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# THE AMARANTH.

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## LITERARY LADIES OF AMERICA.

THIRTY years ago, and this would have been a strange term in America; something for our Down East mothers to wonder at, and search their dictionaries about. A book on religious subjects by Hannah Adams, one of history and of biography, perhaps, were written by females about the time of the Revolution. A few stray snatches of poetry sometimes appeared—like *Epithets* beautiful, but almost unnoticed—among the newspaper paragraphs which formed but a dim shadow of what is now a flourishing periodical literature, but except these slight manifestations of the future, the Genius of America, so far as her women are concerned, brooded among our household gods, a beautiful, but voiceless spirit.

New England, the birth-place of female genius, was full of wild and soul-stirring poetry, even before the white man's tread disturbed the lush of her forests. It dwelt in the solemn depths of the wilderness, and nature found there a thousand startling voices to awake the fancy, and arouse the high worship of mind, before human intellect dreamed of a western hemisphere. It lived in the golden sunshine where it broke on the mountain peak, and laughed in the silvery riot of her waterfalls, where they tossed their foam to the wind, and plunged from the cliff to the green valley below! It slept in the river vale, and trifled with the sweet south wind, when it went sighing among the wild flowers—it whispered in the forest leaves where the red man crept stealthily beneath them in search of the spotted deer. It was found every where haunting the sea shore and the wilderness with its melodies, a restless spirit yearning for some more touching power of expression than was found in the whispering leaves, something more delicate than lives in the manly heart, and with a higher strength than gushes forth in the bird song.

The depth of masculine mind was sounded, but in the human soul are many delicate strings ready to thrill at a gentle breath, but which give forth no music to the powerful touch of man's intellect. American poetry was deficient in its most refined attribute 'till a female mind awoke, capable of blending the most gentle feelings of the heart with the lovely things of nature, and of combining with the voice of masculine thought a soft, low-strain which harmonized and made a perfect melody.

Until Hope Leslie arose from the quiet bosom of New England, like a timid bird, half unconscious of the jewel which lay sheltered beneath its wings, no woman had sounded the chords of her own heart, that they might awake answering tones in the bosom of another. There was no *home music* in the literature of our country; nothing which might arouse the female heart to a knowledge of the high poetry which slept among our household gods. But Hope Leslie was answered by a kindred voice—another and another! 'till those who had deemed that genius and lofty thought, which is its attribute, could dwell in masculine intellect alone, were constrained to admit that thought and feeling in their most lovely combinations, might exist in the female heart, and still detract from no gentle or womanly virtue.

The author of Hope Leslie gave a beautiful example that female mind may be brilliant and yet delicate, capable of intense feeling, and of powerful thought, and that the highest intellectual exercise of which the heart and mind of woman is capable, may be modestly performed amid the light of her own home and surrounded by the domestic affections.

If there is a being on earth who should be held in love and reverence, it is that woman who first gave to female genius a voice and name in our land! Who became great through the brilliancy of her mind, but who, amid all her fame, remained womanly and modest fr m

the goodness of her heart. If there is honour due to woman for her loveliness, or to genius for its beautiful creations, it should be rendered to the author of *Hope Leslie*, and the equally great and gentle woman whose genius is floating in a thousand melodies through our country: whose mind has been one continued tribute to her sex; and whose life supplied us with an example of intellectual pursuits, harmonizing with the duties of a wife and mother, beautiful as colours ripen on the cheek of a peach in midsummer.

The author of *Zinzendorf*, and her illustrious compeer, followed immediately by two or three others of almost equal worth, were the pioneers to a class of women who are exerting quiet, but powerful influence in the land; an influence increasing every day, and which will be felt, for good or for evil, centuries and centuries hence. And it is this influence of female literature, more than any other, which will exalt and refine the sex, and which will establish a true position for woman in the scale of social life. It will extend the dominion of her influence by increasing her resources of enjoyment; by giving dignity and grace to the beautiful world of home which is her undisputed kingdom; by rendering her content with that little domain which has more space for cultivation than female mind has yet suspected.

Miss Sedgwick and Mrs. Sigourney, Mrs. Child and one or two others who became authors almost the same year, were among the first to clothe our history and social life with the hues of their own bright imagination.—They exerted mental wealth to render domestic life lovely, and to persuade their sisters into content with the blessings of their natural condition. Their fiction was full of truthfulness, and the sweet lessons which it gave were calculated to exalt woman in her proper sphere, but never to entice her beyond it. They have taught the ambitious of the sex, in many a beautiful page, and by their own blameless lives, that women may become great, yet remain humble and affectionate, and that the most lofty ideal is not necessarily divorced from the useful. They have taught us that genius may be combined with firm principle and plain common sense, yet lose nothing of its brightness: that female genius is, in truth, a household spirit, that infancy may nestle in its bosom, and childhood need not fear to crown it with flowers, or play at hide and seek in its vestments. They have exhibited it a gentle spirit, smoothing the pillow of age, hovering around the sick bed, with plumage

which but grows brighter from the dews that fall over it from the green roof tree.

It is true that this little band of women have been followed by others of more or less pretensions to kindred excellence. But they first broke a path in the wilderness of letters, and when the thorns were removed and the rugged places made smooth, it required no great effort of courage to follow their footsteps.—The toil of adventure was almost accomplished, and the laurels green on their foreheads, before those who have since become known in the world of letters, ventured to imitate their illustrious example. Within the last few years the walks of female literature have become peopled with votaries. Intellectuals as brilliant as the examples that have been chosen, may be found among them—nay, greater genius and more startling manifestations of female mind may exist, now or hereafter—but equality or even superiority of mental power in those who may come after, can detract nothing from the reverence and gratitude due to those who unlocked the treasure of their genius, when the result was uncertain, and when the effort might be followed by glory or reproach, as the generosity or prejudices of their countrymen should determine.

At the time these ladies devoted themselves to literature, they might indeed tremble for the opinion which men would form of them, for at that time a woman who wrote books was considered almost a rival to masculine intellect and regarded as something strange and unapproachable by her sister women. The division lines which are now so strongly drawn between the masculine and feminine mind, were little understood in that day, and the idea that a woman of genius could be domestic, cheerful and unpretending, would have been considered visionary in the extreme.

The first impulse was given by women who were doubtful of the result; and to their moral courage and spirit of self-sacrifice is due, a degree of praise which no votary of the present, however brilliant, can hope to receive; for the circumstances under which they wrote can never exist again to test the strength of woman's courage, though every day exhibits some new and beautiful power of her genius.

With this band of gifted women arose the title which heads our essay. They were a new, and rare class, springing up like exotics in the wilderness. So our countrymen imported a name from over sea, and they were called "Literary Ladies."

Did this little group of women dream of

wide and bright the circle would spread, when they cast their pearls on the waters of society, and saw them sparkle and eddy beneath their influence for the first time? Did they guess that the air was all alive with kindred spirits and new voices of melody—or think how high and bright the flame of female mind would rise and shine, and that the country would be studded with answering fires, in less than twenty years after their own timid watch lights were kindled on the hills of New England?—Did they anticipate that progress in the mechanic arts, by which thoughts slumbering in the heart one week, may on the next claim sympathy from a hundred and fifty thousand readers? *Could* they have known how beautifully their influence would spread among the sex—how many gems would flash around their feet when, like angels of old, they went down to trouble the still waters of human thought?!

Did they anticipate all this? No! no!—Genius is a sweet impulse, and calculation unknown to its first exertions! As the bird panting beneath the burden of its own rich melody, pours its song upon the air—they gave up a treasure of thought which was pleading for utterance—and the result came naturally as flowers blossom beneath the kisses of an April sun. Their spirits were haunted with music, and taking no thought of the morrow, they gave it freely to the breeze without one anticipation of the echo which society might send back to them—of the affection they have excited, and the reverence which will cling around their memory. They acted from the impulse of a high nature, and with all their genius remained true women, faithful to their sex, firm in the domestic duties which are imperative alike on the gifted, and those of humble endowments.

With the examples just dwelt upon joined to many others scarcely inferior either in qualities of mind or heart, it will hardly be contended even by the most obstinate, that in order to write well a woman must invest her mind and personal habits with the attributes of masculine greatness; or that she must sacrifice one feminine or gentle quality in order to attain literary distinction. The history of female mind from the landing of the Pilgrims to the present day, has been a beautiful contradiction to this false idea; and so far as our literature is concerned, the ladies of America have little to regret, and less to blush for. Common-place and feeble books may occasionally emanate from their pens, but a decidedly immoral or irreligious volume has not, to the writer's

knowledge ever left a disgraceful record against the sex since America was a nation. In our land few ladies of genius, or even talent, exist, who would not reject the distinction, however high, which must be purchased by a sacrifice of delicacy or principle. If this unnatural desire for popularity did exist, there is no safeguard against it so powerful as the cultivation of a truly feminine taste for letters. There is something in a study of the beautiful which ennobles and refines the intellect; and if the pursuit of letters led to no higher result, the author might secure an exceeding reward in the cultivation of her taste—in the delicacy and refinement which habits of pure thought blend with the character, adding new grace to that already existing in her woman's nature.

But in the very luxuriance and success of our female literature there is danger of its deterioration. The indiscriminate use of a term, by which women of genius were first known in our land, threatens to destroy its dignity, and in some degree check the progress of female mind. The appellation once bestowed on our distinguished females as a title of dignity and honour has become perverted by society, and is thoughtlessly rendered to the pretender, who, mistaking ambition for talent, assumes, under the delusion, more than the highest grade of genius would arrogate to itself. And more reprehensible still!—it is given to the woman who degrades her sex, by a bold companionship of rights which ought to shock the feminine nature. Who can rise audaciously before a multitude of men, comprising all classes of mind, and amid the coarse cheers and rude clapping which heralds her unnatural appearance, hold a political discourse, or exhaust presumptuous eloquence in defence of "woman's rights," and equality of the sexes—equality, which if it did exist, would deprive us of the sweetest blessing ever inherited by the sensitive and feminine heart! For in order to sustain it, woman must sacrifice that feeling of trust and dependence on some being of sterner strength and purpose than herself, which is the most beautiful want known to her existence.

The rights and equality which these bold teachers claim would sweep away all the little world of confiding tenderness, which is the richest dower of womanhood. Females who can so misrepresent the female character, should be rejected in the arena of manly intellect, and shut out from the Eden of their own sex forever. It is impossible to read and think much, without comprehending how beautifully

the relations existing between the sexes are established by the Creator, and the true woman of genius—one who has learned to study and feel—would as soon dash a specimen of glorious sculpture from its pedestal, or fling discord into a strain of exquisite music as disturb one bud of that flowery woof which draws us to the heart of man for love and protection. Yet the woman who exhibits her person before a crowd of applauding men, or writes a book calculated to subvert religion and all the beautiful poetry which religion kindles in the soul, claims the same title with one who has exalted the sex by a modest exertion of high thought. Though with such minds true feminine genius can hold no sympathy, the delicacy of womanhood and the dignity of intellect are outraged by the association.

It is to be expected that the original and lofty mind will sometimes be coupled with pretension and ambitious weakness. The faculty of adopting ideas already created, and of tasteful combination, is frequently misunderstood for intrinsic mental strength. But if the women who possess mere talent occasionally receive the tribute due to creative genius, it is a harmless usurpation, and when divested of arrogance may well meet with indulgence. A desire for public distinction, though a coarse and unfeminine impulse when carried to extremes, and one which most frequently urges mediocre talent before the world, may be forgiven so long as the dignity and delicacy of sex are not sacrificed, though Sappho herself, would fail to render the feeling a gentle or lovely one.

While no false moral sentiments are inculcated, the exertion of superficial talent is but slightly felt in society, and if it were not productive of pernicious influence in the literary circle, the evil would scarcely be worthy a passing remark. But disappointment falls with harsh and painful force on the ambitious and thoughtless mind. The effort which takes its rise in vanity, alone, must ever recoil baffled and dissatisfied on the heart where it originated, and though the exercise of weak talent may in itself be harmless, it is by the evil feelings which arise from an over estimate of this talent in the possessor, and the disappointment which follows want of success, envy, heart-burning, and that hateful feeling, "literary jealousy," manifest themselves in the world of letters. But these are sensations that know their birth in mediocrity alone, and which never yet found a moment's rest in the truly great mind.

The successful are seldom envious!—to those who deserve success the passion is unknown.

Envy, and all its train of evil feelings are engendered in the strong thirst for notoriety, which goes with the ambition that has no power to sustain its pretensions. The baffled spirit, which finds that wings which were deemed shivering with the plumage of an arch angel have scarcely power to flutter from the dull earth, grows bitter as the lofty and pure make a steady flight upward, and are seen bathing in the sunshine which it has failed to reach. But the woman possessed of that depth of thought and feeling which, harmoniously blended, forms all that is worthy the name of genius, in our sex, is incapable of those selfish and bitter passions which can assimilate with no pure quality of her mind, no warm impulse of her heart.

There is a modest but certain consciousness of moral and intellectual power that accompanies genius, which lifts it above the petty competition of weaker minds.

The truly original spirit feels that it is invested with a power all its own, and unlike that existing in any other human being. It looks into the great eternity of thought, and feels that the stars burning in the blue bosom of the sky are not more independent, each in its sphere of light, than the faculty of creative thought which lives in any one human soul.—Minds which grovel to the dull earth may jostle each other, and make unpleasant discord, but the spirit that soars upward, finds no lack of space in the blue ether which lies between it and the sun, and though a thousand kindred spirits haunt the same golden atmosphere, each is distinguished by its own bright plumage and peculiar melody.

It is but a slight evil which leaves mediocrity to the woman of genius, though the infirmities of one are sometimes thoughtlessly charged on the other. But it is unjust to couple the woman who makes an altar of her own hearthstone, who writes from the unconquerable promptings of her nature, whose soul, with all its treasure of thought, is poured, like jewels, into the lap of society; it is cruel and unjust to degrade her and the situation which she can do so much to exalt, by linking her even in a chain of words to that class of women who have dashed aside the sweet attributes of their sex, and plunged into the arena of masculine strife, drowning a coarse ambition under the cry of "woman's rights," and setting up a defiance which tinges the cheek of every true woman with shame and sorrow, that her sex

can be so degraded. Yet the audacious advocate of rights which no refined woman would accept—the imitator who echoes the idea which she can appropriate but scarcely comprehend, are coupled with the women of deep and earnest thought, and both are classed under one general title of “Literary Ladies.”

It may be said that poverty has a power to make even the most delicate woman forgetful of her sex. This may be true regarding persons too vain for useful labor, and without strength for a profitable exertion of intellect; but, in this country, and in this age of literary enterprise—never, by any possibility, can it apply to one deserving the title of a literary woman! The time has gone by when poverty is the necessary associate of genius. Indeed where that glorious attribute really exists, it cannot fail to be justly and generously estimated by a public enlightened and intelligent as ours; while the remuneration which it commands precludes all possibility of want when connected with economy, and even moderate habits of appreciation. The rules which regulate trade, operate on the creations of mind as on all things else; and a vast reading public has created a demand for intellectual wealth, which we have not in our whole country, and combined in both sexes, more than genius enough to supply.

The lady who cannot—even without the means of support—secure enough for honourable independence by devoting one-third of her time to intellectual pursuits, may reasonably suppose that her want of success lies in the over-estimate which she has placed upon her own abilities, not from a want of just appreciation in the public mind, and that effort to improve her fortune by degrading the profession she has selected, will only result in more bitter disappointment to herself, and in wrong to those who have the dignity of a national literature at heart.

It is no proof that poverty is inseparable from genius, because some few persons of talent have made their necessities an excuse for adopting the profession of letters; for the woman who deems any excuse requisite for obeying the dictates of a high and pure nature, must possess little of that true dignity which is inseparable from genius.

If literature were in any way proven an improper pursuit, no lady would be excusable if she allowed mere necessity to influence her in accepting it. It is doubtful, indeed, if any motive independent of that prompted by genius itself, should lead to authorship as a profession!

Efforts which owe their birth to any cause, save the yearnings and aspirations of a spirit which cannot be hushed, are very seldom successful. Like those who occupy the sacred desk, the votary of literature should own her inspiration to lofty desires living within the heart, and not to the outward circumstances with which she is surrounded.

But why should any excuse be rendered for a pursuit honourable in itself, and which may be adopted by the most refined female, without one shadow of indelicacy falling upon her? Why, above all, should the most common apology be, poverty; one which a sensitive and proud woman would be reluctant to offer her dearest friend while reposing in confidence at the sanctuary of her own fireside?

There is not upon the broad earth a more ennobling or dignified profession than that of authorship, nor one more beautifully fitted to the female character. The woman who truly feels this will possess too high an estimate of her own bright inheritance ever to place herself before the public, crouching beneath a load of weak apologies, as if there existed something to be ashamed of in the exercise of a power inherited from God himself! A power of which—if pure and fervent—she can no more divest herself than the diamond could quench the rainbow tints that sparkle within its heart; or the nightingale force back the song that gushes up from her-throat, when she is brim full of music, and sheltered among the moonlit roses of a southern clime.

The only necessity which female genius should ever plead, yet remain true to itself, is that of utterance, a right which no misfortune or circumstance can deny to it. Like music, it has a voice for every feeling; there is no lot so humble, no prison wall so thick that the voice of genius will not break through and make itself heard. All things else may perish with the dead, but that being in itself immortal, becomes sweeter and more solemn when the grave has left it but the echo of a melody that death cannot hush.

If it were not natural and right that women should become authors, why was the capacity in any one instance bestowed on the feminine mind, by a being who never yet blended tints that were not harmonious even in the most humble wild flowers? And why should her thoughts shrink from unfolding themselves in the light which is sent from heaven to nurture them, more than that humble flower should close its petals to the sunshine which gives it perfume and beauty?

The only true reason that a woman can give for becoming an author is, "that she could not help it." Question any one whose genius has been acknowledged in the world, and she might truly answer that ever since she can remember, her heart has been full of strange, sweet fancies, haunted as it were, with visions of beauty which it seemed impossible to clothe in words or impart to any human being; that pictures of sublime scenery, ancient buildings, such as she had never witnessed or even heard described, with wild flowery places, and skies bewildering from the soft light that slept in their clouds, were continually passing through her brain long before she could comprehend the use and mystery of language. She may answer that as she grew older these fancies were blended with her reason, and become a sweet and subdued power capable of expression: and struggle against it as she might, the thoughts which lay buried, like jewels, in her heart, would flash up and weave themselves together like shifting rainbows when a burst of sunshine streamed over them from a kindred mind.

She may answer that at times these thoughts possessed a power which she had no strength to resist—that they held a pleasant dominion over her whole being, and at such times a melody was created, she scarcely knew how, for the pen which recorded it, seemed winged by an invisible spirit; and that the melody did not appear of her own, but something that had been wafted to her from a far off realm of dreams—yet there it was, clothed in language, and written out by her own hand. She gave it to the world with no thoughts of reward—that came naturally like the exertion, and thus she became an author.

But a groundless belief in her necessities is not the only idea which creates a false sympathy for the woman of genius. It is sometimes said of her that she lives in a charmed circle, isolated and lonely—that she is exalted above the common affections and sympathies of mankind, and that the highly gifted can alone appreciate her on earth, and her only happiness is to be found beyond the grave in a bright home amid the angels of heaven.

Very young and sentimental writers have invented this idea with a poetical sweetness which makes even sophistry beautiful. The image of a human soul caged like a singing bird, and exhausting its music in fruitless cries for sympathy, is so rich in sentiment that we are often willing to overlook the fiction which is entangled in the soft meshes of such poetry,

and really believe that for which we have no evidence.

If that creative power which is confined to the intellect alone can be called genius—when that power is found in the female character, independent of the sentiments and affections, the person so endowed may justly claim all the sympathy this poetical idea is calculated to excite. The woman whose intellect has been enriched at the expense of her heart, who arrogantly draws her own circle, and mounting the marble pedestal her pride of mind has erected, takes a position of graceful sentiment that men may crowd round to do her homage, must be content with the tribute which reason pays to exacting selfishness. The homage of mind may be rendered to her admiration, respect and cold esteem; but no home affection, no heart love. She is merely an *intellectual woman*, not a feeling one, and society renders back to her that which she has given coldly as she gave it.

In order to render justice to a band of women but little understood, and often ungenerously associated by the careless observer, it would be well to pass by the literary pretender—the merely talented and the intellectual woman—and applying the term "Literary Lady," as it was first intended, only to women of genius, enquire if there really does prevail a want of affection regarding them. If they are less cherished and beloved in the social circle, and at the domestic fireside than those gifted with the sleepy treasure of mediocrity.

The existence of any high and pure attribute, whether it be of the heart or intellect in a human being, cannot fail to enlist sympathy from like attributes, wherever they are to be found in society. A brilliant mind when it kindles the sentiments and feelings of an affectionate heart to action, is the most attractive and lovable power which a human being can possess; and genius is nothing more than this: "It is but the power to feel deeply, combined with an intellect capable of embodying feeling into words, and of conveying images of truth and beauty from the heart of the writer to the heart of the reader"—and this comprehends all that makes the loveliness of womanhood. Is it in the nature of things that a woman so endowed should be the isolated, companionless being which the sentimental poets make of her? Is there any thing in her nature which should chill the damask cheek of the infant as it nestles to her bosom, or does the poetry which sometimes breaks from her lips, render them

senseless to the soft, eager kisses of her own children? Is she less valuable as a wife, affectionate as a daughter, or faithful as a friend, because she has blended thought with the kindly impulses of her nature, and exalted instinct by reason? Is she in reality less beloved than her sister women, or an object of sentimental commiseration from any cause which may not be applied with equal justice to the whole sex? If the exercise of her mental faculties has a tendency to refine her intellect 'till it becomes discontented with the mean and common-place; if her feelings are rendered more acutely sensitive, and are thus exposed to some degree of suffering which is unknown to the generality of her sex, she has a beautiful equivalent in the exquisite sensation which makes the exertion of thought "its own exceeding reward," and though the excitement of composition may sometimes amount to pain when pictures of suffering and distress pass through the imagination, and become vivid and almost real in their intense effect on the mind which has created them; although the hand may sometimes quiver and tremble on the page it writes, the cheeks grow pale and tear-drops fill the eyes unconsciously, the pain so endured is far outbalanced by the new beings of interest which the mind has created for itself, and work of genius becomes an object of regard—nay, almost of affection which enlinks the author with her ideal world by a thousand pleasant sensations which are but rendered the more intense that pain is sometimes mingled with them. But allowing the exercise of genius to be productive of far more suffering than it really is, there a doubt if any woman possessing the glorious power of mental creation would exchange it for all the pleasures of mediocrity, though pampered by wealth, and luxuriating in earthly splendor. The very suffering which genius knows is preferable to the happiness which slumbers in the mind and feelings too sluggish for a painful or intense sensation.

But in this age authorship has a more substantial reward than attends female exertion in any other walk of life, and the privileges which a successful writer commands, are among the highest in the gift of society. The position which genius secures to its possessor among the great and good of any land is in itself a benefit worth half the labour of a lifetime. It is a position so exalted, that even the aristocratic and titled woman of Great Britain are struggling and toiling for it amid the luxuriance of their palace homes, and in the full

enjoyments of hereditary honours. If any thing can prove the respect which female genius commands, it is, that woman who can trace the blood which damasks their cheeks through a titled line back to William the Conqueror, will submit to study and labor that a higher title may be engrafted on those they have been taught to consider so important. A title rendered aristocratic by the King of kings, and republican by the acclamation of a thinking people.

But distinction is not the only privilege conferred on genius; power and affection are equally its inheritance. It is a slight power which the author asserts in that communion which her thoughts hold with thousands and thousands, whom she may never see, who have linked her name with fireside conversation 'till it has become a household word? Is there not a heart-thrilling pleasure, in the tribute of esteem and affection which flows spontaneously to her feet, from the nooks and humble corners of society where her thoughts have lingered to bud and blossom?

Is it no privilege that she can turn to her own thought for honourable support, and that the very feelings which should render her sensitive to pecuniary obligations are those which make her independent of them? Is there any thing connected with the profession of Belles Lettres which should render the woman who follows it an object of groundless and morbid compassion? or which should make her insensible to the sweet domestic pleasures which are the sunshine of a woman's life?

Is genius a quality which should render her less domestic and useful in her home, or can that really be called genius which does not extend itself to all properties of the mind, and shed a light over the entire of duties which surrounds the possessor? Can the woman who justly appreciates that which is pure and beautiful in her sex, fail to be domestic and kindly in her habits? Has she not reason to be firm in the dignity of her own power, and conscious that no occupation can degrade her which will give happiness to the most lowly of human beings? Genius must be limited indeed if it cannot be joined with the useful, and it would in truth unsex woman if it precluded all knowledge of household duties and home thoughts. The lady's hand that is unfamiliar with the needle, in its most humble task, ill becomes the pen which should persuade females to be useful, kind, and "only great as they are good."

There is no reason why the woman of genius

should not be fortunate, social, beloved and happy as her sisters. Let the charmed circle, which poets talk of, be drawn on the warm hearth-stone, where the blessings of age and the laugh of childhood may ring over it. Let genius sometimes forget its dignity and sun itself in the green fields with a group of romping children hard at play among the buttercups and red strawberries that are ripening around their feet.

Let the woman of genius cease to demand more sympathy than is commonly given to the sex, and while she is careful not to mistake the exactions of vanity for the pleadings of affection in her own heart, render to society that sympathy which she so much covets, and there is little fear that her "charmed circle" will not be haunted with kindred spirits, and rendered fragrant by the sweetest blossoms that spring up and blush along the path of every day life. Let genius be content with the gold and splintered gems that sparkle amid the sands of her existence; nor pine in morbid vanity though a crowd of worshippers does not gather at her shrine to see them "glitter as they pass."

While mind can forget itself and study that philosophy of happiness which gives more than it requires, there is little cause for fear that esteem or affection will not be rendered to it. That which enlightens and improves must always command respect, and if there is any thing on earth calculated to exist and perpetuate affection, it is that embodiment of intellect and feeling expressed by the word genius. Circumstances may discourage and crush mere talent, but genius commands circumstance; her capital is invested in the intelligence of a reading public. Her strength lies in the mass of intellect which she has interested in the feelings she has touched.

To its unperverted exercise it sweeps a circle broad as the waves of society; remains pure as wind from the mountain top, and beautiful as the ice jewelry entangled over the white pebbled brook in mid-winter. Genius is an independent possession, a gem which no time nor circumstance can wrest from the soul.—It exists and grows brighter in its own unquenchable fires, and flings a brilliancy on surrounding objects spite of all the obstacles which can be heaped upon it. Never is that gem so pure and holy as when it burns in the female heart. The gentle lustre which it sheds there has power to illuminate her own beautiful home kingdom, and yet fall far and wide in the world, touching the blossoms of social life

wherever they are found with a new beauty and kindling up the waste places of human thought with a gentle and refining influence.



### AUTUMN.

Ripe autumn hath the yellow field  
Upon its landscape thrown:  
A garb of golden hue surrounds,  
And covers to its utmost bounds  
The realm it claims to own.

It hath the fruit-tree's goodly form  
Bending beneath the store  
Of nature's bounty unto man,—  
Continued since the world began;  
What could he wish for more?

It hath the joy of finished hope,  
The gratitude of prayer;  
For it the farmers' trust repays  
A hundred fold for toilsome days,  
Of labour and of care.

It hath the beautiful harvest moon  
When silver light is shed,  
To bless the gathering in—when time  
Shall strew with storms our milder clime,  
And snows of winter spread.

It hath the sere and faded leaf,  
Rustled by winds that sweep,  
Breathing sad music o'er the soul,  
And whisp'ring of that final goal,  
Where mortals all must sleep.

But though it hath the faded leaf  
Descending from its throne,  
A few more days with wonders rife,  
Will clothe the forest thrones with life,  
And beauty all its own!

It is the time when earth gives forth  
The stores her bosom cloy;  
When recompense for anxious toil,  
Upon the various fruitful soil,  
Is made with smiling joy.

O! grant kind heaven to fill my heart,  
With gratitude to thee,  
When on the breast of Autumn lies,  
The harvest's rich and golden dyes,  
*Gifts of thy mercy free!*

Liverpool, (N. S.), 1843.

ARTUR.



TOMBS.—Houses built for skeletons; dwellings of sculptured marble, provided for dust and corruption; monuments set up to perpetuate the memory of—the forgotten.

## THE AVENGER.

A TRADITION OF CAITHNESS.

"I learned them in the glen,  
The last abode of living men."—Hogg.

FROM our earliest infancy we have listened with delight to the tales and songs of our native land. We have sat for hours by the *grey cairn* on the lonely hill, where chiefs of other years lie interred, and in our lonely musings, have conjured up in our fancy the misty forms of our forefathers "rise on the night rolling breath of the gale." We have wandered among the hills "from morning sun 'till eve," "wooing" those spots, rendered sacred by the past, where our forefathers "fought and bled," and checked the incursions of their foes. To us these spots have a fascinating charm, and serve as links to connect the past with the present. We love the Highlands, for there the scenes of our rambles are laid, and every valley and hill and gurgling stream is associated with some tale of the past. We have spent many an hour on the mountain side gathering legendary lore from the aged Highlander, and our heart warms whenever we meet with a specimen of the old trusty Gael: and to be surrounded by a half dozen of the genuine sons of the glen, amidst song and tale, would be our highest enjoyment. Many of their songs and tales could we rehearse; and from a numberless variety of them, we content ourselves with the following one at present:—

The romantic valley of Langwell is not surpassed by any in the North, on account of its beauty; for, independent of its natural loveliness of situation, the hand of man has tended in no small degree to enhance the spot. The river flows along in the most majestic manner—hemmed on both sides by steep perpendicular braes, which are covered by wood, the creeping ivy, and the mantling honeysuckle.—To the north the scene is highly diversified by the Braemore hills, which rise in gigantic grandeur and magnificence—while the sheep and mountain goat may be seen climbing their steep sides and dizzy cliffs, and the lonely shepherd, attended by his faithful dog, following his flock. The passing traveller cannot fail to be struck by the romantic situation of the inn at Berrisdale, which is nestled in the bosom of a ravine, shaded by wood and brae. A short distance from the inn, the banks of the river assume a formidable height, while the waters dash below in boiling, whirling eddies. Standing musing at this spot, and listening to

the harmonious wood-notes wild of many a songster, I was awakened by a gruff voice which accosted me thus, at the same time touching his bonnet—"Faitle airbshc."

"Faitle airbshc fhein," responded I in his native dialect.

"Whence is the DHAOIN uasail—art thou a Sassenach." To which having replied in the negative, he shook me cordially by the hand. I soon perceived I was in company with an aged Highlander, a true specimen of the generations "gone beyond the flood." Having asked him a few preliminary questions, I requested him to walk with me the length of the inn, to which he complied, but refused to enter, 'till overcome by entreaty. Having placed before him some "mountain dew," it soon had the effect of kindling his spirits. "Slainte mha," (good health,) exclaimed he, swallowing his potation, while he continued, "The good old times are now no more; and the stranger may wander over our valley without being offered any refreshment. The door of hospitality is no longer open, and Alister Macmurrach is the last of his race, abandoned and forsaken by the world. This arm, which is weak and feeble, could once wield the claymore with skill, while for swiftness of foot I could cope with the red deer on the hill." He uttered these words with an emphasis, while his eye kindled with a fresher lustre, and a more youthful glow pervaded his countenance. "I have seen many a change in the world," resumed he, "and many a legend could Alister Macmurrach tell."

"I shall feel more than obliged to you for rehearsing some of them. Are there any traditions connected with this part of the country," asked I.

"Many," he replied. "A feat of no ordinary kind was performed at the spot where we met, but let us begin at the commencement of the tale.

"Young Sutherland of Forse was one of the most brave and promising youths in the country. His generous and frank manner endeared him to all, with the exception of Sinclair of —, who was his rival in an affair of gallantry. Both solicited the hand of a neighbouring lady of amiable qualities, and heiress of extensive property. Sutherland pursued his suit with an appearance of every success, while Sinclair, to his mortification, found his applications slighted and neglected. As may be conjectured, such treatment irritated Sinclair, and plunged him in the deepest agony and distress of mind; and he vowed revenge

of the deadliest kind. He became silent and reserved, and was evidently meditating some deep plot. In the silent hour of midnight, the thought of his ladye love would come across his feverish brain, and he would give way to the most incoherent ravings—while swords and scenes of the most horrible nature would present themselves to his bewildered imagination. In this situation he communicated his thoughts to none, with the exception of an old trusty servant, who was his only confidant.

“Tradition says that a great annual fair or market was then held in that district, whither the greater part of the gentry in the country assembled to celebrate their prowess and the various rude games which characterised that age. Thither Sutherland and Forse repaired with a few stanch retainers, but, we may say, it was principally with the view of seeing his intended bride. Upon his arrival at the market place, he found an immense assemblage of people congregated before him, contending for the honours of the day. He freely mingled with them, and seemed to take the lead. At last Sinclair and himself came to oppose each other, when it would be impossible to say which of them would be successful. In other circumstances than those in which they were situated, such a keen contest would never have arisen between the two youthful aspirants.—The eyes of the whole crowd were directed towards them, and their energies seemed to be roused to the highest pitch. Both felt as if the honours of their different clans rested on their merit and success. A fierce struggle ensued, when at last victory inclined to Sutherland. His opponent, in a fit of frenzy and anger, taunted him with some disagreeable aspersions. Sutherland, who could by no means brook such an insult, drew his sword; but the Sinclairs rushed to the aid of their exhausted chieftain, and in the skirmish Sutherland was killed, before his handful of followers could offer any resistance. The perpetrator of this action was a stout athletic Lowlander, whose strength and ferocity were the theme of many a story: and the people in the district where he lived looked upon him as matchless and unconquerable. He was foremost in the forage or any other undertaking which required more than ordinary exertion or intrepidity.

“When the mournful and afflicting news of Sutherland’s death were conveyed to his mother, she felt unconsolable for the hapless fate of her son. Near her dwelt Angus Sutherland, a powerful and gigantic Highlander, whose arm was never raised in vain. Suther-

land was summoned before her, when she entreated of him in the most earnest manner to revenge the death of her son, and promised to reward him handsomely for the completion of the undertaking. Sutherland, having armed himself, set out with a few attendants for the residence of the murderer of his chief. The sun was rising in splendour and majesty over the red ocean as the solitary band left their homes to accomplish their foul deed of revenge, which in those days was accounted an honourable one. All nature seemed to be partaking of repose and rest, and man alone, in whose breast jarring passions raged, seemed to be the only being who could break the tranquility of the scene. A few hours’ march brought Sutherland to the place where his opponent dwelt, but found him absent, being at a fast given by his chieftain for his services in taking away Sutherland’s life. How to act in this emergency, he knew not; for to pursue the object of his revenge amongst his own clan would be certain death to him, as by their numbers they could easily overpower him; but he was soon relieved from this dilemma by the appearance of his antagonist. Both met each other with looks, in which defiance and vengeance scowled.

“‘What dost thou here,’ asked the latter, in a voice which betokened some approaching storm,

“‘Base murderer, you shall soon know and atone for the crime of killing my beloved master, and your carcass shall be food for the ravenous hawk and eagle,’ reiterated Sutherland.

Thrusts of the broad-sword were exchanged immediately; but Sutherland, who seemed to be the best swordsman, was rapidly gaining ground, and gave a fatal thrust in the heart to his opponent, who staggered and reeled, when the other severed his head from his body with one stroke. Upon committing this act, Sutherland pursued his way homeward, and laid the prize before his mistress, who directed it to be placed on the highest pinnacle of the Castle of Forse, where it remained for many a day.

“When the report of what Sutherland had done was divulged among the friends of the murdered vassal, their rage knew no bounds, and in return they prepared to revenge his death. A band of men set out immediately who dogged his steps. They attacked him unawares; but owing to his nimbleness of foot they could not overtake him. On passing Berrisdale, he was so hotly pursued that he had to leap the river above the inn, at a spe-

which is sufficient enough to make the blood hardle within the veins. This undertaking would seem incredible in these days, and one which no human being would attempt to perform. In his *transitu* across the river, the head of an arrow disengaged itself from his back owing to the exertion of his body. He carried this weapon for several miles sticking in his body, being unable to disentangle himself of it as his enemies were following him so close in the pursuit.

"Finding that he could have no place of security in this county, he betook himself to Sutherlandshire for protection, which was afforded him by the Dunrobin family upon the recommendation of Lady Forse, who, according to her promise, exerted herself to the utmost in his behalf. All that remains to be told is, that he settled in Sutherland, where he was the founder of a respectable and influential scion of the clan, whose posterity can still be traced out at this distant period of time.



#### THE LAST DAYS OF PRINCES.

(Continued from page 33, February, 1843.)

In prosecuting the design on which this series was formed, it is by no means intended to follow up the regular successions to any one kingdom; neither is it to be narrowed within the limits of either ancient or modern history. Illustrations of the mortal hour among monarchs are numerous, and, while so many of them are striking and impressive, it would be a waste of time both to the writer and the reader, to wade through passages which are comparatively of a common-place character. All ages of the world, and every region of it, can furnish memorable examples of the nature here proposed; and while ancient times present a Cræsus, an Alexander, an Antiochus or a Nero, and modern ages offer a Louis XI. of France, a Charles V. of Spain, a Henry VIII. of England, a Henry IV. of France, a Peter the Great of Russia, or a Charles XII. of Sweden, there would be little advantage in dwelling upon those whose whole history is composed of a summary like the following.—  
He was born, he reigned, and he died.

It is therefore on other grounds than that of mere succession that the subject of William Rufus immediately follows, in this series, the considerations arising out of "the last day," of his predecessor and father, William, the Conqueror. The force of contrast is here applied, as bringing out effects more strongly,

and striking more deeply, than when the picture is isolated and alone. The Conqueror was hard, inflexible, and disdained the use of wile or deceit to carry a point which it was his will to succeed in; but Rufus, though brave as any of his race, could apply the cunning of the fox to eke out the strength of the lion. Moreover, the dying hours of the first William were painful and long-protracted, giving time for that awful visitation of horrors and remorse which retrospection introduced to his distracted soul; while the second William was brought to his end in a moment, and before he could have time to utter the shortest prayer for mercy to his departing soul.

But besides the force of contrast, there is also the force of affinity, in summoning up the accounts concerning these remarkable princes. In an examination then will be found something very like a wonderful scheme of Providence, gradually but fully wrought out, and presenting, altogether, a lesson to mankind which compels the mind to contemplation, and which cannot be thrown aside and forgotten without a manifest dereliction from duty. This affinity as well as this contrast will, however, be best perceived in the details which are as follows.

#### NO. II.—WILLIAM RUFUS.

"Thus was I

\* \* \* \* \*  
Cut off, even in the blossoms of my sin,  
Unhousel'd, un-anointed, unanel'd;  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
With all my imperfections on my head.  
Oh, horrible!—Oh! horrible!—Most horrible!"

Shakspeare.

"See all prepared for the chase to-morrow," said the haughty Rufus. The monarch's will was law, on all occasions; but in this case obedience was pleasure, for the Norman lords, like their Norman master, were devotedly attached to sylvan pleasures, not a little enhanced perhaps in value, by the exclusion of the English from their native woods, and from the courtiers of the King, who were permitted to accompany him, being a privileged few. William then retired for the night, although at an early hour, that he might be the more invigorated by rest, for the next day's sport.

Up sprang the Red King from his midnight couch; with glaring eyes protruded from their sockets; with a countenance, pallid, save the small livid flush of fevered expression which faintly relieved that pallid hue; with frowning brow and eye-brows deeply knit; with lips parted, teeth set, hands clenched, and with all the violent shaking of one in an ague fit. In-

stinctively he seized his sword which lay ever ready near him, and seemed, to all appearance, distraught; but presently recalling his scattered ideas, his features by degrees relaxed of their fierce and anxious cast, his half-drawn sword was slowly returned to its sheath, he seated himself on the nearest bench, and languor succeeded to the eagerness which had beamed from his eyes.

But what has caused this blanched cheek, this blood-shot eye, this perturbation of spirit in the King? It is a *dream*! With all his boasted courage, with all his headstrong impetuosity, in the midst of all his insolence of power, he has been terrified by—a *dream*!—Blasphemous and desecrating as he was in his daily ravages and self-willed commands, grinding as both church and churchmen ever found him, greatly as he shocked the public ear and the hearts of the devout by the license of his tongue upon holy subjects, this despotic and ruthless tyrant was the slave of superstition. A visitation of the night shook his very soul; the attendants round his couch perceived his convulsive motions, heard the muttered sounds which escaped from his lips during his disordered sleep, shrank with apprehension as the half-choked and unwanted cry escaped him of “*Mercy, sweet Virgin! save me, blessed lady!*” and marked the drops of cold perspiration which stood on that frowning forehead, whilst his bosom, heaving with uncontrollable groans, seemed to rend the iron frame of the commonly audacious sufferer. Astounded, they remained for a while uncertain how to act, but soon recollecting how dangerous it is to know too much of a powerful man’s secrets, they deemed it expedient to awake the agonized monarch. In doing this, the sudden glare of light and the presence of armed men became mingled with the horrors of the scene he had shared while sleeping, and—*up, he sprang!*

Before the subject of that dream be related, it may be well to take a retrospective glance at the life and actions of this “bold bad man,” for, without such glance, the mind would fail in the attempt to take in the force which shook the Red King’s soul. Well indeed is the denunciation in the decalogue, that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on their children unto the third and fourth generation, illustrated in the descendants of the Conqueror. Unnurtured in kindly affections towards each other, the whole of the first William were in constant hostility among themselves: the sons against the father, the brothers against each; selfish ambition or thirst of vengeance alternately

swaying their hearts and actuating their conduct. The eldest son only, Prince Robert, possessed any feelings of humanity and brotherly love. Yet his best qualities were rendered useless through the torpor of indolence which was his besetting vice. The second son, Richard had indeed given promise of many a fine quality; but here the hand of Heaven may be said to have interfered, for in that very New Forest which had been appropriated to royal disposal at the expense of all that was humane, all that was just, did the ruthless Conqueror lose its finest scion of his house, by a fall whilst hunting. The third son, William, the Red, possessed not one virtue under heaven: nor one good quality save that of courage. His character may be summed up in few words; he was brave but crafty, false and treacherous: he was tyrannical, capricious, debauched, reckless, and impetuous. Rapacious in obtaining riches, prodigal in spending them, he was remorseless in breaking all ties to effect his ends, and as ready to break a ribald jest on holy things, as on the licentious pleasures of court and table. The fourth, and youngest, Henry, differed from the rest; he was no soldier, like his elder brethren, but had studied the learning of his age. His disposition was cunning, he pursued his ends by wiles, and schemes, and by watching the “*signs of the times.*” Selfish and ambitious was this Henry, as any of his house, he depended more on the sagacious head than the strong hand. Alternately fostering his bad passions in each of his brothers, he shifted his side whensoever his crooked policy dictated, and although sometimes his case was desperate enough to lead weaker men to despair, yet did he live to triumph over opposition, and become himself the possessor of the English throne.

Such were the offspring of the first William and well did the father understand the characters of his sons notwithstanding that the affairs of his “*own times*” left him small leisure to attend to them, and notwithstanding that from early years they had begun to lift up their rebellious hands against him. That he did so is evident from his final bequests to them; his bequests, which had then nearly the authority of law and the sanction of religion. To Robert was left the patrimonial territory of Normandy, his own by indefeasible right, but indolence unfitting him for the rule over a large conquered and an impatient people, he was wisely excluded from authority in England; and, for-as-much as England was obtained by the sword, he deemed that he could give as he pleased

own achievements, he assigned that kingdom to Rufus; well knowing that at least neither pusillanimity nor sloth would make him relax his grasp. Was it a prescience like that of the patriarchs of old, which dictated to this father a request of but a small sum of money to his youngest son? Did his glance into the future enable him to see the future monarch of England and the avenger of filial impiety in Henry the *beau clerc*? And did he in anticipation receive that on all—even on the avenger himself—would fall that weight of Divine displeasure which awaits all who honour not "their father and mother?"

Woe! to the prince that is surrounded by evil counsellors, might Robert have exclaimed. The restless Norman barons persuaded his easy nature that his father's will had despoiled him of right; he waged war with Rufus and was defeated. Many of the English, and some of the Anglo-Normans had joined Robert in his unsuccessful expedition,—these found, too surely, that the King was a Rehoboam in vengeance, and that he seemed to have said to them, "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." In this sense, his "little finger" was indeed 'thicker than his father's joints.'

The only person whom William Rufus held in respect, and who had any influence over his conduct, was Archbishop Lanfranc, and the only principle which ever continually held him in restraint, was superstition. Lanfranc had been his tutor, and towards him the King manifested some signs of regard. While that prelate lived, Rufus contained himself, and was not addicted to the excesses which subsequently broke out; but on the death of the Archbishop, all the most odious features of the King's character became fully developed. Bishops and abbacies, as they became vacant, were retained on his hands, that he might appropriate their revenues to himself; his rapacious usurer, Ranulph, well surnamed *Flambard*, or The Wolf, ground and oppressed the wretched people, particularly the English, and money was exacted without mercy or remorse, to gratify the insatiable desires of the grasping monarch.

And this money! Let the gluttony, the revelry, the vitiated appetites of Rufus and his crew, account for a part, and, for the rest, the splendour of his apparel, the sumptuousness of his palace, his taste for building and decoration, consumed the remainder. With unblinking

cheek justice was sold, with unflinching voice blasphemy was uttered; rigorous as his father in executing the severities of the forest laws, he had been heard to exclaim against the justice of Heaven itself, which permitted an offender against them to escape; and although aware of the deep curses and maledictions which hung on the memory of his father, for the miseries consequent on the establishment of the New Forest, he added to those miseries, and to the execrations of all good men, by the destruction of four abbeys and seventeen churches more, with the spoliation and dispersion of the inhabitants in their neighbourhood, in order to enlarge the arena of his despotic and iniquitous pleasures of the chase.

Superstition, as it has been observed, held some sway over him; this, however, was only perceptible by fits and starts. His father had left the large sum of sixty thousand pounds, to be distributed among the church and poor of England, as some expiation of the enormities he had committed. Greedy and violent as Rufus undoubtedly was, he did not dare to divert that sum from the purpose of the bequest, and it was actually given according to the will of the donor. In sickness, also, this otherwise ruthless man would endeavour to propitiate offended Heaven by a temporary relaxation of severity, by some remission of claims, by promises of mild government and impartial laws; but a return to health brought a return to lawless rule and rapacious exactions: of him it might well be said—

'The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be,  
The Devil was well, the devil a monk was he.'

Such was the monarch whose midnight slumbers were thus so unusually affected, and to whom, in this condition, the narrative thus returns.

Although now awake, and entirely in possession of his faculties, the King continued to shiver as though perishing of cold, and for a while he eyed his attendance askance. At length breaking silence, he related the horrid cause of his disturbance. His *dream* was a continuation of his sleep, which seemed to be interrupted by a constantly increasing cold wind. This, at first but annoyed him, by degrees it pierced him; he struggled to throw it off, it prevailed against him, it penetrated through his sides, it reached his heart; he felt all the agonies of a living death, and whilst bolts of ice seemed to pass through every artery, and to occupy every pore, he felt himself like the hopeless struggler against a powerful and devouring monster. In these horrible

moments, all the passages of his life seemed to concentrate themselves before him, as in one agonizing word, and he struggled to utter the dying prayer, to the virgin mother, for mercy on his soul.

And how did that soul rejoice on perceiving that all his inquietude was but a dream, a fantasy of the brain? Did he fall down in thankfulness, that he was yet spared to make some atonement for the mountain of evil which he had committed, and the enormity of which had been placed full before his vision? Ah! no. He commanded that the wine-cup should be brought to him, and resolved that the remainder of the night should be spent in jollity and revelry; for he would not—though he kept that secret to himself—encounter the risk of another such dream. Wine and wassa! then prevailed, but though ribaldry was in the mouth of the King, a gnawing vulture was at his heart; and the ghastly expression of his features remained unaffected by the feasting and the license of which he endeavoured to partake.

Morning arrived, and daylight now gladdened the spirits of Rufus more than all the factitious aids which had been placed before him; nevertheless, he refused to permit the field sports which he had ordered the night before. Upon his mind still hung sad forebodings, and although his heart beat high for the chase which he loved, and his eye roved over the field where the attendants were passing with hounds and horses, he resolved that, for this day at least, he would remain within the walls of Malwood Keep, and find his joys in the conviviality of the table. So passed on the time until the dinner hour.

The noontide repast was on the board, the wine and the mirth went round; already was past care forgotten, and the cautious Prince Henry, who at this period was on friendly terms with the King, was covertly urging him to the sport he loved; he had consented, and had given to his favourite knight, Sir Walter Tyrrel, two out of six arrows deemed especially good in the workmanship. Once more the noise of steeds, and hounds, and attendants, was heard without; the heart of the Red King was elate, his dream was forgotten, or remembered as but the effect of a distempered brain; the wonted audacity of his soul was again predominant within him. His foot was in the stirrup, but before he mounted into the saddle, a messenger,

"Bloody, with spurring, fiery red with haste," rode up, and with more eagerness than respect presented a packet.

"Read, read, Sir Walter," exclaimed the irate King; "what brings the knave, and whence comes he?"

"So please you, my lord King," replied the man, with deep obeisance, "my message from the lord Abbot of St. Peters', and I was commanded to spare neither horse nor man, until the packet should be delivered unto your highness."

"Read, read, Sir Walter," again exclaimed the monarch. "What says the shaveling, what asks he? *Dents-dieu*, how dares he interrupt our course? Thou dost hesitate, man, give me the scroll; *Dents-dieu*, the priest dares not to palter with us."

He snatched the missive from the knight and threw his eyes over the contents. What saw they? The relation of a dream! The monk of St. Peters' had dreamed! he saw the King tearing and gnawing with his teeth at the blessed symbol of his faith, as though he would destroy it, not devour it; and that the sacred image spurned and trod down the impious monarch, from whose mouth, nostrils and eyes, streamed forth flames of fire, which consumed him. This dream the friar had reported to his superior, who, deeming it ominous and danger to his sovereign, had forwarded the account with loyal haste.

A sudden pang shot across the heart of Rufus at the word "*dream*." It was but for a moment, for the wine wrought in his heart, and love of the chase wrought in his heart.—He laughed a scornful laugh as he cried aloud, "Give the slave an hundred pence; the monk is wise, he dreams for money, and practises credulity. What! He would prate his idle dreams, and presume to stay the course of his master's pleasure. To horse, my lords; *Dents-dieu*, shall we be checked because an old woman sneezes!"

Infernal man! Onward he goes towards his fate; onward from the castle which should never again receive him. His heart beat high as he chased the bounding deer, and little he recked that the setting sun should witness his setting also. Little he recked, that when he cried to his favorite knight and nearest attendant, "Shoot, Walter! shoot—in the devil's name!" he commanded his own death, in the name of the master he had so faithfully served. Scarcely had he spoken, when an arrow pierced his heart, and his soul instantly fled from its mortal abode.

The mind recoils, on contemplating the fearful and sudden end of one so ill prepared for his great account; of one, in whom reigned

very passion hateful to God and man; of one, who, to the last, exhibited all the insolence of pride, all the audacity of unbridled power, and all the impiety of an unchastised spirit. What change! At one moment an absolute and despotic King, at the next, a lump of lifeless clay, forsaken and shunned, like that of his father, by all, even by his brother! He, on whose nod had hung the safety and property of millions, was now thrown into the dirty cart of a charcoal burner, and received the last obsequies of religion unaccompanied by a tear from one of those millions.

In charity it may be hoped that the current belief of the manner of his death is correct; that it was the casual glance of an arrow—the arrow given by the Red King himself—which struck the wretched monarch. But there is reason enough for the suspicion that his evil deeds had brought on their punishment.—Spurred to madness by the desolation which his predecessor and himself had caused in making this New Forest, an avenging hand was probably found, to rid the world of a tyrant.

And now perhaps we have arrived at the end of his mortal history, and may fancy that his remains could suffer no farther dishonor. Not so. Heaven itself seems willing to give one awful sign of its displeasure, and to mark the spot where the disturber of his people found his grave. The tower of Winchester cathedral, in which the Red King was interred, was soon afterwards destroyed by lightning, and his tomb was covered by the ruins.

Again we say “he that runs may read.”—The vices and impiety of private individuals may exist in as large a degree as those of Princes, although they may neither have so extensive a scope, nor be so publicly perceptible; and no offender is so mean that he may not be cut off “with all his imperfections on his head.”

Yet once again must one of the family of the Norman conqueror be brought to figure on our canvass. So eventful was their career, so prominent were their lives, and so striking was the end of each, that they even seem to offer themselves to our notice, as lessons which neither can, nor ought to be overlooked. Diversified in their several characters, equally diversified in their “last days,” and the end of each was in perfect keeping with his life; but whilst the heart softens over the remorse of the conqueror, and whilst we are startled and shocked at the sudden exit of Rufus, the mind

is saddened, and shrinks back upon itself as it views the living death, the state of hopeless despondency, the countenance from which smiles have long been for ever banished, the mortified and broken down ambition of him who, for his learning and worldly wisdom, was pre-eminently distinguished as the *Beau Clerc*. Springing from the same root, there are many, in the successive generations of the English annals, whose lives and whose “last days” afford powerful lessons to those who attentively consider them; but the Conqueror and his sons offer so many peculiarities, that they seem to be linked in a consecutive series, for the express purpose of giving the moral of their history a greater momentum, and of compelling us to pause on them as they are severally brought in review.

But as Henry, on whom we have here to dwell, will be the last of the family on whom we shall enlarge in this part of our series, certain reflections naturally arise relative to those who come more immediately after him in the page of history; which reflections cannot be stifled without violating the principles upon which the exhibition of “the last days of Princes” was formed. The awful threat in the second article of the decalogue, in which we learn that God will “visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation” of those who hate him, is too frequently looked upon as generally an abstract proposition; and, as it is productive of painful sensations to trace out its application, we commonly avoid it as much as possible; but the fact is not the less true, though it be in a great measure unmarked; and here, in the earliest English monarchs of the Norman race, it is most forcibly and lamentably held up to example. Ambition, duplicity, tyranny, and cruelty, attended the steps of the first Norman monarch; the next generation presents a Robert, the victim of his brethren, and his son brought to a premature death; a Richard, the only virtuous one of his family, early and violently snatched out of life; a William, the plague of all, and deserted by all, cut off in mid career, even when his arrogance and tyranny were at their highest pitch; and a Henry, whose very essence was falsehood and equivocation, justly deprived, for years, of mental peace, plagued by a fury of a daughter, for whose aggrandizement he devoted the latter portion of his wretched life, with sad misgivings that he was labouring in vain. Pass we then to that daughter—the third generation—engaged in continual war for the crown which

her father left her, but which she never attained to wear; and then shift the scene to her son—the fourth generation—who did indeed become monarch of England, but whose days were embittered by a termagant wife and a most rebellious offspring! Need we trace this instance of God's awful denunciation any farther? Not now; the picture is sufficiently striking already, and to fill the canvass any more closely, would confuse rather than make clear the important subject represented. Let us then isolate a principal figure, and contemplate the closing hours of

NUMBER III.—HENRY LEAU CLERC.

"The powers delaying, not forgetting, have incensed the seas and shores, yea all the creatures

Against your peace. Then, of thy son — They have bereft, and do pronounce by me Ling'ring perdition, (worse than any death Can be at once,) shall step by step attend You and your ways."—*Shakspeare.*

There was a solemn stillness within the halls of Lions-la-foret, slightly broken, occasionally, by the hasty and flitting steps of anxious-looking menials, as they trod the rushes which were every where strewn over the passages, or by the whisperings of the mailed warriors who were assembled in groups in the apartments devoted to their attendance or accommodation. The archbishop of Rouen, together with other prelates and ecclesiastics, had just departed from an inner chamber, in the vicinity of which the most guarded silence was enjoined; the leeches passed in and out from thence with solemn and mysterious air, and all things betokened an important crisis to be at hand. What is it which thus checks the mirth of the all-licensed soldier, and causes the rough menials to abate their tumultuous officiousness? Why is this solemn procession of the priests under the direction of the highest and most powerful churchmen? King Henry lies extended within the inner chamber, suffering under disease brought on by indulgence in a gluttonous propensity, and from which his leeches have told him he shall never arise in health. Late, very late, his immortal state has been impressed upon him, and the ministers of religion have been summoned. These have offered the soothing consolations of the church to the heavy-hearted monarch, and have gone through the ceremony of the *ritium* so deceitful to the judgment because so allaying to the feelings. The ecclesiastics have done their allotted duty, but has the King done his at this eventful crisis? Alas! no; the cares of this world have mingled with his considera-

tions respecting that which is to come, and have so far preponderated, that the solemn religious offices have been to him an empty ceremony, and the offered consolations have proved but a blank to his soul. The passion which has absorbed every other sentiment within him, clings to him in the mortal hour, and only leaves him with the last expiration of his breath. The love of power, to the attainment of which he sacrificed, during life, every virtue, every social tie, and every bond which is held sacred among mankind, has possessed him, even in moments when it is evidently slipping from his hands; and, not satisfied with the wide extent of it which he has actually enjoyed, he is employing the few miserable hours of mortal existence which are still left to him, to secure its continuance to a daughter who has been the plague of his latter years, who is hated by his subjects, but for whom he nevertheless hopes, *against hope*, to establish it.

Scarcely had the king remained a few hours in comparative repose, after partaking in the spiritual rites intended to smooth the bed of death and take from it some portion of its terror, when the world and all its concerns returned upon him with redoubled force. In feverish haste he called for the barons in attendance. "Where," cried he, in feverish tones, "where is Etienne de Blois? Where is William of Gloucester. They have, of late, been officious enough in protestation and profession: where are they now?" The barons sprang forward with eager steps, each anxious to be first. "Here, at your feet, my royal liege and uncle, exclaimed the Earl of Blois.—"Here, at your command, my royal father," cried the Earl of Gloucester. Ah! little did the royal invalid guess the full import of those two exclamations, and little did his own immediate importunity accord with either.—"Haste, haste, my lords," replied Henry—"call here my nobles, call here the Archbishop, and do you lay near to me the sacred book.—Where is my daughter? Bid her come to me; she is my heir; to her and her's belong my crown and power, and all must swear they will sustain her claims." The two nobles hastened to obey the King's command, and Henry, exhausted, turned his head on his pillow, muttering with a deep and heart-drawn sigh, "Ungrateful that she is, why, why do I thus persevere for a child who has ceased to care for me?" His visage assumed a still more mournful expression, as the review of his life and reign presented the numerous in-

idents of which they were composed, before his disturbed recollection.

How true it is, that a life of dissimulation and falsehood towards others, produces finally self-deceit. Ever desirous of clearing ourselves in our own eyes, we become, at length, the victims of our own duplicity. And such was now the case with Henry Beau Clerc. He could not hide from himself, in an hour like this, all the atrocities of his atrocious life; but some he palliated under the plea of expediency, some he coloured by the circumstances of the times, of some he changed the hue by viewing them through a favourite medium, which converted them into apparent good, and against others he was still able to shut his heart and thoughts altogether. How truly did this self-deceiving King make good the beautiful doubt of the Apostle—"we trust that we have a good conscience!" But whilst the dying monarch is thus pursuing his devious course of retrospection, during the absence of the two earls, we may take a brief survey of the same scenes that occupy his attention, and enjoy a clearer vision of them than his distempered fancy and deceptive soul would permit.

Of all the sons of the Conqueror, Henry was by far the most sagacious by nature, and his intellectual qualities had been fostered with greater assiduity than was usual to knights, nobles, and princes, in that warlike age; hence he obtained the surname of the Beau Clerc.—But unhappily the nature of the studies at that time known, together with his position in the world, and the qualities of those with whom he found himself associated, had sown in him the germs of duplicity, cunning, and avarice. Like all his family, he was ambitious, he perceived that he was the cadet of his name, with but little probability of being distinguished in arms, for which, although no coward, he had no particular vocation; and it had even been suggested that with his intellectual qualities, and the royal influence of his family, his most probable road to eminence and power might be through the church. But no, it was soon the delight of this subtle prince, to attain difficult objects by the powers of his mind, however deflected from the straight course might be the means, and he seemed to rejoice at the mastery with which he managed the puppets which were his creatures, in the operations of his desires. Cruel, as well as treacherous, remorseless of consequences, as well as pertinacious in continuance, he neither allowed the ties of consanguinity, nor the affections of the heart to interfere with his pursuits. He was

the sleuth-hound, constant, persevering, and silent on the scent, and equally silent when the prey was in his clutches. These properties were early developed within him, and although he knew himself the youngest of a family of warriors, he saw in dim perspective, even whilst a boy, the English throne at a possibly attainable distance. When the water was thrown on the head of the hasty Robert, that which was sheer insolence in Rufus, was incipient design in the young Beau Clerc. He had already learned the meaning of "divide et impera," he had read the dispositions of his brothers, whilst his own was unscanned by either; involved in the insult of the moment, he knew how to withdraw himself from the consequences, and even throw a double portion on his fraternal associate therein. History shows how correctly he calculated thereon, and we know that from a circumstance so apparently trifling, sprang all the domestic squabbles with which the history of the Conqueror's family is so very replete. The first William was never fully reconciled to his son, Robert, and there is much reason to believe that the ill-feeling was covertly fomented by the artful Henry, who however does not appear to have prominent with his machinations. His father nevertheless, who was ever shrewd and observing, was well aware of the ascendancy which Beau Clerc would be likely to attain, in the course of years; and when he bequeathed to his youngest son the seemingly small legacy of five thousand pounds weight of silver, he replied to the young man's remonstrance, as with a prophetic spirit, "Be patient, thy turn will yet come." He was patient, and his turn did come. He perceived that his father had read him truly; he dissembled his impatience; his avaricious soul and grasping hand made sure of the treasure without delay, and he then set himself to "bide his time," to watching passing events, and avail himself at all opportunities to make advantage out of occasion.

Nor had he long to wait for a commencement of his designs. His brother Robert, indignant at the breach of the general law of succession at his expense, prepared to wrest the sovereignty of England out of the hands of Rufus; being actuated also by the Norman nobility both in England and on the continent, who desired not to hold estates under distinct sovereignties, and whose pride was touched at the idea of the apparent alienation of the conquest from the victorious duchy of Normandy. But Robert wanted money, and Henry was able to lend it; accordingly the latter advanced

three thousand pounds of his bequest, and received, as security for the loan, possession of the district of Cotentin which was more than a third of the entire duchy. Well did Henry know the prodigality and indolence of the borrower, and he took careful steps to hold fast the security pledged to him. And here we have the first remarkable instance of Henry's cold-blooded cruelty, and of his determination never to be contented with half measures. A burgess of Rouen, named Conan, had treacherously engaged to deliver the city to the authority of William; the intention was discovered, but the powerful citizen offered an effectual resistance to Robert. At this juncture Henry joined his brother, and Conan was taken prisoner. The affair was Robert's and that merciful prince was contented to punish the refractory citizen by imprisonment only; but the far-seeing and calculating Henry, looking to distant results, and determined to be rid of all who should be at once turbulent and influential, had decided that Conan should not escape. He summoned the prisoner into his presence and pretended to remonstrate mildly with him on the folly and criminality of his late conduct.

"How couldst thou hope, man, to make good thy treachery against thy master?—Hast thou considered the position of this city, knowest thou not that it is encompassed far and wide by barons and by vassals devoted to thy liege lord? Conan, I have long heard of thee, and I esteemed thee wise, but here thou hast acted foolishly as well as deceitfully.—Thou wouldst be great, perhaps; vassal, it is thy sovereign only that can raise thee. I would have thee loyal, and reward thy desert; come with me therefore, I will show thee first the folly of thy undertaking, and then point out the means to secure thy future fidelity.—Do thou follow me, Conan."

The prince led the way, and was followed by the prisoner, the guards, and attendants, and they ascended to the roof of the loftiest tower of the castle. He then pointed out to the prisoner the plains on every side, dotted with the castles of the Norman nobility, each with his force of men-at-arms, harnessed and in readiness at the shortest warning to speed to the succour or to the service of their valiant duke.

"Thinkest thou now, good fellow, that thy mischievous plan would have availed thee aught? I understand thy looks; we have not turned towards the river's mouth. Come hither then, and view attentively all that is to

be seen near the foot of the castle on this northern side; what seest thou there?"

The prisoner stepped into an embrasure and cast his eyes immediately below. At the instant that he did so the prince stepped up to him and hurled him into the paved court below, where he was dashed to pieces. A cry of horror was uttered simultaneously by all present, but Henry waving his hand commanded silence, adding only,—“the punishment of a traitor.”

But the schemes and the ambition of the wily prince had nearly suffered shipwreck in this adventure. He had trusted too much, and had feared too little. Robert failed, his brother the King of England invaded Normandy, a peace was patched up between the belligerents, and both of these now turned their arms against Henry, whose craft they dreaded, and against which they employed every precaution that mutual policy could devise. Now it was that the two elder princes stipulated with each other that the survivor of the two should be the inheritor of both England and Normandy, and that in the meantime neither should molest the other in his present possessions. The flood rolled in upon Henry, threatening to overwhelm him; the territorial security which had been delivered to him was unscrupulously wrested from him; he became a fugitive and took refuge on the top of Mount St. Michael where he was closely besieged, and obliged to capitulate. Here might have terminated his career, had his antagonist been Rufus only; but Robert had a large portion of the milk of human kindness in his bosom, and by his interposition Henry, deprived of everything, was permitted to remain in Bretagne. But “*Cedant arma togæ*,” the talents and wisdom of Henry gained him friends in his obscurity and ere long he was invited to become governor of the city of Damfront. This he administered so wisely that he rapidly extended his authority and shortly he was again virtually in possession of the greater portion of that which had been wrested from him by force of arms.

But the important crisis was at hand which, at the expense of every moral, every social, every political right, was to make him a potent monarch, and to be the means of destroying his peace for ever. A reconciliation, such as the world calls it, took place between Henry and William, and the prince was on a visit to the Red King when the latter received the mortal stroke. It is not given to man to look into the deep and hidden recesses of the heart of his fellow-man, but reason compels us to

put circumstances together, and draw the conclusions which naturally arise from the conjunction. And what is the conjunction here to be viewed? Of these brothers, the only one who possessed a spark of kindly feeling and affection, is a heedless, indolent, but brave man, who has mortgaged his whole possessions for a trifle, to enable him to pursue a wild adventure in a distant country, where he will add his blood and treasure to the heap which has already been wasted, in the chimerical hope to rescue the Holy Sepulchre of the Redeemer out of the hands of the Infidels. He is now far away, and the field is open to his ambitious, crafty, avaricious, and remorseless youngest brother, who is not likely to let an opportunity escape of gratifying his predominant passions. The King had but recently been grinding with taxes and exactions his English subjects, and a large portion of the treasure thus acquired is now lying at Winchester.—The fatal arrow has sped, King Rufus falls, and his brother hastens—where? To assist him, to cheer him, to try to revive him? No, he flies at the speed of his courser, direct to the royal treasury, and makes himself master of that key to the human heart, that all-stirring mover of human action. True; but the worldly wisdom and self-command which Henry emphatically possessed, urged him promptly to catch the “golden opportunity,” after which he doubtless sets on foot a rigid inquiry into the awful catastrophe? Never! One unfortunate knight witnesses the event, and fearful perhaps of consequences in those arbitrary times, he hastens to France and from thence to Palestine, where he loses his life; and thus Sir Walter Tyrrel becomes the scape-goat to a fratricide.

The goal of his desires was now at hand.—Well did he recollect his pledge to Robert at the conclusion of the last quarrel between the elder brothers; equally well was he aware of the commonly received law of succession; but what was faith, what were pledges to one whose life and very essence was one great falsehood? Robert was in distant lands, he had never been much in the minds of the English or even of English residents; besides he was indolent and would probably never gather resolution enough to resent his wrongs, although his bravery was indisputable. At all events Henry would be King, and this was the crisis of his fortune. His craft supplied him with arguments which at that period were not without their weight. He proclaimed himself an *Englishman*, which in fact he was by

birth; he distributed liberally and with discretion the funds which he had seized, and thus obtained many an influential voice when he declared that his desire was to be, not the inheritor of his deceased brother's kingdom, but the King of the people's choice; still farther he won the hearts of the English by solemnly promising to restore the Saxon laws which had been collected by King Edward the Confessor; and he put the finishing stroke to his popularity by marrying the daughter of the King of Scotland, the last scion of the Saxon royal house.

Henry Beau Clerc is now at the summit of his ambition. By what means he became so is partly known, but partly the mind fears to guess. Unscrupulous and resolute, he never hesitated to remove every obstacle which lay in his path; yet serpentine and smooth he did most things insidiously. At this period of his life remorse had never touched his breast; but could that obdurate man have looked forward, and, with prescient eye have scanned the series of ills and crimes consequent on his newly acquired state, he must indeed have been of iron heart had he not started aside from his course, and tried another and a better way.—Many a torture of his dying hours might have been spared him, much of the agonized writhing which occurred on that bed would have had no cause, many a subterfuge and sophism which when dying he eagerly brought to excuse himself, would have been unnecessary.—This future period of his life we have yet to scan with him.

(To be concluded in our next.)



### THE WIDOW'S SON.

A LEGEND OF THE SCOTTISH PERSECUTIONS.

It was as beautiful a summer's morning as ever shone upon the earth, that smiled upon the wild and pastoral glens that intersect the bleak hill moorlands of the Rutland hills—the calm bright sunshine poured down in a soft flood over the cultivated fields and scanty gardens that marked the glens of every mountain streamlet—the crops of grain were waving to the gentle air, still in their early verdure—the meadows richly laden with deep, luxuriant grass, and decked with hundreds of bright wild-flowers were scattering abundant perfumes on every breath that fanned them; the larks were floating at “heaven's gate” in legions, filling the world with melody; the bees were out in thousands, swelling in the thymy pastures of the steep hill-side, and

round the scented blossoms of the purple clover in the valley; even the broad bare moorlands appeared to smile in the blythe morning, as the great clouds would sweep across them, wrapping their round heads with grand blue shadows, and leaving them, after a moment, bathed in clear sunlight. How beautiful—how peaceful—how far removed from aught of sin or strife or sorrow showed those fair solitudes that summer morning—for although cultivated and inhabited, those moorland glens are, even to this day, indeed solitudes. It is true, certainly, that every mountain valley had its sparse farms and scattered granges, that every broader strath had its small hamlet and its kirk; but so far distant were the hamlets, so wide the tracks of heathclad moorland and deep green morass which intervened between the hill-farms, that there was little intercourse between the lonely cultivators of the soil, except when they assembled on the Sabbath in happy quiet congregations within the precincts of God's house. But peaceful though it showed—there was, in that day, through that groaning land, "no peace but a sword." The fiercest and most blood-thirsty of earthly warfare was devastating those lone valleys—a warfare, as it was called, of religion!—a barbarous sectarian persecution! The kirks were closed, the altars all forsaken, the ministers dispersed and houseless exiles, the faithful congregations driven to worship God, if they did worship Him after the fashion of their fathers, in the untrodden fastnesses of the old hills, and even there to worship in doubt and fear and trembling. Such were the times—dark, stern and bloody—when on the lovely morning, I have assayed to paint, a little household was assembled before the door of a small neat farm-house, in one of the loneliest of those lone valleys, offering their morning sacrifice to Him who has declared His most esteemed offering to be the praise that flows to him from pure and humble hearts. Humble indeed was the dwelling, in front of which that group of worshippers was gathered, and small the farmer's household. A low stone cottage of a single story, with a thatched roof all overgrown with moss and stone crop, and an old-fashioned porch fronting due southward—a narrow plot of garden, well-stocked with pot-herbs, and a few common flowers, fenced from the sandy road by a low wall of unhewn free-stone, and overshadowed by three gnarled and moss-grown apple-trees—a rich broad meadow opposite across the road, with heavy swathes still steeped in the night-dews lying where

they had fallen yestereven beneath the mower's scythe—two or three stripes of oats and barley—a little garth behind the house, where in two cows and a pet lamb were pasturing—a tract of wild hill-pasture, with its small flocks of ragged, black-faced sheep!—such was the dwelling and demesne which constituted all the earthly wealth for which the moorland farmer was sending up sincerer prayers to the giver of all good, than many a rich man offered for his abundance and blessings!—an old, grey-headed woman, wrinkled, and bowed by age, but active still, and cheerful, clad in a suit of plain deep mourning, with a close cap of snow-white muslin, beneath which, neatly braided, appeared her venerable locks, white as the lawn that shadowed them—a tall and slightly-formed young man, light-haired and comely, although too delicate in his appearance for his rude calling, dressed in the ordinary garb of a Scottish peasant, his broad blue lowland bonnet, doffed reverently on the high occasion—a beautiful bare-footed girl, of scarcely thirteen years—the orphan child of a dead sister—these made the whole of the literal "two or three," who were gathered there together in presence of their King and Maker! And now the brief extemporaneous prayer was ended!—the chapter had been read from the well-thumbed and greasy Bible—it was one of those splendid outbursts of rapt Isaiah's unrivalled eloquence and poetry, full of denunciations dark and mysterious of God's coming wrath and vengeance, with dazzling glimpses interspersed of high beatific promise—in which the Scottish covenanters, as had their puritan forefathers, especially delighted to apply to their own times, and their own persecutions!—and the accustomed hymn was rising on the calm morning air—the self-same hymn that pealed from the steeples of the enthusiasts who shed their blood like water at Marston and Dunbar and Worcester! The deep, harmonious tones of the young farmer's voice, blent with the shrill sweet girlish treble of his fair niece, and the weak quavering thrill of his old parent swelled up with a strange effect in that wild solitude and, through the sounds, the thrilling psalm-tone were soon mixed with stranger and more unaccustomed noises; so fully had the thoughts of all been occupied by their sincere devotions that 'till the hymn was ended, no one of the three worshippers was in the least aware that their poor melody had found any listening ears save those of that all-hearing one whom they all hoped, with an undoubting confidence, was bending from on high to catch each a

ant of thanksgiving. Yet very soon after their first notes rose upon the silence of the morn- ing with that peculiar cadence which marked the service of the covenanters, the sampling sound of horses feet might have been heard coming up the road, mingled with an occasional clink as of the steel accoutre- ments of harnessed troopers; and as the last few quaver died away, these ominous and fear- ful notes of approaching danger had come so close, that not one of the little household doubt- ed that a band of the dreaded Scottish Life- guards, the persecuting minions of the relent- less Graham were at hand! With eyes start- ing as it were from their sockets with terror— "Rin, Uncle Jamie. Rin for dear life—the blude-thirsty dragons of God-despising Clae- rse are upon us!" exclaimed the little maiden. "Ay! my bairn, flee—flee to the hills—flee to the black linn of Polmoodie—there shalt thou lie in safety 'until this tyranny be over- cast!"—oh, flee—my bairn—son of my age and sorrow—flee from the persecuting dogs who thirst ever for the hearts' blude of the saints. Even the holy David fled and hid him in the hill of Hachilah, which is beside Jeshi- mon—then why wilt thou not likewise flee away?" cried the frail, grey-haired woman with energy that could scarce have been look- ed for in one so weak and aged—but the youth answered very calmly, although his face, even to the lips, was ashy pale and death-like—

"And leave you, mother, to their outrageous violence?—never, while life is left to me!"

"Oh! my bairn—take no heed for me—bad though they be, ungodly, and blude-spillers, they will not harm an aged and lone female— but thee will they slay even before my eyes— son of my sorrows—thou wilt they slay sure- ly!—wherefore I bid thee again, ere it be too late, to gird up thy loins and flee to the hills swiftly—nay! my bairn, thou wert obedient ever—disobey not thy mother now, that never ddst before refuse to do her bidding!"

"Lo! it is all too late," returned the young man—"and more, mother, I have done no man any evil: and I fear nothing!" and he said truly that it was too late, for ere his words were spoken, the soldiers whose approach they had heard from afar, rode up at a sharp trot, and at a word from their officer, wheeled their black chargers into line, facing the garden wall and the little gate into the lawn, and halted on the instant. They were in number seven, six privates in the rich scarlet uniform of the Lif- eguards, with highly burnished breastplates, and morions of steel, with nodding plumes,

and gauntlets reaching to their bows, and large jack-boots covering their legs to the mid thigh. The seventh man was a youth, not seemingly above eighteen, gorgeously armed, and evidently the commander of the party.— His features were small, delicately formed, and exquisitely beautiful, but not with the beauty of manhood even in its earliest spring time; for so soft was each rounded outline, so smooth the texture of the skin, so faint and feminine the colouring, that his whole lineaments and air gave the idea of a lovely girl, masquerading in the war-harness of some male relative, rather than of the youngest warrior. His large blue eye had a soft liquid lustre, half lazy and half languid, that seemed as if it could not wake to aught of anger or even spirit—his lip and cheek were altogether beardless, nor did the slightest down upon the chin foreshow the growth of a more manly garniture. His long light hair of a hue between gold and auburn, fell down his neck and over his shoulder in a profusion of close curled and perfumed ringlets. If he were really a boy, he was one in appear- ance born to minister to the luxurious wants of some soft eastern potentate.

He was dressed like the privates, in full uniform, but his cuirass was studded with great knobs of solid gold, and crossed by a blue scarf all fringed and tagged with bullion, a su- perb neckcloth, with long ends of the finest Flemish lace, fell down over his glittering breast-plate, and his white gloves were delicately laced with silver. He wore no helmet, but a slouched bread-brimmed hat, with a band set around with white and scarlet feathers— his boots were polished until they vied in splen- dor with his steel corslet, his sword-hilt spark- led with bright jewels, and the butts of his pistols, as they peered out from his velvet- covered holsters, seeming to woo his grasp, were heavily embossed with silver. Such was the aspect of the young commander, who with a voice silvery as a girl's, and modulated with affected sweetness, gave the word to his men to "link their chargers, dismount, and make their carbines ready!" and strange to say, more terror was displayed by the old woman and the girl, when they beheld the soft effem- inate form, and comely features, and heard the sweet low tones, than they had shown at the array of warlike, and, as they well judged, hostile soldiers! For that fair-favored youth, delicate as he was and blooming, with the vigorous blood rushing in girlish blushes to his white brow at every word and motion, had won himself a terrible renown through that

wild district—well was he known—and widely, and but too justly dreaded, as the most fierce and fiendish of Graham's persecuting troopers. Where that brave and most chivalrous though sanguinary leader performed the savage dictates of the council with unrelenting firmness, believing it to be true policy to crush the rebellious spirit of the puritans, and quench the embers of their wild creed in blood—while he and his sterner officers, slew more from the fanaticism of politics, and from a species of high-born disregard to the rights of those whom they looked upon most sincerely, as brutal, ignorant, rebellious fanatics, of an inferior race,—the soft, fair-featured Laird of Livingstone, himself a dweller in the glens, the youngest of the cornets of the Scottish life-guard, had ordered more men out to instant execution, had steeped more hearts in blood, before his lip was bearded, and that too in the very wantonness of needless cruelty! than all his regiment beside. What wonder, then, that the poor females shook with terror, that their hair bristled on their heads, and their cheeks blanched with apprehension, when they discovered, at a glance, the features, and recognized in the first syllable he said, the voice more dreaded than the sovereign thunder, of him who was named, ere his years reached a score, the Tiger Laird of Livingstone.

"What dulcet melody was that we heard, sweet as a seraph's whisper," he asked in lisping mockery, "as we rode up the glen? Ye were not, I trust, psalm singing, my excellent good friends?"

Then, when no answer was returned to him, he strode close up to the old woman,—*"answer me,"* he continued, *"answer me, say, sweet angel, were ye engaged in lifting up your voices to the Lord?"*—and, as he spoke, he stretched his hand out toward her, as if to grasp her arm; but as he did so, the young farmer took a quick step, and with a resolute air, moved aside the arm of the fierce soldier.

"We were," he answered quickly, but firmly, "we were engaged in our devotions, noble sir, after the manner of our fathers, in naught disturbing any one, nor breaking any ordinance or laws of king or prelate, and so what of it?"

"After the manner of your fathers!" replied the Laird, with a contemptuous and bitter sneer, "your fathers!—by my soul! I knew not that such base-born dogs had fathers!—Now on your life! or rather, as you would live to see the kingdom of the saints! I do beseech you, well beloved, expound to me, had you in very deed a father?"

"Ay, had he?" interrupted the old woman drawing up at the words her weak and bending frame to its full height, and bending on her the clear light of her dark eye, which positively flashed with indignation, "ay, had he she exclaimed in tones that quivered not, trembled in the least, for anger had completely overmastered not the infirmities alone her aged body and the feebleness that well-nigh extinguished all the light and quickness of her mind, but all considerations of time, the place, the speaker—all prudence—all fear of evil—"ay, had he, Sir Dragoon, father that rode through more foughten fields than thou hast pranced in wantonness of pleasure across horse courses—a father whose sack was girt oftener by the hard rivets of his morquet, than thine hath been entwined by the white arms of amorous Deliahs!—ay, had he Sir Dragoon, a father—who, had he lived to see this day, and found a dozen of his fellows had rid this groaning country—"

"Peace! mother—peace! I pray you, it is the Laird of Livingstone—King Charles's high officer—you know not what you say," the young man interposed, now seriously alarmed at his unhappy parent's indiscretion. "She is a weak old woman, sir," he added, turning respectfully to the life-guardsmen, "and knoweth not one half the time, what she saith or doeth, the other."

"And if it be so," answered the soldier brutally, "who asked for thy interposition? But we have heard enough already to justify some sequestration—Hunter and Ramsay," he continued, looking toward his men, "go round the fields and drive off all the stock you find there. I saw some cows behind the homestead, in the byre—and you, good sergeant, step in and search the house, if ye may find any concealed arms, and if you do—" he nodded his head ominously, and the infernal smile played on his smooth sleek features, which rarely lit them up save in anticipation of some accursed deed. Then while the men went cagerly away to execute his barbarous orders—"Tell, worthy dame," he added in a good-humoured bantering tone, "this gallant father about whom you speak—the father of this noble youth, he fought, I trow, for David, Leslie, and old Tell—"

"Ay, did he?" she replied, scarce conscious what she said, or who was questioning, "at Marston fight; and Worcester-field—at Tippermayr and Philiphaugh, likewise, was his sword reddened with the blood of the malignant and rakhelly cavaliers!"

"By the Lord! here have we found a precious nest of psalm singers—and now I think it—what book is that you hold so lovingly ere, friend?"

"The Lord's book!" the young farmer answered, touching the brim of his bonnet, as he spoke very reverently.

"Oh! the Lord's book, is it?—and this, I fancy, is the sword of Gideon,"—as the sergent made his appearance, carrying in his hand a long and heavy broadsword, with a large basket hilt of iron.

"That is the broadsword of my father!"

"Mighty well—mighty well—this is audacity—by my soul it is," said Livingstone, the same abominable smile curling his lip, again.

"But I expected it—before the Lord! I did.—

Now, master rebel, answer me promptly; you were best; have you not heard the order of the council forbidding all men, under the rank of Laird, to keep edged weapons, or hand-gun, or pistol?"

"I have not, sir. I do profess to you, I have not heard it—"

"Then you were not at church last Sunday, where our worthy curate archdeacon proclaimed it from the pulpit, thus contumaciously and of aforesought malice avoiding—but," he interrupted himself for a moment, and then continued in a low stern whisper, "but it avails not talking—call Hunter back, and Ramsay, Sergent Mackey, we have got other gear—so that is well," he added, as the two privates came up, driving the widow's cows before them—"let the beasts go, we will not rob the widow, for what saith the Scripture anent grinding of widows, and removing of landmarks. Fall in—right face—handle your carbines—prime, load, make ready!—Now, sirrah, kneel down on the green-sward, you have five minutes left to make your peace with Heaven. Sergent, remove the woman back there, up in the space, assist your sergent, Ramsay!"

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not for himself alone, but for his ruthless murderers.

The time elapsed—the sign was given—the levelled carbines flashed—the volley hurtled through the air—but loud and clearly heard above the full reports rang the heart-broken shriek of the bereaved and hapless parent, yell after yell, shriek after shriek, volumes of hopeless anguish pealed up to the sky, and actually struck a superstitious awe to the cold hearts of the iron soldiers.

They mounted and rode gaily off, their feathers waving joyously, their harness glancing in the blithe sunlight, heedless that where they had found peace and humble happiness, they had left, misery and death and desolation.



### THE DEATH BANQUET.

"Come, all, you spirits That 'tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here; And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood; Stop up the access and passage to remorse, That no compunctious visitings of nature Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between The effect and it!"—*Macbeth*.

IN the year 182-, on finishing my studies, I prepared with much regret to quit Edinburgh, to spend, for the first time, some months in Paris. There is not, in my opinion, a more delightful residence than the Scottish capital, in all Europe. Situated in the very garden of Scotia, surrounded by the most magnificent scenery, noted for the high mental cultivation and frank, open and hospitable manners of its inhabitants, I know no place where life glides away more calmly and happily. Besides, during a sojourn of more than five years, I had formed many ties and associations which it was most painful to sever. Among a numerous circle of friends and acquaintances, I had the good fortune to number many of the artists of which Edinburgh boasts so large and distinguished a list. Passionately fond of the art of painting, I had eagerly embraced every opportunity of cultivating an intimacy with its professors, and many an hour stolen from the confinement of the dissecting room and the college halls, was devoted to the contemplation of my favourite art. On learning that my destination was Paris, the excellent and celebrated A—n, was kind enough to give me a letter to his friend D—a, who with his younger brother, held a high rank among the painters of the modern French school. To this letter was I indebted for many of the most agreeable moments I passed in France. D—a, a de-

cidedly clever and accomplished man, received me with a warm and graceful politeness which at once placed me at my ease, and caused me to regard him with the familiar cordiality of long acquaintanceship. I became a constant visitor at his weekly reunions, at which were collected all the most noted individuals in every branch of art, science or literature that the renowned capital contained, and where painters, poets, dramatists, actors and warriors, of well earned and widely spread reputation, mixed in unrestrained and delightful intercourse. In a short time too, to my great delight, I found myself a daily and privileged loungee in their atelier, for the two brothers lived and painted together. The D—s, as I have said, were artists of high reputation, and a visit to their collection afforded to the lovers of the divine art a gratification of no common order, for the walls exhibited many paintings of fine conception, and of admirable colour and finish.

Among the many gems which wooed the attention and admiration of the amateur, I was particularly struck with one painting of exquisite finish and beauty, but whose subject was so strange and peculiar that I had frequently but vainly conjectured to what probable incident it might relate. Its scene was a small but richly furnished apartment. The time was night, for the light from many silver lamps was strongly thrown on a most singular and startling group which occupied the centre of the painting. On a crimson velvet couch reclined the figure of a splendidly dressed woman, apparently quite dead. Her face was livid and distorted with pain, and a purple hue had overspread her bare and jewelled neck. At the other extremity of the same couch, clothed in the magnificent and picturesque costume of the fifteenth century, and with his dark hair hanging in curls down his neck, was a young and noble looking man, the expression of whose pale and dying countenance intimated the most dreadful agony and despair. But the most singular and striking figure of this strange group remains to be noticed. It was that of a beautiful but girlish looking female, clad in a black velvet dress, of the Spanish fashion, with her jet black hair, braided on each side, and who, with her slight but exquisitely moulded figure drawn up to its greatest height, stood pointing with an air of haughty and malignant triumph to the figure of the dead woman.

Observing me one day intently gazing at this piece, D—a asked my opinion of it.

"I am vain enough," he said, "to think a very tolerable performance."

"Tolerable!" I replied, "I admire your modesty! It is admirable. But pray tell me is it a fancy sketch?"

"Not exactly; it is founded on incidents which occurred in this very city many years since."

"My dear D—a," I eagerly exclaimed, "pray take compassion on my curiosity, and have the kindness to illustrate for my information, your beautiful and interesting picture."

"Most willingly," he repeated, with a good laugh; the palette was laid aside, and my good humoured acquaintance related the following tale, which may with truth be considered as partaking somewhat of the "convulsive school." D—a, like most of his lively countrymen, possessed the happy art of narrating well and gracefully, and I entirely despair of imparting at second hand the same interest to his story.

"The circumstances, which gave rise to the picture you do me the honour to admire so much, occurred during the regency of that good and witty profligate, the Duke of Orleans, when the court and city of Paris,—never, by the way, so much renowned for purity of manners—had reached a pitch of licentiousness absolutely astounding. At this period, a young girl made her appearance as a dancer on the Madrid stage, and from her extreme grace and beauty as well as her wonderful talents in her profession, created a considerable sensation in the theatrical world of the Spanish metropolis. Our ambassador to the court of Spain, who ever might have been his capacity as a diplomat, was an admirable judge of saltatorial excellence, formed the patriotic determination of transplanting this fair creature into the more congenial soil of his adored Paris, and of bestowing on his countrymen the rich gift of such rare and unequalled talent. Negotiations were consequently set on foot with an eagerness and diligence. You smile, and are perhaps not sensible of the importance of the subject. Know then that it requires more tact and address to obtain the favor of the loan of a celebrated opera dancer, than to settle the preliminaries of a treaty of peace between two first rate powers.\* However, the praiseworthy efforts of the worthy ambassador were crowned with success, and he returned in triumph of his recall, bearing in his train the beautiful and accomplished Nana, for such was the Span-

\* In France, and indeed on the continent generally, the theatres are under the immediate jurisdiction of the government.

*soubriquet* of the fair dancer. As soon as it was known that a young and beautiful opera dancer was to make her *debut*, all Paris was in a tumult of feverish expectation. With us, the first appearance of a new actor or actress of celebrity, was then, and is even now, a matter of serious and overwhelming importance. A thousand rumors were in circulation respecting the new comer, and all of course the most contradictory and irreconcilable. The most correct account, however, appeared to be, that she was young and handsome, that her name was Maria Gonzaga, and that she was the illegitimate offspring of a pretty Manola—a woman of the lower ranks—and of a licentious Spanish grandee, who, however, had never treated her with much parental affection.

The eventful night fixed for her appearance at length arrived. The curtain rose and discovered the beautiful Nina, richly dressed in the Spanish costume, and glittering with precious jewels. Her figure was slight—almost girlish, but charmingly proportioned, her hands and arms were models of perfection, while her beautiful and elastic little feet and ankles were enough to turn the brain of an anchorite. The warm rich tint of her cheeks, betrayed her Spanish origin, and her features though exquisitely beautiful, wore at times an air of wildness and *hautour*. But the great charm of this lovely girl was her eyes. Dark as night, lustrous as the diamond, they seemed fitted to express all the workings of a lofty and passionate soul.

Her reception was warm and flattering, but when she had performed one of the fascinating, but somewhat voluptuous dances of her native Spain, the enthusiasm of the audience knew no bounds, and her success was complete and triumphant.

The first impressions of the fair *debutante* on the public were afterwards fully maintained, and she became the rage. In vain the critics—a surly race—found a thousand faults with her style, and protested that she violated all the established rules of her art; her admirers were steadfast and declared that the lovely Spaniard possessed a charm beyond the reach of criticism. In that licentious age it was not to be supposed that a beautiful girl, in her position, could escape the pursuit of libertines. But to the surprise of all, it was soon discovered that the young actress was of inflexible chastity. In vain did a crowd of the gay and glittering court butterflies flutter around this fair exotic; in vain did many an old and wealthy debauchee make her the most tempting and dazzling

offers. The advances of the first were repelled with haughty indifference, and of the latter, with gay but bitter mockery. Even the most veteran *habitués* of the *coulistes* confessed with a shrug of pity, that the virtue of Nina was without spot or reproach. But matters were not to remain long in this situation. "The hour was come and the man." The handsome, the noble Colonel de Valmont at this period returned from the army, with just a sufficient wound as to render him interesting, and to allow him to wear his arm in a graceful scarf. Young, rich, of high birth, witty, accomplished, but heartless and profligate, he had long assumed a prominent rank as a man of gallantry and pleasure. The favourite companion of the regent, the idol of the ladies, the terror of husbands, the envy of his vicious companions, De Valmont had fought more duels and broken more hearts than any other man in Paris. To see and admire the young dancer and to attempt her conquest was with him a natural consequence. But why detail the arts of an accomplished seducer? It is enough to say they were successful, and Nina became his mistress. These matters are easily arranged at the opera. But the connection was an unhappy and stormy one. Yielding up every thought and energy of her passionate nature to the new and overwhelming feeling which engrossed her whole being, this young creature could not long be content with the imperfect and scanty love of such a heart as De Valmont's. Besides, it must be confessed that she was dreadfully jealous. At the theatre she watched him like a lynx. A smile, or the slightest attention or courtesy to another woman, would drive the blood from her cheek and make her dark eyes flash like lightning. Matters could not long continue thus. It was the old story, devoted affection on one side, indifference, coldness, disgust on the other.—They parted. But not content with abandoning the victim of his sensuality, De Valmont still farther outraged her feelings by immediately commencing a *liaison* with a pretty *fiille d'opera*, named Rosalie. This was an injury never to be forgiven, and aroused every dark and baleful passion in the breast of the young Spaniard. Her former love was changed to deadly hate, and vengeance became the sole impulse of her thoughts,—her dream,—her existence. From that moment De Valmont was a doomed man!

Among the crowd of lovers who had knelt at the shrine of her beauty, was one who had been most persevering in his pursuit, and

whose rejection had occasioned him much unhappiness. Indeed, the Chevalier De Nanci still loved her, and a smile of encouragement was sufficient to cause him to renew his homage. This young man was destined by Nina to be the instrument of her revenge. One night, after the performances had finished, he was permitted to accompany her to her house, for the first time. Seated beside the object of his wishes, he warmly pushed his suit.

"How long," he exclaimed, "charming Nina, are you determined to make me languish in hopeless despair? Take pity on my sufferings and reward my long and faithful love."

The young girl turned her dark eyes on her lover as he knelt before her and seemed to hesitate.

"No! no!" she at length answered, "it cannot be; while De Valmont lives I can never be yours!"

"Ha! you love him then, you still love that false and ungrateful man!"

A dreadful expression crossed the countenance of the dancer as she almost shrieked with a wild laugh,

"Love him! him, who has outraged, who has trampled on me, no, De Nanci, I hate him with a bitter, an unutterable hatred! Listen to me," she said in a hoarse whisper, and taking a small scarf from her neck, "bring me this steeped in his blood, in his heart's blood, and I am yours for ever, body and soul."

De Nanci listened to the enchantress with conflicting feelings; all that he had dared to hope for was within his reach! but at what a price! He was silent.

"Ah! you falter, you renounce me then; well, so be it. Coward! take back your vows!"

"You wrong me most grievously," replied De Nanci, "the word *coward* cannot be coupled with my name. But *murder*! No! Even to gain your love. I cannot stoop to that."

"Who talks of murder?" exclaimed Nina. "Murder! No! I could never clasp a murderer in my arms. But you fiery young gallants of the court, I know you well, a word, a look if you choose it so, produces a duel. Slay him in that way, or if your heart fails you, leave me, and for ever."

De Nanci,—forsaken by his good angel,—turned one glance on the temptress, and yielded.

"Give me the scarf! I accept your conditions. You shall be avenged, or I return to you no more."

The next night there was quite a sensation at the opera. As the gallant Colonel De Valmont was engaged in conversation with some

acquaintances, the Chevalier de Nanci trod heavily on his foot, and passed on without making any apology.

"Ha! Monsieur de Nanci!" called out De Valmont, "may I request you to return, I would speak with you."

In a moment, De Nanci confronted him with a cool, and rather insulting air.

"Have you not forgotten something, Monsieur?"

"No, sir, nothing."

"I think you have forgotten to apologize for the insult you just offered me, and have added to it by your manner. Come, sir, let us bring this matter to an end; you must do me reason."

"Now, sir, or when you will," replied De Nanci.

"No, not now," was the general exclamation of the friends of both parties, who, by this time, had crowded round them—"not now, it is too dark to fight."

"Gentlemen," exclaimed an old *militaire* with a huge moustache, and his neck contracted from a former wound, "no doubt it is extremely dark; but what of that? We have plenty of servants here, and plenty of torches. Let us adjourn to the *Pre aux Clercs*, and terminate this silly affair. The sooner these things are ended the better."

In those days, in consequence of the numerous robberies and assassinations which took place in the streets of Paris, it was the custom of all those of the higher ranks who stirred abroad at night, to be accompanied by a numerous train of lackies with torches, for, as yet, gas was not known. The objectors to the obscurity of the night, who had, by the way, not the slightest opposition to the excitement of a duel, made no farther objection, and the whole party started for the *Pre aux Clercs*, a meadow near Paris. On arriving at the ground, and ere preparations could be made for the approaching combat, lights were seen approaching from a distance, and shortly after, the measured tread of a body of men. "The guard! the guard!" was the exclamation of most of the party; "we must adjourn to some other place."

"Not at all, messieurs," said the man with the large moustache, "I am convinced that we are more than sufficient to drive back those rascally cuckolds."

"Bravo! bravo!" was the universal cry of those thoughtless young men, who now rushed with drawn swords and loud peals of laughter against the unfortunate city guards, who, after a short resistance, were put to the route.

"Now, messieurs," said the man with the moustache, "you can fight in peace."

During the skirmish which had taken place, De Nanci advanced to his antagonist, and whispered in his ear, "this duel is to the death; one of us must fall."

De Valmont seemed much surprised, but contented himself with bowing in silence. In a few minutes every thing was arranged for the deadly encounter which was to take place. The seconds were chosen, the principals were examined, to see that no hidden armour might afford them any unfair advantage, and the word was given "*en garde messieurs!*" The swords crossed each other with a sharp clash, and the combat commenced. It was however by no means an equal one. On one side, exquisite skill and temper were opposed to rashness and passion, and the result could not very long be doubtful. After an impetuous and spirited assault on the part of De Nanci, which was however baffled and completely turned aside by the skill of his cool and wary antagonist, he began to lose his temper, and received several slight flesh wounds. Summoning every energy for one last and desperate effort, De Nanci rushed on his opponent, but in the act of advancing his foot, slipped, and De Valmont's sword passed entirely through his body, the point coming out near the left shoulder blade. His friends rushed forward immediately to raise and support the unfortunate young man who had fallen heavily to the ground. But it was useless; the wound was a dreadful and fatal one; there was a gasp, a slight shudder, and all was over. The gay and reckless group which surrounded the dead man, looked on the bloody tragedy for a short time in unbroken silence. At length the man with the moustache relinquishing the body which he had attempted to lift up, exclaimed, "It is, no doubt a great pity; he was an excellent fellow! but as we can do no good here, I propose that we decamp forthwith, before that rascally guard gets reinforced, and returns to attack us."

"Yes, yes," cried another, "the comedy is finished; let us go to supper,"—and the thoughtless crowd swept away to their various pursuits and amusements, leaving the corpse of their late associate to be taken care of by his servants. Now-a-days, such conduct and remarks would be considered cold blooded and revolting. But it was the tone of that age to treat the most serious and sacred subjects, in a light and mocking spirit. Religion, virtue, morality, even the Deity himself, all was a jest.

Whatever might have been the feelings of the young Spaniard on learning the result of her scheme of vengeance, she confined them to her own bosom. By neither word nor look did she betray her interest in the events which had become the public topic of conversation, nor did she for a moment neglect her theatrical duties.

A few nights after the duel, as De Valmont was walking behind the scenes, a hand was lightly laid on his arm, and on looking, he was somewhat surprised to see Nina. "Ha! truant," she exclaimed, with a gay and joyous smile, "have I found you at last; you shall not go again until you promise to grant me my request."

"Fair Nina," replied the former lover, with an air of gallantry, "what could you ask that I should refuse?"

"Then promise to sup with me to-night," she replied with a quick and eager glance.—"What! you hesitate! nay, then I must bribe you, for, know, fair sir, that the charming Rosalie will be there; so no refusal."

"Since you are so kind," at length said De Valmont, "be it so; I will wait on you."

"Till then, adieu," said the fair dancer, kissing her hand to him.

That night a merry party of three was gathered around the sumptuous repast of Nina, who did the honours of her table with charming grace and simplicity. The rich viands, and the rare and costly wines were seasoned by many a sparkling jest; and the light musical laugh of the young Spaniard, was a constant echo to all the lively sallies of her companions.

Thus passed the hours away unheeded, in mirth and revelry, until De Valmont declared that it was time to part. "Fair Nina," he exclaimed, "it is a pity that such charming moments as we have spent this night, should have an end. But, alas! so it is. Farewell, and a thousand thanks for your delightful entertainment."

"Nay," said the dancer, "go not yet, sit, I entreat you. Before you depart, you must drain one bright and sparkling cup, and the pledge shall be, 'love and pleasure.'"

While speaking, she rapidly changed colour and slightly trembled, but recovering her calmness by a strange effort, she went to a large sideboard covered with glittering and costly plate, and filling two richly chased gold cups from a flask of wine, which she appeared to select with some care, handed them to De Valmont and his companion. The pledge was named, and the fatal goblets emptied. After

a time, a deep and prolonged silence fell on the party. The Spaniard sat watching her guests with anxious and troubled looks. De Valmont seemed ill at ease. "Fair lady, your wine, methinks, is strangely potent! My brain whirls round, and the lights look dim and ghastly! Ha! what means these strange and dreadful feelings?"

He buried his face in his hands and leant on the table. Nina still continued to watch him eagerly, until, at length, she arose and shook him with violence. "What ho! De Valmont, look up! see, your lady love, the fair Rosalie smiles upon you!"

With a painful effort the young man lifted his head, and fixed a dim and ghastly stare on a sight, which filled his guilty soul with horror and dismay. Reclining in one corner of the couch, was the frail partner of his dalliance, a swollen and discoloured corpse. With a dreadful execration, and struggling desperately to rise and draw his sword, he shouted—"Wretch, you have poisoned us! But thou shalt not escape; thou, too, shalt accompany me." But the effort was vain, his nerveless limbs refused their office, and he sunk back on the couch in an agony of pain and dismay.—And there stood the fair fiend, gazing with flashing eyes and a smile of triumph, on the scene of her revenge.

"Yes, perjured traitor, you have guessed truly, you are indeed poisoned. I tell thee, De Valmont, thou hast not an hour to live.—No power on earth can save thee. And now I leave thee to thy thoughts. Think on all the crimes of thy life, think on thy wrongs to me, and despair!" Saying this, and with one long look at her victims, she rapidly left the apartment, locking the door, and removing the key. But we draw a veil over the death pangs of this wretched man.

The next morning, De Valmont's servants, who had accompanied him to the house of the dancer, and who had awaited his departure in a room below, with many a smothered curse of impatience at his long delay, became alarmed, and proceeded to the door of the apartment.

After loudly knocking, and calling without receiving any answer, they burst open the door, and entered the room, where an appalling sight met their astonished view. Amidst the scene of the late festivity, surrounded by all the gorgeous and glittering appliances of revelry, in horrible mockery of the place, sat the ghastly and disfigured forms of the two dead guests.

"And what," I enquired, "became of the

agent in this terrible deed of vengeance? Did she escape?"

"No," replied D—a. "That night, in the nets which are placed to intercept the bodies of the victims of suicide or assassination, was entangled the form of a fair and richly dressed girl. And on a marble table of the *Morgue*, was exposed to the eager gaze of a thousand spectators, all that remained of the once lovely and admirable La Nina. Struck with remorse at her awful crime, or despairing to escape the pursuit and punishment of the outraged laws, she had thrown herself into the *Seine*."



### SONG OF THE SPRING BREEZE.

Oh, give me welcome—I come—I come  
From a sweet and balmy land,  
With the tropic rose I have made my home;  
'Mid ripening fruits I have loved to roam—  
Where the sea-shells lie in their golden sand,  
I have played with the foam of a Southern  
strand.

Oh, give me welcome! I bring—I bring  
A gift for the coming May,  
The sunshine falls from my restless wing,  
It touches the ice of the mountain spring;  
But I laugh—I laugh as it melts away,  
And my voice is heard in the leaping spray.

Oh, give me welcome—a welcome now!  
The winter was stern and cold,  
But I sung him to sleep, and I kissed his brow  
While I lifted his robe of spotless snow.  
And that crusty fellow, so chill and old  
Awoke in a mantle of green and gold.

A welcome now! while the south wind weaves  
His breath with the morning dew,  
As he fans the moss on the cottage eaves—  
And drives from the hollow the sear dry leaves.  
Where the violet hides its eye of blue  
And the pale young grass peeps faintly through.

Oh, welcome me—while I have a rout  
With the pleasant April rain—  
The birds that sing with a silvery shout  
And the fragrant buds that are breaking out  
Like drops of light with a rosy stain,  
'Mid the delicate leaves that are green again.



IMAGINARY evils soon become real ones, by indulging our reflections on them; as he who is in a melancholy fancy sees something like a face on the wall or wainscot, can, by two or three touches with a lead pencil, make it look visible, and agreeing with what he fancied.

## MOMENTS OF TERROR.

"CAPTAIN, you have led a busy life—have seen much service both at sea and on shore.—We want to call on your experience, to settle a point of dispute between us."

"At your service, gentlemen."

"You are doubtless acquainted with the Orkney Islands, where the wild fowls breed in the cleft of the rocks which are piled in fearful height along the shore. The fishermen fasten a stick at the end of a long rope, which is well secured round a tree, or to a stake driven into the brow of the cliffs, and then placing one of their number astride the stick, he is lowered down the precipice in search of the game. You have most likely heard the account of the man who, in striking at the birds with an iron-pointed boat-staff, as they flew from their holes, cut two of the strands of the rope that suspended him between heaven and earth. He saw the severed strands slowly uncoil themselves, and run upwards, leaving his whole weight, with a heavy prize of birds attached to his girdle, dependant upon one small strand, which already began to strain and crack. Below him was certain death—above him, a terrific wall of rock, that seemed to reach the sky. He gave the signal for hauling up, by striking the rope twice with his staff. Never did his comrades pull the line so lazily. He plucked the birds from his belt, and dropped them on the rocky beach—he kicked off his heavy fishermen's boots—he threw away his staff. Slowly, slowly dragged the rope over the edge of the cliff, while the severed strands seemed to fly upwards with the rapidity of thought. Every instant he dreaded that a weak place in the remaining portion would be untwisted, and so certain appeared his doom, that he felt that every foot he advanced up the face of the precipice, would but increase the height of his fall. A sudden pause in the motion, struck him with a new fear—when the untwisting part of the rope came into the hands of the fishermen above, they at once perceived his danger, and instantly lowered another line. The fowler was rescued from his peril, but such was the effect of his terror during the few minutes of his frightful ascension, that his dark brown hair was changed to grey. I have often thought of this incident; and believe that nothing in man's experience can be brought to rival the agony of that situation. What think you, captain? my friend here, treats the fowler's danger light."

"Bad enough," said the captain, "but not

quite the worst in the world. I don't know whether the chance which a young neevy of mine run foul of, during his first v'yage, in the Bay of Biscay, wasn't just as bad. We were in a stumpy tub of a mafferдите brig, trying to claw off a lee shore, with a rolling sea, and plenty of wind in short sudden puffs. The boy—about sixteen—slim built and pale—was an out-and-out lubber, fond of reading, and skulking his duty whenever he could; his mother, my only sister, a widow, by the way, had made me promise to take care of him—but we were short-handed, and he was forced to work his turn. Some of the hands had gone aloft to shake out a reef in the fore topsail—the rigging was covered with ice—it was a January morning—well, the boy slipped, or was thrown, or blown from the yard—his foot caught in a bight of some of the running rigging, and he hung by the heels, head downwards from the end of the yard, dipping into the sea at each plunge of the old craft, and hoisted up again, high and dry, every time she came to the wind. I expected every roll, to see him washed or jerked from his foothold; and no boat that we had could have lived a minute in that sea. I did not dare to luff, for fear of being taken aback. When I thought of his mother, I had a great mind to save him, even if I beached the old tub; but the point I wanted to weather was close ahead, and the roar of the surf did not sound altogether the thing. We did save him, at last, and I guess his feelings were quite as queer as that of your friend, the fowler. He had but one pull up, while my neevy had better than a hundred—with a cold dip in a frosty sea, between each pull—nothing but an accidental half-hitch round his ankle—and head downwards all the while."

"Horrible, indeed. What did you say to the poor fellow when he was relieved?"

"Told him he deserved a starting for being so clumsy, when he knew I was short-handed—made him swallow some hot coffee, and turn in. He never went aloft again; and at the end of the v'yage, cut the sea, and took to carpentering. That's some years ago, and his hair aint turned grey yet."

"Pray, sir," said another of the passengers, "have you seen Hoffinan's tale of the drunken fireman who crept in at the man-hole of a boiler undergoing repairs, on board one of the western steamboats? it is very well told.—The poor fellow woke up in total darkness, as the water was being pumped in—then he heard the roar of the huge fire beneath, and felt the

boiler glowing round him, while the firemen continued to 'wood up.'"

"A good idea; but it resembles 'The Involuntary Experimentalist' in Blackwood.—We were speaking of facts, not fiction. I have heard a veteran officer, in the service of England, declare that he has stood the brunt of the peninsular campaign, besides a tolerable seasoning in India, where fearful sights were every day matters—and that he never actually suffered under the influence of fear, even when death slew down his thousands, except once, and that, strange to say, occurred in the heart of the city of London.

"A ghost story?"

"No, indeed—a street affair, in open daylight. A couple of notorious murderers, Haggerty and Hollaway, were to be executed in front of the Newgate jail. It is said that upwards of forty thousand spectators were collected in the neighbourhood of the place of execution, crowding from every point to a common centre. Just as the criminals were placed upon the gallows, a cart full of women broke down; this accident alarmed the by-standers, and gave an impetus to the whole body of that immense assemblage, which swayed to and fro like the waves of the sea. Persons of short stature and weak frame, unable to compete with their more burly neighbours, sunk down, and rose no more. Shrieks of 'murder' sounded on every side—the crowd was forced over the writhing bodies of several females and boys, without the power of rendering the slightest aid. The mob were absolutely struggling with each other for their lives. In the midst of the alarm, the criminals were swung from the gallows' beam, an incident, which, although expected, materially increased the confusion.—The outer portions of the mob pressed furiously to get near the disgusting sight—several persons were squeezed to death as they stood in the crowd, and their bodies remained wedged in the living mass for a full hour. The major often spoke of the scene as one of peculiar horror. A short and stout person of considerable respectability, with whom the major had been conversing for some time, previous to the panic, had one of his shoes forced down at the heel; he stooped to put it in its place, when a sway, or rolling of the crowd occurred, pushing him from his balance, and overwhelmed the unhappy man. In one minute, above a hundred persons had been forced over his body, pounding it into a mass of blood and dirt. A woman, with an infant at her breast, sunk under the feet of the mob from sheer exhaustion,

as she she fell, she put her babe into the arms of a man who stood beside her. He threw it over the heads of the crowd, aware that he was unable to save it where he stood. The infant was again tossed forward—and again—until a person received it near the edge of the crowd, and he placed it under a cart 'till the mob dispersed. 'The child was taken away alive.

"How many persons lost their lives on this occasion?"

"I do not know. The major declared that when the crowd separated, which was not until the bodies of the criminals were removed from the platform, that upwards of one hundred were found senseless in the street—but many were doubtless restored to life.

"I am not superstitious, gentlemen, said the captain—

"Not more so than captains in general, I suppose."

"But I do believe that that fearful panic was infused into the minds of the mob, as a punishment for making holiday in the death hour of their fellow creatures."

"I have heard a story somewhere of a merchant, who collected a party together to give eclat to one of those little family festivals which brighten the dark track of life, and cheer the human heart in every clime. It was his daughter's wedding day; crowds of her young acquaintance circled round her, and as the father gazed proudly on the face of the young bride, he wished as bright a prospect might open for his other children, who were gambolling merrily among the crowd. Passing along the passage connecting the lower rooms, he met the servant-maid, an ignorant country wench, who was carrying a lighted tallow candle in her hand, without a candle-stick.—He blamed her for this dirty conduct, and went into the kitchen to make some arrangements with his wife about the supper-table. The girl shortly returned from the cellar, with her arms full of ale bottles, but without the candle. The merchant immediately recollected that several barrels of gun-powder had been placed in his cellar during the day, and that his foreman had opened one of the barrels to select a sample for a customer. 'Where is your candle,' he inquired, in excessive agitation. 'I could not bring it up with me, for my hands were full,' said the girl. 'Where did you leave it?' 'Well, I'd no candlestick, so I stuck it into some black sand that's there in one of the tubs.' The merchant dashed down the cellar steps; the passage was long and dark, and as he groped his way, his knees threatened to give

nder him, his breath was choked, and his flesh seemed suddenly to become dry and parched, as if he already felt the suffocating blast of death. At the extremity of the passage, in the front cellar, under the very room where his children and their friends were revelling in felicity, he discerned the open powder-barrel, all almost to the top—the candle stuck lightly in the loose grains, with a long and red snuff of burnt-out wick topping the small and gloomy flame. This sight seemed to wither all his powers, and the merry laugh of the youngsters above, struck upon his heart like the knell of death. He stood for some moments, gazing upon the light, unable to advance. The fiddlers commenced a lively jig, and the feet of the dancers responded with untroubled vivacity—the floor shook with their exertions, and the loose bottles in the cellar rattled with the motion. He fancied that the candle moved!—was falling! With desperate energy he darted forward—but how was he to remove it? the slightest touch would cause the small live coal of the wick to fall into the loose powder. With unequalled presence of mind, he placed a hand on each side of the candle, with the open palms upward, and the distended fingers pointed toward the object of his care—which, as his hands gradually met, was secured in the clasping or locking of his fingers, and safely removed from the head of the barrel. As he lifted the candle from its bed in the powder, the exuberance of the wick fell off, and rolled, a living coal, into the hollow of his hands. He cared not for the burning smart; he carried it steadily along the passage to the head of the cellar stairs. The excitement was then over—he could smile at the danger he had conquered—but the re-action was too powerful, and he fell into fits of most violent and dreadful laughter. He was conveyed senseless to bed; and many weeks elapsed ere his nerves recovered sufficient tone to allow him to resume his habits of every day life."

"I confess that you have evidenced a stronger instance or cause of terror than I did when I produced the fisherman of the Orkneys.—Yes, sir, your merchant had not only his own life in forfeit, but the consideration of the almost certain death of the whole of his family. I can thoroughly understand that man's feelings while gazing upon the candle of death.—He must have lived fifty years in twice as many seconds. And then the blankness of despair so suddenly following the fulness of delight—his visions of mangled limbs, and the scorched bodies of his own flesh and blood,

exciting the passions of the father, the husband, and the friend—the close proximity of a horrid death to himself and all he loved—the result of his own carelessness, and only to be avoided by the utmost self-possession in that trying scene."

"The merchant's chance," said the captain, "was a trifle worse than my nevey's, as far as feeling and all that goes; but still he did not get the duckings in a January sea. You haven't capped the climax yet, though; and you can't do it on dry land—you must take our mishaps at sea, by and large, if you want horrible situations in perfection."

"Can you instance one or two, captain?"

"Half a dozen, if you like. I'll mention one, that in my opinion, combines the most awful point of all your stories—and I know my portion of it to be fact. A small schooner was chartered in New York, in '37, to take a company of players to Texas. I forget the manager's name, but he was with his troop, and contemplated a junction with Corri, who is of some standing as a public caterer in the young republic. Among the company, were Mr. and Mrs. Barry, Mr. and Mrs. Gibson, Mr. Page, Mr. Dougherty, Mr. Williams, with the manager, and several others. The little craft was caught in a gale off Cape Hatteras; a heavy sea struck her stern and forced her head into the wind: her bows were seized by the gale, and she went down stern first. Being light-freighted, she soon rose to the surface, keel upwards. The captain, with all his little crew, and some of the passengers who were on deck, were swept away like so much chaff; but the suddenness of their destruction was mercy compared to the sufferings endured by the unfortunates in the cabin. The companion-way had been left open, and the rushing water soon engulfed the inmates, already sorely bruised by the loose furniture and luggage that knocked against them in the capsized. When the water in the cabin reached its level, it was found that by standing on the beam or roof-tree, there was a vacancy of about six inches between the top of the water and the bottom of the cabin overhead. Consequently full grown persons could find breathing room by holding their faces in a horizontal position, but were liable to lose their standing every instant from the rolling of the vessel in the trough of the sea. But few of the passengers could avail themselves of this tantalizing assistance for any length of time: the weak-bodied and short-sized men gradually sunk, maugre all the assistance that the stronger class could render.

The husbands fought with death most manfully in behalf of their wives—but were unable to save them. One of the ladies had an infant, and intent upon its salvation, literally drowned herself in endeavouring to hold her babe above the water. Thrice did her husband dive and rescue all he held dear on earth; and thrice was he compelled to let them sink.—Now, I affirm that no imagination can picture a scene of more perfect horror than this floating chamber of death presented to the survivors, who were struggling to maintain life for a few seconds in almost hopeless agony.—Without a ray of light to cheer them—dashed from side to side as the vessel gave to the fury of the sea, with the dead bodies of their wives, and comates rolling about them—the howling of the storm without rendering the despair within more terrible, by forbidding the hope of rescue—the occasional moments of silence interrupted by the muttered prayer or agonized supplication of the sufferers, with the bubbling struggling deaths of the victims, as they writhed about the limbs of the survivors—all this is truly horrible; no romance can equal it, and the annals of suffering cannot afford a parallel case.

“Death was gradually dwindling the number of the passengers, when one of them proposed to dive down under the companion ladder, swim along beneath the deck, dive still deeper under the bulwarks, and come up in the open sea, by the side of the capsized hull. The attempt was difficult to a practised swimmer, and but two of the four survivors were able to swim at all. There was also the chance of being caught in one of the sails, or getting entangled in the rigging—and, supposing all these difficulties conquered, what certainty was there that the swimmer would be able to secure a holding-place on the hull in that fierce, raging sea? But, on the other side, the scheme afforded a hope of escape—while certain death awaited them inside. The best swimmer volunteered to make the first essay; and if successful, he was to knock loudly upon the upturned keel. He made several attempts before he was able to clear the ladder; at last, he succeeded in getting out of the cabin, but they waited in vain for the encouraging sound. One of them declared he heard a wild shriek mingle with the gale shortly after the adventurer disappeared. Another ventured, and was fortunately thrown on the hull by a wave as soon as he reached the surface. He kicked loudly against the side of the craft, and in a few minutes beheld another of the sufferers strug-

gling furiously to reach the hull—he was successful. The third and last appeared, and gained a hold upon the vessel; but he was too exhausted to remain. He fell off in the course of the night, and Williams and Dougherty were the only survivors of that ill-fated company and crew.

“For four days, these poor fellows were tossed about, clinging to the upturned vessel and suffering from famine, thirst, fatigue, and cold. A brig, bound to New Orleans, rescued them, but Williams never recovered; he was too exhausted to speak, when picked off the wreck, and died shortly after he reached the brig. Dougherty still survives.

We have inserted on the pages of our present number, an article entitled “Literary Ladies of America,” from the pen of the gifted Mr. Stephens; it is one which we would recommend to all our female readers, and we think cannot fail to be appreciated for the beauty of its style and the pure and lofty sentiments it embodies.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—The story of “The Haunted Island,” is not without its merits, but we think the author, by perseverance, could produce a much better.

“The Glittering Stars,” a Ballad, by “M.” is written in so bad a hand, that we can scarcely decipher more than one half of it.

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