

PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS.

THE MOON.

Concluded.

Our juvenile readers may naturally expect, on such a subject, that eclipses, with which the moon has much to do, would not be overlooked. It is well known, that opaque bodies, when exposed to the light, must cast a shadow. An eclipse of the moon is therefore occasioned by the earth's shadow falling on the moon, when at full, as the earth passes between the sun and the moon. The orbit of the moon does not coincide with the plane of the earth's orbit, but intersects it, and at the remotest part, is elevated rather more than five degrees above it, and consequently, on the opposite part, depressed as much below it; these points of intersection are called nodes, and when the full moon happens within about 12 degrees of these nodes, it cannot escape the earth's shadow, and is said to be partially or totally eclipsed, according as a part or the whole of her is overshadowed. On the contrary, an eclipse of the sun is occasioned by the moon passing between the earth and the sun, which can only take place when at her conjunction she is near one of the nodes. It is among the numerous benefits of philosophical information, that these necessary occurrences no longer affright us. There was a time when the words of our great poet were very applicable:

—“As when the sun,—
From behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchies.”

Every one is aware that the face of the moon is not equally fair and lucid in every part. Children are frequently heard indulging their imagination in its appearance. The telescope has enabled astronomers to observe those inequalities and parts of different colours, and from the analogy of many circumstances between the earth and its satellite, it is not surprising that the names of hills, valleys, and volcanoes should have been assigned to those irregularities. Indeed such has been the industry with which these observations have been pursued, that names have been given to its mountains &c. and maps drawn of its surface. That there is something more than conjecture in this, will increasingly appear as we candidly investigate the subjects. It is found there are elevated parts in the moon's surface, because shadows are cast, and, in all situations of the moon, these shadows are in a direction from the sun, and, on the contrary, the valleys are always dark next the sun, and illuminated on the opposite parts. From these analagous appearances, the inference that it is the seat of life is natural. Dr Herschel has very explicitly declared his opinion in the Philosophical Transactions: “It may be objected, that we perceive no large seas in the moon, that its atmosphere (the existence of which has even been doubted by many) is extremely rare, and unfit for the purposes of animal life, that its climates, its seasons, and the length of its days totally differ from ours, that without dense clouds, (which the moon has not,) there can be no rain; perhaps no rivers, no lakes. In short, notwithstanding the similarity which has been pointed out, there seems to be a decided difference in the two

planets we have compared. My answer to this will be, that the very difference which is now objected, will rather strengthen the force of my argument than lessen its value: we find, even upon our globe, that there is the most striking difference in the situation of the creatures that live upon it. While man walks upon the ground, the birds fly in the air, and fishes swim in the water: we certainly cannot object to the conveniences afforded by the moon, if those that are to inhabit its regions are fitted to their conditions, as well as we on this globe are to ours.”

These considerations, while they teach us the indescribable wisdom, power, and goodness of the almighty, show us what poor diminutive creatures we are, and in what a state of ignorance we are born. The little knowledge we have is the result of much observation and reflection, happily, if in the best sense we are children of God, “what we know not now we shall know hereafter.” The period will arrive, when our faculties shall be enlarged and sanctified, and the means of improvement be perfect and holy. May each of us share in such felicity.

NARRATIVE.

From the *New-England Review*.
THE WIFE.

“You know, dear, I am a spoiled child, I must have my own way *this time*,” said Mrs Finlay, a beautiful bride, to her adoring husband.

Finlay was a young lawyer of fine talents just getting into extensive practice; it was necessary that he should remain in the city, but a stronger necessity was upon him, his *cara sposa* would go into the country, to be present at the wedding of a friend.

“But, dearest you know I have several important cases upon the docket, which are just about to be tried; my clients will be dissatisfied,” said Finlay, in that tone of mild entreaty, which should find its instant way to a woman's heart.

“N'importe; let them go, you will have something besides clients to live upon, you know, one of these days.”

There was much pride, little sense, and a great want of feeling in this speech. Mrs Finlay's expectations all depended upon a kind indulgent father, during whose life time they could not be realised. Finlay felt it jar upon his heart strings and vibrate to the very core, but he excused it, or set it aside. “She is a beautiful thoughtless creature, she cannot be unfeeling.”

To the country they went. “Well,” thought Finlay, “I shall have exquisite pleasure, in pointing out to my Caroline, some favorite scenes, some striking views, which may have escaped her notice. We must sometimes make sacrifices to those we love, leaving town, after all was a matter of little consequence.”

The boat glided almost with the rapidity of light, over the smooth deep Hudson.

“Come upon deck, Caroline, we are nearing the Highlands, never did they look so splendidly.”

It was the momentary glow of radiant coloring which a happy heart gives to nature, that at this moment rested so gloriously upon the picturesque Highlands.

“Come, Mrs. F——,” said Finlay, carefully wrapping the shawl about the delicate form of his beautiful wife.

“Why George, do you think I had never been up the river before in my life,” said Caroline, who was in the midst of an animated discussion upon the merits of their respective milliners. “I have seen the Highlands a thousand times, all that romantic stuff is out of fashion; quite outre nobody talks of ‘the beauties of nature’ now, but hoarding schoni misses.”

Thus repulsed, Finlay left her, and took his seat upon the deck with a sigh.

“Out of fashion,” thought he, and his noble forehead was wrinkled with frowns, his proud lip curled, and a momentary flash illuminated his dark eyes with unwonted fire. “Out of fashion! These towering, frowning palisades, this dark river, yonder rising moon!” He fell into a reverie, long and deep, for now he could not enjoy these things, *alone*. At the end of it, all the world's consoler Hope, whispered kindly, “she certainly has sensibility, her mind is plastic, I can mould it into any form, and make it a complete reflection of my own.”

Conjugal affection is a delicate plant.—The first rude shake sometimes scatters its fair leaves to the four winds of heaven. If but one leaf be torn away, all the others are loosened. In poor Finlay's case, they followed one by one in rapid succession.

A few weeks in the country entirely dispelled the illusion which love had thrown around his idol—the celestial halo, which was only a hallucination of his own imagination, had departed forever. He had married a beautiful weak woman with whom his refined mind could hold no communion.

Finlay returned to town an altered man. His high ambition had been sanctified in his own estimation, because it was not, entirely, a selfish feeling. In all his visions of success, his honor were to be laid at the feet of his Caroline.

He entered again upon his laborious employment; he was for a time entirely devoted to business, and lost all care and reflection in the close attention which he gave to his professional duties. But soon, he needed relaxation; some place to which he could resort, to spend a few hours in pleasure. Home did not afford it. The spoiled, heartless Caroline was engaged in an endless round of fashionable amusements. When at home she was weary, vapid, peevish. She needed the excitement and admiration of a crowd to give her animation. It was not worth while to exert herself to please one, and he only her husband.

Thus driven from that home, which should have been the haven of rest and peace, Finlay fled to the society of the gay, dissipated young men.

Soon, his office and law books were forsaken. His clients' frequent knocks were unanswered; they became less and less frequent, and at length ceased entirely. They had lost their advocate, their counsellor. He had rendered himself unworthy of their confidence. The highly gifted, ambitious Finlay had become a drunkard.

After a few years, Caroline returned to her father's house because her husband was no longer able to support her; she returned a faded, disappointed, wretched woman. The viper sting of conscience, told her, that she had brought all her misery upon herself.

Why will not woman learn her own happiness? Can one whose every thought before marriage