

THE  
STUDENTS' MONTHLY.

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ELMYR, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

A finely-gravelled carriage road winds through the trees, and slopes away past the broad gallery, down to the very edge of the miniature lake, whose dancing lights tickle the artistic eye of the beholder, as the sun pours his darting rays through the foliage of the tall maple and silver-birch trees upon its laughing surface. Choice flowers border the road, well-watered, and the grass-plots in which they rise, like green Oases in the purple gravel, are closely shorn, and the broad lawn, also, which descends gradually from you, like a soft green carpet, is a picture over which I linger with a fondness which I, only, can appreciate.

Elmyr Hall is well kept,—the inmates are happy as the day is long, the servants are well treated and well behaved; the stable is well filled with choice animals, the public highway is at a comfortable distance, and taking all things into consideration, it appears to my limited ideas of the world, as a model of comfort, where anyone but a boor might be content to pass the remainder of his years in domestic happiness. Ten years ago this was different. Elmyr Hall was then in the hands of Squire Walter.

He was a bachelor of five and forty, and the village people say he so crippled the estate, that his successor spent the greater part of his life in paying off old mortgages, contracted during the short but profligate career of this man. The balcony on the south side of the Hall, above the wide gallery, had fallen; the tower was in ruins, and the stables were silent and tumbling down; whilst the conservatory was utterly neglected, and the large flower-garden, among the trees, was choked up with weeds.

The prospect was not pleasing then, and the villagers say to this day, in whispers, as they gather about their firesides in the long winter's evenings, that a ghost, white and deathlike, used to flit about the lone walk by the river's bank, in the pale moonlight.

I well remember Squire Walter. My aunt Langsley used to tell me strange stories about him and his family, and whenever I saw him, I would wonder if all she told me were true. I had a great reverence for old families, and, perhaps, from this arose the fact, that through the greater part of my early girlhood, I somehow fancied I should be looked upon some day by him as though I was an equal.