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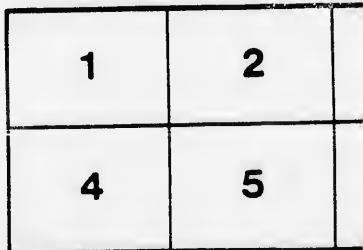
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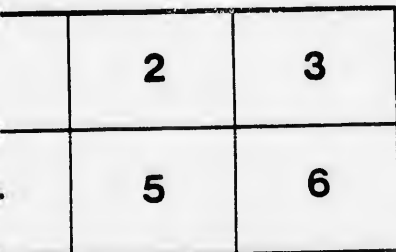
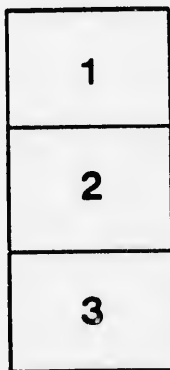
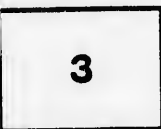
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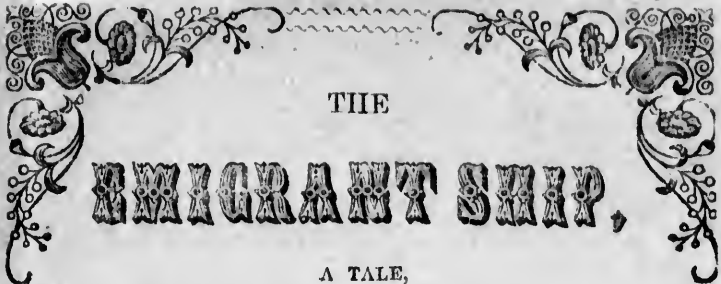


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THE

EMIGRANT SHIP,

A TALE,

WRITTEN BY A LADY

FOR THE

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IN AID OF THE

Protestant Orphan Asylum.

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OCTOBER, 1850.  
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Montreal :

PRINTED BY LOVELL AND GIBSON.



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APPEAL OF THE ORPHAN CHILDREN.

Friends of the friendless! in His name,
Who was the friend of all,
We lift to thee our humble claim,
Oh hear the Orphans' call.

Children of charity, we come,
With thanks for that kind care,
Which sought us in the hour of need,
And rescued from despair.

That care which food and raiment gives
On each returning day:
Shelter to those, who had not where
Their weary heads to lay.

Thanks for those blessings! Still our hearts
For other's sorrows plead;
Hundreds of houseless Orphans yet,
That generous bounty need.

Children of poverty and vice,
Behold them, starving lie!
To you they lift their feeble voice—
Oh! leave them not to die!

Here, in the name of suffering want,
This Orphan Fair was spread,
Sweet Charity, with pity wrought,
And twined each skilful thread.

Fair hands with generous zeal have toiled,
 And tasked inventive aid—
 Bright eyes have watched the growing forms,
 Of beauty here displayed.

Whate'er the restless fancy craves,
 Or polished taste holds dear,
 Fair to the eye, or useful deemed,
 Behold! you find it here.

Come then and choose! the Orphans' Fair,
 Displays its gifts to all;
 Cast freely round the shining dross,
 It cannot vainly fall.

Unseen, but robed in purest light,
 Could our dim sense perceive,
 With open hand, fair Charity,
 Here waiteth to receive.

Mildly she speaks to all,—“ Oh! give,
 “ Give at the Orphans' call;
 “ A blessing on the liberal hand,
 “ And generous heart shall fall !”



THE EMIGRANT SHIP,

A TALE FOR THE

Protestant Orphan Bazaar.

THERE was a crowd looking on, one bright morning in early Spring, while an Emigrant ship weighed anchor, and spreading her white sails, moved slowly out to sea. A loud cheer broke from the spectators, and it was answered by a farewell shout—a wailing cry rather, it was so sad and plaintive—which burst from the full heart of those poor emigrants; who crowded the deck to take a last look of their native land:

A last look! and who ever looked for the last time on any spot endeared by memories of joy or sorrow, without a pang, keener than words can express?

“That ship is too heavily laden,” said a hard-faced man, whose thoughts dwelt on the risks of Insurance, in which he was deeply concerned.

“Too much—too much crowded,” replied a bustling, active man, “there will be sickness on board, and it will be detained in Quarantine, till the demand for Spring goods is passed.”

He spoke feelingly, for he had consigned a large amount of goods to the chances of that crowded bark.

"God be with the poor creatures," fervently ejaculated another; one who wore a priestly garb, beneath which, beat the heart of a true Samaritan. And his prayers followed those whom poverty and despair had driven away, to find new homes in a far off, stranger land.

"God bless your reverence," said an old woman, wiping a tear from her eye, "there go our friends and neighbors, who would have lived and toiled honestly on their own bits of land, if the bread had not been taken from their mouths, and they were left to starve entire—God help them."

"Let them go, mother," said a young man huskily, "why should they stay here till the black rot comes, and the bailiffs turn them out of doors? When I have saved enough, mother dear, *we* will go too."

The crowd dispersed; the ship ploughed heavily along, farther, farther off—it became a mere speck, and was then lost to sight. And, save in a few forsaken homes, or a few desolate hearts, who thought of, or cared for the fate of that heavy-burdened Emigrant Ship?

The ship went on its way bravely, ploughing the smooth sea with deep furrows, and making steady progress, though the wind was capricious,

and often drove it from its course: Twenty days it had already been at sea; it was alone in the midst of the broad Atlantic, and a hundred and thirty living souls were pent up within its narrow limits. And there was not a heart, however seared with wretchedness, or hardened by degradation, or chilled by disappointment and poverty, but throbbled with a feeling of hope that some better destiny awaited them in the land they were approaching, than had fallen to their hard lot in that which they left behind.

Another week passed away, but storms had arisen, and adverse winds beat the ship about, while drenching rains swept the deck, which only experienced seamen could tread in safety. The nights were dimly dark, and the angry waves lashing the sides of the vessel, which pitched fearfully on the stormy sea, struck terror into the hearts of the ignorant and superstitious. Provisions also began to grow scarce, for with habitual improvidence, many had neglected to prepare for the exigencies of a long voyage, and others had been sent from their homes almost destitute. The captain, a selfish and grasping man, doled out a scanty supply from his private stores, for which he exacted a most unjust compensation, and those who had no money to give, became a burden on the charity of the compassionate. During the week in which the storm continued, a

fearful change had taken place among the unfortunate Emigrants. Shut out from the fresh air, crowded together in a small space, and destitute of wholesome food, a fearful disease was generated, and when the sun again broke out cheerfully, and all were called on deck, not one-half their number were able to obey the summons. Pale, dispirited, worn by fasting and confinement, they crawled forward; even those who had been cleanly and robust, were but the shadows of their former selves, and on the face of childhood, was imprinted those most painful lines—the traces of premature suffering and hardship.

Amidst a silence which seemed sad and ominous, two of the ship's crew followed, staggering under the weight of a dead human body; and when another and another was brought forward, and cast, with little outward form, into the fathomless deep, a cry of anguish burst from the survivors, and the chillness of despair settled on every heart. The work of death went on among that devoted company: in quick succession, fifty passed away, and their bodies were consigned to a watery grave.....

It was a joyful sound when a man at the mast head cried out, "Land!" and the faint outlines of Newfoundland might be seen through a glass, in the far distance. The cry was repeated by every lip, and the saddest face lighted up with a glow

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of pleasure. The sun had just sunk below the waves, and the broad sea, mingling with the horizon, lay like a smooth mirror beneath the glowing sky. Eagerly, but vainly the poor Emigrants strained their sight to catch a glimpse of the wished for land;—it still lay far beyond the ken of any but the most experienced eye. They were dispersed with rude jests by the sailors, and returned disappointed to their allotted places. Seated on the bulkhead there remained one group, apparently too much absorbed by their own sorrows, to observe anything passing around them. A young man of perhaps thirty years, was holding on one knee a sickly looking little girl, and on the other, an infant of some eighteen months sat quietly nibbling a crust, and vainly trying to win a smile by holding it coaxingly to her father's lips. A sturdy little boy nodded at his feet, while the mother, sitting beside her husband, leaned her head on his shoulder, and wept bitterly. That day, her mother and an only brother had been consigned to the deep.

“Do not fret so, Bessy dear,” said the husband tenderly, “it cannot call back the dead, and fretting only wears the life out of you. Just think of the bairns now,—you will make them grit too.”

“The poor bairns, God keep them,” sobbed the wife, “and you too Allan, but you do look

so pale! Sore enough times we had at home, but then we kept all together,—and now they are gone—gone!” and she burst into a fresh flood of tears.

Allan soothed his wife with all the arguments which his kind heart could suggest, and her tears gradually dried and she tried to answer him with a smile, but her heart was sadly oppressed, poor thing, for her gentle but not very strong spirit had sunk under the distresses of that sad voyage.

An early marriage and the demands of a growing family, had kept Allan and his young wife poor; and how can the Irish peasantry hope to grow rich amidst the accumulated social evils which grind them to the earth? They rented a small cabin; and a patch of potato-ground and a cow were their chief dependence; yet Allan and his wife belonged to the decent poor who prized independence and looked forward to better days. But the potato-rot came, and took away from them the staff of life; labor was scarce and poorly remunerated, and the cow was sold to pay their rent and taxes. So they scraped together the little that was left, and it barely sufficed to pay for a passage to America after setting aside a few pounds for the outfit of a new home, or any exigencies that might arise. From this small sum some coins had already been abstracted to relieve the necessities of their suffering fellow-

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passengers, for Allan and Bessy had kind hearts and could not resist an appeal to their sympathies. And, however deficient the unsophisticated Irish may be in prudential virtues, and in worldly wisdom, for generosity and self-sacrificing kindness, no people in the world can equal them.

The Emigrant Ship, still infected with the baleful fever, reached Grosse Isle in due season and was detained the usual time in quarantine. Many carried the seeds of the dreaded fever to the shelters provided for them on the island, and before the ship was purified and suffered to proceed to Quebec, more than half the remaining Emigrants rested under the sod. On the very day that they were preparing to depart, poor Allan was taken ill and carried to the hospital. Bessy's agony amounted to despair, for in her weak, fond heart was the strong love of a devoted wife, and the superstition of her uncultured race. It is well remembered what terror the progress of *ship fever* spread on every side, and how reluctant any but the devoted Nuns, or the most mercenary nurses, were found, to attend upon the sick. But Bessy's love was stronger than her fear, and nothing could keep her from her husband's side. The medical men, touched with her distress allowed her to attend upon him, and though almost unconscious of her presence, his

sufferings were mitigated by her vain, but tender care. Poor Bessy's painful watchings, aggravated by distress of mind, brought on her the same terrible disease, and for some weeks after Allan's death, her life seemed to hang by a single thread.

It was a bright summer morning, when Bessy and her little children mingled in with a crowd of Emigrants, landed from a steamer on the wharf at Montreal. She looked round on the cheerful, active scene, and a sense of loneliness smote upon her heart. This then was the city which she had looked forward to, with such earnest longing, when they parted from their native shore! This was the end of the long travel which she had commenced with such unambitious but sanguine hopes! And he who had set out with her, and on whose stronger arm she leaned for support, had fallen by her side, and henceforth she must tread the world alone! Poor Bessy! *she had not time to grieve*; the poor have never time to grieve. In the midst of bereavement they must rise up and struggle for existence, and with stricken hearts bear the burden of the day, and crush down the sorrow which would unnerve their hands for that labor on which their life depends! Often we may look at them, and wonder at their apathy, when, could we see their hearts, we might read there a tale of patient endurance and of unforgetting sorrow,

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which would far outweigh all external badges, and all conventional forms.....

In an obscure court, leading from a narrow street, in the heart of the city, might be seen a few wooden houses close packed together, and the words "Room to Let," written in large characters on one dilapidated window-shutter, attracted the attention of the passing idler. The houses were swarming with children, and every room, save that one which had just lost a tenant, was occupied by a family. The court was small, closed in by those over-crowded tenements, and the air stifling and polluted. In the middle of the yard was a pool of water kept full by the emptying of dirty suds and other questionable slops, and some half dozen ragged children were gathered round it with boisterous mirth, floating chips upon the stagnant water. From almost every window some untidy female looked out, or a meagre baby was held up to find amusement in gazing at the noisy children without. All manner of rubbish littered up the sides, and the feet slipped over decaying vegetables thrown out before the doors. It seemed strange that life could be supported in such a fetid atmosphere and pent up in such close apartments. Yet in these places the poor of cities are obliged to live, for rents are too dear where there is fresh air and comfortable lodgings!

In that "Room to Let," poor Bessy found shelter for herself and children. Her money was nearly exhausted; scarcely two sovereigns remained of all her little store. There she deposited her chest, her bed, and the few articles of comfort she had brought from her childhood's home. The poor children fretted sadly, for they had been used to fresh air, and the little cabin where they first saw the light, was clean, and stood alone on a breezy hill side. Bessy soothed their complaints and though her own heart was *crushed*, love for them, gave her courage and endurance. Patiently she sought employment, and though often ill-requited, day after day found her toiling in cheerful hope and earning enough to keep want from the door, and to pay the rent of her little room. If anxious thoughts would sometimes intrude, hope came to her aid, and she looked forward to the time when her children would be old enough to help her, and they could then earn more, and live in a better place. Poor Bessy, this was the extent of her ambition.....

Autumn came on with its chilling blasts and dismal rains. The children needed warmer clothes, and the wind blew so sharply through the broad cracks and shattered windows, that another stick must be added to the fire, and even then their teeth chattered, and the small dipped candle at night, flickered painfully to the eyes. Bessy had

no peat-bog to go to now, where fuel might be had for digging, and the long, long Winter came on fast and found her ill prepared to meet its severity. Work was not as plenty as it had been in warmer weather. A family for whom she had done washing, left town suddenly and forgot to pay her a dollar which was due. Alas! a few shillings which the rich think so lightly of, or spend in selfish extravagance, if given to the poor, or applied to the just payment of honest industry, how many hearts would be gladdened, how many abodes of poverty made comfortable!

That dollar Bessy had appropriated to purchase fuel; for a week they had had no warmth except from the blaze of a few chips which the children picked up about some unfinished buildings, and the mother's heart ached as she looked on their poor little frozen fingers and their bare feet, pinched with cold. And when they came crying round the few dying embers, her thoughts turned reproachfully to the rich man in his abundance, who had so cruelly forgotten the claims of justice and humanity.

It was the midst of Winter. Bessy sat with aching eyes by the dim candle, finishing some slop work that she had procured from a dealer in *cheap labor*. Sixpence for a garment neatly made! It was a bargain which brought *him* ample remuneration, but left *her* only a few farthings for her

strained sight and wasted strength. A threadbare cloak, which was the pride of her happier days, slightly screened her from the wind that whistled through every crevice; but still her feet ached, and her fingers were so numb she could scarce hold the needle. A few chips still lay on the hearth; they were all that were left to warm the little ones the next day, when she must leave them alone to go and work at Mrs S's. No, she could not rob the children of the warmth they so much needed; so she drew the cloak more closely round her, and at a late hour her task was finished, and poor Bessy lay down to rest with a more quiet mind and a far more confiding spirit, than many are blessed with, whose easy lot leaves them no anxious thoughts for the morrow.

The next day Bessy returned home thoroughly chilled from her days work. She had gone far out of her way to ask for a few shillings due for some sewing which she took home in the morning; for she was very hard pressed, and Mrs. S. could not make the change when she left her house, but told her to call again the next day. Mrs. S.—with all her kindly feelings, knew little of the wants of the poor, and Bessy never complained to any one. She bore her hard lot with patient submission, and felt an honest pride in concealing her wants from every eye. So she could not make up her mind to tell Mrs. S. that

she and her children were suffering from cold and want, but gratefully took the fragments of broken meat offered her, and in weariness, threaded the cold streets, half blinded by driving sleet, to obtain the paltry sum due for her midnight labor. It was then too late to purchase any thing that night, so Bessy went home and groped her way up the crazy stairs, to her cold silent room; for a charitable neighbour in the next apartment had looked after the children and put them to bed. Bessy ached in every limb, and her head throbbed painfully. It was of no use to kindle up the embers at that late hour, so she laid down beside the children, cold and damp, and vainly tried to sleep. It seemed very long, that weary night, as she tossed from side to side, and could find no relief in change. Hardship, anxiety and exposure had done their work, and a burning fever raged in every vein. In the morning she was unable to rise.

It was well for poor Bessy that she had a kind friend in her neighbor of the next apartment, who, with the warm sympathy that almost invariably springs up, fresh and genial among the weeds of poverty,—rendered her every needful assistance, and watched beside her with the tenderest care. Mrs. S. also, when two or three days passed away, and Bessy did not return for her money, neither came on the usual day to work for her, sent to

enquire the cause. Greatly shocked to learn that her own thoughtlessness had, in part, occasioned Bessy's illness, she endeavoured to repair the error by every possible attention which her situation demanded; and the suggestions of self-reproach led her, ever after, to regard more seriously the claims of those whose labor contributes so materially to domestic comfort.

Bessy had struggled hard with poverty and her constitution was unable to bear so severe a shock. The violence of the disease yielded to medical skill, but a rapid decline followed which left no hope of recovery. The world could offer her few allurements, and the grave had no terrors to her imagination. But one strong tie still held her to life, and the mother forgot all suffering in her earnest prayer to live a little longer for the children's sake. "My children, what will become of them?" was the constant burthen of her heart; and the doubt, "who will care for the poor creatures when I am gone?" rose before her with painful pertinacity.

Happily Mrs. S. was enabled to soothe her fears, and give peace to her dying moments. She explained to her that there was a place provided, where such little ones were received and kindly cared for, and promised that her children should all find a home there, when she could no longer care for them. Poor Bessy's gratitude was unbound-

ed; she had no higher boon to ask in life, and death came to her without a sting. The little orphans were welcomed to the Protestant Orphan Asylum, where their brief troubles were soon forgotten; and here, subjected to kind discipline, and instructed in all good and useful knowledge suited to their condition, it is hoped they will grow up to usefulness, and reflect credit on the Institution which has embraced them in its noble charity.

Friends of this Orphan Asylum! it is no tale of fictitious sorrow which we have laid before you. In your own experience, similar cases must have often called forth your generous sympathies. At every turn, you meet the poor, the sorrowful and the forsaken. In all the by-ways and obscure corners of this city are hungry, weeping orphans, left to the cold charity of a world that deigns not to look upon them, but whom Providence calls on you to rescue and redeem for the service of mankind.

And to others, the gay, the prosperous and the happy, who come here this day to pass an idle hour, or to please the fancy and gratify the taste, —let a deeper thought and a more earnest desire take possession of their minds, and lead them more faithfully, to perform the mission which our Heavenly Father has appointed to every child of humanity.

These orphan children appeal to every Christian heart, not for themselves alone, but for all little ones who are destitute of food and shelter,—care for their bodies, and training for their immortal minds. And to every one whom Providence has blessed with means and opportunity, is addressed the touching language of the Saviour. “In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.”





