

# THE GARLAND.

"TO RAISE THE GENIUS AND TO MEND THE HEART."

VOL. I.

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## POPULAR TALES.

### THE FORSAKEN GIRL.

"They parted—as all lovers part—  
She with her wronged and broken heart;—  
But he, rejoicing he is free.  
Thou'ndst like the captive from his chain;  
And wilfully believing she  
Hath found her liberty again."—*L. E. London.*

If there is any act which deserves deeper and bitter condemnation, it is that of trifling with the inestimable gifts of woman's affection. The female heart may be compared to a delicate harp, over which the breathings of early affection wander, until each tender chord is awakened to tones of ineffable sweetness. It is the music of the soul which is thus called forth—a music sweeter than the fall of fountains, or the songs of Houris, in the Moslem's paradise. But wo for the delicate fashioning of that harp if a change pass over the love which first called forth its hidden harmonies. Let neglect and cold unkindness sweep over its delicate strings, and they will break, one after another—slowly perhaps—but surely. Unvisited and unrequited by the light of love, the soul-like melody will be hushed in the stricken bosom, like the mysterious harmony of the Egyptian statue, before the coming of the sunrise.

I have been wandering among the graves—the lonely and solemn graves. I love at times to do so. I feel a melancholy not unallied to pleasure, in communing with the resting place of those who have gone before me—to go forth alone among the tombstones, rising from every grassy undulation like ghostly sentinels of the departed. And when I kneel above the narrow mansion of one whom I have known and loved in life, I feel a strange assurance that the spirit of the sleeper is near me—a viewless and ministering angel. It is a beautiful philosophy, which has found its way unsought for and mysteriously into the silence of my heart, and if it be only a dream, the unreal imagery of fancy, I pray God that I may never awaken from the beautiful delusion.

I have been this evening, by the grave of Emily. It has a plain white tombstone, half hidden by flowers, and you may read its mournful epitaph in the clear moon-light, which falls upon it like the smile of an angel, through an opening in the drooping branches. Emily was a beautiful girl—the fairest of our village maidens. I think I see her now, as she looked when the loved one—the idol of her affections, was near her, with his smile of conscious triumph and exulting love. She had then, seen but eighteen summers, and her whole being seemed woven of the dream of

her first passion. The object of her love was a proud and wayward being—whose haughty spirit never relaxed from its habitual sternness, save when he found himself in the presence of a young and beautiful creature, who had trusted her all on the "venture of her vow," and who had loved him with the confiding earnestness of a pure and devoted heart. Nature had deprived him of the advantages of outward grace and beauty; and it was the abiding consciousness of this, which gave to his intercourse with society a character of pride and sternness. He felt himself in some degree removed from his fellow men by the partial fashioning of nature; and he scorned to seek a nearer affinity. His mind was of an exalted bearing, and prodigal of beauty. The flowers of poetry were in his imagination, a perpetual blossoming; and it was to his intellectual beauty that Emily knelt down—bearing to the altar of her idol, the fair flowers of her affection—even as the dark eyed daughters of the ancient Ghebers spread out their offerings from the gardens of the east, upon the altar of the sun.

There is a surpassing strength in a love like that of Emily's—it has nothing gross, nor low, nor earthly in its yearnings—it has its source in the deeper fountains of the human heart—and is such as the redeemed and sanctified from earth might feel for one another, in the fair land of spirits. Alas! that such love should be unrequited—or turned back in coolness upon the crushed heart of its giver!

They parted—Emily and her lover—but not before they had vowed eternal constancy to each other. The one retired to the quiet of her home—to dream over again the scenes of her early passion—to count with uniting eagerness the hours of separation—and to weep over the long interval of "hope deferred."—The other went out with a strong heart to mingle with the world—girded with pride and impelled forward by ambition. He found the world cool, and callous, and selfish; and his own spirit insensibly took the hue of those around him. He shut his eyes upon the past—it was too pure and mildly beautiful for the sterner gaze of his manhood. He forgot the passion of his boyhood—all beautiful and holy as it was—he returned not back to the young and lovely and devoted girl, who had poured out to him in the confiding earnestness of woman's confidence, the wealth of her affection. He came not back to fulfil the vow which he had plighted.

Slowly and painfully the knowledge of her lover's infidelity came over the sensitive heart