bilious fever rendered it necessary, however, that he should for a time forego his wonted pleasure. Nor had he cause to regret his visit, for the bracing air of Ivy Bank, effected a wonderful improvement on his plodding and care-worn system ; and, in return for the daily pleasure of which he was deprived, a new, and holier joy was created within him. There was a secret watchery in the pensive look of that amiable, and accomplished young lady, an and irresistibly insinuating charm in her animated conversation, which touched a chord in his heart, that never vibrated before. Though naturally retired and unassuming, and rendered even more so, by her peculiar position towards the young captain yet out of in respect to her Uncle, she endeavoured to make herself agreeable to his guest ; and the worthy merchant while prosecuting his daily walk with the family, in the meadow, or on the hill side, or retired to the little arbour to enjoy the cooling shade, felt, that more after all was needed than gold, to constitute felicity. His heart set for amassing wealth as the chief good, insensibly became mellowed, and susceptible of impressions—if not of love,—at least of holy friendship.

It was now his delight to wander in the shade, when the refreshing breeze,—laden with the fragrance of the sweet-brier and the wood-ruffe, and the thousand wild flowers that bloomed around,—imparted to his mind the most pleasing sensations ; but, as a natural consequence, he could not wander alone. In vain would the flowers exhale their balmy odours, if he was not otherwise interested in his walks, and no one could so highly contribute to his happiness as Miss Jeffrey. The "Harebell," the sweet "Forget me Not," the Jasmine and the Honeysuckle, as well as all the other treasures of Flora, were alike strangers to Mr. Thompson, and each furnished matter for an explanatory lecture from the fair professor, whose attention in her retirement had been somewhat turned towards the science of Botany.

The genial weather, the delightful scenery, and the comfortable society, warmed the re-