

The Weekly Observer.

BEING A CONTINUATION OF THE STAR.

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SAINT JOHN, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1830.

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THE GARLAND.

THE FOOTSTEPS' FALL.

From the Iris.
The recognition of individuals, as they approach us, by the sound of their footsteps, as readily as by the sound of their voices, and the very different manner in which the elastic bounds of joy and pleasure, and the heavy tread of grief and wretchedness, fall upon the ear, are almost too familiar even for the subject of so familiar a little composition as the following. The novelty of the application (if it has even that slight merit) is all that we recommend it.

The Footsteps' Fall! Time presses on,
With you, with me, with all;
And sad it is to mark the change
Even in the Footsteps' Fall.

Recall those childish days,
When innocent, and small,
Like fairy prints, upon the grass,
Were seen our Footsteps' Fall.

I recollect that ripper age,
When, blest in lover's sweet thrall,
Swiftly to meet o'er night's lone path,
Echoed the Footsteps' Fall.

I've known the dream, that flies as proved,
Eager at pleasure's hall,
Life wastes, speed, though hastening down,
Merry the Footsteps' Fall.

I've known the busy, business world,
The world of care and gall,
Where, drudging weary years of toil,
Heavy the Footsteps' Fall.

And now the tottering frame of age
Slowly obeys the call;
Life wastes, speed, though hastening down,
And feebly Footsteps' Fall.

The end is near—the last dark step—
The coffin and the pall;
Silence—and naper more our path
Shall sound our Footsteps' Fall.

VERSES INSCRIBED IN AN ALBUM.

By FRANCIS JEFFERY, ESQ.
Why write my name amidst songs and flowers,
To meet the eye of lady gay,
I have no roses for lady's bowers—
For page like this no fitting lay.

Yet though my heart no more must bound
At winking call of sprightly eyes,
Mine is the brow that never frowns'd
On laughing lips or sparkling eyes.

No—though behind me now is closed
The youthful paradise of Love,
Yet I can sleep, with soul composed,
The ingers in that happy grave!

Take then, fair girls, my blessing tale!
Where'er amid its charms you roam;
Or where your wafters bid you take
You brighten a sinner's home.

And while the youthful lover's name
Here with the sister beauty's blends,
Laugh not to scorn the humbler aim,
That to their list would add a friend's!

THE MERRYLAND.

A PASSAGE IN HUMAN LIFE.

By WILLIAM HOLLIS.
In my daily walks into the country, I was accustomed to pass a certain cottage. It was no cottage *ornée*; it was no cottage of romance. It had nothing particularly picturesque about it. It had its little garden, and its vine spreading over its front; but, beyond these, it possessed no feature likely to fix it in the mind of a poet, or a novel writer, and which might induce him to people it with beings of his own fancy. In fact, it appeared to be inhabited by persons as little extraordinary as itself. A good man of the house it might possess—but he was never visible. The only inmates I ever saw, were a young woman, and another female in the wane of life, no doubt the mother. The damsel was a comely, fresh, middle-looking, cottage girl, comely; always seated in one spot, near the window, intent on her needle. The old dame was as regularly seated, and fro, in household affairs. She appeared one of those good housewives who never dream of rest, except in sleep. The cottage stood to near the road, that the fire at the farther end of the room showed you, without being rudely inquisitive, the whole interior in the single moment of passing. A clean hearth, and a cheerful fire, shining upon homely, but neat and orderly furniture, spoke of comfort; but whether the dame enjoyed, or merely diffused that comfort, was a problem.

I passed the house many successive days. It was always alike—the fire shining brightly and peacefully; the girl seated at her post, by the window; the housewife going to and fro, catering and contriving, dusting and mauling. One morning, as I went by, there was a change; the dame was seated near her daughter, her arms laid upon the table, and her head reclined upon her arms. I was sure that it was sickness, which had compelled her to that attitude of repose; nothing less could have done it. I felt that I knew exactly the poor woman's feelings. She had felt a weariness stealing upon her; she had wondered at it, and struggled against it, and borne up, hoping it would pass by; till, loth as she was to yield, it had forced submission. The next day, when I passed, the room appeared as usual: the fire burning pleasantly—the girl at her needle, but her mother was not to be seen; and glancing my eye upwards, I perceived the blind close drawn in the window above. It is so, I said to myself, disease is in its progress. Perhaps it occasions no gloomy fear of consequences, no extreme concern; and yet who knows how it may end! It is thus that begin those changes, that draw out the central bolt which holds together families; which steal away our fireside faces, and lay waste our affections.

I passed day after day. The scene was the same. The fire burning! the hearth beaming clean and cheerful; but the mother was not to be seen; the blind was still drawn above. At length I missed the girl; and, in her place, appeared another woman, bearing considerable resemblance to the mother, but of a quieter habit. It was easy to interpret this change. Disease had assumed an alarming aspect; the daughter was occupied in intense watching, and caring for the suffering mother; and the good woman's sister had been summoned to her bedside, perhaps from a distant spot, and perhaps from her family affairs, which no less important an event could have induced her to elude. Thus appear-

ances continued some days. There was a silence around the house, and an air of neglect within it; till one morning I beheld the blind drawn in the front below, and the window thrown open above. The scene was over; the mother was removed from her family; and one of those great changes effected in human life, which commence with so little observation, but leave behind them such lasting effects.—*Walter's Wreath.*

SCOTTISH HISTORY.

By SIR WALTER SCOTT.
The Cabinet Cyclopaedia, another of the works undertaken in England in conjunction with Scotland, commences with a history of Scotland, by the celebrated author whose name we quote. The history of England by Sir J. Maklister, and of Ireland by Moore, will follow. The charms of Sir Walter's style are well known, and so such a subject almost any expectations may be indulged as to the execution of his work. The fact that a writer who with romance might give the reins to his fancy, while engaged on volumes of which the principal merit must be the accurate detail of fact, is removed by the assurance that this point has been assiduously guarded against throughout.—*N. Y. Atlas.*

The falsification of history for the sake of effect, or for less excusable motives, by poets and novelists, is a charge which few writers are more obnoxious than Sir Walter Scott himself. It is a charge to which Shakespeare is also liable, from a too ready adoption of the fables and interpretations of the old Chroniclers; as the reader will see in the following remark on the fate of the "gracious Duncan," who fell by the dagger of Macbeth. On reading these scenes," observes our author, "every reader must feel as if brought from darkness into the blaze of noon day; so familiar are we with the passages whom we last named, and so clearly and distinctly we recall the events in which they are interested, in comparison with the doubtful and misty views which we can form of the twilight times before and after a fortunate period. But we must not be blinded by our poetical enthusiasm, nor add more than due importance to the legends, because they have been woven into the tissue of fiction, and ambition and remorse that ever streak awe into a human bosom. The genius of Shakespeare having found the tale of Macbeth in the Scottish chronicles of Holshed, adorned it with a little simile to that which a level beam of the sun often invests some fragments of glass, which, though shining at a distance with a lustre of a diamond, is by a near investigation discovered to be of no worth or estimation.

DUNCAN AND MACBETH.

Duncan succeeded to King Malcolm III. in 1033; he reigned only six years. Macbeth his near relation, also a grand-child of Malcolm III. though by the mother's side, was stirred up by ambition to contest the throne with the possessor. The lady of Macbeth, also, whose real name was Grach, had designs to revenge on the reigning prince, she was the grand-daughter of Kenneth IV. killed in 1003, fighting against Malcolm III. and other causes for revenge against the mind of her, who has been twice painted as the strongest of women. The old Scottish chroniclers, in a supernatural kind to the assistance of a virtuous woman over an ambitious husband. Three women, more than human stature and beauty, appeared to Macbeth in a vision, and bled him successively by the name of the Crow, the Witch, and the Hag, which the king afterwards bestowed on him, and king of Scots, which inspired him with the ambitious hopes so well expressed in the drama. Macbeth broke so late of hospitality in his contempt of Duncan's life. He attacked and slew the king at a place called Balaclava, near the Smith's House, near Elgin, in 1039, and not as has been supposed, in the castle of Inverness. The act was bloody, as was the custom of the times; but, in very truth, the claim of the throne, according to the rule of Scottish succession, was his right, and that of Duncan. As a king, the tyrant so much exclaimed against, was, in reality, firm, just, and equitable. Approbation of a party which Malcolm, the eldest son of the slaughtered Duncan, had taken in the North, he attacked and slew the king at a place called Balaclava, near the Smith's House, near Elgin, in 1039, and not as has been supposed, in the castle of Inverness. The act was bloody, as was the custom of the times; but, in very truth, the claim of the throne, according to the rule of Scottish succession, was his right, and that of Duncan. 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