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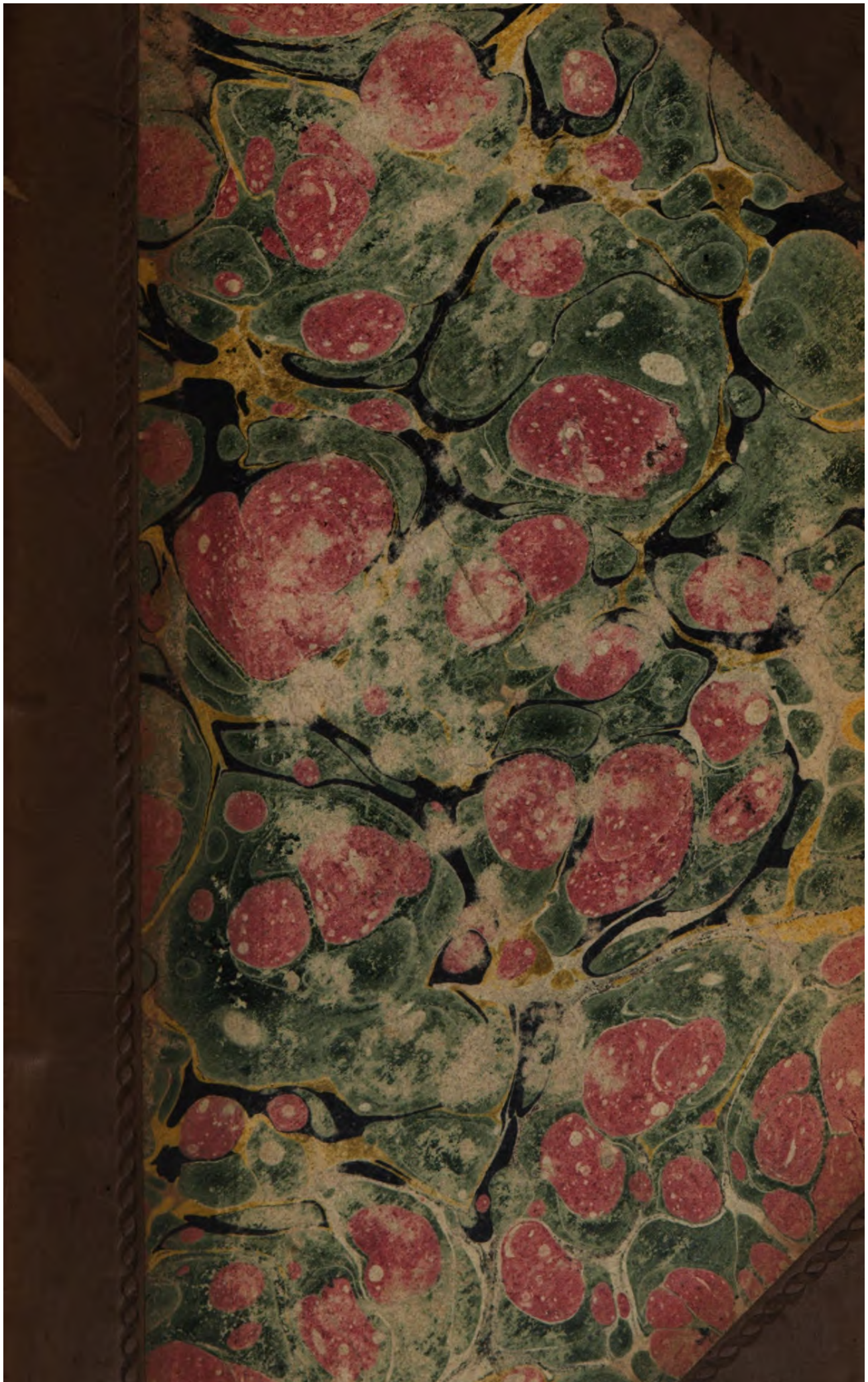
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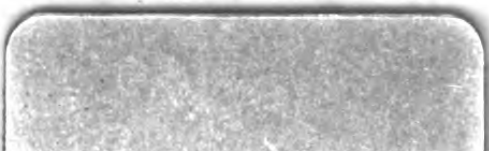


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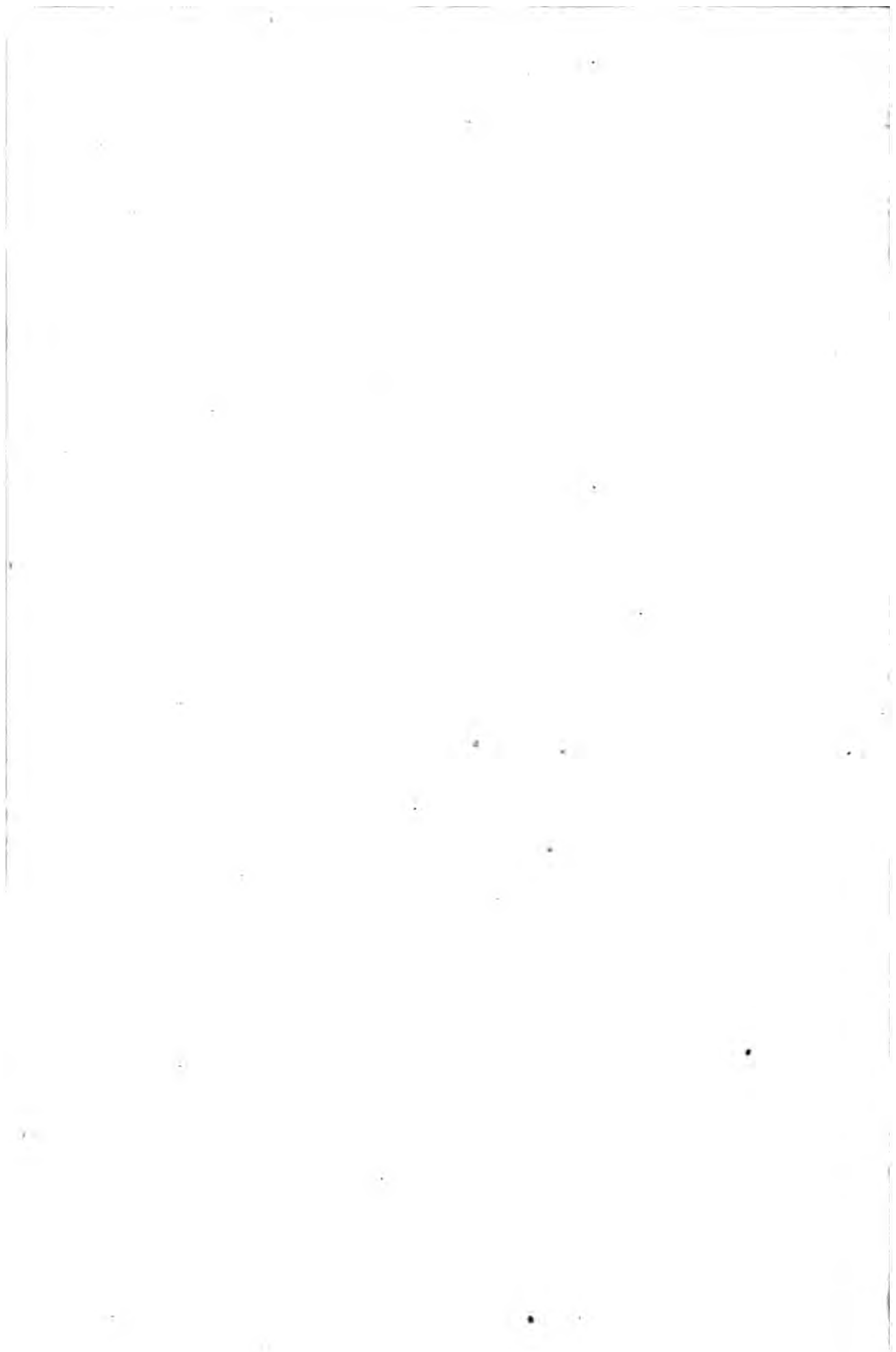
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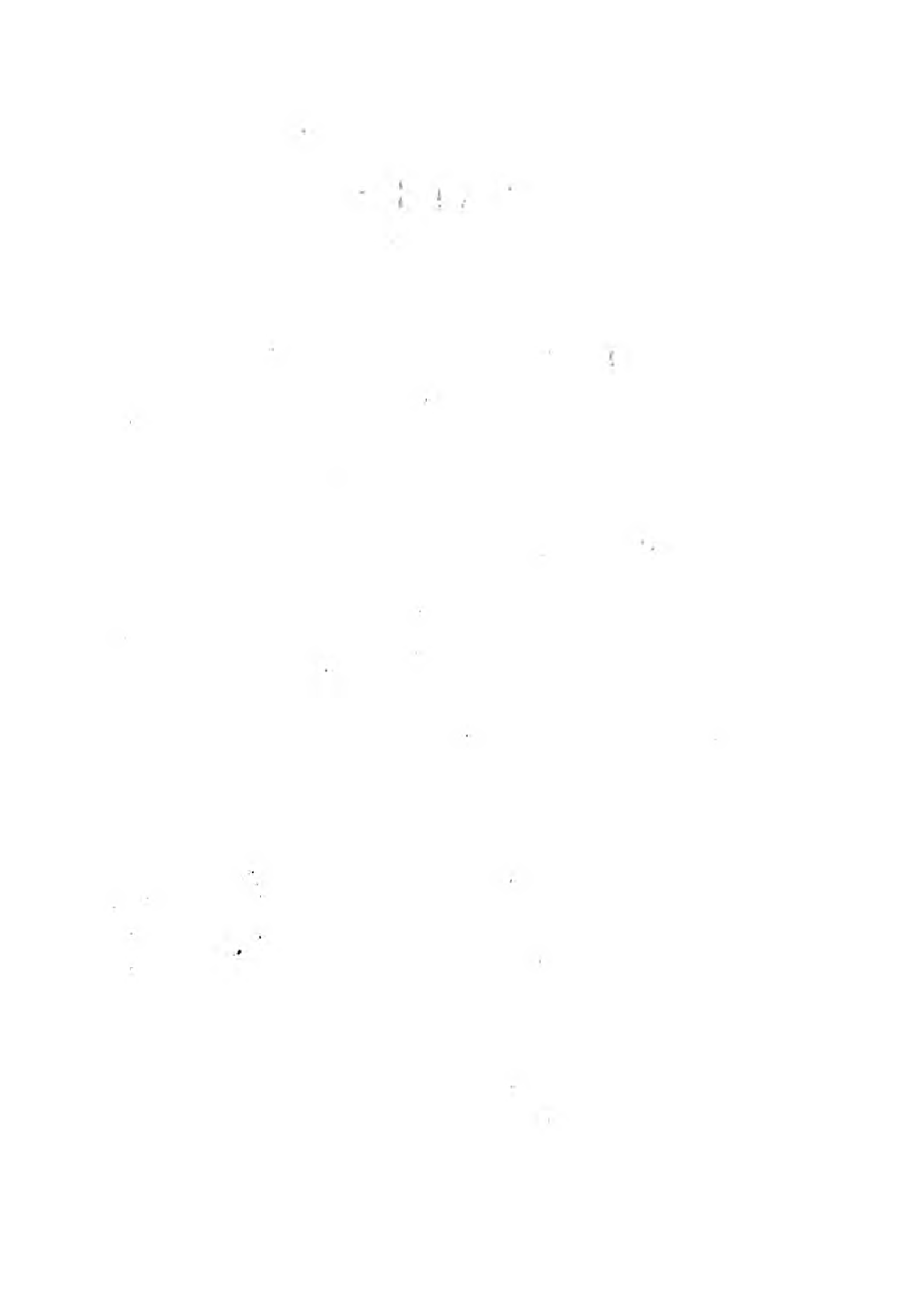




TALES OF FIELD AND FLOOD;

WITH

SKETCHES OF LIFE AT HOME.



S.A. 1829

TALES

OF

FIELD AND FLOOD;

WITH

SKETCHES OF LIFE AT HOME.

BY JOHN MALCOLM,

Author of "Scenes of War," "Reminiscences of a Campaign in the
Pyrenees and South of France," &c. &c.

EDINBURGH:

PUBLISHED BY

OLIVER & BOYD, TWEEDDALE-COURT;

AND

SIMPKIN & MARSHALL, LONDON.

1829.

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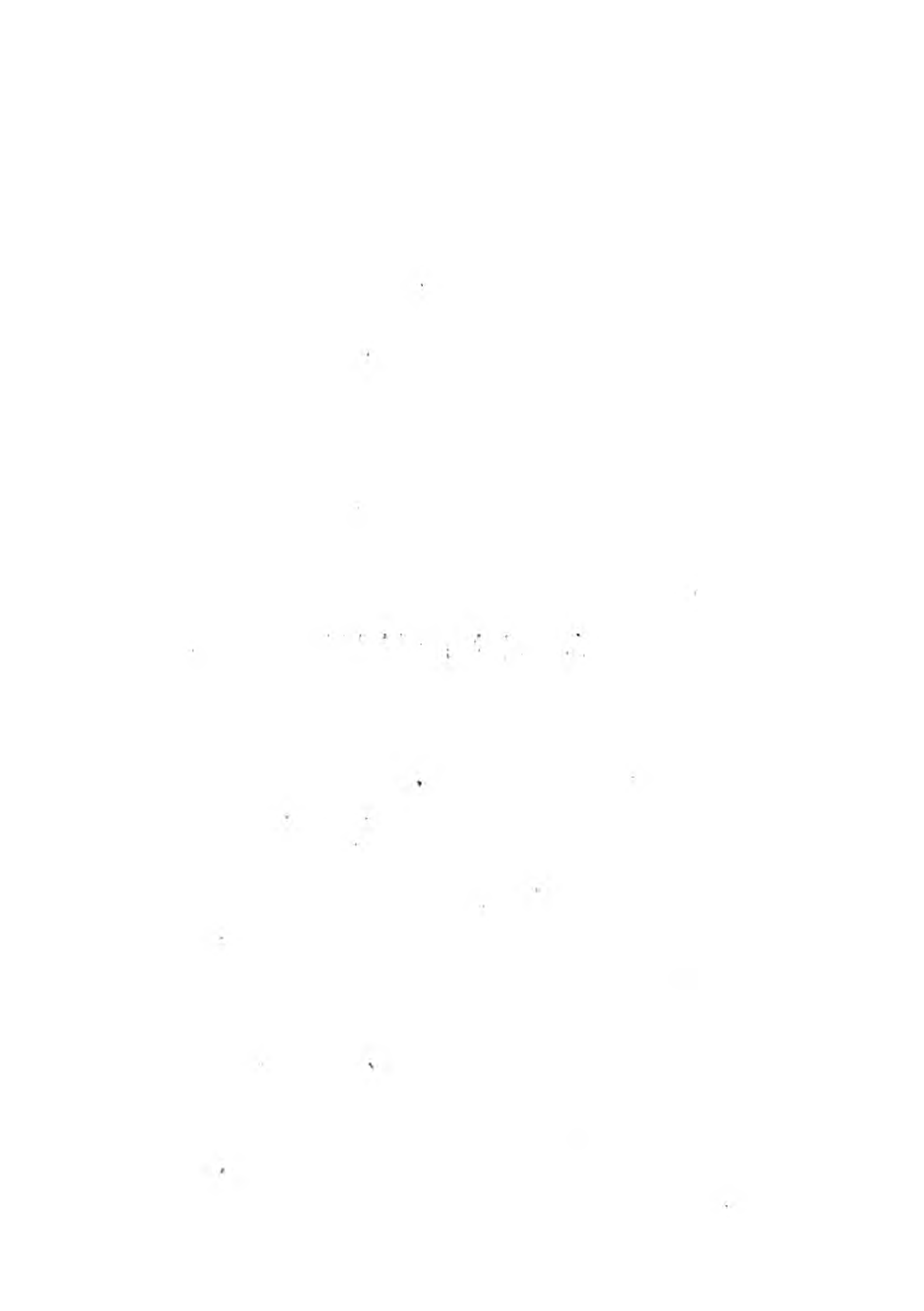
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LIFE IN CAMP.



LIFE IN CAMP.

“ The plumed troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue ;
The neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner ; and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war !”

Othello.

How delightful, after a long absence in a foreign country, is the return to our native land ! How beautiful is the first far-off gleam of its distant hills, as they break out from the back-ground of the sky, and stretch away, as now, in silent and sunset glory !

When I last beheld them, and lingered upon this height that overlooks my home, the land-

scape lay embalmed in the dewy light of the morning, and Earth looked up to heaven through her smiles and tears.

Autumn has now hung her russet mantle over the woods, which Spring then clad in her green array, and gladdened with her choral hymn. Since then I have met her on distant shores,—have seen her come and go,—have bade her welcome and farewell, as she passed like a fairy vision from the earth. Yet I will not regret the days that are gone; since Time, that steals away its enjoyments from the present and its hopes from the future, sheds unclouded beauty over the past, which every thing around me calls up from oblivion.

The very walls of my dwelling seem to return my smiles, and to welcome me back. Its smoke is curling in the calm sky, and the sound of approaching footsteps is in mine ear. But no; it was only the beating of my heart. A mist comes over my sight,—the hills, vales, and woods mingle together in strange confusion, and suddenly melt away into undistinguished shadow.

I start as from a reverie, and gaze around. Above me are the silent stars of night, and the pale tents glimmering through the gloom. And it was all a dream !—Such are the pleasures of sleeping and waking in camp.

The troops stand to their arms an hour or two before daybreak. I see them beginning to muster, by the dusky gleams of the watchfires, around which the officers are collecting in groups, and passing away the hours of darkness as well as they can, in discussions on passing events, or in planning amusements for the day.

Dawn breaks at last in the eastern sky, and as every thing seems quiet, the parade is dismissed, and the troops pile their arms along their tents as before. By and by commence the various operations of the day ; the cooking and eating of breakfasts, the parading of parties for duty, relieving of guards, &c. Sutlers and followers of the army, male and female, produce their various commodities. Bread and fruit, wine and spirits, horses, mules, and donkies, are everywhere exhibited for sale. And if a battle has

lately taken place, in addition to these may be had officers' wardrobes, epaulets, watches, swords, &c. at very reduced prices.

Excursions to the front and rear form agreeable pastime during the day. At the former, if no lynx-eyed old general cross our path, we may discuss politics and a glass of cognac with the officers of the enemy's picquet on the neutral ground; and at the latter may follow the amusements of shooting and fishing, or, in the mood of contemplation, enjoy the glories of nature; and he who has passed through a campaign in the Peninsula will not easily forget such excursions, if, like me, he has climbed its vast sierras, and, taking his siesta midway up the mountains, under the shadow of some old tree, hath gazed upon the primeval peaks towering above him in middle-air, till his spirit has been wafted away into the ages of solitude and silence which have rolled over them, but left them unimpaired as things of yesterday; while "battles and banners have passed below," and have been all swept away, with the various races of men by whom the country

has in different ages been overrun, and who have left no other trace upon the face of the earth than such as may be detected in living features which still bear the impress, as it were, of the Moorish and Arabic mints. From these mighty hills, plains boundless as the ocean expand below, over which the eye may wander and fancy expatiate till they are peopled with the past; and turbaned hosts, and Moorish camps, and cowed monks, and veiled nuns, seem to rise in shadowy succession on the hour of reverie.

That we know not what a day may bring forth is most strikingly true in camp, where the extreme uncertainty of every thing, even of life itself, gives an interest to its most trivial enjoyments, and makes us grasp at the very shadows of pleasure as they flit past us. At the sound of a wretched violin I have more than once beheld grey-haired veterans start up and foot it around the tent-pole, even upon the battle-eve, as if in the enjoyment of pleasure they were working against time.

Not even "upon 'Change" itself do we meet

with a greater number of Quidnuncs than in camp. “ Pray, have you heard the news, Sir ?” “ No ; what are they ?” “ Why, there is to be a fight,—that you may rely upon as a fact. I had it from my friend, Captain B—— of the —— regiment, who had it from an intimate acquaintance, who had it from an officer of the Guards, who had it from an aide-de-camp ; and that, you know, is good authority. The right of the enemy is to be attacked and turned, and then our division is to storm their left. A devil of a position it is, no doubt ; but never mind that, sudden death or glorious victory,—noble alternatives ! They that survive will be lucky dogs,—all captains to a dead certainty. Egad, though, but there will be some wigs on the green !”

Such is the consolatory strain in which a battle is talked of and its effects anticipated in camp. There is nothing, however, but disappointments in this wicked world. The right wing of the enemy is indeed attacked and turned, but this very circumstance deprives us of the pleasure of

storming their left, for upon approaching the formidable position we find it evacuated ; so there is no help for this misfortune but to push on in pursuit of the fugitives, who have doubtless got the start of us a long way ; and thus our promotion to the rank of captains is postponed *sine die*.

Darkness has for some time given place to the grey twilight of the morning, and now the sun, circling upwards from the sea, has touched the mountain-tops with fire, and kindled all the woods. He salutes us through the green foliage, whose dewdrops sprinkled over us shed freshness and balm upon the fevered brow. Sweet is the breeze of the morning,—the breath of nature,—although on the line of march the fumes of a cigar will occasionally mingle with its flower-scented gale.

Meantime detachments of light cavalry and flying artillery push past us ; and about noon the sound of firing is heard towards the front, announcing that our advanced posts have come up with the enemy ; and in an hour or two we

meet some of the cavalry on their return, escorting from the front the prisoners they have taken in the various charges upon the enemy's rear-guard; and, shortly afterwards, straggling parties of soldiers carrying back their wounded comrades. It must be owned that the sight of so many brave fellows who passed us an hour before in high health and spirits, flushed with hope, and full of gay anticipations, now borne back wounded and disabled, pale as ashes, and covered with blood and dust, is but little encouraging to those who are hastening on to the scene of action. But our bands of music strike up some spirit-stirring old march, to beguile the road, and all unpleasant thoughts are forgotten.

How delightful it is, while threading the mazes of the woods, or wending round some vine-clad hill, to hear the inspiring strains of our country ascending in the air, and mingling with the melodies of the morning in a foreign land!

Occasionally, too, at a turn of the road, some quiet village will rise upon the view through its sheltering trees, reminding us of our own happy

homes, unpolluted by the foot of a foreign foe, while its church-spire points from this vain and troubled world to the better land above; and, even amid the excitement of the march and the distant din of war, the faint and far-off sound of its bell, floating over orchard and wood, wafts to the heart a gleam of peace and home, and Sabbath hours,—and a chastening thought of Time and Eternity.

At length we reach the village, whose inhabitants are all on the tip-toe of curiosity to behold us, and do not seem very much alarmed at our approach.

Upon entering the streets, innumerable black eyes and half-seen faces peep out at the windows, and by and by the doors open, and the streets are thronged with spectators,—old men, women, and children. Some of the soldiers *en passant* take the liberty of stepping into the houses,—lighting their cigars,—complimenting the girls,—and making by the way some little inquiries respecting provisions, of which they are informed there is a great scarcity, the enemy having pass-

ed through the place during the night, and carried off whatever they could find.

Leaving the village, we proceed upon our route, and cast many a longing look upon the fresh green fields and shady trees extending on each side of the dry and sultry road over which the line of march must pass. At length the bugle sounds a halt, and the troops pile their arms in the fields, and relieve themselves from the galling load with which their backs are encumbered. Such pauses on the march frequently afford us opportunities of taking a leisurely survey of our commanders,—men whose names have filled the world, which will shine along the page of history, and go down with the stream of time to far futurity.

On such an occasion it was that I first beheld General Picton. I was much struck with his appearance ; his countenance was very swarthy, and had an intensity of expression which I shall never forget. He stood in a lounging attitude on the field where we reposed, and surveyed the troops with a look of grim delight. His dark visage brightening beneath a smile resembled a

sun-touched thunder-cloud, with whose terrific attributes my imagination invested this presiding genius of battle.

A long march still remains before us,—the bugle sounds the advance,—the troops stand to their arms, and again move on with renovated vigour and spirit; and the day and the journey are generally concluded together; then are the foraging parties paraded and marched off, and the tents (if they have arrived) are pitched.

A piece of wretched lean beef, boiled to rags among a mess of rice and water, forms the standing dish of the campaigner. But what have we got to-night? As I live, a fine fat fowl, like a floating island among an ocean of soup, thickened with a variety of roots and vegetables. How, in the name of the marvellous, came they here?

Gentle reader, do not suppose that such a question was ever asked, except in the way of mental soliloquy, at a camp-dinner. How should they come but in the manner that promotion often does in the army, viz., by purchase? Surely no

one would be so uncharitable as to suppose they were procured by any improper means ; more especially as the law against plunder is so very severe.

So perfectly satisfied indeed are our simple and unsuspecting minds upon all such occasions, that we have not the slightest curiosity to know, and ask no impertinent questions about the matter ; and, except expressing our approbation of our servants for their skill in preparing soup, it does not appear, from any thing said by us, that we are even conscious of a change of diet.

Although soldiers in general, if not labouring under severe privations, are disposed to be contented, and, if at all comfortable, even gay and happy, yet the camp, like other scenes of life, has its grumblers,—men dissatisfied with every thing and every body around them,—yea, even with the very order of nature. I believe, however, that they form no exception to the general felicity of the scene, but are happy too in their own way,—have a heartfelt pleasure in venting their spleen, and feel, by comfortable expe-

rience, that grumbling, like virtue, is its own reward.

To reason with such persons would be a mere waste of time ; but while pouring out the vials of their wrath, and storming the gentle ear of some experienced campaigner with their vain complaints, I have frequently known the torrent of their eloquence suddenly and effectually stopped by the old stager's whiff of cigar, accompanied by this cool and very pertinent question, " Why did ye list ?" There are many occasions, however, on which we are all grumblers, for the life of a soldier in the field teems with annoyances.

Of commonplace and every-day ones take the following specimens ; viz.

The overturning of a kettle of soup and beef by an awkward servant at the eventful moment the precious viands are ready to be served up to some half-dozen of famished subalterns, who, by this irretrievable misfortune, are plunged into the depth of despair.

The loss of shoes upon the march, they having become so tired of the service as to take leave of

you upon the road ; and this, coupled with the information you receive upon arriving at the long-looked-for village, (where you fondly hoped to repair your loss,) that all the disposable boots and shoes of the place have been carried off by the enemy during their retreat on the preceding night.

The absence of your pony at the very moment when he should be present, *videlicet*, when an order for marching has arrived ; in which case you bid an eternal adieu to your baggage, and take a long farewell of cleanliness and comfort.

Or said pony alarming you during the night, by floundering among the cords of your tent, and plunging upon the canvass, thereby bringing down your house about your ears, and falling over you along with it, while you, writhing in agony below, are almost crushed to death by this worst species of the nightmare ; or, lastly,

The said tent, during a dreadful night of wind and rain, being blown down, and, in order to avoid suffocation, you are obliged to crawl out

from beneath it in a state of nudity, shivering in the blast, and to grope your way through mire and dirt to the nearest canvass-habitation, and crave permission to enter and cover your nakedness beneath its canopy during the night.

Having gone through these preliminaries of the campaign, we at last come up with the foe, whom we find occupying a strong position; and dispositions being made for an attack on the morrow, we are marched to our ground on the eve of battle.

The eve of battle!—what solemn recollections do the words awake, while memory wafts me back to that most eventful scene, as I once beheld it on a distant land!

Again I seem to sit in the shadow of the twilight-hour betwixt the mountains and the sea, and near the lonesome wood, where the minstrel of the night plains to the sky, and faintly glimmer through the grove the lights of a distant town,—while around me, and pavilioned in their pale tents, are the warring hosts of banded nations.

Slowly the twilight melts into the soft blue of an autumnal night, through whose starry stillness the low sweet harmonies of nature murmur on the ear ; but at times the shrill neigh of the war-horse startles the drowsy calm, and floats from the foemen's hosts a deep but indistinct and fitful hum, like the mutterings of distant and dying thunder ; and through the dim azure of the night, upon an opposite ridge of heights betwixt me and the sky, I can distinguish the dark undefined masses of hostile columns moving to their ground, slow and silent as the march of solemn pageantries in funereal pomp and ghostly gloom.

At length the night wanes away, and the dawn is announced by some sudden shots fired at the outposts ; these are followed up by rapid discharges of musketry, which soon increase into volleys, and at length thicken into a continuous peal ; then comes the deep and heavy boom of the " random gun,"—then the roll of artillery, at first fitful and far away, but soon deepening from flank to centre into one wild roar along the whole lines ; then the rush of columns and the thun-

der-shock of cavalry, with bayonets glancing, plumes bounding, and trumpets braying through the dun sulphureous billows of the war, proclaim the hour and power of darkness.

I will not attempt to paint the after-scenes when the strife is o'er, but confine myself to one single instance of the miseries of war which I once witnessed on the field of battle.

At the conclusion of the peninsular campaign, when the French army occupied an intrenched camp before Bayonne, their outposts were attacked by the British troops under the command of Sir John Hope.

The light companies were brigaded together, and sent out in front to feel their way through the woods, and to clear them of the enemy.

The skirmishing was hot, and continued during the greater part of the day; for the enemy sheltered themselves behind the farm-houses, and among the orchards and hedges, disputing every inch of ground.

The light company to which I was attached had just dislodged a party of them from their

cover after a sharp fire, and we were crossing the fields in close pursuit, when we heard the moaning of a wounded soldier who was lying in our path. Upon seeing us passing, he cried out, "Oh, comrades, stop for one moment and shoot me, for I am in torment!" A sergeant went up to him, and tried in every way he could to alleviate his suffering, but all in vain; he seemed wild with agony, and called out more vehemently than ever,—“ Will none of you take pity upon me? Oh shoot me, shoot me! for God's sake send a ball through my head or my heart!” As we could not comply with the prayer of the dying man, nor give him any relief, his cries of agony became so heart-rending, that the very soldiers, accustomed to sights of horror and death, could not stand it; and when the bugles sounded the advance, their rush towards the front seemed less a pursuit of the enemy than a flight from the wretched man, whose delirious shrieks came after us through the woods, and will haunt my ear as long as I live.

The path of war, too, may be traced, by its

“ blight and blackening,” over wrecks and graves, and trampled fields, and deserted halls.

A scene of the last-mentioned description rises even now to the eye of memory fresh and vivid as a thing of yesterday.

From an encampment which we occupied in the north of Spain, I one evening made an excursion to the rear, and, leaving the main road, struck across the groves and orchards which stretched away over the face of that wildly-beautiful country, when I came suddenly upon a small chateau which stood in the gloom of recent dilapidation. It was situated in the bosom of a soft green recess formed by the almost circling hills, and by which it was nearly shut out from the world. In one direction alone the view extended to the horizon, where the eye, following the bend of a long-withdrawing vale, caught a distant gleam of the sea. The higher grounds were overhung with woods, and the air was sweetened with the perfume of orange-trees. The solitude was unbroken by any other human habitation, and the silence undisturbed by ruder sound than that of

a stream winding towards the sea ; but the sacredness of this scene of seclusion and peace was no protection against the invaders of the Peninsula. A marauding party of these miscreants entered the house, and by them the unoffending inmates, consisting of an old gentleman, his wife, daughter, and servant, were massacred in cool blood !

I entered the desolate abode, and the echo of my footsteps through the empty halls sounded like a knell. Every thing of the least value had been broken or carried away by the destroyers, except a miniature portrait of the young lady, which was left hanging on the walls of one of the apartments.

Judging from the picture, I should suppose her to have been about the age of eighteen ;—her pale and pensive features were finely contrasted with the large dark eye of Spain, beaming with soul and that intensity of expression more exclusively belonging to the natives of glowing climes.

From the deserted house I wandered forth into the garden, and, seating myself in an arbour by

the " graves of a household," began to muse upon the scene around me.

The setting sun was blazing over the sea, and pouring a flood of golden light upon the garden, which was saddening in the very smiles of heaven, and silent, save that a sound of gushing waters from their marble fount lulled the ear, and now and then the fitful carol of a bird would break from among the boughs.

Ungentle hands had passed over that fairy scene, and weeds were mingling with its flowers. The clock had long ceased to " repeat its hours," but the shadow on the dial-stone, like the slow-moving finger of Time, was pointing to Eternity, and giving its warning to the winds, mournful to imagination as a voice crying in the wilderness and none to hear !

The image of the fair girl too, whose portrait I had seen, rose up before me, haunting the bowers, and lending to the scene a sadness derived from the most melancholy associations.

Some months afterwards accident gave me an opportunity of revisiting the deserted chateau ;

but it then wore a very different aspect, having passed into the possession of another family. Its dilapidations were repaired, its garden was again in bloom, and every thing around it looked gay and flourishing.

Yet I own the change did not please me. I loved it better in its day of desolation, and sighed to think how soon every trace of human suffering had been obliterated, and how quickly the memory of man passeth away for ever !

THE BIVOUACK.

THE BIVOUACK.

“ Our bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lower'd,
And the sentinel-stars set their watch in the sky.”

CAMPBELL.

“ **THANK God !**” exclaimed Captain Howard, when at the close of a long day's march our corps received orders to halt. The words were echoed by Lieutenant Douglas and myself; for we were much fatigued, and had tasted nothing since the morning. The period of which I speak was shortly after the battle of Waterloo, and we were then on full march to Paris. We had got the start of our baggage so far that there was no hope of its overtaking us that night; but, as the weather was extremely fine, the pros-

pect of a bivouack was rather pleasant than otherwise.

We halted on the skirts of a forest, where the sound of the bill-hook soon announced that the hewers of wood were at work ; and in a short time afterwards innumerable little sparks began to spring up through the camp, like glow-worm lights, then broke forth into blazing fires, which were speedily crowned with camp-kettles, and the operations of cooking commenced with a zeal, activity, and earnestness, unknown to civilized life at home.

Notwithstanding the many hardships and privations incident to the camp, there is a charm about it which more than compensates for these, and a romance rather to be felt than defined. To see large bodies of men without any fixed habitation, and with no covering but the sky, sitting beneath the stars of night, grouped around their forest-fires, and “telling old tales beneath a tree,” reminds us of the wild freedom of the patriarchal state, and the picturesque modes of life which we associate with antediluvian times and

oriental lands. We seated ourselves on the ground, and despatched our dinner, or rather supper, by the light of a blazing fire which our servants had kindled for us, and began to drown our cares in some light but exhilarating country wines with which our canteens were pretty well supplied.

The fatigues of the day soon passed away from us, as they seemed also to have done from those around us; which appeared from their frequent and careless laugh, as they sat around their little fires, with their arms piled beside them. As our party consisted of three, a number alike confidential and conversational, we felt no inclination to sleep; and general and commonplace topics being discussed, the conversation became of a more particular and personal nature, and began to take a retrospective cast. Then came reminiscences of strange adventures which had happened to ourselves, or which we had heard related by others. This vein is infectious; and, after I had contributed to the amusement of the night by the narrations of the most striking inci-

dents with which the life of a soldier supplied me, Douglas, the earlier part of whose life had been passed at sea, began as follows :—

“ I shall not trouble you with the monotonous variety, if I may so express myself, of a sea-life, with its storms, and calms, and shipwrecks, &c. but shall merely relate to you two scenes which I witnessed on the deep, the impressions of which no time or circumstances will ever erase from my mind.

“ In returning home from a voyage to the polar seas, our ship was in danger of being shut up among the ice, or crushed by its large masses floating around us. Our escape, I think, was owing to a smart gale of wind, which, springing up in the right quarter, enabled us to thread our way through the dreary labyrinths of icebergs, and to gain the open sea, when suddenly a large ship hove in sight from among the ice, from the perils of which she seemed, like ourselves, to have just escaped.

“ The sight of a vessel in such circumstances is always hailed with delight, as it takes away, in

part at least, that load of loneliness from the heart produced by a long voyage, for there is nothing so lonely as the sea. The desert hath its green spot and its solitary palm ; but on the blue and boundless ocean there is no fixed object on which the eye can rest, or the spirit repose, but an endless undulating plain, without rock or hill, or tower or tree, to break its solitude or to brighten its desolation.

“ In hopes of having her company on the homeward voyage, we bore away towards the vessel, and came up with her in a few hours, but were much surprised at not seeing any of her crew upon deck, except the man at the helm. It seemed as if, overcome with their toils and struggles among the ice, they had all gone to sleep. Upon approaching nearer we hailed her repeatedly, but none replied, not even the steersman, who was lashed to his post ; and it was not until we came close alongside that we beheld the fearful phenomenon of a ship under full sail without a crew, and with a dead man at the helm. He seemed to have been frozen to death, and

glued to his post ; but the fate of the crew was veiled in the shadow of mystery, over which conjecture hovered in vain. It was among the secrets of the great deep, not to be revealed until time and tide shall cease to flow, and until the sea give up its dead !

“ The other event to which I alluded took place while I was on a homeward voyage from the West Indies. We sailed from Kingston in company with another vessel bound for Liverpool, and for several days kept close together. We were proceeding on our voyage with a fair and moderate breeze, which, however, gradually began to increase, and towards evening blew a heavy gale. The sea was running very high, and the other vessel might be two or three miles ahead, but we still had glimpses of her amidst the waves, as she bounded away into darkness, which at length concealed her from our view.

“ About the middle-watch of the night, a light suddenly sprang up upon the sea, some miles ahead, which every moment became larger and more vivid, and at length burst forth into vast

and sheeted flames, by which we discovered the form of the ill-fated ship enveloped in the devouring element. We crowded all sail, in order to come up with her, and, if possible, to save her crew, thus hanging betwixt fire and flood. Meantime the flames ascended along the mast, and, quickly extending to the sails, showed her scudding before the wind on wings of fire. We had now come so near that we could discover the forms of her crew, hurrying to and fro in distraction, and flitting like spectres amid the wild and blood-red gleams, when all at once, with a tremendous explosion, and a flash that made the whole horizon leap into light, she shot up through the sky, in a tree of fire, whose branches spread over the heavens, and whose burning leaves were strewed over the stars, from which they gradually melted away in a fiery shower, leaving us in tenfold darkness. For some moments I stood spellbound in silent horror, musing upon the fearful sight I had just beheld,—a fragment of the world of life, a crowd of human beings in one instant scathed into ashes, and scattered on the

winds. Next morning the storm had died away, and the sea had subsided into a calm, but the ship and her crew had passed away like the 'fabric of a vision, and left not a wreck behind.' ”

When Douglas had concluded his description of these scenes of fearful excitement, Captain Howard observed, that the circumstance which had made the deepest and most painful impression upon his mind had not occurred among the “moving accidents by field and flood,” but in the midst of a great and populous city.

“After the short peace of 1814,” continued he, “when the battle of Toulouse had opened a path into France, so long shut against the English, I obtained leave of absence, and returned home by the way of Paris, then the centre of attraction, the theme of tourists, the topic of general conversation, and the wonder of the world. I arrived in the great city, whirled about in its vortex, and mingled with its crowds, who appeared to be eagerly engaged in affairs of moment; all hurrying to and fro with bustling anxiety, indicative of important pursuits. I soon

discovered, however, that all this earnestness of purpose and goading on of hope were exerted in the feverish pursuit of mere bubbles, of pompous trifles, exhibiting a specimen of the practical bathos, 'the furious tame;' making Shakspeare's description of human life more literally true there than elsewhere, as being 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.'

“ Having seen the show, I began to tire of Paris, as of a 'populous solitude,' which disturbed without interesting me. One evening I had sauntered across the Pont-Neuf, and strolled about until I found myself at the Palace of the Luxembourg. I entered its gardens, and continued to perambulate its walks until dusk, when I again passed into the streets, and insensibly wandered into the more ancient parts of the city. While passing along its dark and narrow defiles, I gradually fell into a reverie on the antiquity of the things around me, contrasted with the ever-varying aspects and evanescence of human life. I sighed to think how long these fabrics of clay, frail as they were, had continued to exist after

the hands that reared them had crumbled into dust. I began to reflect how often that part of the city had changed its inhabitants, and from age to age had emptied its short-lived generations into the great receptacle of the grave. This train of thought reminded me of the Catacombs, over part of which I was even then treading; and it immediately occurred to me that I would go and explore their 'long-extended realms and rueful wastes.' Upon arriving at the place of descent, I found several strangers assembled there for the same purpose with myself; and, having procured a guide, and lighted our tapers, we descended into the 'silent city of the dead.' The cold earthy blasts of mortality met us as we entered its dread abodes, and proceeded, by the 'glimmering light,' along the low-browed vaults, which stretched away on every side into the dark and seemingly interminable labyrinths of the grave.

“In a fit of abstraction I insensibly strayed from the party along one of the subterraneous passages, where the bones of the dead are piled

up to the roof in pillars, and stretch along the aisles of this temple of mortality,—pale, glimmering, and ghastly. Absorbed in melancholy reverie, ‘Behold,’ sighed I, as I gazed upon the columns of cross-bones, crowned with skulls, extending in dark and endless vistas through this valley of the shadow of death, ‘the final consummation of human affairs, and all that remains of the once busy and countless generations of a great city, here hushed in eternal silence ! Yet each of these mouldering frame-works piled around me once enclosed within its frail tenement a brain to think and a heart to feel, an eye that beamed with love and that sparkled with joy, and an ear that drank in the harmony of sweet sounds ; but where now are those countless perceptions, and that world of thoughts and feelings ? Have they only passed from the earth, or are they lost for ever ? And do we hope and fear, and toil and sweat, and groan through the weary pilgrimage of life, for no better end at last than to lie down and moulder away into the cold earth, and be as if we had never been ?’

“ While I stood bewildered in these melancholy reflections, the taper suddenly dropt from my hand, and was extinguished, leaving me in utter darkness. Instinctively I uttered a loud shriek, which a moment’s reflection prompted me to repeat, in hopes that it might reach the ears of some of the party from whom I had strayed ; but it called back no reply but the deep and sullen echoes of the tomb ; for my companions had speedily satisfied their curiosity, and had ascended from the vaults.

“ To guard against the possibility of accidents, when a party returns from the Catacombs, they are not allowed to separate until it be ascertained that their number is complete ; and if any are missing, the vaults are immediately searched ; but of this circumstance I was not then aware, and consequently believed that I was lost for ever. A cold perspiration broke over my whole body ; I stood fixed to the spot in a trance of horror and despair. A thousand hideous forms of darkness seemed to flit past me,—the skulls, with their eyeless sockets, seemed to scowl upon

me,—my head became dizzy,—the vaults, with their skeleton pillars, spun round me in the dance of death,—my brain reeled, and I fell against a crashing pile of mortality, where I swooned away.

“ My return to sensibility was accompanied by the usual horrors attendant in such cases upon the struggles of nature ; but just as the lights had ceased to flash in my eyes, and the strange unearthly sounds to ring in my ears, I became conscious of the faint echo of distant voices. A gleam of hope came over me, and, starting to my feet, I uttered a wild cry, which rung like a death-knell through the vaults. Terrified at the sound of my own voice, I listened a moment, and heard my call answered from far away. In a short time the voices became more audible, and faint streaks of light began to stream through the gloom. I had been missed upon the ascent of the party, who had returned in search of me, and by whom I was thus rescued from one of the most horrible situations to which human nature can be exposed.”

When Howard had concluded the narration of his adventure, our watch-fires began to pale in the dawn, and never were the returning light and the fresh breath of the morning more welcome to me, as they chased away the horrors of these wild tales, which pressed like an incubus on my breast.

FRANCESCA ZAMORA.

FRANCESCA ZAMORA.

“ Oh grief, beyond all other griefs, when fate
First leaves the young heart lone and desolate
In the wide world, without that only tie
For which it loved to live, or feared to die.
Lorn as the hung-up lute that ne'er hath spoken
Since the sad day its master-chord was broken.”

MOORE.

It was a joyful day when the division of the army to which I belonged, then encamped in the south of Spain, received orders to strike their tents, and to occupy as winter-quarters the villages in the immediate neighbourhood.

There, for the first time since my arrival in the Peninsula, I was separated from my friend Edwards, with whom I had hitherto shared the same tent, but who now had quarters assigned to him

in the house of an elderly gentleman and his lady, who, having no family of their own, had adopted a niece, bereaved of her parents by death while she was yet too young to feel the loss. She might at that time be about the age of nineteen, and was by far the finest woman I had ever seen, even in her own land of beauty; and few men whose affections were free could have looked upon Francesca Zamora without emotion.

Edwards was a young man of a gay and light-hearted disposition, one of those who can dally with love, and play around its flame without being much scorched; but his attentions to the fair Spaniard were so marked, and such a mutual regard seemed to subsist betwixt them, as in less troubled times would have rendered their union for life a matter of more than mere probability.

But with the first appearance of spring our army took the field in pursuit of the enemy, who commenced their retreat towards the north, and Edwards and I became messmates and sharers of the same tent as formerly.

It was at the close of a long and harassing march that we were joined by an officer who had been left behind in our late quarters for a few days on regimental duty, and by him informed, that, shortly after the departure of the regiment, Francesca Zamora had disappeared from the house of her friends, and that every search after her had proved in vain.

Her loss had excited deep and universal regret, for she was the pride of the village, and the delight of all hearts.

Edwards seemed much affected at the time, and for several days was in low spirits, but afterwards regained his usual gaiety, and seemed to have forgotten the circumstance altogether.

We had nearly concluded a long day's march without getting sight of the enemy, when towards evening, all at once, from a rising ground, we beheld them posted upon a ridge of heights from which they showed no disposition to retire.

Our troops immediately moved on to dislodge them, in the face of a furious cannonade, as well as of a heavy and destructive fire of musketry,

and, after a sharp action, succeeded in driving them from the heights; but, darkness coming on, it was impossible to follow up our advantage, and we contented ourselves with occupying the position from which we had driven them.

Our loss was severe,—and among those who returned not from the strife was Edwards. Yet he had not been seen among the killed or wounded, and there seemed no possibility of his having been taken prisoner by the enemy, as they had not given us an opportunity of coming in close contact with them. In the report of the casualties, therefore, he was returned as missing; and, oh! with what agonies of doubt and sickening suspense is that brief word fraught, as it meets the startled gaze of far-distant friends! What vague and dark conjectures does it call up into the bosom of affection, compared to which certainty of any kind, even of death itself, were a relief!

We bivouacked during the night, which was stormy and dark, save when the moon would break out in momentary gleams through the black

and billowy clouds careering over the sky ; and I sat all alone by a fire which my servant had kindled, musing upon the strange and wild vicissitudes of a soldier's life, and the mysterious disappearance of Edwards, whose absence made a dreary gap in my existence.

The friendships formed in camp, I believe, are few ; for hardships and privations have a tendency to shut up the avenues to the heart against generous and social feelings, and to render it cold and selfish ; yet, if once formed, they seem to be strengthened by such trials, and a community of suffering becomes a bond of union. But of the few friends whom I possessed during the campaign, and with whom I had lived in a state of intimacy almost unknown to social and civilized life, every battle had deprived me of one ; and now I was again alone and a stranger amidst the crowds of a camp, where yet the strong necessity of circumstance compels men to herd together, and to form new intimacies, even with the memory of a lost friend warm at the heart.

It was now verging towards the middle-watch

of the night, when a sudden thought came into my mind, that I would go and search for Edwards upon the field of battle. Who knows (thought I) but he may have escaped notice among the dead, or he may be still alive, but disabled by wounds, and perchance perishing for want of human aid?

The plan was no sooner conceived than I felt an irresistible impulse towards its accomplishment. I therefore hastily drew my cloak around me, and proceeded alone towards the contested ground, which lay at no great distance in our rear.

In a melancholy mood I approached its precincts, which were skirted by a lonesome wood, and had no sooner entered the "valley of death" than I stumbled over a dead body.

I sprang up with a feeling of horror, and at that moment a sudden stream of moonlight falling on the pale face and lifeless form before me, revealed to my shuddering recognition an officer whom I had known in England, and had frequently seen at the banquet and the ball the gayest of the gay; and now, oh what a dreary meet-

ing, at the dead of night, and on the field of battle, to jostle with his corpse !

I passed over the ground with more slow and cautious steps ; but had not proceeded far, when I was startled by the sound of footsteps, and, upon directing my attention towards the place whence it proceeded, could distinguish a tall figure muffled up in a Spanish cloak approaching through the gloom.

“ Who goes there ? ” I exclaimed, (as is the soldier’s wont in cases of danger or of doubt ;) but receiving no answer, and observing that the unknown stood still, I again called out, “ Who are you, and with what intent do you roam among the dead at the midnight hour ? Speak instantly, or I shall hold you as a plunderer, and treat you as a foe.”

Upon hearing these words the stranger slunk back into the wood, which confirmed my suspicions, that he was one of those marauders who follow in the wake of an army, and come forth with stealthy steps, in the shadow of the night, to plunder the dead and to despatch the wounded, in order to obtain their clothes and money.

Ruthless hands had already been busy at their sacrilegious work on the battle-field; for, amidst the fitful gleams shot from the moon, as her waning crescent sailed through the storm, I had frequent glimpses of the naked and outraged dead, lying in their gory wounds, with their pale ghastly faces turned towards the sky, and glimmering in the cold wan night-beam.

Meantime the storm waxed wilder every moment, and howled and wailed through the wood. There was something fearful in that uproar of nature, contrasted with the dreary silence and peace of death. A feeling of painful solemnity passed over my heart; and, after traversing the field without making any discovery respecting Edwards, I retraced my steps and returned to the camp.

The operations of the campaign which succeeded I pass over, as not being relevant to my narrative. But about a month after this affair with the enemy, while reposing in my tent during the heat of noon, I was startled by the apparition (for such for a moment I conceived it to be) of my lost friend.

Yes; Edwards it was who stood before me, though much changed and emaciated; but, overcome with amazement, I gazed upon him without the power of utterance. "Why don't you speak?" were his first words;—"ghosts, you know, must be questioned ere they break silence; however, on account of our long intimacy, for this once I dispense with this condition of their nature." As soon as I had recovered from the shock produced by the presence of one whom I had long numbered with the dead, I made him give me an account of his mysterious disappearance and unexpected return. It was to the following effect:—

About the middle of the action, mentioned in the foregoing pages, Edwards received a severe wound, by which he was so disabled as to be unable to move from the spot where he had fallen, surrounded by the dying and the dead. In this helpless situation he remained unnoticed until the fall of night, when his wounds became stiff and agonizing, and at last nature was so far overpowered with suffering, that he sunk into a slum-

ber, which would have ended in the sleep of death, had he not been roused from it, by feeling his temples chafed, and his head gently raised from the ground. Slowly and heavily he raised his eyes, and a burst of moonlight breaking through the gloom, showed him the pale face of Francesca Zamora bending over him, as she supported his head upon her bosom.

As soon as he showed symptoms of returning life and consciousness, she beckoned to a female attendant in waiting, who immediately approached, and by their joint-exertions Edwards was removed to a solitary and deserted cottage at some distance, where medical assistance was procured, and his wounds were dressed by the surgeon of a village a few miles in rear of the scene of action.

Thus it was, that, under the influence of a romantic passion, and perhaps a presentiment that she might be the preserver of its object, Francesca had quitted her kindred and her home,—had sacrificed the approval of her friends, and, more than all, had risked her reputation,—and with a female domestic had contrived, by means only

known to themselves, to track the movements of the army undiscovered and unsuspected, and at length, on a night of storm, and a field of death, to snatch from the brink of the grave the object of her first affection.

Alas that a love so rare and so devoted as hers should ever meet with so sad a fate!—that after saving him from death, and tending him in sickness, till her fair young face faded with watching his fevered slumbers, which was done with a patience that ceased not from its labour of love until he was once more restored to a state of convalescence,—that after these, and all her other sacrifices and sufferings, she should have to learn, ere he departed for the army, that he was already betrothed to a lady in his own land!

Edwards was not wanting in gratitude; he poured out his heart before her at parting, calling her his preserver and dearest friend, but said that a gulf of fate was fixed between them, and that she herself must cease to regard him, were he base enough to break his vows; he, however, expressed his hope that she would still think of him as a friend

who was indebted to her for life, and who would cherish her memory till his latest breath ; finally, he obtained from the unfortunate girl a promise that she would again return to her friends.

Shortly after the return of Edwards I was appointed to take charge of an escort about to proceed to Lisbon with a party of our sick and wounded men ; and as our route lay through that part of the country which we had occupied as winter-quarters, Edwards requested that I would make particular inquiries respecting his deliverer, as he felt he could not be happy until he had heard of her safe arrival at her native village.

At an early hour in the morning I marched off with my party, and bade adieu to the camp, whose white tents faded away into the horizon like the dying gleam of distant sails.

I proceeded with my charge, by slow and easy marches, until we reached our late village-quarters, where, upon inquiry, I learnt, with regret, that Francesca had not returned, nor had ever been heard of since the time of her departure from her inconsolable friends ; and as it was sup-

posed she must have met with some fatal accident, masses had been said for the repose of her soul.

As I had seen and known her in her day of smiles, her romantic and melancholy story made a deep impression upon my mind, and the mystery that now hung over her fate gave rise in my imagination to a thousand vague and dismal conjectures respecting her.

But the beautiful and exciting scenes through which I passed gradually began to efface from my mind these and all other subjects of painful contemplation,—not but that the face of the country tended at times to revive them, for here and there it bore the records of ruin ;—but the healing principle of Nature was busy at the work of renovation, and was spreading a garment of green, a beautiful oblivion over what she could not restore. Young flowers were springing up on the battle-field, making the grave a place of beauty and the nursery of new life ; and the poor peasants, who had been hunted from their hearths into the dens and caves of the wildest sierras, were once more

returning to their homes, and beginning to repair the work of destruction.

I had now been a considerable time upon the march, when, at the close of a long day's journey, we arrived at a village where I found it would be necessary to allow my party a day's rest, as the sick and wounded were beginning to suffer much from fatigue and exposure to the heat of the climate; and on the following evening I sauntered forth to take a survey of the place, which was beautifully situated at the foot of some stupendous mountains.

I had strayed about a mile from the village, when, upon turning the angle of one of the hills, I came suddenly upon a large mansion which stood in the gorge of one of the defiles of the mountains, from whence might be had a glimpse of their mystic recesses, wending away through the shadowy mazes of rock and glen; while, on the other side, a vast range of champaign country, variegated with woods, and waters, and old castles, stretched away to the horizon in one wide gleam of evening glory.

From the appearance of the building before me I supposed it to be a convent, which conjecture was strengthened by the approach of a priest proceeding towards it. As I had ever found the holy fathers to be social and communicative, I accosted him, and began to make inquiries about the large prison-looking abode before us. He informed me that it was not a convent, but an asylum for insanity, containing inmates from many different parts of Spain; and proffered his services to procure me admission, in case I felt any curiosity to visit its cells.

Although the exhibitions of a madhouse are of the most painful description, I felt a strong desire to behold them, even as we feel a fatal impulse to leap from the precipice into the gulf from which the flesh shrinks and recoils. I therefore accepted the offer of my conductor, and proceeded along with him to the asylum, whose massy portals opened at his call, and closed after us with a hoarse and sullen sound.

Upon entering the drear abode, my ears were assailed with strange and discordant sounds, blend-

ing in wild chorus. The voice of laughter, "where laughter is not mirth,"—the groans of despair and shouts of unearthly glee, echoed by the clanking of chains and the sound of the keeper's lash, rung through that hell of human agony, whose dwellers, like the benighted blind, dwelt in darkness at noonday.

There might be seen every species of mental aberration,—madness with its "phantom crown" and fettered hands,—and melancholy,—deep, religious, and hopeless melancholy, struck into despair by the terrors of a world to come, deeming itself already in the place of lost souls, and sitting mute in the blackness of darkness. But who may unveil the visions that beset the maniac's cell,—perchance more wild and incongruous than the horrors that haunt our most fevered dreams! The sights around me soon became so intolerable that I was about to leave the place, when all at once there arose from a neighbouring cell a strain of music, at first low and faint, as a sigh struggling into sound, or such as breaks upon our dreams.

I never heard its like before, and never shall again. If sorrow could mingle with the songs of the blest, I might have deemed it the anthem of a departed spirit; but no, it was a strain of earth, the breathings of a woman's voice and of a broken heart, which longed to be at rest.

I could not intrude upon such sacred sorrow; but when at last the strain died away into silence, I entered the cell, and in its dim light beheld a young female of exquisite symmetry sitting in an attitude of deep dejection, with her brow resting upon her hands. She raised her head at my approach, and in a maze of horror, as if I had beheld a visitant unveiled from the world of spirits, my gaze grew fixed and frozen upon the face of Francesca Zamora!

As soon as the mist had passed from my brain, and the stupor from my heart, I inquired of the keeper what he knew respecting her; but the only information he could give amounted to this, that she had been brought to the neighbouring village by some shepherds, who had found her wandering among the wild recesses of the mountains,

half-famished with hunger ; and as she could give no account of herself whatever, and was evidently labouring under mental derangement, she had been received into the asylum, where she had since remained in the state in which I then beheld her.

I drew near and addressed her by name, and tried, by every means I could devise, to awaken some slumbering recollection, and to strike some chord of her heart ; but all in vain. With a cold vacant gaze she regarded me for a moment, and then bowed down her head as before, and sunk into a profound silence.

I could endure the sight no longer, and quitted the mournful scene. Upon arriving at Lisbon I lost no time in transmitting an account of what I had seen to the friends of Francesca, and to Edwards. But the tale of sorrow never met his ear, for ere my letter had arrived at the British camp he was far beyond the reach of bad news,—he had fallen in battle !

AN ORKNEY WEDDING.

AN ORKNEY WEDDING.

“ To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.”

GOLDSMITH.

GENTLE reader! you, I doubt not, have seen many strange sights, and have passed through a variety of eventful scenes. Perhaps you have visited the Thames Tunnel, and there threaded your way under ground and under water, or you may have witnessed Mr Green's balloon-ascension, and seen him take an airing on horseback among the clouds.

Perhaps, too, you have been an observer of human life in all its varieties and extremes: one night figuring away at Almack's with aristocra-

tic beauty, and the next footing it with a band of gipsies in Epping Forest. But pray tell me, have you ever seen an Orkney Wedding? If not, as I have just received an invitation to one, inclusive of a friend, you shall, if it so please you, accompany me to that scene of rural hospitality.

In conformity with the custom of the country, I have sent off to the young couple a pair of fowls and a leg of mutton, to play their parts upon the festive board; and as every family contributes in like manner, a general pic-nic is formed, which considerably diminishes the expense incident to the occasion; although, as the festivities are frequently kept up for three or four days by a numerous assemblage of rural beauty and fashion, the young people must contrive to live upon love, if they can, during the first year of their union, having little else left upon which to subsist, except the fragments of the mighty feast.

Well, then, away we go, and about noon approach the scene of festivity,—a country-seat built in the cottage style, thatched with straw,

and flanked with a barn and a well-filled corn-yard, enclosed with a turf-dyke.

The wedding company are now seen making their way towards the place of rendezvous; and the young women, arrayed in white robes of emblematic purity, exhibit a most edifying example of economy. With their upper garments carried to a height to which the fashion of short petticoats never reached even at Paris, they trip it away barefooted through the mud, until they reach the banks of a purling stream, about a quarter of a mile distant from the wedding-house. Here their feet, having been previously kissed by the crystal waters, and covered with cotton stockings, which in whiteness would fain vie with the skin they enviously conceal, are inserted into shoes, in whose mirror of glossy black the enamoured youth obtains a peep of his own charms, while stooping down to adjust their ties into a love-knot.

Immediately in front of the outer-door, or principal entrance of the house, and answering the double purpose of shelter and ornament,

stands a broad square pile, composed of the most varied materials, needless to be enumerated, and vulgarly denominated a *midden*, around the base of which some half-dozen of pigs are acting the part of miners, in search of its hidden treasures. It is separated from the house by a sheet of water, tinged with the fairest hues of heaven and earth, viz. blue and green, and over which we pass by a bridge of stepping-stones.

And now, my friend, before entering the house, it may be as well to consider what character you are to personate during the entertainment; for the good people in these islands, like their neighbours of the mainland of Scotland, take that friendly interest in other people's affairs, which the thankless world very unkindly denominates impertinent curiosity.

If I pass you off as a lawyer, you will immediately be overwhelmed with statements of their quarrels and grievances; for they are main fond of law, and will expend the hard-earned savings of years in litigation, although the subject-matter of dispute should happen to be only a goose.

You must not therefore belong to the bar, since, in the present case, consultations would produce no fees.

I think I shall therefore confer upon you the degree of M. D., which will do as well for the occasion as if you had obtained it by purchase at the University of Aberdeen; although I am not sure that it also may not subject you to some trouble in the way of medical advice.

And now having safely passed over the puddle, and tapped gently at the door, our arrival is immediately announced by a grand musical chorus, produced by the barking of curs, the cackling of geese, the quacking of ducks, and the grunting and squeaking of pigs. After this preliminary salutation, we are received by the bridegroom, and ushered, with many kind welcomes, into the principal hall, through a half-open door, at one end of which we are refreshed with a picture of rural felicity, namely, some sleek-looking cows, *ruminating* in philosophical tranquillity on the subject of diet.

In the middle of the hall is a large blazing

turf fire, the smoke of which escapes in part through an aperture in the roof, while the remainder expands in the manner of a pavilion over the heads of the guests.

A door at the other end of the hall opens into the withdrawing-room, the principal furniture of which consists of two large chests filled with oat and barley meal and home-made cheeses, a concealed bed, and a chest of drawers. Both rooms have floors inlaid with earth, and roofs of a dark soot colour, from which drops of a corresponding hue occasionally fall upon the bridal robes of the ladies, with all the fine effect arising from contrast, and ornamental on the principle of the patch upon the cheek of beauty.

Separated from the dwelling-house only by a puddle dotted with stepping-stones stands the barn, which, from its length and breadth, is admirably adapted for the purposes of a ball-room.

Upon entering the withdrawing-room, which the good people with admirable modesty call *the ben*, we take our seats among the elders and chiefs of the people, and drink to the health of

the young couple in a glass of delicious Hollands, which, unlike Macbeth's "Amen," does not stick in our throats, although we are well aware that it never paid duty, but was silyly smuggled over sea in a Dutch lugger, and safely stowed, during some dark night, in the caves of the more remote islands.

The clergyman having now arrived, the company assembled, and the ceremony of marriage being about to take place, the parties to be united walk in, accompanied by the best man and bride's maid,—those important functionaries, whose business it is to pull off the gloves from the right hands of their constituents, as soon as the order is given to "join hands,"—but this they find to be no easy matter, for at that eventful part of the ceremony their efforts are long baffled, owing to the tightness of the gloves. While they are tugging away to no purpose, the bridegroom looks chagrined, and the bride is covered with blushes; and when at last the operation is accomplished, and perseverance crowned with success, the confusion of the scene seems to have infected the

parson, who thus blunders through the ceremony :—

“Bridegroom,” quoth he, “do you take the woman whom you now hold by the hand to be your lawful married *husband*?”

To which interrogation the bridegroom having nodded an affirmative, the parson perceives his mistake, and calls out, “Wife, I mean.” “Wife, I mean,” echoes the bridegroom; and the whole company are in a titter.

But, thank Heaven, the affair is got over at last; and the bride being well saluted, a large rich cake is broken over her head, the fragments of which are the subject of a scramble among the by-standers, by whom they are picked up as precious relics, having power to produce love-dreams.

And now the married pair, followed by the whole company, set off to church, to be *kirked*, as the phrase is. A performer on the violin, not quite a Rossini, heads the procession, and plays a variety of appropriate airs, until he reaches the church-door. As soon as the party have entered and taken their seats, the parish-clerk, in a

truly impressive and orthodox tone of voice, reads a certain portion of Scripture, wherein wives are enjoined to be obedient to their husbands. The service is concluded with a psalm, and the whole party march back, headed as before by the musician.

Upon returning from church the company partake of a cold collation, called the *hansel*, which is distributed to each and all by the bride's mother, who for the time obtains the elegant designation of *hansel-wife*. The refreshments consist of cheese, old and new, cut down in large slices, or rather junks, and placed upon oat and barley cakes,—some of the former being about an inch thick, and called *snoddies*.

These delicate viands are washed down with copious libations of new ale, which is handed about in a large wooden vessel, having three handles, and ycleped a *three-lugged cog*. The ethereal beverage is seasoned with pepper, ginger, and nutmeg, and thickened with eggs and pieces of toasted biscuit.

These preliminaries being concluded, the com-

pany adjourn to the barn, where the music strikes up, and the dancing commences with what is called the *Bride's Reel*; after which, two or three young men take possession of the floor, which they do not resign until they have danced with every woman present; they then give place to others, who pass through the same ordeal, and so on. The dance then becomes more varied and general. Old men and young ones, maids, matrons, and grandmothers, mingle in its mazes. And, oh! what movements are there, what freaks of the "fantastic toe," what goodly figures and glorious gambols in a dance, compared to which waltz is but the shadow of joy, and quadrille the feeble effort of Mirth upon her last legs.

Casting an eye, however, upon the various performers, I cannot but observe that the old people seem to have monopolized all the airs and graces; for while the young maidens slide through the reel in the most quiet and unostentatious way, and then keep bobbing opposite to their partners in all the monotony of the back-step, their more gifted grandmothers figure away in quite another style.

With a length of waist which our modern belles do not wish to possess, and an under-figure which they cannot if they would, even with the aid of pads, but which is nevertheless the true court-shape, rendering the hoop unnecessary, and which is moreover increased by the swinging appendages of huge scarlet pockets, stuffed with bread and cheese, behold them sideling up to their partners in a kind of *echelon* movement, spreading out their petticoats like sails, and then, as if seized with a sudden fit of bashfulness, making a hasty retreat rearwards. Back they go at a round trot; and seldom do they stop until their career of retiring modesty ends in a somerset over the sitters along the sides of the room.

The old men, in like manner, possess similar advantages over the young ones; the latter being sadly inferior to their seniors in address and attitudes. Nor is this much to be wondered at, the young gentlemen having passed most of their summer vacations at Davis's Straits, where their society consisted chiefly of bears; whereas the old ones are men of the world, having in early life

entered the Company's service, (I do not mean that of the East Indies, but of Hudson's Bay,) where their manners must no doubt have been highly polished by their intercourse with the Squaws, and all the beauty and fashion of that interesting country.

Such of them as have sojourned there are called north-westerns, and are distinguished by that modest assurance, and perfect ease and self-possession, only to be acquired by mixing frequently and freely with the best society. Indeed, one would suppose that their manners were formed upon the model of the old French school, and queues are in general use among them; not, however, those of the small pigtail kind, but ones which in shape and size strongly resemble the Bologna sausage.

And now, amidst these ancients, I recognise my old and very worthy friend, Mr James Houston, kirk-officer and sexton of the parish, of whom a few words, perhaps, may not be unacceptable.

His degree of longitude may be about five

feet from the earth, and in latitude he may extend at an average to about three. His countenance, which is swarthy, and fully as broad as it is long, although not altogether the model which an Italian painter would select for his Apollo, would yet be considered handsome among the Esquimaux, or, as James calls them, the *Huskimese*. His hair, which, (notwithstanding an age at which time generally saves us the expense of the powder-tax,) is jet black, is of a length and strength that would not shrink from comparison with that of a horse's tail, and hangs down over his broad shoulders in a fine and generous flow. The coat which he wears upon this as well as upon all other occasions is cut upon the model of the spencer: its colour, a "heavenly blue," varied by numerous dark spots, like clouds upon a summer sky; while his nether bulk is embraced by a pair of tight buck-skin *unmentionables*.

Extending from the bosom down to the knee he wears a leather apron. This part of his dress is never dispensed with, except at church; and

though I have not been able to ascertain its precise purpose with perfect certainty, I am inclined to think it is used as a perpetual pinafore, to preserve his garments from the pollution of soup and grease-drops at table.

The principal materials of his dress are, moreover, prepared for use by his own hands; Mr Houston being at once sole proprietor and operative of a small manufactory, consisting of a single loom; when not employed at which, or in spreading the couch of rest in the church-yard, he enjoys a kind of perpetual "*otium cum dignitate.*"

His chief moveables, in addition to the loom, consist of three Shetland shelties, and a small Orkney plough, by the united aid of which he is enabled to scratch up the surface of a small estate, which supplies him with grain sufficient for home-consumption, but not for exportation.

His peculiar and more shining accomplishments consist in the art of mimicking the dance of every man and woman in the parish, which he does with a curious felicity, and in executing short

pieces of music on that sweetest of lyres, the Jew's harp.

Like most of his profession, he is a humourist ; and though he has long "walked hand-in-hand with death," nobody enjoys life with a keener relish at the festive board or the midnight ball, which he finds delightful relaxations from his *grave* occupations during the day ; and yet even these latter afford him a rare and consolatory joy denied to other men,—I mean that of meeting with his old friends, after they have been long dead, and of welcoming, with a grin of recognition, the skulls of his early associates, as he playfully pats them with his spade, and tosses them up into the light of day.

But it is in his capacity of kirk-officer that Mr Houston appears to the greatest advantage, while ushering the clergyman to the pulpit, and marching before him with an air truly magnificent, and an erectness of carriage somewhat beyond the perpendicular, he performs his important function of opening and shutting the door of the pulpit, and takes his seat under an almost overwhelm-

ing sense of dignity, being for the time a kind of Lord High Constable, with whom is intrusted the execution of the law. And that he does not bear the sword in vain is known to their cost, by all the litigious and church-going dogs of the parish; for no sooner do they begin to growl and tear each other, with loud yells, which they generally do, so as to chime in with the first notes of the first psalm, than, starting up with a long staff,—the awe-inspiring baton of office,—he belabours the yelping curs with such blessed effect as to restore them to a sense of propriety, and prevent them from mingling their unhallowed chorus with that of the melodious quire.

Having given this brief outline of Mr Houston, we shall proceed through the remaining part of the scene. A large and very substantial dinner forms an agreeable variety in the entertainments of the day; and in the evening the scene of elegant conviviality is transferred to the ball-room, where dancing again commences with renovated spirit. The perpetual motion, also, seems at last discovered in that of the *three-*

lugged cog, which circulates unceasing as the sun; like that, diffusing life and gladness in its glowing orbit round the room, and, kissed in its course by so many fair lips, bears off upon its edges much of their balmy dew, affording a double-refined relish to its inspiring draughts.

At length the supper is announced, and a rich repast it is; quarters of mutton, boiled and roasted, flocks of fat hens, in marshalled ranks, flanked with roasted geese, luxuriously swimming in a savoury sea of oiled butter, form the *élite* of the feast; from which all manner of vegetables are entirely excluded, being considered as much too humble for such an occasion.

The company do ample justice to the hospitality of their entertainers; and even the bride, considering the delicacy of her situation, has already exceeded all bounds of moderation. This, however, is entirely owing to her high sense of politeness; for she conceives that it would be rude in her to decline eating as long as she is asked to do so by the various carvers. But now I really begin to be alarmed for her; already

has she despatched six or seven services of animal food, and is even now essaying to disjoint the leg and wing of a goose; but, thank Heaven! in attempting to cut through the bone she has upset her plate, and transferred its contents into her lap; which circumstance, I trust, she will consider a providential warning to eat no more.

And now, before leaving the wedding, we will have a little conversation with some of my country friends, who are fond of chatting with those whom they call *the gentry*; and who, being particularly partial to a pompous phraseology, and addicted to the use of words, of which they either do not understand the meaning at all, or very imperfectly, are almost all of the Malaprop-school, and often quite untranslatable. A fair specimen of their style may be had from my friend Magnus Isbister, who has taken his seat upon my left hand, but at such a distance from the table that his victuals are continually dropping betwixt his plate and his mouth. I will speak to him:—

“ I’m glad to see you here, Magnus; and

looking so well, that I need not inquire after your health."

Magnus. "Why, thanks to the best, Sar, I'm brave an' easy that way; bit sairly hadden doun wi' the Laird, wha's threatenin' to raise my rent, that's ower high already; bit he was aye a *raa-ward* man,—and, between you and me, he's rather greedy."

"That's a hard case, Magnus; you should speak to the factor, and explain your circumstances to him."

Mag. "Oh, Sar, I hae been doin' that already; bit he got into a *sevendable* passion, an' said something about 'his eye and Betty Martin.' I'm sure I ken naething about her; bit ye maun ken he's a *felonious arguer*, an' ower deep for the like o' us puir *infidel bodies*."

"Had you not better sit nearer to the table, Magnus? You are losing your victuals by keeping at such a distance."

Mag. "Na, na, Sar; I dou't ye're mockan' me noo; bit I ken what gude manners is better than to do ony sican a thing."

“Where is your son at present, and what is he doing?”

Mag. “Why, thanks be praised, Sar, he’s doin’ bravely. He follows the *swindling* trade awa’ i’ the South, whare they tell me the great Bishops o’ Lunnan are proclaimin’ war wi’ the Papists.”

“That they are, Magnus, and ever will do.”

Mag. “Can ye tell me, Sar, if it’s true that the King’s intendin’ to part wi’ his ministers? I’m thinkin’ it wad be a’ the better for the like o’ us boons folk, an’ wad free us frae the tithes.”

“You misunderstand the thing, Magnus; the King’s ministers are not those of the church but of the state.”

Mag. “Oh! is that it? weel, I never kent that before. Bit can ye tell me, Sar, wha that gentleman is upon your ither side?”

“He’s a young Englishman, who has come north to see this country.”

Mag. “Is he, indeed, Sar? And, by your leave, what *ack o’ parliament* does he drive?”

“He is, I believe, a doctor of medicine.”

Mag. “Just so, Sar. I wonder if he could tell me what wad be gude for me?”

“I thought you told me you were in good health?”

Mag. “Weel, as I said before, I’m brave an’ easy that way, indeed; but yet I’m whiles fashed wi’ the *rheumaticisms*, an’ sometimes I’m vera *domalis*.”

“Domalis!—what’s that, Magnus?”

Mag. “Weel never might the waur o’ that; I thought ye that’s been at the College wad hae kent that;—domalis is just ‘*flamp*,’ (listless).”

“I would advise you to keep clear of the doctors, Magnus; believe me, you don’t require them at present;—but come, favour me with a toast.”

Mag. (Filling his glass.) “Weel, Sar, I’se do my best to gie you a gude ane; (scratching his head)—Weel, Sar, ‘*Here’s luck*.’”

“An excellent toast, Magnus, which I drink with all my heart; and, in return, ‘Here’s to your health and happiness, and that of the bride and bridegroom, and the rest of this pleasant company, and a good night to you all.’”

THE SECRET OF THE SEA.

THE SECRET OF THE SEA.

“ Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll,
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deeds, nor doth remain
A shadow of man’s ravage save his own,
When for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffin’d, and unknown.”

BYRON.

GREEN and undisturbed for ever be those graves !
was my mental ejaculation as I approached the
burial-ground of an old church upon the seashore,
in Devonshire.

The surrounding grounds had been the frequent scenes of my social and solitary walks during a former visit to that part of the country, when

I resided with the family of my young friend, Herbert Seymour; and now, after a lapse of eighteen months, I was again approaching their hospitable mansion in fulfilment of a promise which I had made of repeating my visit; but, being somewhat fatigued with my journey, and still about two miles distant from the house of my friends, I entered the calm retreat of the dead, and, seating myself upon a grave-stone, began to feel the soothing spirit of the evening hour, and the chastening influence of the scene, stealing over me like the sweetness of a dream.

The western sun was sinking over the sea, which expanded beneath his broad bright orb in a golden calm, and the dewy landscape was blushing in the evening sky. The very graves around me looked warm in the genial glow which lighted, with the hue of the rose, the cold pale trophies of the tomb.

Afar off were heard the hum of living voices, the laugh of children, the bleating of flocks, and the carols of the small birds among the leaves,—while the break of the sea upon the shore filled

the stilly air with pulses of solemn sound, and mingled its deep bass with the great hymn of nature warbled over the grave, where the thousands that lay around me heard it not,—to whom heaven and earth were as a sealed book, and betwixt whom and the light of day a veil had fallen to rest for ever !

“It was on such an eve,” sighed I, “and upon the very spot which I now occupy, that I once lingered with Herbert Seymour, musing upon the surrounding scene,—and nothing but the presence of that friend is now wanting to complete a picture of the past, and to enable me to live over again a day that is gone ; but he has doubtless ere now arrived at his destination in the East Indies, where, perchance at this moment, he may, like myself, be engaged in lonely reveries, and thinking of the friends who are far away,—but the home of his youth is at hand, where I may probably hear something about him.” So, breaking off from my soliloquy, I rose to depart ; but, happening to cast a glance upon the stone on which I had rested, I beheld, with amazement and sor-

row, the letters carved thereon which told me I had been sitting on his grave !

My visit to his friends was of course a melancholy one,—and by them I was informed of the particulars of his death. The events which led to it I shall now proceed to lay before the reader in the order in which they occurred.

During the period of my last visit to Devonshire, I resided, as already stated, with the Seymours, whose cottage was situated at no great distance from Falmouth.

The family were then in reduced circumstances, owing to the unprincipled conduct of a relative whom they had befriended in his difficulties with all the means which they possessed ; so that the only son, Herbert, instead of having the prospect of a comfortable independency, had only a very limited choice of professions allowed him, and, in making that choice, he was influenced by hopes that were destined never to be realized.

Helen Bond was the fair playmate of his infancy, and the mutual affection of their child-

hood had grown with their growth and ripened into love.

Her father had been educated for the church, in which, from the interest of his family, he had the fairest prospects ; but, in consequence of his forming what the world calls an injudicious alliance, or, in other words, marrying for love rather than for money, he was disinherited by his father, a wealthy merchant in London, and abandoned entirely to his own resources.

Thus situated, he accepted of a small curacy in Devonshire, when his young wife, after giving birth to a daughter, expired.

His infant child, Helen, was now his only remaining consolation ; in her he beheld the miniature image of her mother, whose memory every look and smile of the little prattler kept busy at his heart.

To the cultivation of her mind he devoted all his energies, and in the sweet companionship of the daughter, as she bloomed into womanhood, he felt as if the love of his youth was restored again, or at least the best compensation for such

bereavement that can be hoped for on this side of the grave.

In Mr Seymour, too, who resided in the neighbourhood, he found that best of blessings, a friend ; and his Helen a companion of her own age in that gentleman's daughter,—and in his son, Herbert, a warm and devoted lover ; but, owing to family-misfortunes on both sides, their prospect of being united seemed (to say the least of it) a distant one. Helen Bond had nearly completed her seventeenth year, when she was suddenly deprived of her father by death. He was carried off after a short illness, and with his dying breath consigned his orphan daughter to the care of Mr Seymour, until such time as his sister, who was married in India, and who had ever behaved to him with sisterly affection, should be informed of her situation, and give directions respecting her.

It was during the time of my residence in Devonshire that a letter arrived from her aunt in India, directing her to embark for that country with the first eligible opportunity ; and the ship *Indus* having anchored off Falmouth in order to

receive some passengers for the East, she was accompanied by the inmates of Seymour-Cottage to the point of embarkation.

It was on a bright breezy morning in May that we arrived at Falmouth, which, upon that occasion, exhibited a scene of great bustle and confusion.

The shore was crowded with the families who had come to witness the embarkation of their friends, and to bid them a long, or an everlasting, adieu. Youth and age crowded the beach, and accompanied their departing relatives to the extreme verge of the shore, until the waves chafed their feet and chilled them with spray.

The scene was rendered more striking by the contrast arising from the sorrow of severing friends, and the cold unmeaning gaze of the idle and unconcerned spectators.

Then came the wild adieus and audible sobs mingling with the dash of oars and the cries of the seamen, as they pushed off their boats from the shore towards the majestic ship, which sat, queen-like, upon the waters, with the Blue Peter

flying at her mast-head. Suddenly there shot from her side a flash of fire like the levin's bolt from its cloud, and the thunder of the signal-gun summoned the last lagging passengers on board.

Among these was Helen Bond, who was accompanied by her lover to the vessel, where the expression of their feelings at parting must have been much suppressed in consequence of the publicity of the scene.

Slowly the anchor heaved amid the wild chorus of the sailors ; and, trampling the billows with her giant-bulk, the ship swung round, and spread out all her mighty wings for a flight over half the world.

Soon she shot past Pendennis Castle through the foaming sea, careering down the Channel where it opens into the raging gulf of Biscay. And a goodly sight to the unconcerned spectator was the gallant ship, rushing with the swiftness of a racehorse through the deep, and going down along its distant waters ; but a melancholy one to Herbert Seymour, from whom she bore away all

that was dearest in life, and who lingered on the steep, watching her lessening form, until her last speck of sail faded into air.

From that day his views in life were changed, and his whole heart was bent upon obtaining an appointment in India. The studies in which he had hitherto been engaged were abandoned for such as are deemed necessary for the soldier destined for the service of the East ; and his father and family knowing the cause of this, did not attempt, by thwarting his wishes, to destroy his happiness.

After the lapse of more than a year he obtained the appointment which he wished, and was ordered to proceed to India with the first fleet that should sail from London ; but his good fortune seemed to have come too late, and to afford him little or no satisfaction ; for, since the day that the *Indus* had sailed from Falmouth, no account of her had ever come back to the British shores, and the usual period of receiving intelligence from ships arriving in India had long gone by.

The sickness of hope deferred had been busy

in many a bosom besides that of Seymour ; and the feverish anxiety and fears which waste the heart, and wake in the voice of the piping gale and the sounding sea, were now giving way to darker surmises and wilder dreams. Hope had almost ceased to linger, or but

“ The hope that keeps alive despair,”

and the spectre-doubts that haunt the bosom of affection, when the period has past by that should waft home the message of consolation from a distant land, and still the blank day rolls on silent of them we love. They too have had their hour of agony, but that is long past. Yet what an hour it must have been ere they went down into their burial-bed among the waves, and while they yet gazed upon the great gulf that was to hide them for ever,—from whose dark and unfathomed depths no tidings of them would ever reach the shores of the world,—where no tongue would tell their tale, and bear their last farewell to their weeping friends,—no earthly grave grow green above their bones, where love might make a part-

ing pilgrimage and unlock its fount of tears ; but, sinking in the wide, waste, eternal sea, they felt they were about to be hid among its secrets, searchless and sealed up—to go down into its central solitudes with the things before the Flood, never to rise again “ till the Heavens be no more !”

That such had been the fate of the crew and passengers of the Indus seemed next to certain ; but the friends of Herbert Seymour, though they could not give him the consolation of anything like reasonable hope, yet ventured to suggest various causes, by which tidings of them might have been prevented from reaching England, and he still seemed willing to grasp at the very shadows of possibility whereon to rest his hopes.

One day, while the family were engaged in a conversation on this subject, they were interrupted by the arrival of a distant relative, who had come to pay them a visit on his return from sea.

In the course of an eventful life he had commanded several ships in the West-Indian and South-American trade, and had encountered many

of the strange vicissitudes and adventures incident to the life of a sailor ; and it was probably in the hopes of obtaining some account of the Indus, or some suggestion respecting her fate, that young Seymour gradually led the conversation to the subject of his unceasing thought, and at length asked the Captain whether hopes might still be entertained of the safety of a ship which had sailed from Falmouth for India upwards of a year ago, but of which no tidings had ever since been received ?

“ The safety of any ship,” observed the Captain, “ of which no accounts have been heard for such a length of time is much to be doubted. Yet that some of her crew or passengers may still be alive, and be restored to their country, is a possibility of which I myself am a living example ; and my very last voyage furnishes as remarkable an instance, perhaps, as any on record of preservation from death, in one of the most hopeless situations to which a human being can be exposed. I was proceeding,” continued he, “ with favourable weather on a voyage to Rio Ja-

neiro, and might be rather more than half-way across the Atlantic, when a sail hove in sight on the verge of the horizon, and as it rose more distinctly into view, I discovered, by the aid of my glass, a strange and suspicious-looking ship bearing down, and gaining upon us very rapidly.

“ Not liking her appearance, as soon as she approached within call I hailed her over the wave, but was answered by a broadside from her guns, by which several of my crew were killed and wounded. We returned her fire, however, and made the best defence we could, until we had not men enough left to work the guns, when we were boarded and made prisoners.

“ The pirates having lightened our vessel of the most valuable part of her cargo, abandoned her, and carried away the surviving part of her crew. What became of them I never could learn ; but, being enraged at the resistance which I had made, they allotted for me a different fate ; and having lowered me into a small boat without oar or sail, or provisions of any kind whatever, they cut away the rope which held her to the ship's stern,

and, with long and loud cheers of mockery, set me adrift upon the wide ocean.

“ I will not attempt to analyze my sensations at that awful moment,—indeed such a rush of horrors passed over my brain as to leave no one predominant over the rest,—and their overwhelming and distracting influence produced such an undefined and wildering agony as attends the moments of recovery from a swoon,—and it was not until the vessel was at some distance that I distinctly awakened to a sense of my dreadful situation.

“ Even now my ear rings with the peals of fiendish laughter which came after me from the pirate-ship ; and yet, when they died away in the distance, the silence which succeeded was even more dreadful, for it seemed to have closed over the last sound of a human voice that would ever reach my ear. And when the vessel's lessening sail set like an evening cloud over the waters, it seemed as if the last link which connected me with humanity and the world of life was broken for ever ! And my sensations resembled his who, standing on the brink of a precipice, feels the

earth loosening beneath his feet, or the rock or shrub to which he clings, with desperate grasp, slowly giving way, and about to consign him into the frightful abyss, ‘ a thousand fathoms down !’

“ Meantime the breeze which had wafted the ship from my sight gradually died away, and a dead and dreary calm settled wide over the waters.

“ The heavy chill of night came down upon me like death, and, owing to the want of motion, occasioned a general torpor of my frame. I felt a desire to sleep, but obtained only momentary and troubled slumbers.

“ At length the morning dawned again, and the sun, circling upwards from the deep, looked down upon the infinity of sea and the little atom of human misery, the only speck upon its bright and boundless expanse ; but he rose in blood, tinging the clouds with red and storm-presaging streaks.

“ Still, however, the day passed on in a breathless and death-like calm, till towards evening, when the sea began to heave and swell, agitated

like the autumnal wood, that 'shakes without a wind.'

"At last the storm broke forth, not gradually and heralded by the breeze, but in a moment, as if bursting with a crack from the 'cave of its slumbers.' Yet I heeded it not, or rather I hailed it as a messenger from Heaven sent to release me from the pangs of cold, and hunger, and despair, by which I had suffered so much, that the bitterness of death seemed already past.

"Instinctively, however, I clung to my seat in the boat as she bounded over the billows, or plunged headlong into the weltering abyss. Around me were storm and darkness brooding immense over the ocean, whose cold spray, dashing over me, roused me for a time from incipient lethargy,—but nature at length gave way,—I began gradually to sink into a state of torpor, and to feel as if going away into the land of dreams.

"The last sensations of which I have any recollection were of lights flashing around me, and of wild voices rising in chorus with the roaring sea; and my first feeling of returning conscious-

ness was that of wakening as from a fevered dream, and beholding strange faces bending over me in the glare of lamp-light, and in the cabin of a ship, by whose crew I had been observed, and snatched from the devouring deep and restored from insensibility.

“ The vessel in which I now found myself a passenger was bound for the Cape of Good Hope, whither I was carried, and from whence, after waiting for some time, I obtained a passage to England.

“ Thus it is that the deep sometimes restores its wanderers to their native shores after all hopes of them are at an end ; and occasionally, too, it affords some dark hint of the fate of those whom it hides in its grave, the particulars of which are sealed in mystery.

“ As an instance, I may mention that, in our homeward voyage from the Cape, we picked up the fragment of a ship's stern, upon which, with some difficulty, I discovered the name of a vessel in which my brother was a passenger, and spelt, with freezing horror, the word ‘ Indus ! ’ ”

As that fatal name smote his ear, Herbert Seymour gasped for breath, and sunk back into his chair. The fearful certainty which flashed upon his mind soon completed what the long-continued pain of agony, of doubt, and dread, had begun.

He was carried to the bed, which he never left until borne to the grave, followed by his weeping friends and a numerous train of mourners from the surrounding neighbourhood, by whom he was much beloved and regretted.

THE BOROUGH.

THE BOROUGH.

“ They ate and slept, good folks—what then ?
Why then they ate and slept again.”

PRIOR.

IN one of those small towns, situated no matter where, which, by some fortunate circumstance in past times, have been elevated from the rank of village to that of Royal Borough, I passed some of my early years.

The place might be about a mile in length, and consisted of one street, which meandered away through some low grounds, until its progress was somewhat abruptly stopped by the sea.

The houses, which were low, were built with

their gables facing the street, and exhibited many other infallible symptoms of antiquity, both without and within ; but some venerable old ruins, like chroniclers of departed grandeur, gave an interest and an air of solemnity to the Borough.

The streets, which were extremely narrow, sloped down at each side in such wise as to render it expedient for the pedestrian to keep the "crown of the causey." They had no regular pavements, and lucky it was that they had not, for the few flags which here and there lay along the dwellings of the aristocracy seldom failed to resent the insult of being trodden upon, by squirting up a quantity of black venomous-looking matter into the face of the unwary intruder.

This sort of salutation they seemed to have a particular pleasure in bestowing upon such ladies and gentlemen as were proceeding in full decoration to the scenes of "feast and song ;" and many a poor wight to whom Fortune, in her capricious dealings, had assigned only one dress-suit, and that often none of the best, have they sent back, even from the very threshold of the ball-room,

affording a striking proof “that man is born to trouble as the *sparks* fly upwards.”

In walking along the streets the olfactory nerves were continually regaled with the most pungent odours, calling up, by the power of association, images of the most varied kinds. In illustration of this effect, I need only remind my poetical readers of the many sweet recollections of gardens and summer-glories, lapped up, as it were, in the perfume of a rose; and, in like manner, the effluvia arising from the heads of stale fish, (the predominant smell in the streets of the Borough,) presented to the susceptible imagination a vision of its dinner-tables and civic feasts, at which, by the way, fish were never relished until they were in the above-mentioned state.

It must doubtless have been highly gratifying to the stranger who visited the Borough, to find himself, perhaps for the first time in his life, the object of universal interest; and while progressing along the streets, to see doors and windows flying open at his approach, and heads popping

out,—some with their hair in papers, others with no hair at all,—some covered with Welsh wigs, and still more with Kilmarnock nightcaps.

Such marks of attention, however, were only preparatory to others of a more substantial nature; for the inhabitants of the Borough were remarkable for their hospitality to strangers; respecting whom their conjectures were often but too favourable, since it frequently happened that the unknown persons, whom it was their pleasure to entertain and honour with all the attentions due to gentlemen of family and fortune, turned out after all to be mere *canaille*.

Their liability to deceptions of this kind was the more surprising, as they professed to have an intimate acquaintance with high life; and it was a common saying among them, that no person could reside for any length of time in the Borough, even though he were a native of the west end of London, without acquiring a greater elegance of manner and a more polished address.

Family-pride, as it exists in society, seems to involve an absurdity, inasmuch as the honour of

being descended from a great man increases exactly as the degree of consanguinity to him diminishes; for his immediate descendants are as mere upstarts compared to such of his remote posterity as can trace their origin to their great progenitor, back through a period of five hundred years; so that the honour increases with the distance from the fountain thereof. But the pride of ancestry with which the inhabitants of the Borough were infected was more than usually absurd, having no foundation whatever whereon to rest, and, like the world, “hanging upon nothing;” the fathers being of a lower grade in society than the sons, and the grandfathers lower still, until an obscurity, deep as that which involves the origin of nations, in mercy spread out an impenetrable pall.

The magistrates (Heaven bless them if still alive, and rest their souls if dead!) bore a strong family likeness to their brethren in other royal boroughs; having the same corpulence as a corporation, the same sleek solemnity, and the same pomposity arising from “pride of place.”

Methinks, even now, I see the venerable guardians of the city marching in heavy procession to church, heralded by their guard of honour,—the town-officers, arrayed in long light-blue broad-bottomed coats, faced with yellow, and having triangular cocked hats perched upon one side of the head, which gave additional effect to the martial frown with which, in all the “insolence of office,” they strutted along the church-aisle, and finally took post behind the great easy chairs where the civic body reposed during divine service, in all the dozing dignity of lethargy and fat, immediately opposite to the pulpit.

The pulpit was a fine specimen of the antique, illustrative of the taste of the times in which it was made. Carved on its wooden canopy, over the head of the preacher, like so many Cupids, with outspread wings, hovered a whole flock of angels, to whose infantine and chubby faces a chastening solemnity was imparted by the overshadowing dignity of large full-bottomed wigs, such as decorate the Lords of Session while on the bench.

The clergyman was a judicious and benevolent person ; but, not dealing in that terrific sort of eloquence and violent gesticulation which, with certain classes, have ever been considered the tests of orthodoxy, was rather undervalued by some of his flock, one of whom, a member of the kirk-session, gave him the definition of a good preacher, in the following panegyric on his predecessor :—

“ Ah, Sir !” exclaimed the elder, in the tone of pathetic recollection, “ our late minister was the man ! He was the poorfu’ preacher ; for i’ the short time he delivered the Word amang us, he knocked three pulpits to pieces, and dang the guts out o’ five Bibles !”

The magistrates, however, were well enough satisfied with their pastor, the quiet tenor of whose discourses did not disturb their Sabbath slumbers. They were, indeed, a wise and philosophic body of men, who showed by their practice, if they did not avow it in words, their belief that eating, drinking, and sleeping, comprehended the whole duty of man, and the great business

of life, of which they were at once the means and the end,—an opinion, the blessed effects of which were visible in the florid cheek, and the full, fixed, and satisfied eye, which have ever distinguished the philosophers of this persuasion.

The only public amusements of the Borough were its assemblies, where youth indulged in the folly of dancing, and old age in that of cards; and where the *great men* of the place would occasionally honour the company, and create a delightful surprise, by popping in about the eleventh hour, in top-boots and scarlet vests, and lead to the head of the country-dance the blushing modesty of seventeen, almost overpowered by the honour conferred.

But it most frequently happened that the dance was opened by some lady of ton, who had lately returned from Edinburgh, and whose very soul sickened at the old hackneyed figures, and delighted and luxuriated in those of whose complicated evolutions she had acquired a knowledge in the metropolis.

But, alas! we are not all equally gifted,—

“great heights are hazardous for the weak head,”—errors generally ensued among the uninitiated in the newly-imported mystery,—one blunder produced another, till the performers, reeling about, and jostling against each other, were making what billiard-players denominate “the cannon,” and it seemed as “Chaos had come again.”

Hitherto the good people of the Borough had never been molested by a foreign foe, their only wars being *civil* ones ; but at length their latent energies were called into action, by a most alarming and unexpected event.

During a severe snow-storm, a French frigate, having on board a considerable number of troops, was wrecked upon the coast, at no great distance from the Borough ; and there being no military force of any description in the county, the citizens made a general turn-out ; and a stirring sight it was to see them mustering upon the “Broad Street,” in order to be drilled by an old gentleman who, in his hot youth, had served his country at *home*, in a corps of Fencibles, which had marched in triumph from one end of the

kingdom to the other, most gallantly scaling the hills, deploying into the valleys, taking possession of the best quarters in the towns, and carrying female hearts by storm.

Upon this alarming occasion patriotism seemed to have inspired every heart, and all distinctions of rank and wealth were for the time forgotten :

“ Groom stood by noble, squire by knight :”

The highest with the humblest. The young hopeful, the heir-apparent of heather and seaweed, forsook the sport of the hill and the shore, and left the grouse and the wild-duck for nobler game ; the doctor threw his “ physic to the dogs,” and resigned the lancet for the lance ; the lawyer gave up the cause of his clients for that of his country ; for that, too, the shoemaker resigned his *awl* ; and even the tailor, fancying himself a man, instead of a mere fraction thereof, left his *goose* and *cabbage*, and joined the glorious band who had assembled for the defence of their country.

Yet, notwithstanding all this promptitude of

purpose, and chivalrous feeling, the appearance of the recruits would, I fear, have been far more appalling to a drill-sergeant than to an enemy. Drawn up in line—

“ A *horrid* front they form.”

“ Shoulder arms !” exclaimed the Captain, in a voice intended to resemble thunder ; but the execution of the order was anything but simultaneous, and one man, it was observed, was still “ standing at ease.” Upon being challenged by the Captain, and asked why he had not “ shouldered” along with the rest, “ What the deil’s a’ the haste, (quoth he),—canna ye wait till a body tak’ a snuff ?”

This single circumstance will enable the reader to form a tolerably correct estimate of the attainment of the citizens in the art of war.

Fortunately for themselves and their country their services were not required, in consequence of the arrival of a detachment of volunteers from a neighbouring county, which had been sent for on the first alarm, to whom the poor Frenchmen,

already half-dead with cold and hunger, surrendered themselves prisoners at discretion ; and thus the cloud passed away, and the Borough was restored to its usual state of tranquillity.

At the time of which I speak there existed, and, for aught I know to the contrary, there may still exist, a more than usual proportion of elderly unmarried ladies. The cause of this melancholy fact I cannot pretend to explain, for many of them I have heard were great beauties in their youth. Taken as a body they were as free from the peculiarities incident to single-blessedness as any other class of society ; yet true it is, that a few of the sisterhood took such a warm interest in the characters and concerns of their fellow-citizens as had on several occasions well nigh set the town on fire ; and such was their unquenchable hatred of scandal, that they would not for one moment allow it to sleep, or even to die in peace.

At the head of this Suppression-of-vice Society was Miss Tabitha Primrose, a lady of a *certain* age, which, according to Byron, is of all

ages the most *uncertain*. She had long made a dead halt at that of thirty, beyond which stage in the journey of life nothing could induce her to budge a single step.

One of the slowest movements in nature is the approximation of the nose and chin, these neighbours requiring the greater part of a century to effect a meeting, by travelling over the short space which divides them in youth; and in Tabby's case they had gone over fully half the distance, pointing, like the index of a clock, to a pretty late hour,—but all in vain. Suns and seasons might roll away,—moons wax and wane,—sands might run and shadows sail, till dials grew green and tresses gray,—but amidst this moving scene Tabby remained immoveable, in protracted youth, with a bloom of that blessed kind which never fades, and a *wig* that bade defiance to the “snows of time.”

Tabitha had been a great beauty in her youth; the evidence of which (as few people could speak of that period from their own recollection) rested on the best of all authority—her own; but hav-

ing, it seems, had a tendency to corpulency, she had indulged rather too freely in the use of vinegar, to which ought probably to be ascribed a certain expression of sourness about the corners of her mouth, which she still retained.

In common with all other fair ladies, she had been "beseached and besieged" by a host of admirers; but, being remarkably fastidious, and, perhaps, not finding among her swains a perfect Sir Charles Grandison, and, moreover, the age of chivalry being past and gone, when men sighed seven years for a lady's smile, it somehow or other happened that Tabitha was left to

"Waste her sweetness on the desert air."

We have all heard of those wise ancients who wept when a child was born; but Tabby went a step beyond them, and, with a more prophetic philosophy of feeling, actually shed tears whenever she heard of a marriage; and, in the midst of her sorrow and pity for the unhappy bride, thanked Heaven for having preserved herself from such a fate.

She was such a determined enemy to every

kind of youthful levity, that the very frisking of lambs seemed to displease her. Pure as new-fallen snow,—severe as justice,—and unerring as mathematical sequences,—she stood alone,—a woman without a weakness, and a very personification of *prim* propriety.

“But who can stand envy?” or when did ever such superhuman excellence escape the breath of calumny?—against that even Tabitha’s virtue was no protection; and there were not wanting ill-disposed persons who called her severe reprobation of derelictions from virtue downright scandal, and by whom the tears which she shed for young brides were shrewdly suspected to flow from the regret she felt at not being one herself.—But to return.

The evening entertainments were of that kind denominated “Tea and Turn-out,”—a mode of treating one’s friends having the show of hospitality, but denying the power thereof. Tea and Turn-out!—gentle reader, only think of such a hoax,—my blood yet runs cold at the thought—Tea and Turn-out!

Early in the forenoon, a maid-servant, all smiles and roses, would enter and present a gilt-paper card, whereon the eye caught the words " Compliments,—company at tea,—spend the evening," &c.—the last words seeming to insinuate a delicate hint of supper ; but thus it is that our feelings are cruelly sported with, and hopes are excited which are never intended to be realized. In consequence of such *promissory*-notes, how often have I risen from a comfortable fireside at home, have adjourned to a cold room above stairs, and dressed for supper, when, alas ! supper was not *dressed* for me !

The festivities of the evening commenced about six or seven o'clock, according to the rank of our entertainers ; and as it seldom happened that any waiters were in attendance to hand about the tea, an excellent opportunity was afforded to our Lotharios of showing their attention to the ladies in that way ; but in doing the thing with an air, the consequence frequently was, that the fair ones received into their laps instead of their hands the elegant china vases, together with

their scalding contents. Next were presented various kinds of rich sweet-bread, pleasant indeed to the eye, but, upon a nearer acquaintance, betraying an air of antiquity not altogether agreeable.

As soon as the refreshments of the evening were over, the conversation became general, and occasionally *particular*: our absent friends were not forgotten, nor were their most private and delicate concerns overlooked.

About nine o'clock, a general *rising* took place, which, not being resisted on the part of our entertainers, we read our fate in each other's eyes, and made a simultaneous movement towards the door; whence, with ill-suppressed chagrin, we descended into the street, and made the best of our way home.

Such was the nature of our evening pastime in the Borough at the time I first resided there; but, returning after an absence of long years,

“ I looked and saw the face of things quite changed ;”

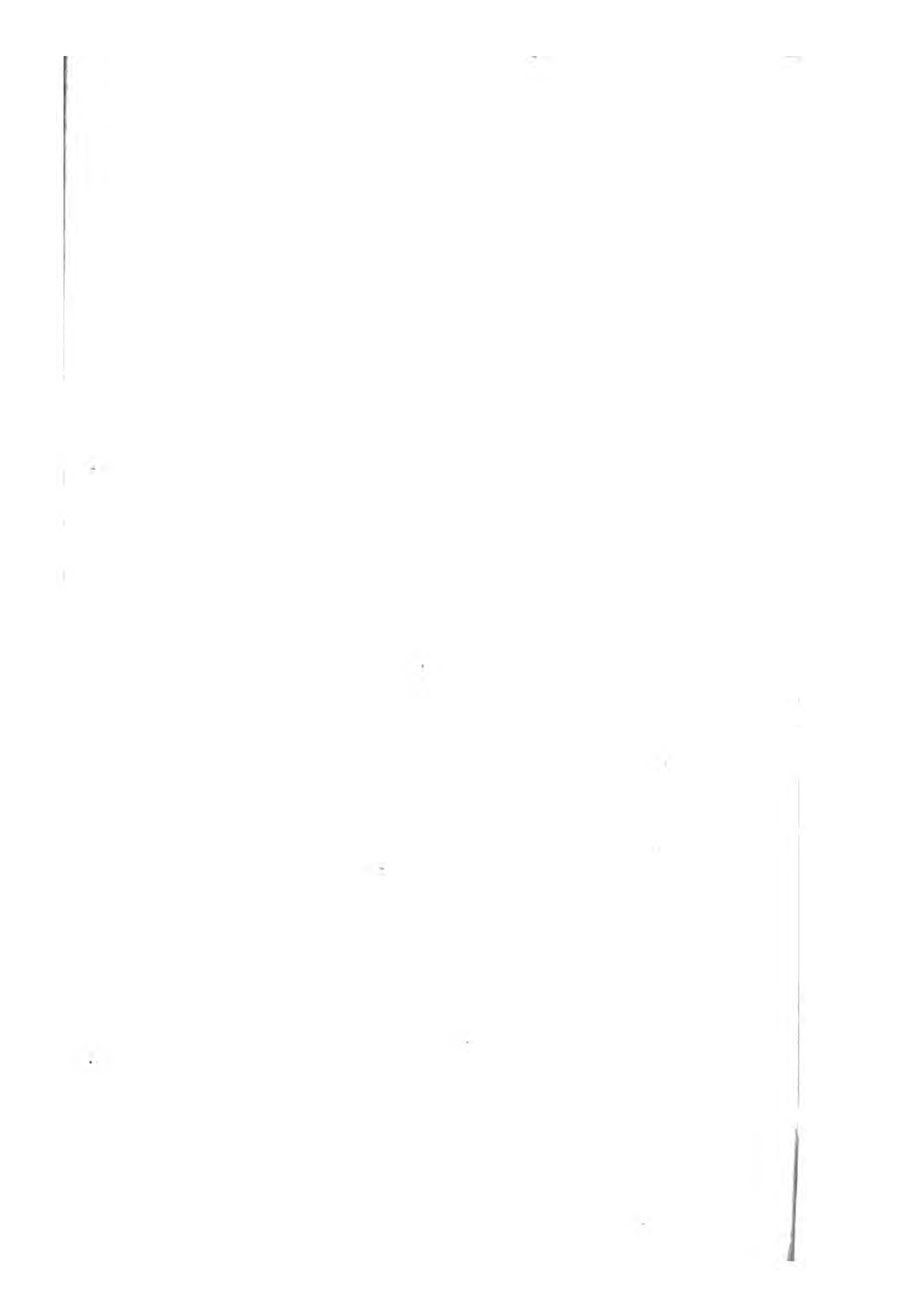
many old friends and old fashions had died, and

among the rest "Tea and Turn-out" had given up the ghost, and better things, of which it was only the type and shadow, reigned in its place. Instead of that meagre mockery, the supper-tables, plethoric even to apoplexy, exhibited in beatific vision such varieties as the following:— A large round of boiled beef, smothered among cabbage, through whose silvery canopy of mist appeared a smoked goose, a large mutton-ham, a roast of pork, a dish of dog-fish, and of Welsh rabbits melted in their own fat. The light meal was diluted by copious draughts of strong home-brewed ale, and the whole etherealized by several large bowls of rum-punch; after which the happy guests retired to rest, to enjoy those pleasant dreams which are the never-failing reward of such good living.

In this way they managed matters at the time of my last visit to the Borough; but, alas! there is nothing permanent on earth except change; for I have lately been informed that "Supper and Turn-in" hath gone the way of "Tea and Turn-out." A great and goodly con-

version hath taken place at their evening parties, where controversial divinity is the standing dish. Mutton-hams, smoked geese, and Welsh rabbits, are superseded by knotty points of faith, still harder of digestion, and punch has given place to prayers.

LONDON.



LONDON.

—————“ The city’s pomp,—
Of life’s extremes the grandeur and the gloom.”

CAMPBELL.

A GREAT city is a scene fraught with themes of deep and solemn reflection, and his must be a cold and superficial mind in which it awakens no deeper emotions than such as arise from mere excitement.

Often as I have visited London I am still as powerfully affected as ever by its strange and ever-moving panorama of human life.

Approaching it from the ocean, in passing up the Thames, its vicinity is made known by the congregated clouds of sails sweeping onwards before the breeze to this vast rendezvous of all

the wanderers of the deep. By and by we are merged into a forest of masts, which every moment becomes denser and darker, as we win our way through its interminable mazes. It seems as if all the ships in the world were assembled there, to form one vast city of the waters; and at length the masts become so crowded, that the eye fails to track them, as they stretch away with the bend of the river into the dun shadowy atmosphere of smoke.

By land our approach to the metropolis is announced by a more crowded population, and a country mottled with seats and villages. These continue to thicken and stretch along the road until the trees and green fields are only seen by glimpses, alternating with brick-walls and rows of cottages which glance past us, as we are whirled along the highway to London. At length the country disappears altogether, the crowds increase, the buildings thicken, and the scene becomes more complicated and wildering every moment, till we find ourselves in the very centre of the city, overtopped by the majestic dome of St Paul's.

From that lofty eminence what a scene expands upon the gaze ! Far as the eye can reach the great Babel spreads out upon every side, seemingly to the horizon, but seen in a dim uncertain light through the haze of its smoke, and thus giving to the imagination the impression of vastness undefined, inconceivable, infinite,—such as arises from a contemplation of the ocean ; like the distant sound of whose many waters seems the ceaseless hum of the multitudes below.

From dawn till darkness the stir and din of the city know no pause. The streets shake and thunder with the clattering of steeds, the crash of waggons, and the rumbling of carriages, careering along in endless succession.

From morn till night the tide of human life flows on,—a mighty and continuous stream, passing from Time to Eternity, ever dropping, as it rolls along, from this anxious and busy scene into the land of forgetfulness. Many of the individuals of which it is composed, arrayed with power and glory, occupying to-day the high places of the earth, to-morrow are “ huddled out

of sight," and in a drear and sable procession figure away from the face of the earth.

Passing along, amidst the vast and unknown crowd, I recognise a face of which even the glance of a moment awakens a world of proud and glorious recollections. Fourteen years have now rolled away since I last beheld it, and then but for an instant, as it shot past me through the blaze of battle, and vanished in its storm; but no one who has once seen can ever forget that of the Duke of Wellington; it is, moreover, but little changed, and still wears the same placid smile and calm dignity which never for a moment forsook it, even in the mortal struggle and earthquake-shock of battle.—But to return.

In the mighty mass of existence around me, how closely and mysteriously hath Nature wove her web of joy and grief, and what a sum of pleasure and pain is mingled in fearful contrast!

Amidst these ever-crowded haunts are blended together the titled heirs of fame and fortune, (whose very menials, in the wantonness of wealth, are clothed in gorgeous apparel, and

fare sumptuously every day,) and, with scarce even rags to cover them, the children of poverty, called into this "world of wailing" to struggle with cold, hunger, and disease. Here, as in the grave, meet and mingle men of all nations, and the extremes of human circumstances. Here life and death revel together,—bridals, births, and burials, and festal and funeral processions jostle in the streets! Here are brief meetings and everlasting farewells! Side by side are the house of mirth and the house of mourning; and were our senses sufficiently acute, amidst the continual hum of life, which seems but one monotony of sound, we should distinguish the varied tones which swell the mighty chorus, should hear at the same moment the shout of laughter blending with the sob of wo, and

"Funeral shrieks with revelry!"

Impressive as is this busy and eventful scene during the day, methinks it seems even more so when Night drops her curtain upon the "stage of men," and tower and temple are pavilioned in darkness.

Awakening on my couch at midnight, even in the very heart of London, all is solitude and silence, save when at intervals the stillness is broken by the drowsy chime of some distant clock, or the call of the watchman, as he paces the lonely and echoing streets, announcing the flight of time, which, whether we sleep or wake, speeds equally away.

Slumbering in the silence and shadow of night, the busy multitudes lie hushed and helpless as cradled infancy, and it seems as if Death had passed an act of oblivion over the great city, and sealed it in that sleep which is only to be broken by the sound of the Last Trumpet :

“ O'er each vain eye Oblivion's pinions wave,
And quenched existence crouches in a grave !”

But the last night-watch is on the wane, and ever and anon is heard the faint and far-off sound of a coach, bearing, perchance, from the protracted debauch some “lagging reveller,” or lost prodigal, to the sleepless pillow and the horrors of solitude.

Darkness at length dissolves into dawn, and the stir and hum of the city, at first low and indistinct, now begin to increase. But, hark! what means yon deep and doleful chime? Oh! I remember now. This is a day of death, and the bell of St Sepulchre is tolling the knell of the wretched criminal about to be hurried into eternity, and with relentless and iron voice is calling him to his doom.

It has now ceased. The pangs of the sufferer are at an end, and the tale of his crime and punishment are about to be added to the records of the day, to be read and forgotten ere the fall of night,—forgotten even by the crowd who witnessed his last agonies, and who now turn from the spectacle of death as from a show, to mingle again in the haunts of vanity and dissipation.

THE PARTING AND RETURN.

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THE PARTING AND RETURN.

“ One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes,
To which life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no balm and affliction no sting.”

MOORE.

PASSING one evening along the piazzas of Covent-Garden theatre I entered the house, and with some difficulty wedged my way into the pit, which, owing to the first appearance of a new play, was more than usually crowded.

Whether the fault was in the piece itself or in the acting I cannot say, but, certain it is, I felt little or no interest in the performance, and began, as is usual in such cases, to look about me,

and to seek amusement in a survey of the company.

While I was busily engaged in scanning the faces around me, I observed that my own was diligently perused by a gentleman dressed in black, who was sitting close beside me. I looked at him in my turn, and felt a dim and confused remembrance of having seen him before.

“ If I am not much mistaken,” said the stranger, “ your name is —— ?”

“ Your acquaintance with my name,” replied I, “ confirms the conjecture that I had begun to form, that yours is not unknown to me, though at this moment I cannot recollect it, or tell when and where I have seen you.”

“ Is it possible,” returned he, “ that a few years passed in India can have wrought such a change, that you cannot recognise your old friend Morris ?”

Morris indeed it was ; and after the first burst of pleasure and surprise at this unexpected meeting was over, we left the theatre, and adjourned to a tavern in the neighbourhood, where we par-

took of a light repast. As soon as the supper-equipage was removed and we were left to ourselves, "I congratulate you," said I, "upon your return to your native country, and almost envy you the feelings arising from it, which I have no doubt more than compensate for the pain of absence and privation ;—indeed the trials of a few years spent abroad are not to be regretted, since they enable us to appreciate and enjoy the comforts and delights of home during the rest of our lives."

"You are mistaken," replied Morris ; "the enviable feelings which you suppose I possess exist but in your own imagination, as they once did by anticipation in mine ; but let not him who has sojourned in a distant land give way to his longings to revisit the scenes of his childhood and retrace the walks of his youth,—let him keep the mountains and the sea betwixt him and his place of birth. Shrined in his heart and glowing with the light of happier days lies that fairy-land of memory ; but to revisit its scenes would be to dash the picture with shade, and to strike out from it

the fair familiar faces that gladden our dreams, or touch them with the dreary traces of time,—let him therefore enjoy the beautiful vision as it exists in memory, but not seek to view the reality with a faded eye and a disenchanted heart.”

“ I am well aware that all our enjoyments come short of our anticipations, yet I fear there must have been some untoward circumstance in your case which has mingled unhappy associations with the scenes which should naturally give rise to the sweetest emotions.”

“ That is too true,” said Morris with a sigh,—
“ there is in my case a circumstance of sorrow that well may cloud the brightest day and the fairest scene ; and though perhaps it is wrong in me to trouble you with a record of my errors and sufferings, yet, since by communication we lighten the burden of our woes, I know you will forgive me.” He then began as follows :—

“ I had nearly completed the course of education which is generally considered sufficient for young men destined to seek their fortune abroad, when, through the interest of an uncle who had

been long resident in India, I was appointed to a cadetship in the Company's service.

“ I left the scene of my studies in order to pay a farewell-visit to my relations in the North Highlands of Scotland, and for that purpose took my seat in the mail-coach, which brought me, at a turn of the road, within a few miles of my birth-place, where I left it, and, striking off from the highway, proceeded on foot towards my native glen.

“ It was Sabbath morning, and as I advanced upon my journey I began to see the ‘ dwellers of the hills’ assembling towards the church, and to hear the chime of its bells. Before the commencement of divine service I also had reached it, and entered in along with the humble friends and companions of my early youth.

“ In a few minutes a middle-aged gentleman walked in, accompanied by his wife and daughter, and seated themselves in a pew almost opposite to the one which I occupied; and by the stir and bustle of curiosity which their entrance excited among the congregation, I guessed that

they were strangers in that part of the country. There was nothing remarkable in the appearance of the gentleman, except an expression of worldly shrewdness, which I felt to be disagreeable ; but his wife had a mild and dignified demeanour, and his daughter was of those who, once seen, are never to be forgotten.

“ She might then have been about the age of seventeen ; but her countenance had more thoughtfulness and feeling than generally belong, or indeed seem natural, to such early years. Her features were not of that regular description with which painters and sculptors body forth their conceptions of perfect beauty, but possessed, in a far greater degree, the power of fascinating the beholder ; for they beamed with that light of the soul which the cunning of the pencil cannot steal ; nor need I regret that it had not the power to fix upon earth the image of that beauty which is now in Heaven, since the picture is better engraven on my heart ; and there, at least, the cheek hath not lost its rose, nor the eye its ray.—But to return.

“ The service of the day commenced, and the sermon seemed to be a farewell-address to men about to leave their country, and to seek a home in some distant land. They were exhorted not to despond because their place of refuge lay beyond the great waters,—they were reminded that God is everywhere present, and would be with them in the wide wilderness as much as in the haunts of men,—that we are at best but strangers and sojourners upon earth, as all our fathers were,—and that, having here no continuing city, we seek one to come.

“ These passages of the sermon seemed to give pain to the strangers ; by which circumstance I conjectured that they were a family which had been expected for some time past in the parish, and that the gentleman was the person who had taken a lease of the surrounding district for the purpose of throwing it into sheep-farms ; in consequence of which so many poor people were about to be turned adrift upon the world, and obliged to seek a home in the wilds of America.

“ When the service was concluded the stran-

gers left the church, and passed hastily through the crowd, who eyed them in sullen silence as they walked along the glen towards a house lately erected by the proprietor of the district for his new tenant, by which circumstance my conjecture respecting them was confirmed.

“ ‘ There they go ! ’ exclaimed an aged woman who had once seen better days,—‘ there they go, but the blessing of the poor goeth not with them ! I had hoped,’ continued she, ‘ to have been allowed to die where I have lived, and to lay me down in peace beside my fathers ; but it may not be,—the stranger hath come and left me neither house nor home ; yet mark my words. Yon blighted tree was once strong and flourishing ; it fed upon destruction, for its stem was in the grave, and was nourished by the tears of the widow and the fatherless ; but the thunder came at last ; it scathed the boughs, and the trunk withered ; and so shall it fare with the despoiler of the poor. The hope of his heart, the child of his love, shall perish,—even yon young maiden, fair a flower though she be as ever gladdened a cot-

tage or graced a court ; but it needs not the vision which is now upon my soul to foretell her doom ; for there is that on her pale and thoughtful face which, to the experienced eye of a mother, who, like me, has seen her own fair daughters drop away, speaks of an early grave !

“ I was much shocked at this speech of the old woman, whose denunciation of death against the young, beautiful, and unoffending girl had something fiendish in it, which curdled my blood, and seemed the curse of the withered heart on which the prophet-spirit had come down before death.

“ I arrived at my destination in the evening. It was the house of a friend with whom my sister resided, who was the nearest living relative I had.

“ We were happy to meet, and had much to ask and communicate. I retired to bed at a late hour ; but the image of the fair stranger whom I had seen at church, and which had engrossed my waking thoughts, came back upon my dreams.

“ I will not dwell upon the minute details of

the progress of my affection for the fair Emma. Suffice it to say, that I soon became acquainted with her family, where I was a frequent visitor ; and my sister being the only young woman of a rank corresponding to her's in that part of the country, they were often together, and I had frequent opportunities of enjoying her society and gaining her affections.

“ From me her young unsophisticated heart received the indelible impression of first love, and I in turn became devoted to her. Our attachment was unsuspected by her parents, and indeed was known to no one but my sister, who, although she disapproved of it as imprudent and likely to end in disappointment, had yet too much sympathy with our happiness to throw any impediment in the way of our meetings, or deprive us of the pleasure which we felt in each other's society.

“ The time at length approached for my departure : we had our last meeting, and at that feast of tears I vowed eternal fidelity, and promised that, as soon as my services abroad should entitle me to leave of absence, I would return, when,

with improved prospects, I might solicit her hand with a reasonable hope of obtaining the consent of her parents.

“ I took my departure with a heavy heart and proceeded to London, where I embarked on board a vessel bound for Calcutta. We dropped down the river on the night, and, having entered the Channel on the following day, bore away in the direction of the Land’s End, and then stood out to sea.

“ The sun was setting in the west, and gilding the green earth, then sinking in the deep ; and, oh ! what a world of slumbering feelings and long-lost memories flashed back upon my heart as I beheld the ‘ land of my birth and of my father’s grave,’ and the scene of my past joys and sorrows, which held all that was dear to me in life, waning over the waters, faint and far away as the phantom-shores of the land of dreams ! I watched it as it lessened along the deep to a dark line,— a speck, that glimmered a while through the mist of tears which obscured my gaze.—I dashed the dew from my eyelids and looked again ; but the

vision was gone,—all gone,—it might be for ever. I shall never see these shores fade again with such a pang, and, strange as it may seem, I grieve thereat. So blessed a thing is youth, that we regret the loss even of its sorrows.

“ After a voyage of the average length we reached our destination, where I was received and welcomed by my uncle in the most flattering manner, and entered with the fairest prospects upon oriental life. Yet still I was a stranger in a distant land, whose modes of life were foreign to my heart,—where day was a season of languid repose, and eve, which at home was sacred to quiet walks and soothing contemplations, was the time of bustle and excitement. Night alone was to me the time of enjoyment ; for it wafted me away into the land of memory, and gave me back in vision the smiles and sweet faces that were far away.

“ Would it had continued ever so ! but by degrees I began to mingle with and at length to relish the society among which my lot was cast.

“ About this time it was my misfortune to be-

come acquainted with a set of young men whose peculiar boast it was to be proof against the fascinations of woman, or, as they expressed it, the cunning of the sex. Love as it is felt in young and innocent hearts was to them the inexhaustible theme of ridicule, and the existence of female virtue they considered entitled to the same degree of credit as that of the Phoenix. While they confined themselves, however, to general and sweeping assertions, their opinions had little or no influence upon me; but when these were backed by a multitude of corroborative facts and particular examples of dereliction from virtue, with which their own evil experience had supplied them, my mind insensibly but strongly imbibed the poison of their principles, of which the baneful effects soon became evident, and I began to repent of my vows to the fond confiding girl who had given me her heart.

“ For a considerable time I had combated opinions which I saw, if generally received, must be utterly subversive of the social charities; but the fiend of suspicion, once fairly roused, could not be

laid, and shook, like an earthquake, the peace of my once unsuspecting heart.

“ Hitherto my correspondence with Emma had been both frequent and regular; but now, although I still duly received her letters, my replies became gradually colder, then less punctual, and at last ceased altogether. She could no longer misunderstand my meaning, and wrote me a last letter, seemingly calm and passionless; for though my apostacy was death to her young heart, yet the dignity and proper pride of a true woman concealed the wound. In that letter she absolved me from my engagement to her, wished me every happiness through life, and bade me an eternal farewell.

“ After our correspondence had finally ceased, I heard nothing of her for a considerable time. At length I received a packet from my sister, who did not seem to be acquainted with what had happened, as her letter did not contain one upbraiding word; yet it was written in a strain which cut me to the heart.

“ It informed me, that, in consequence, she

feared, of some secret sorrow, her amiable friend, Emma, had fallen into bad health and low spirits, ending in a brain-fever, from which her recovery was imperfect,—that her intellects continued in a disordered state, and that she appeared to be rapidly sinking into a decline.

“ It was then for the first time that I felt the pangs of remorse ; and it was by awakened feeling that my reason was enabled to detect the miserable sophistry by which it had been deluded, and to be sensible of the absurdity of forming an estimate of all womankind from the conduct of some of the worst of the sex whom my companions might have known in England or in India, in whose alliances the heart had no share, and with whom wealth, even if coupled with age and disease, was preferred to every thing else. I felt ashamed of myself for having been the dupe of fools, and longed to make reparation to the girl whom I had so deeply wronged, if it might not yet be too late.

“ For this purpose I was just about to apply for leave to return home, when my uncle died,

leaving me sole heir to his fortune, which was considerable. I immediately resigned my situation in India, and embarked in a vessel about to sail for England.

“ Once more did I behold the cliffs of Albion soar like a white wall over the sea ; but they rose upon my gaze with troubled emotions, for my soul was dark, and cast a shadow over every scene. Immediately upon landing I set off for Scotland, and, leaving the coach a few miles from my native spot, took my solitary way towards the glen that sheltered the dwelling of Emma.

“ The scene was still the same as when I last beheld it,—and yet how changed ! The same, for its green hills, ‘ all light and silence,’ towered as heretofore into the sky, and over them the winter-storms of a thousand years had shed their snows, and wrecked their fury in vain,—but changed ; for where the smoke of an hundred hamlets rose curling in the calm, and where the milkmaid’s song was heard at morn and eve mingling with the chorus of the woods,—all was silent, save the whistle of the solitary shep-

herd, or the bleating of his flock on the lonely hill. It was spring-time, moreover, when I last looked upon my native vale, and the flower was in bud, and the woods were green, which had now fallen into the 'yellow leaf.'

“ Upon approaching the dwelling of Emma I became wild with emotion, and a nameless, undefined foreboding of ill,—my heart beat as if it would leap from my breast, and by the time I reached the house I was almost overpowered by my feelings. The door was opened by a female servant; but I had no power of utterance. She desired me, however, to walk into the parlour. I knocked at the door, and a voice, which seemed the faint echo of one I had heard in other days, bade me come in. I entered in a state of breathless agitation, and my startled gaze rested upon the faded form of my first love !

“ She was seated in a window, through which the crimson light of the evening sky shed a dying glow upon her pale cheek, and was gazing on the setting sun and the falling leaf as if reading her own doom in the book of nature.

“ As soon as I regained the power of utterance, I addressed her, I scarce know how, for I was bewildered with sorrow. But she answered me coldly and as a stranger. I then mentioned my name, and asked her if she had forgotten me? She raised her beautiful eyes, and, looking at me with a vague and abstracted gaze, replied, that she thought my name was not new to her, but the recollection of it was like that of a dream : ‘ Indeed,’ continued she, ‘ I have been very unwell, and my memory begins to fail ; but I will call my mother, and she will recollect you at once, for she is not of those who forget their old friends.’

“ I was struck with remorse as I gazed upon the ruin which my folly and wickedness had wrought ; while the kindness with which her unsuspecting mother received and welcomed me back was like coals of fire heaped upon my head.

“ My tale now draws towards a close. A bright hectic spot began to glow upon the cheek of Emma ; and a fearful thing it is to see that fatal sign,—that blossom of the grave lurking amid

the smiles of hope, with which consumption flatters and deludes its victim. It is as if, while gazing on the face of beauty, we could discover through the bright eye and blooming cheek the ghastly frame-work which they veil, and could see the naked skeleton grinning behind its mask, in mockery of the ‘fools who adore!’

“At length Emma died. She waned to a shadow, and vanished like a noiseless dream. Had she lived to recognize and forgive me, it had been some consolation; but she never once had a lucid interval, nor even for a moment awoke to a sense of her sorrows. I saw her laid in the grave, in the same churchyard, and beneath the blighted tree where the old woman had foretold her death on the day I first beheld her.

“Her father and mother were inconsolable,—the former has become dead to the world, and regardless of his affairs, which are rapidly fallen into confusion, and it does not seem likely that he will long survive her loss; and my sister has now left that part of the country, which no longer holds any thing dear to me but the grave of Emma.

“ I shall pay a pilgrimage to it once more, and then seek such alleviation of my sufferings as time and distance can administer in some foreign land.”

Such was the conclusion of Morris' story. I mused upon it in silence, but answered not, for I had no consolation to bestow.

A TRIP TO PARIS.

A TRIP TO PARIS.

—“ They order, said I, this matter better in France.—You have been in France ? said my gentleman, turning quick upon me, with the most civil triumph in the world. Strange, quoth I, debating the matter with myself, that one and twenty miles’ sailing, for ’tis absolutely no farther from Dover to Calais, should give a man these rights !”

STERNE.

IN search of novelties and fine scenes, a man often goes farther and fares worse than if his attention had been directed to his own country. Where, for instance, can we behold a nobler sight than the river Thames, leading its silvery mazes through verdant lawns and wooded hills, teeming with wealth, and, like a great artery, glowing with life and circulation to and from the heart of the kingdom ? The earth has mightier

streams, and scenes of more natural, but few of such moral sublimity ; for this river receives into its bosom the tributes of the East and the West, the productions of every clime, and the sails whose return shall gladden every land from the rising to the setting sun. But there is a charm in the idea of foreign travel to which “distance lends enchantment ;” and, besides, it is fashionable to talk of France and Paris. One would not be behind the “march of the age,” and, at a very trifling expense of time and money, the all-accomplished traveller may be enabled to prattle very respectably about the Louvre, the Palais Royal, and the Boulevards.

Since the great desideratum of wings seems to be in some measure supplied by steam, you may breakfast in London and sup in France. The thought is ecstatic and irresistible ; so, without more ado, you pack up a few travelling necessaries, drive down to Blackwall, and embark on board the steam-boat for Calais. A horn blows, as at the starting of a mail, and away you go. The passage down the river is delightful,—woods,

lawns, and palaces, seem flying past. A band of music serenades you, and you are surrounded by a gay assemblage of beauty and fashion from the West End to Wapping,—all under the influence of high excitement. In a short time you make Margate, formerly the limit of the Cockney grand tour; and by and by you pass the melancholy shores of the North Foreland, and see Old England fading in the night-fall. Upon reaching the Goodwin-Sands, about mid-channel you distinguish the lights of Dover and Calais, rising on the shores, that long had stood aloof, divided more by war than by water. About eleven o'clock at night you enter the harbour of Calais, where the difference of the scene which awaits you from that which you have left is felt to be great in proportion as the intervening time and distance are small.

The moment you set foot on shore you are surrounded by the *Monsieurs*; the very first burst of whose eloquence convinces you that you have been labouring under a mistake in supposing you understood French.

Having delivered your passport at the Custom-house, you proceed to your hotel, upon whose huge papered walls trees grow and ships sail in the most approved attitudes.

Next morning you take your seat in the stage for Paris, but not till you have submitted to many petty impositions,—such as a gratuity to the person who signs your passport, and a donation to the gentlemen who were kind enough to search your baggage, and a small additional consideration to said gentlemen on account of their having been obliged on that account to get up rather earlier than usual. Your miseries, however, seem at last at an end; the postilion cracks his whip, and away you go, rumbling along over narrow streets and drawbridges, and at last gain the open country. But pray order the postilion to stop, for some one is running after the diligence at full speed. A well-dressed young gentleman comes up almost breathless, and informs you that you have forgotten something.—What an honest people the French are!—Yes, you have forgotten to—leave him a small remuneration for carrying

back the keys of your portmanteau from the Custom-house !

After travelling through a flat uninteresting country, you arrive at Boulogne, a handsome town, commanding a fine view of the Channel, over which the cliffs of Albion rise like a white wall. Here you remain for half an hour to dine ; and towards the conclusion of your repast a pretty French girl makes her curtsy, and sings, to the accompaniment of a guitar, some of her simple national airs, possessing a character half gay, half plaintive.

The country from Boulogne to Paris continues to improve ; but is almost entirely unadorned by gentlemen's seats and their pleasure-grounds as in England. Groups of children serenade you along the road,—sometimes for miles,—and in return for their music expect a few *sous*.

On the evening of the second day from the commencement of the journey, your large lumbering vehicle, ycleped a *diligence*, (*lucus a non lucendo*,) approaches the capital of France through long vistas of poplar-trees. Viewed

from a distance, its towers, its spires, and gilded domes, reflecting the gorgeous tints of an evening sky, produce an effect like enchantment; but upon entering the city, the illusion is at an end, and you proceed to your hotel through dark and narrow streets, or rather lanes.

From Montmartre, Napoleon's Pillar, and various other eminences, may be had a complete view of Paris. It expands in nearly a circular form, and its whole mass of buildings being of a light cream-colour, unclouded by smoke, and variegated with palaces, gardens, and public walks, appears to infinite advantage compared with the dark and sombre aspect of London. The view also along the river is extremely fine, where the eye, after wandering up and down along the dense and well-defined outline of its edifices, its noble quays and numerous bridges, reposes at last upon the green and wooded banks of the Seine, stretching away to the horizon.

Immediately beyond the Fauxbourgs the stranger is struck by the sudden transition from the noise and bustle of the city to the perfect

stillness of the country, unvaried by villas, which in England always denote the vicinity of a large city. A few gunshots from the entrance of the town you may see the shepherd tending his flock; and in the Bois de Boulogne, a short distance from the barrier-gates, you merge at once into the deep solitude of the forest, the silence of which is only broken by the occasional call of the sportsman, or the discharge of his gun. This is a favourite resort of the beauty and fashion of Paris on Sundays, and it would be difficult to conceive a more sweet seclusion in the immediate neighbourhood of a great city.

To the eye of an Englishman, Paris presents a vast mass of incongruities, an assemblage of the mean and magnificent;—splendid palaces, churches, and public buildings, extensive and beautiful gardens, ornamented with ponds, fountains, and statues, are everywhere contrasted with filthy, dark, and miserable streets in their immediate vicinity, through which the unfortunate pedestrian cannot walk either with comfort or safety, as they have not an inch of pave-

ment, and slope down towards the centre, through which

“No crystal waters flow.”

Although Paris surpasses London in the general character of its public buildings, it has nothing to match the sublimity of St Paul's, with its mighty dome towering into the sky. Nor can the church of Notre Dame be compared with Westminster Abbey, where the dust of kings, heroes, statesmen, patriots, and poets, repose under your feet, and the pale monumental forms of the mighty dead are seen gleaming around you through its Gothic shades.

The Restaurateurs and Cafés, with their marble floors, brilliant chandeliers, and innumerable mirrors, by which the rooms and their inmates are multiplied in every direction, are quite dazzling, and remind one of the enchanted halls described in the fictions of the East.

Something of the French character may be traced in the construction of their capital. In general, the public edifices are magnificent, while

the abodes of private life exhibit much that is mean and comfortless. To use a phrenological expression, there seems to be a want of *individuality* about a Frenchman; his personal seem to be absorbed in his national feelings; he identifies himself with his country in every thing, whether great or trivial; he is a part of the *grande nation*, and piques himself upon whatever is French, from a gained battle to a graceful bow.

One sees but little of that gaiety of the heart in Paris, which we have been taught to consider as an essential of the French character. I believe it is now to be found chiefly among the peasantry, whose characters seem to have undergone least change by the Revolution; and to them Goldsmith's description of the nation in his "Traveller" still applies. Considerable numbers of this class, chiefly Normans, are occasionally seen in the square of the *Palais Royal*, basking in the sun for hours together, motionless as statues, with such a look of quiet happiness as if the mere light of day were enough

for them. The sight used to remind me of Moore's beautiful lines—

“ Blest power of sunshine, genial day,
What balm, what life is in thy ray ;
To feel thee is such real bliss,
That had the world no joy but this,
To sit in sunshine, calm and sweet,
It were a world too exquisite
For man to leave it for the gloom,
The deep cold shadow of the tomb.”

The appearance of perfect contentment in these poor people presents a striking contrast to the sombre visages of the military groups, continually sauntering about, slovenly in their dress and sullen in their aspects, some smoking cigars and discussing politics, and others musing with their eyes fixed upon the ground, curling their mustachios with their fingers, and training them into the graceful meanderings of a cork-screw.

In beauty of countenance the French ladies are much inferior to those of England ; but they must be allowed to excel the latter in the articles of feet and ankles ; of which they also afford a more liberal display than our fair countrywomen.

Their figures are generally handsome ; but their mincing movements (for they can hardly be said to walk) are the very antipodes of grace and dignity, and may almost come under the denomination of a *dog-trot*.

Notwithstanding the gallantry of the French, they have allowed most of the heavier duties of life to devolve upon the women, who keep the shops, manage the restaurateurs and cafés, and are in general the more efficient members of society.

Much as has been said of the vices of Paris, making all due allowance for difference in size and population, it is not once to be compared to London, either in regard to the frequency or magnitude of its crimes ; though it must also be allowed to be inferior in virtue. The line of demarcation betwixt good and evil is not very distinctly indicated, and in this all-polite city even virtue and vice appear to be on terms of civility.

Travellers have been very severe upon the French for their great nationality, and overween-

ing opinion of themselves; these, however, are occasionally productive of beneficial effects. To be on good terms with ourselves is the first step to our being so with others. Self-esteem is the basis of benevolence; and, perhaps, to it may be ascribed the acknowledged courtesy of the French to foreigners of all nations: "Pleased with themselves, whom all the world can please."

There is certainly a great versatility in the character of the French; their minds seem capable of receiving but not of retaining strong impressions. It is no uncommon thing for men who have spent the week in gambling-houses, theatres, and other scenes of dissipation, to retire on a Sunday to the cemetery of *Père la Chaise*, and, amidst its countless tombs, to soliloquize for hours, to shed tears over the graves of their departed friends, and sigh to be with them, yet immediately afterwards to return to their former haunts and habits of vice and frivolity.

Père la Chaise itself is characteristic of French taste and feeling. It is a hill of considerable

magnitude, in the immediate vicinity and commanding a fine view of Paris. The eye alternately rests on the abodes of the living and the dead,—on splendid palaces and pompous monuments,—and we are at the same moment sensible of the hum of the city and the stillness of the tomb.

Père la Chaise is a pleasure-ground of graves, a succession of trees and tombs, a blending of beauty and desolation, where the pale monumental ranges are veiled with bough and blossom, and garlanded with wreaths of flowers. Perhaps there is too much of this, too much of a baby cheat in thus dressing up the grave in a gay attire; yet upon the whole the effect is pleasing, and I think takes away rather from the horrors than the solemnity of the last abode.

Under the present religious dynasty, it seems strange that public gambling-houses should not merely be tolerated, but even taken into its holy keeping and protection. I have heard it asserted by several gentlemen residing in Paris, that a club-room, which had been established for the ac-

commodation and amusement of strangers, was shut up by order of the government, such an institution being considered prejudicial to the interests of the gaming-tables; and as government shares the profits, it has a vital interest in protecting these demoralizing nuisances.

These abodes of iniquity are always open to the public, Sundays not excepted; and the novice who enters with the intention of merely looking on, and sees what heaps of gold the upturning of a few cards occasionally transfers into the pockets of his next neighbour, is amazed to see so much money so easily won, and is tempted to try his luck; but, alas! the sweat of his brow, by which the peasant earns a daily pittance, is the effect of a light labour compared to the feverish days and sleepless nights of the gamester.

Upon entering these ever-crowded haunts, you are chilled by an air of deep abstraction,—you have the dreary feeling of solitude in the midst of society,—you behold the “idolaters of chance” sitting around the tables like men in dreams, to whom the power they worship doles out insanity

and despair. Cast a glance over their faces, and you will there read the tale of ruin in characters as appalling and far more legible than the "hand-writing on the wall,"—you will trace it in the cold relentless eye and the lowering brow, from which the burning share of evil passion has ploughed out humanity,—you will mark the leaden and death-like spell of suspense, the convulsive shudder, and the frightful calm of despair with which the ruined wretch rises from the tables,—you will hear the echo of his last foot-falls die away, and at morn the Seine will give up its dead !

Of the public buildings and works of art belonging to Paris nothing need here be said. Descriptions of these have been needlessly multiplied, for such things present the same aspect to every eye ; but the case is different with respect to men and manners, which appear in the most opposite lights to different observers, according to the medium of opinions, associations, or prejudices through which they are viewed.

Of the swarms of tourists which every autumn

throws off from this country, by far the most numerous are the Cockneys. Since the Continent has become open to travellers, they are everywhere to be seen, and are so strongly associated with our recollections of Paris, that in a sketch of it they are entitled to some notice.

A Cockney is a stranger even in his own country, and out of London is out of his element ; of all beyond its precincts he is the most ignorant of human beings, his loftiest flights of fancy have never soared above the dome of St Paul's, and the general march of his mind as well as body has been bounded by Tower-Hill and Temple-Bar. He sets off for France with such childish and excited expectations as the school-boy experiences on approaching a raree-show. He arrives at Calais, and stares at the inhabitants as if he expected to see them adorned with tails, having probably heard of these ornaments being worn by the great men in Turkey. But in France he finds that men and women bear some resemblance to the same species of animals in England, and also that the sky is

blue and the trees are green. *Argal*, what came he to see?—the case is provoking, and it is no better at Paris. In vain its various magnificent objects solicit his attention; his obtuse mind mistakes the indifference of stupidity with which he beholds them for the effect of a long familiarity with the works of art, with which (because he has been in the habit of looking at them) he fancies himself intimately acquainted. His prejudices render him Argus-eyed in detecting every thing faulty, but shut up the avenues of soul and sense from the perception of all that is beautiful or praiseworthy. During his stay at Paris he herds with a class of Englishmen, who, having left their own country in disgust, now rail at that in which they have come to reside. He thinks himself a patriot, merely because he hates foreigners, and fancies that his own country is exalted in proportion as others are degraded. He drinks *confusion* to all Frenchmen in repeated bumpers of their best wines, and verily the malediction returns upon his own head. He thus exhibits an edifying example of the effects of a vice almost

unknown among the people whom it is his pleasure to traduce, and proves himself to be a greater nuisance than any of which he complains.

THE SOLDIER'S GRAVE.

THE SOLDIER'S GRAVE.

“ Oh ! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead !”

BYRON.

IN the autumn of the year 1813, when Wellington had expelled its invaders from the Peninsula, and planted the British standard on the plains of France, I was sent upon regimental duty to a certain Spanish village, situated near the bottom of the Lower Pyrenees. It stood in the opening of a beautiful valley, which gradually narrowed as it winded up towards the hills, and lost itself among their recesses.

It was traversed by a stream which, rising among the mountain-solititudes, brawled away

over rock and steep, then gradually sunk in more gentle lapses, and sung itself to sleep long before it reached the ocean. The acclivities along its banks were skirted with chestnut-groves, and the receding steeps were mantled with woods of pine, which afforded a delightful shelter in that sultry clime from the hour when noonday took its siesta upon the hills, and not a breath of air or the rustling of a leaf disturbed its repose, until the sun went down in all his glory, and the mountains returned his parting smiles.

The heights in the immediate neighbourhood had been occupied by the French army, and had lately been the theatre of war; but then all was solitude and silence. The roar of battle had died away, and friends and foes were sleeping in peace. The scene was worth a "thousand homilies" on the uncertainty, briefness, and vanity of human life; but amidst the glories of nature the heart does not easily give way to the dark inspirations of melancholy.

Upon these fields, it is true, many a hope had been withered, and many a bright career had

been closed for ever. But is it nothing to *have been* once happy, because that happiness must cease at last? Is it nothing to have lived and enjoyed,—to have inhaled the breath of heaven,—to have gazed upon the face of beauty, and thrilled beneath the trance of love,—to have welcomed the returning spring and the opening rose,—to have been “wakened by the lark and lulled by falling waters?” Is it nothing to have once known such joys, because there comes a time when we shall know them no more? and to have walked in the blessed light of this day, because the long night cometh at last? Alas! alas! from such considerations as these we shall seek for consolation in vain. It is to have known delight that makes us mourn its loss,—it is the joys of life that make it hard to die.

More than a month had elapsed since the tide of war had rolled away over that scene of beauty, but its traces were everywhere visible, like wrecks upon the ocean when the storm is o'er, making the dreary calm more appalling than the tempest itself.

The deadly blast had passed away, but the earth had withered beneath its breath. Yet a little while, thought I, as I gazed upon the scene, and Nature will repair her work; the scathed tree will be hung with bough and blossom, the birds will sing amidst their bowers, and the grass will grow green above the graves. Time will efface these sad memorials of decay, and returning spring will clothe them with renovated beauty. But the woes of war are not confined to the field of death; even now, upon a far-distant shore, how many hearts are pining beneath its wounds, for which time hath no balm, and returning spring brings no healing on its wings,—which find no respite from the pains of memory but in slumbers of the night, when, in the land of shadows and of dreams, they meet with the distant and the dead!—

“ They mourn, but smile at length, and smiling mourn ;
The tree will wither long before its fall ;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn,
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall.
In massy hoariness, the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone ;
The bars survive the captive they enthrall,

The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun,
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on."

Such were my reflections as I stood beneath the covert of a wood, skirting the green margin of the stream which wandered down the valley, when I was awakened from my reverie by the approach of a lady deeply veiled. She proceeded a short distance along its banks, with a pensive step and a downcast look, and paused before what appeared to be a grave; upon which she knelt down, and strewed it over with such faded flowers as the season supplied. Her face was of the finest order of beauty, but very pale. "Affliction," to use the words of Sterne, "had touched it with something scarce earthly." She fixed her dark eyes upon the green turf beneath her, and then raised them to Heaven as if in the act of prayer; and, after continuing in the attitude of devotion for some time, rose, seemingly soothed by the thoughts in which she had been engaged, and walked slowly away towards the village.

Upon returning home, I related the circum-

stance to my landlord, and received from him the following particulars of her story, explanatory of the scene I had witnessed :—

During one of those pauses of war, as brief as they are delightful, which occur betwixt the acts of its fearful drama, while the French occupied those strongholds of the Pyrenees, from which they had been so lately expelled, a regiment of British troops was quartered in the village, and one of its officers had become enamoured of the lady whom I had seen, during his residence in the house of her father, where he happened to be quartered.

Notwithstanding their services, the British troops were no favourites with the Spaniards, betwixt whom and their deliverers the jealousy, pride, and religious bigotry of the latter, prevented any thing like an approach to friendship. In every land, however, there are minds of a nobler nature, which rise superior to the prejudices of country and education, and of this description were the members of the family of which the young soldier was at the time an inmate; while

he, frank, generous, and of a prepossessing exterior, united to the graces acquired in polished society, soon obtained the affections of the young and warm-hearted Spaniard.

The margin of the mountain-stream, where I had for the first time beheld her, was their favourite resort, although the heights a few miles distant were covered with the "battle's dreadful array;" but the path of love seems doubly precious when it borders upon the "valley of the shadow of death."—To proceed with my simple narrative: Their vows were plighted, and they were betrothed; but under such circumstances, when a movement of the army, and, consequently, a battle, was expected every hour, they could only look forward to the period of their union in the termination of the war, or at least in the liberation of the Peninsula.

One evening, while they were enjoying the glorious hour of sunset at their favourite haunt, they observed an officer on horseback gallop past at full speed towards the village; thither they immediately repaired, and found their suspicions

realized. An order had arrived for a general movement of the army on the following morning before daybreak.

I shall not attempt to paint the parting scene, but, having stated the circumstances under which it took place, leave it to the imagination of the reader, who will better conceive than I can describe the feelings of the poor Spanish girl on that night of sorrow, and on the succeeding day, when she was doomed to hear the heavy, ceaseless, and deepening boom of the cannon along the line of position occupied by the enemy, and when at nightfall she was roused from a state of the most agonizing suspense by the sight of her lover, borne back wounded and bleeding from the field of battle.

At the first shock occasioned by the sad spectacle she passed from one fainting fit into another; but, recovering at length in some degree, nature found relief in a flood of tears.

During the days and nights which he lingered in pain she never left his couch. In his moments of agony her bosom was his pillow, and

the warm tears of pity and of love, welling from her heart, the balm that soothed his sufferings.

But human aid was exhausted in vain,—the injury was too deep,—a vital part had been affected,—nature at length was worn out,—and he expired in her arms.

He was buried, at his own request, on the banks of the stream where their vows had been plighted, and which was consecrated and made hallowed ground by the most sacred feelings of the heart.

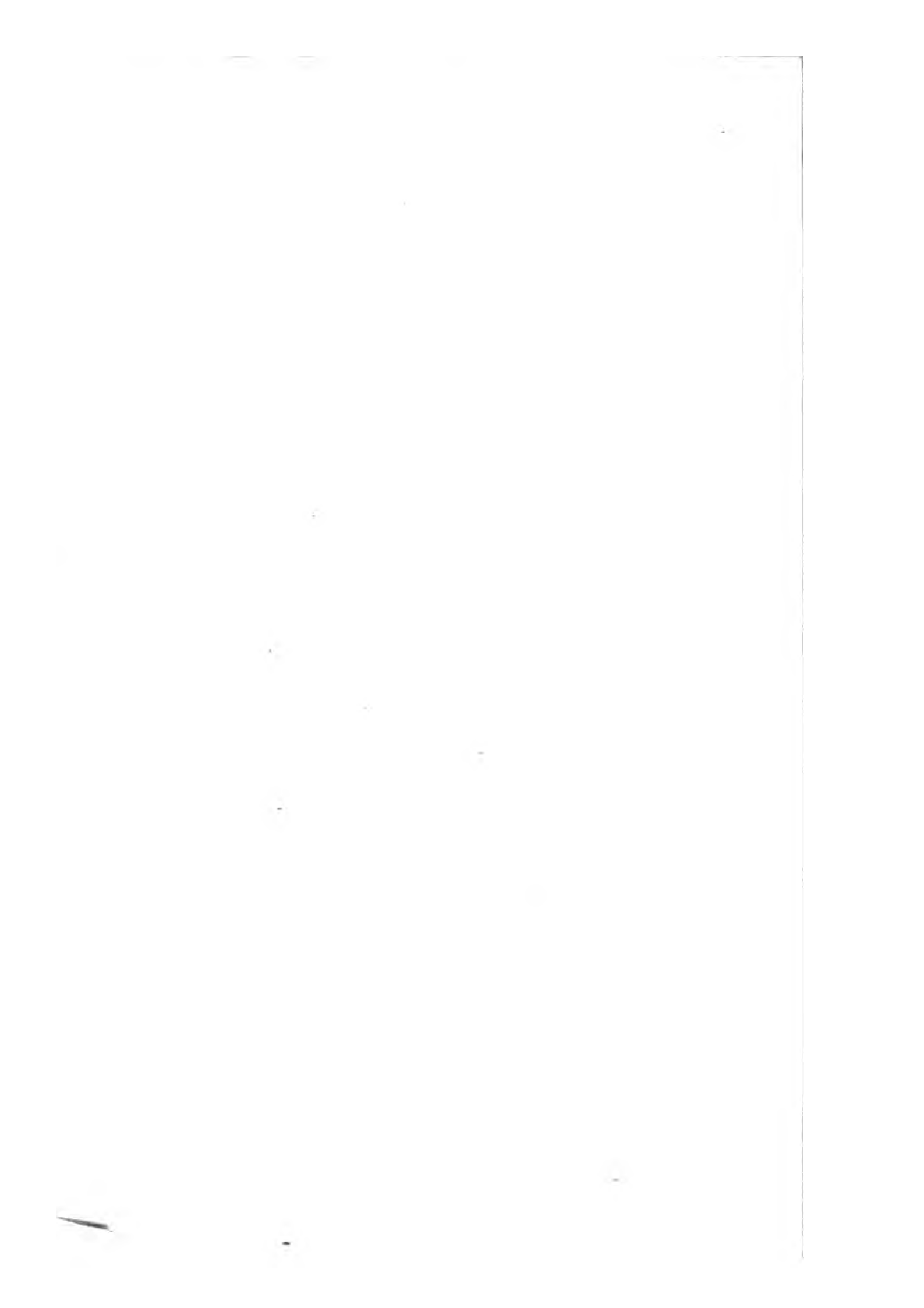
It is the general belief of the world that love cannot exist without hope. Of the falsehood of this opinion bear witness, ye countless tombs, decked with its garlands, and watered with its tears!

Concealed from observation in the wood from which I had first seen the fair Spaniard, eve after eve did I behold her repair to the only spot in the wide wilderness of this world where her broken heart could find repose.

One evening, however, I missed her. A second and a third passed, and still she came not as before.

The day previous to my departure from the village to join the army in France, I paid a farewell-visit to the soldier's grave, from which the turf appeared to have been newly removed and replaced again. It was even so ; the prayer of the mourner had been granted,—she slept beside him !

JACK O'FLANAGAN.



JACK O'FLANAGAN.

“ How stands the glass around !—
For shame !—you take no care, my boys—
How stands the glass around,
Let mirth and wine abound !”

Old Song.

It was in the British camp, before St Sebastian, that I first became acquainted with Lieutenant John O'Flanagan, generally known among the officers and men of his regiment by the friendly and familiar abbreviation of Jack.

To show the reader what manner of man he was would require the aid of the pencil as well as of the pen, which latter I am well aware is of itself quite inadequate to the work of delineation.

Jack was a native of the south of Ireland, somewhat above the middle-size, and apparently not under middle-age; or, if he really was as young as he professed to be, Toil had forged the handwriting of Time with such felicity, that no one could have suspected the deceit; in other words, the crow's-foot had made a deep impression at the corner of each eye, and numerous wrinkles meandered over his brow.

The sufferings of the Peninsular Campaigns (in all of which he had served) had also given him something of a worn-out appearance, and his cheek had exchanged the hue of the rose for that of virgin-gold.

In the construction of his eyes Nature had deviated from her general plan,—they might indeed well be said to be *matchless*, inasmuch as they bore no kind of resemblance to each other, one of them squinting in a most unusual degree, and the other having what is called a *cast*. The former, with a bewildering dubiety of direction, seemed to ogle two or three objects at once; while the latter, which occupied a situation about half

an inch higher in the face, like a jealous guardian, seemed to keep a watchful outlook upon the little leering libertine below, lest it should wander away after the dark-eyed Donnas of the land.

Collapsed cheeks and a mouth having a leaning to one side of his face formed its remaining peculiarities; and his cravat, or stock, he wore so loose as to afford a distinct view of a long scraggy neck rising from a narrow pedestal of shoulders, one of which ambitiously overtopped the other, and terminated in a sharp knob, whereon his epaulet, like the dove of the ark, finding no resting-place, slid from its bony pinnacle, and hung down upon his back in drooping repose; and his cap he wore so high upon his brow, that the back part of it rested under the neck of his coat. His figure altogether was very spare, and looked as if it had been flattened by pressure. His legs, or rather walking-sticks, (for they had long been deserted by their calves,) were of the smallest upon which warrior ever toddled forth to battle; and Jack, with an infatuation common to men of his make, constantly exposed them

in *tights*. They were assisted, however, in carrying him on by the co-operation of his arms, and a general auxiliary wriggle of his whole body.

His accent was strongly Hibernian, and his patriotism was ardent as it was circumscribed, its focus being the city of Limerick, and the utmost limits of its genial glow extending only over the southern provinces of Ireland,—the northern portion of the island being, in his opinion, the very Botany Bay of Europe.

During the whole of the Peninsular Campaigns, the toils of which Jack had suffered and survived, he had lived chiefly on suction; and, in the absence of his favourite national beverage potheen, had solaced himself with rum and brandy, in which articles of daily consumption most of his cash was *liquidated*. In the bottle he found a consoling friend, a sweet oblivious antidote to the toils of war; and those periods during which the rigid duties of a soldier in camp denied convivial indulgences he considered as so many dreary blanks in existence.

It was no great wonder, then, that Jack sighed for his native land, where, unmolested by long marches, bivouacks, and picquets, he might enjoy his evening tippie in a comfortable barrack-room, and, when no longer able to occupy his chair, might tumble into bed without fear of being startled from his repose by the beat of the alarm-drum.

In the first unsuccessful attack upon St Sebastian, Jack was one of the storming-party ; but scarcely had he sallied forth from the trenches when a musket-ball carried away the peak of his cap, and, along therewith, a certain modicum of the skin and flesh immediately above one of his eyebrows.

Jack was almost blinded with blood ; but though he declared he was a dead man, this trifling circumstance did not prevent his retreat into the trenches, through which he made the best of his way to the camp and took to bed. In a short time he was waited upon by a regimental surgeon, who pronounced him *out of danger* ; and Jack inwardly rejoiced at having received a wound

which he had no doubt would afford him a passport to the land of potheen and potatoes, where

“ A bottle and kind landlady would clear up all again.”

So, without more ado, he packed up his baggage, and, bidding adieu to his friends and to the camp, set off for Passages in order to secure a passage for England.

The third day after his departure Jack was missed at morning parade by the colonel of his regiment, who, upon inquiring what had become of him, was informed that he had been wounded, and had gone to Passages preparatory to his embarkation for England.

The colonel in amaze sent for the surgeon in order to ascertain the nature and degree of the injury received; and, upon being informed that it amounted only to a mere scratch, immediately despatched a sergeant to Passages in quest of the homesick soldier, with orders for his immediate return to the theatre of war. The sergeant, upon arriving at Passages, commenced his inquiries after Jack, of whom, however, for a long time, he could

obtain no information whatever. At length he be-
thought himself of extending his search among
the ships about to sail for England ; and while in
the act of descending along the companion-ladder
of one of them, he heard a voice, not altogether
unknown to him, warbling the following exquisite
Irish melody :—

“ Och dideroo daisy, my jewel, be *aisy*,
It's all botheration from bottom to top ;
Och Paddy, my honey, take care of your money,
This London, agra, is the devil's own shop.”

And upon entering the cabin he beheld the
wounded warrior of whom he was in search seat-
ed with the captain of the vessel over a brimming
jug of punch, enveloped in clouds of tobacco-
smoke, with a cotton kerchief instead of a laurel-
wreath around his brows. Great was Jack's sur-
prise and dismay when the sergeant entered the
cabin, and informed him that his valuable ser-
vices could not possibly be dispensed with, and
that the Colonel requested his immediate return
to the camp.

At that fatal announcement his visions of

“home and beauty” melted into air, and his heart and voice almost died within him, as he rose to return to the sickening scenes which he had so lately left.

Shortly after the unfortunate result of this home-fever, our division received orders to break up from their encampment, and to march towards the Pyrenees.

Preparatory to the movement, while others were filling their haversacks with beef and biscuit, Jack provided himself amply with his usual resources of brandy and cigars,—and in this choice he clearly showed his superior wisdom; for whereas the former kind of ammunition only assists the soldier to struggle with his sufferings, the latter renders him insensible to them.

And many a time during the march of that sultry day did Jack have recourse to the cheering and consolatory draught, which, while others were fainting by the way-side, enabled him, with a light step and a buoyant heart, to finish the journey of the day, and at night bedewed his spirit with oblivion.

During our winter-encampment in the Pyrenees and their vicinity the weather was excessively severe, and Jack's potations proportionably great. It was amusing, yet pitiable, to behold him in the cold sleety mornings making a hasty toilet, when, having hung up his watch along the tent-pole by way of a mirror, in attempting to shave, his hand would shake so violently, that, after making two or three gashes in the lower part of his face, he was obliged to wait the arrival of his servant with a large glass of brandy, which was no sooner swallowed than it acted like magic, and enabled him, with a steady hand, to scrape his chin and to sign the report of the state of his company.

Before he had properly completed the operations of dressing, however, the bugle generally sounded for parade, and in his haste and confusion he would sally forth from the tent towards the parade-ground, fastening his sash and girding on his sword by the way, but forgetting to tie the strings of his pantaloons, which trailed after him through the mud.

About this time the tent of which I was an inmate had more inhabitants than it could well accommodate, and as Jack held undivided possession of a small one of his own, I accepted his invitation to take up my quarters with him for a few nights. I entered his canvass-dwelling about bedtime ; and being informed that he was passing the evening at a convivial party in a neighbouring tent, from which it was not probable that he would return till a late hour, I retired to rest. I was wakened, however, about midnight by a noise as of something floundering among the cords which fixed the canvass to the ground ; and, popping out my head, beheld Jack sprawling upon his face at the threshold of the tent. I immediately called his servant, who slept close by, and with our united efforts he was safely housed and put to bed.

It appeared next morning that he had received more falls than one, and those not upon beds of roses, but among whin-bushes, of which his face and hands bore such indisputable marks as to render his absence from parade for some days absolutely necessary.

During the short time I resided in his tent he gave me many sage advices and golden rules to be observed in the choice of friends. He warned me, in a particular manner, to beware of the natives of the north of Ireland, as being the most cold-blooded and treacherous characters, fully as bad if not worse than Scotsmen; but he advised me by all means to cultivate the friendship of the O's and Mac's of the south, who, he observed, had their hearts in the *right side*, and were, moreover, the most ancient and honourable race of men upon the face of the earth.

Jack was social in all his pleasures; and when at any time he happened to obtain any provender better than common camp-fare, he never failed to invite a few boon companions to partake; and although he himself had little or no appetite for food, he felt a pleasure and a pride in the display of an abundant table to his guests, and nothing pleased him so much as to be complimented upon his superior style of living.

But it was not until an hour or two after dinner that he was properly in his element,—when,

under the united influence of brandy and cigars, he began to entertain his friends with graphic descriptions of his love-scenes with the young ladies of the county Limerick. On such occasions he who could keep his gravity must have been more or less than man ; but Jack was too deeply occupied with descriptions of the dear *craters*, and of his own feats in the way of heart-killing, to notice the faces of his guests convulsing with suppressed laughter at the idea of such a Lothario making successful love to the fair daughters of Erin.

During the time that our army was encamped before Bayonne, and along the range of the Pyrenees, a line of telegraphs was established for facilitating communication along its extensive position ; and of one of these signal-stations Jack was appointed superintendent.

For this duty he had an allowance of five shillings per day, which enabled him considerably to increase his stock of brandy and tobacco. But, unluckily, it soon appeared that his eyes were ill adapted for distinct vision ; and one day, in an af-

fair of *posts*, he *signalized* himself by playing at cross-purpose with his correspondents, who were thus thrown into confusion, and, like the builders of Babel, became unintelligible to each other ; in consequence of which misunderstanding Jack was informed that his services at the signals were no longer necessary, and that he was at liberty to return to his regimental duties.

Preparatory to a long march, or any other great exertion, Jack never failed to strengthen himself with a double allowance of his favourite refreshment. To the weakness of a worn-out constitution, which rendered such assistance necessary, and not to any feelings unbecoming a soldier, do I verily believe it was owing, that, on the day of battle, he always appeared to be in a state of more than usual conglomeration.

On such eventful occasions, when the distinctions of rank are apt to be forgotten or overlooked by the men, it was no great wonder that they carried their familiarities somewhat too far towards Jack.

When entering the scene of action one would

say,—“ Come, Jack, let us be *distinguished*, or *extinguished*, to-day !” Another would call out, “ Never mind that fellow, Jack, but keep close to me.” A third would shout,—“ Huzza, Jack, for the Holy Land, the *Sod*, and the lasses of Limerick !” To all this Jack would mildly reply, —“ Now, my good lads, as soon as this affair is over, I'll give ye a guinea to drink, if ye'll not confuse me.”

With the exception of the slight scratch received at St Sebastian, Jack had passed through the long and fiery ordeal of the peninsular war unscathed ; and when his brother-officers used to marvel at his escapes, and tell him that he surely possessed a charmed life, Jack would observe, with an ominous shake of his head, that *the pitcher which went often to the well would be broken at last*. However, he lived to return to his country,—and the little I afterwards learnt respecting him was told me by an officer of the regiment to which he belonged. It consisted of the few following particulars :—

When Jack once more beheld the shores of the

Green Isle rising from the sea, he became wild with joy, and capered about the ship's deck in such an extravagant manner as to create some fears for his intellects.

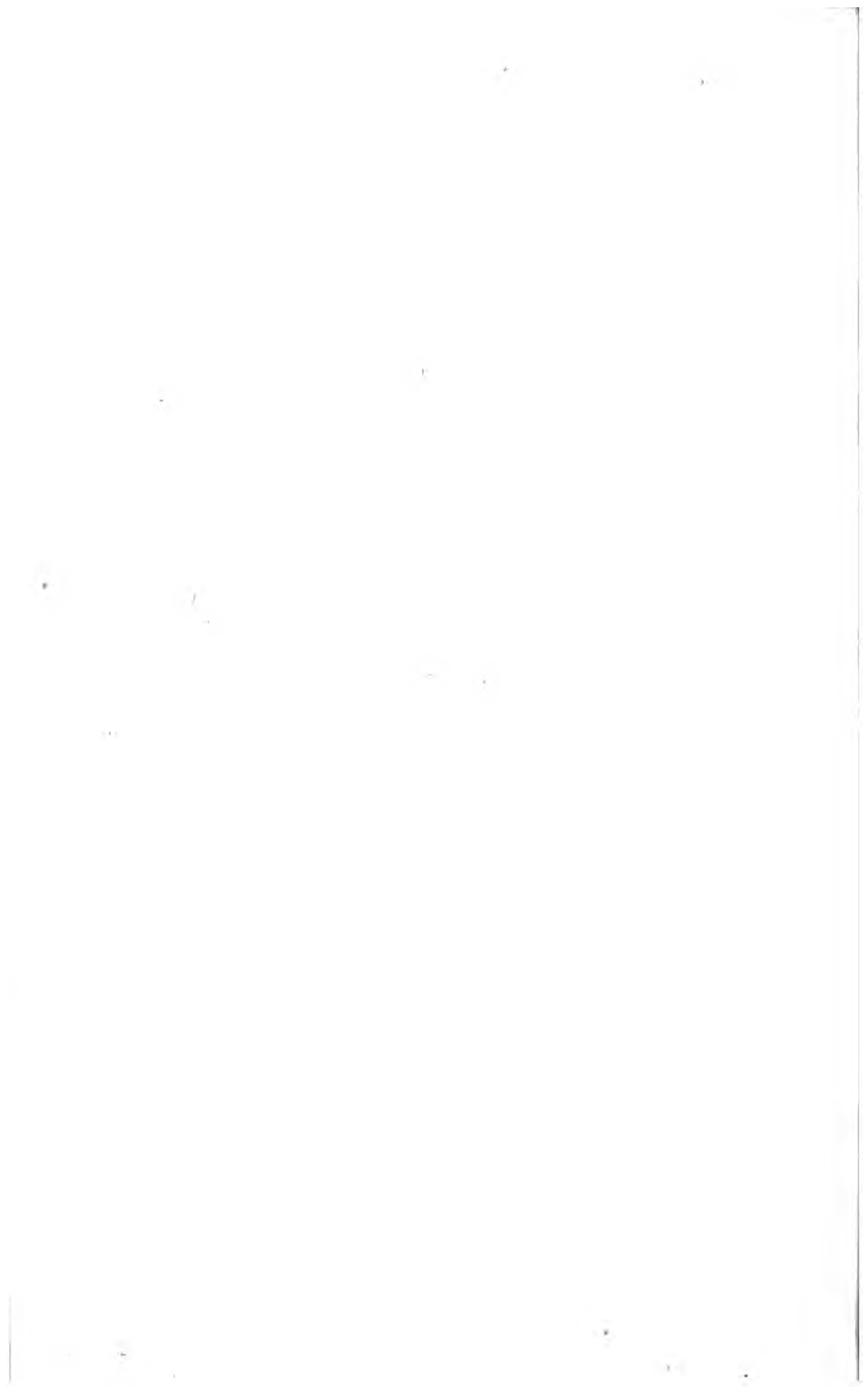
Upon landing at Cork, he could scarce restrain his feelings within the bounds of propriety; and, in passing along the streets, he was met by an old trusty friend and bottle-companion. Their mutual recognition was announced by a shout of ecstasy, followed by an embrace,—after which they immediately adjourned to a tavern, which they did not leave for two days; and, during the whole time, my informant was told that they never went to bed, nor even quitted the festive board.

Jack's residence in Ireland would probably have proved more fatal to him than even his toils and sufferings in the Peninsula; but, at the opening of the campaign of 1815, he once more embarked with his regiment for Belgium, and again marched into mortal conflict on the plains of Waterloo.

When the muster-roll of his corps was read at night, his name was called, but there was no re-

ply ; and when a fatigue-party went forth to bury the dead, he was found among their countless heaps, stretched upon his back, and pierced with a ghastly wound. Yet so ludicrous was poor Jack's countenance, even in death, that the officer who commanded the party declared, that the men could scarcely maintain their gravity while they performed the last melancholy duty of covering his cold remains.

HELEN WATERS.



HELEN WATERS.

The lost, the cast away on desert isles,
Or rocks of ocean, where no human aid
Can reach them more.

THE mountains of Hoy, the highest of the Orkney Islands, rise abruptly out of the ocean to an elevation of fifteen hundred feet, and terminate on one side in a cliff, sheer and stupendous as if the mountain had been cut down through the middle, and the severed portion of it buried in the sea. Immediately on the landward-side of this precipice lies a soft green valley, embosomed among huge black cliffs, where the sound of the human voice, or the report of a gun, is rever-

berated among the rocks, where it gradually dies away into faint and fainter echoes.

The hills are intersected by deep and dreary glens, where the hum of the world is never heard, and the only voices of life are the bleat of the lamb and the shriek of the eagle;—even the sounds of inanimate nature are of the most doleful kind. The breeze wafts not on its wings the whisper of the woodland; for there are no trees in the island, and the roar of the torrent-stream and the sea's eternal moan for ever sadden these solitudes of the world.

The ascent of the mountains is in some parts almost perpendicular, and in all exceedingly steep; but the admirer of Nature in her grandest and most striking aspects will be amply compensated for his toil, upon reaching their summits, by the magnificent prospect which they afford. Towards the north and east, the vast expanse of the ocean, and the islands, with their dark heath-clad hills, their green vales, and gigantic cliffs, expand below as far as the eye can reach. The view towards the south is bounded by the lofty

mountains of Scarabin and Morven, and by the wild hills of Strathnaver and Cape Wrath, stretching towards the west. In the direction of the latter, and far away in mid-ocean, may be seen, during clear weather, a barren rock called Sule Skerry, which superstition in former days had peopled with mermaids and monsters of the deep. This solitary spot had been long known to the Orcadians as the haunt of seafowl and seals, and was the scene of their frequent shooting excursions, though such perilous adventures have been long since abandoned. It is associated in my mind with a wild tale, which I have heard in my youth, though I am uncertain whether or not the circumstances which it narrates are yet in the memory of living men.

On the opposite side of the mountainous island of which I speak, and divided from it by a frith of several miles in breadth, lie the flat serpentine shores of the principal island or mainland, where, upon a gentle slope, at a short distance from the sea-beach, may still be traced the site of a cottage, once the dwelling of a humble

couple of the name of Waters, belonging to that class of small proprietors which forms a connecting link betwixt the gentry and the peasantry.

Their only child Helen, at the time to which my narration refers, was just budding into womanhood; and though uninitiated into what would now be considered the indispensable requisites of female education, was yet not altogether unaccomplished for the simple times in which she lived; and, though a child of nature, had a grace beyond the reach of art, untaught and unteachable. There was a softness and delicacy in her whole demeanour, never looked for and seldom found in the humble sphere of life to which she belonged. Yet her beauty did not startle or surprise, but stole over the heart almost insensibly, like the gentle fall of the summer evenings of her own native isles, and, like that, produced in the beholder an emotion almost allied to sadness.

Such a being was not likely to be appreciated by the rude and common-place minds by whom

she was surrounded, and with whom a rosy cheek and a laughing eye constitute the *beau ideal* of woman ; but she awakened a world of romance in one young heart, with which her own gentle bosom shared the feelings she inspired.

Henry Graham, the lover of Helen Waters, was the son of a small proprietor in the neighbourhood ; and being of the same humble rank with herself, and though not rich, removed from poverty, their views were undisturbed by the dotage of avarice or the fears of want, and the smiles of approving friends seemed to await their approaching union.

The days of courtship were drawing towards a close, and the period of their marriage was at last condescended upon by the bride. Among the middling and lower classes of society in the Orkneys, it is customary for the bridegroom to invite the wedding-guests in person ; for which purpose, a few days previous to the marriage, young Graham, accompanied by his friend, took a boat and proceeded to the island of Hoy, to request the attendance of a family residing there ;

which done, on the following day they joined a party of young men upon a shooting excursion to Rackwick, a village romantically situated on the opposite side of the island. They left the house of their friends on a bright, calm, autumnal morning, and began to traverse the wild and savage glens which intersect the hills, where their progress might be guessed at by the reports of their guns, which gradually became fainter and fainter among the mountains, and at last died away altogether in the distance.

That night and the following day passed, and they did not return to the house of their friends ; but the weather being extremely fine, it was supposed they had extended their excursion to the opposite coast of Caithness, or to some of the neighbouring islands, so that their absence created no alarm whatever.

The same conjectures also quieted the anxieties of the bride, until the morning previous to that of the marriage, when her alarm could no longer be suppressed. A boat was manned in all haste, and despatched to Hoy in quest of them,

but did not return during that day nor the succeeding night.

The morning of the wedding-day dawned at last, bright and beautiful, but still no intelligence arrived of the bridegroom and his party; and the hope which lingered to the last, that they would still make their appearance in time, had prevented the invitations from being postponed, so that the marriage-party began to assemble about mid-day.

While the friends were all in amazement, and the bride in a most pitiable state, a boat was seen crossing from Hoy, and hope once more began to revive; but, upon landing her passengers, they turned out to be the members of the family invited from that Island, whose surprise at finding how matters stood was equal to that of the other friends.

Meantime all parties united in their endeavours to cheer the poor bride; for which purpose it was agreed, that the company should remain, and that the festivities should go on,—an arrangement to which the guests the more willingly consented, from a lingering hope that the absen-

tees would still make their appearance, and partly with a view to divert in some measure the intense and painful attention of the bride from the untoward circumstance; while she, on the other hand, from feelings of hospitality, exerted herself, though with a heavy heart, to make her guests as comfortable as possible; and, by the very endeavour to put on an appearance of tranquillity, acquired so much of the reality as to prevent her from sinking altogether under the weight of her fears.

Meantime the day advanced, the festivities went on, and the glass began to circulate so freely, that the absence of the principal actor of the scene was so far forgotten, that at length the music struck up, and dancing commenced with all the animation which that exercise inspires among the natives of Scotland.

Things were going on in this way, when towards night, and during one of the pauses of the dance, a loud rap was heard at the door, and a gleam of hope was seen to lighten every face, when there entered, not the bridegroom and his

party, but a wandering lunatic named Annie Fae, well known and not a little feared in all that country-side. Her garments were little else than a collection of fantastic and party-coloured rags, bound close around her waist with a girdle of straw, and her head had no other covering than the dark tangled locks that hung, snake-like, over her wild and weather-beaten face, from which peered forth her small, deep, sunk eyes, gleaming with the baleful light of insanity.

Before the surprise and dismay excited by her sudden and unwelcome appearance had subsided, she addressed the company in the following wild and incoherent manner:—

“Hech, Sirs! but here’s a merry meeting indeed,—a fine company, by my faith; plenty o’ gude meat and drink here, and nae expense spared! Aweel, it’s no a’ lost neither; this blithe bridal will mak’ a braw burial, and the same feast will do for baith.—But what’s the folk a’ glowring at? I’s e warrant now ye’re cursing Annie Fae for spoiling your sport. But ye ken I maun just say my say, and that being done, I’ll no

detain you langer, but jog on upon my journey ; only I wad just hint, that, for decency sake, ye suld stop that fine fiddling and dancing ; for ye may weel believe that thae kind of things gi'e nae great pleasure to the dead !”

Having thus delivered herself, she made a low curtsy, and brushed out of the house, leaving the company in that state of painful excitement which, in such circumstances, even the ravings of a poor deranged wanderer could not fail to produce.

In this state we too will leave them for the present, and proceed with the party, who set off on the preceding day in search of the bridegroom and his friends. The latter were traced to Rackwick ; but there no intelligence could be gained, except that some days previous, a boat, having on board several sportsmen, had been seen putting off from the shore, and sailing away in the direction of Sule Skerry.

The weather continuing fine, the searching party hired a large boat, and proceeded to that remote and solitary rock, upon which, as they

neared it, they could discover nothing, except swarms of seals, which immediately began to flounder towards the water-edge. Upon landing, a large flock of sea-fowl arose from the centre of the rock with a deafening scream; and, upon approaching the spot, they beheld, with dumb amazement and horror, the dead bodies of the party of whom they had come in search, but so mangled and disfigured by the seals and sea-fowl that they could barely be recognised!

It appeared, that these unfortunates, upon landing, had forgot their guns in the boat, which had slipt from her fastenings, and left them upon the rock, where they had at last perished of cold and hunger.

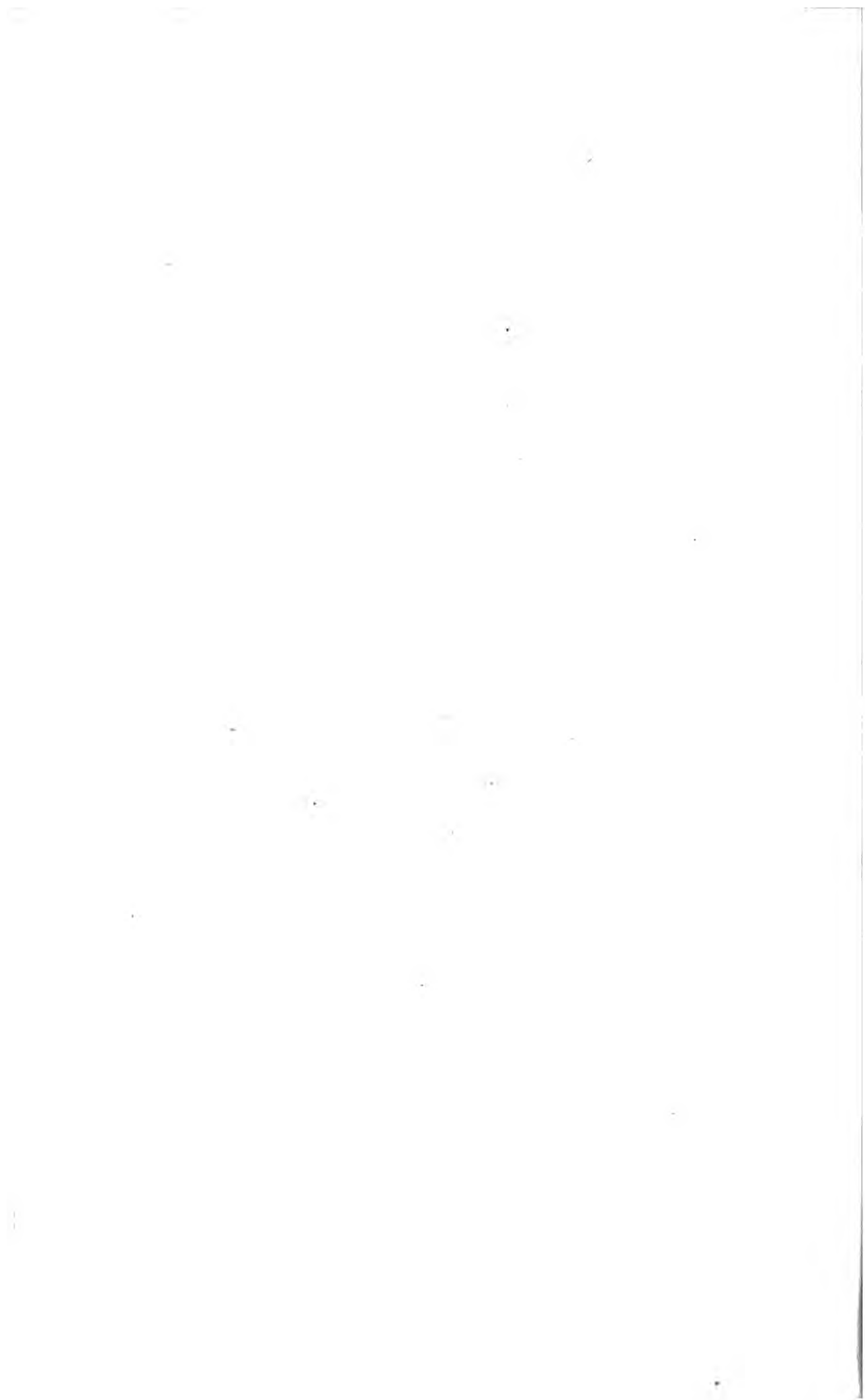
Fancy can but feebly conceive and still less can words describe the feelings with which the lost men must have beheld their bark drifting away over the face of the waters, and found themselves abandoned in the vast solitude of the ocean. Their sensations must have resembled his who wakens in the grave from a death-like trance, to find himself buried alive!

With what agony must they have gazed upon the distant sails, gliding away over the deep, but keeping far aloof from the rock of desolation, and have heard the shrieks which they sent over the flood, in the vain hope of their reaching some distant ship, mocked by the doleful scream of the seafowl! How must their horrors have been aggravated by the far-off view of their native hills, lifting their lonely peaks above the wave, and awakening the dreadful consciousness that they were still within the grasp of humanity, yet no arm stretched forth to save them; while the sun was riding high in the heavens, and the sea basking in his beams below, and Nature looking with reckless smiles upon their dying agonies!

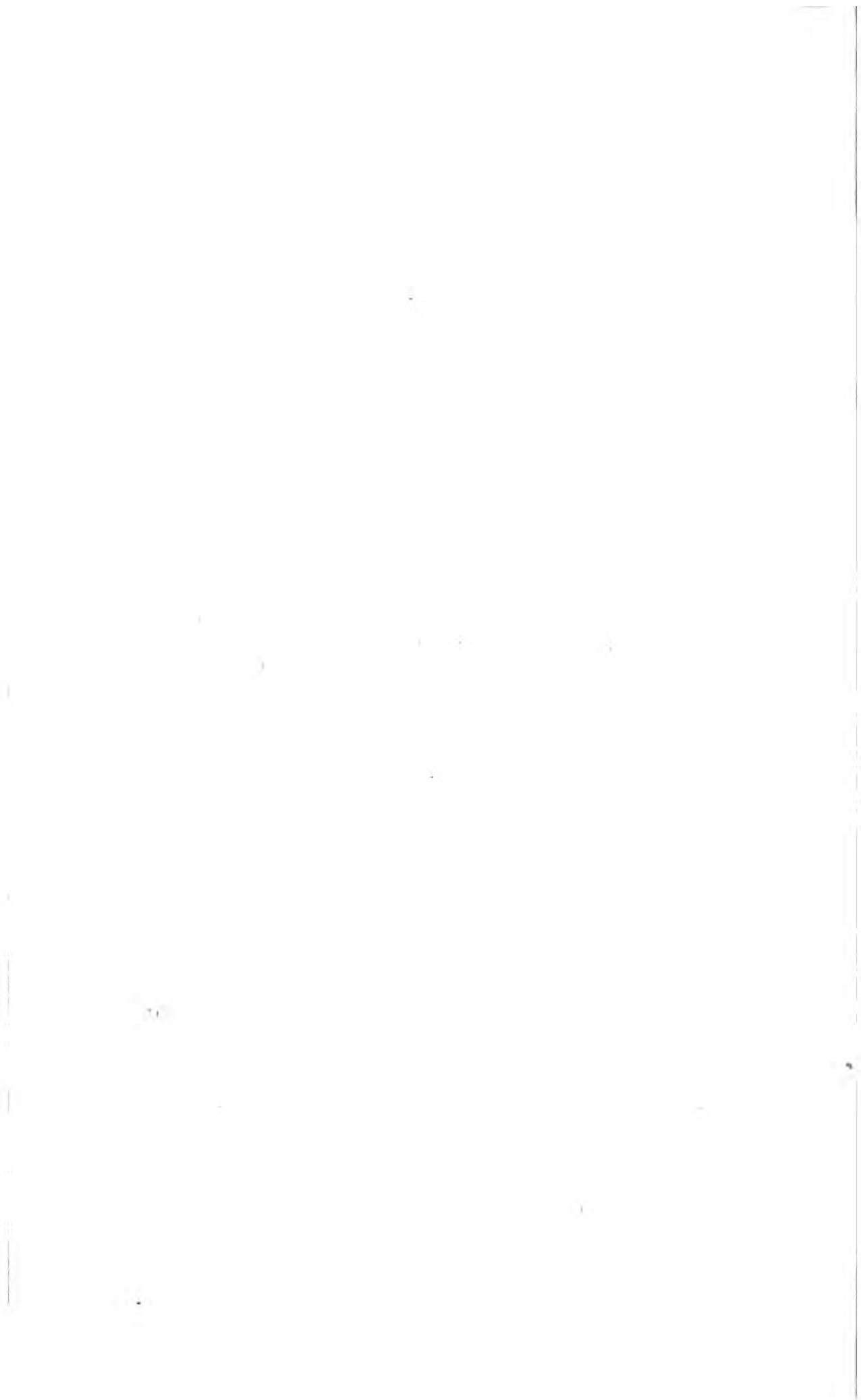
As soon as the stupor of horror and amazement had subsided, the party placed the dead bodies in their boat, and, crowding all sail, stood for the Orkneys. They landed at night upon the beach, immediately below the house where the wedding-guests were assembled; and there, while they were debating in what manner to pro-

ceed, were overheard by the insane wanderer, the result of whose visit has already been recorded.

She had scarcely left the house, when a low sound of voices was heard approaching. An exclamation of joy broke from the bride. She rushed out of the house with outstretched arms to embrace her lover, and the next moment, with a fearful shriek, fell upon his corpse! With that shriek reason and memory passed away for ever! She was carried to bed delirious, and died towards morning. The bridal was changed into a burial, and Helen Waters and her lover slept in the same grave!



THE BACHELOR.



THE BACHELOR.

“ Funny and free are the married man’s revelries.”

Anon.

SINGLE-BLESSEDNESS indeed! The phrase was surely invented in derision of the miseries of unmarried men. No doubt one often hears of the happiness of being exempted from the cares of a family,—of being one’s own master,—of roaming about the world free and uncontrolled, and, like the bee, sipping sweets from every flower. This is a rare picture indeed,—the lights without the shadows,—the rose without the thorn. But let us come to particulars.

Suppose our happy man to be in the prime

of life, and possessed of a handsome fortune. To marry or not to marry? that is the question. Ay, that is the question betwixt his friends, videlicet, heirs-presumptive and certain prudential mothers and their no less prudential daughters. Betwixt these worthies he becomes the subject of a scramble, and the wretched man finds himself regarded by both parties with much the same sort of fondness that the fox feels for the goose, or with which

“ The sea-dog dotes
Upon the small sweet fry that round him floats :”

add to which the misery of knowing, that, whether he marry or not, he must of necessity gratify some of the matrimonial or anti-matrimonial fortune-hunters.

But suppose our Bachelor without the advantage of fortune; in that case he will surely be allowed to live in peace, and enjoy his single-blessedness unmolested? “ Most vain and impotent conclusion !” He will then most probably be persecuted by the abominable affection of

some ugly woman, who prefers love in a cottage to celibacy in a garret,—whose peculiar excellencies consist of a pug-nose, freckled skin, and carrotty locks, and who, having all her life fished for a husband without obtaining even a nibble, makes a dead set at our unsuspecting friend, who, never once dreaming of the conquest he has made, accepts of her invitations to dinners, teas, and suppers at her father's house, where she feeds him with all manner of “amatory food,” and assails him with “nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles.”

Things are going on in this manner, when, some unlucky evening, he is decoyed to walk with her in the garden, amid whose shady alleys no friendly warning announces, “Mantraps set here ;” and, having hooked him by the arm, commences her attack upon his heart by drawing him into a most sentimental conversation on domestic enjoyments and the fireside-pleasures of married life, which ends by her giving hints, too *Irish* to be misunderstood, that he has inspired her with the tender passion.

At this most inauspicious moment and most appalling avowal, while our Joseph is standing spell-bound in a trance of horror, and while the lady, affecting the blush, is leaning her head upon his bosom, her father, by the most singular *chance* in the world, stumbles upon the pair in a state of wonderment which knows no bounds,—trusts, however, that the gentleman's intentions are honourable, and demands an immediate explanation of the scene before him. Alas! in the confusion of the moment, no satisfactory explanation can be given, but something is mumbled about intentions being strictly honourable. Thus the wretched man most probably has the blessed alternatives of a marriage with the object of his abomination, or a lawsuit with her father and a duel with her brother. Should he, however, be fortunate enough to escape such perils as these, it will only be to sink lower in the scale of degradation. If he lives in lodgings, he will be haunted by the genius of matrimony in the humble person of his landlady or her daughter; and if he occupies a house or flat

of his own, though the insurance-office may warrant him against fire and housebreaking, it will scarcely, at any premium, secure him against the matrimonial snares of his maid-servant.

Never shall I put faith in the power of mortal man to live and die a bachelor after the fate of my old friend Adjutant Martin, of whom, as he happens to be a character, I shall give a rough outline.

With the history of his early youth I am unacquainted; but, when about the age of twenty, he was enlisted in the —— regiment of foot by its recruiting-sergeant, then stationed at Edinburgh; and never was there a more promising recruit, or one more after the sergeant's own heart. His progress in the goose-step was truly edifying,—he soon became the right-hand man of the awkward-squad, and wheeled to the right-about with a promptitude and decision worthy the imitation of all statesmen who cannot conscientiously remain in office. With these exalted endowments, and as much scholar-craft as enabled him to read and write so as to be under-

stood, he obtained the rank of lieutenant and the situation of adjutant.

At the period of our first acquaintance, he might be about the age of forty,—lank and long,—spare and square,—every part of his face and figure indicating a most thorough contempt for the curve. When he walked, the swing of his arms might be a pattern to all good pendulums, and the general regularity of his movements might put to shame that of steam-propelled machinery. Nothing could be said against his moral character ; and yet I suspect he considered the whole duty of man comprehended, not in the Ten Commandments, but in the Eighteen Manœuvres. I fear he did not look upon nature with a “ poet’s eye ;” for the only occasion on which I ever heard him express any thing like satisfaction at fine scenery, was once while gazing on a long line of poplar-trees, which, being at a considerable distance, bore no small resemblance to a regiment of grenadiers.

I never heard the adjutant make an attempt at wit, although he was often the cause, and, in

some cases, seemed to have a perception of it in others; as, for instance, in the colonel of his regiment. The colonel's wit certainly could not be said to be superficial, at least it did not lie upon the surface; on the contrary, it was too deep to be perceived or appreciated by any officer in the regiment, with the single exception of the adjutant, who generally seated himself at the mess-table on the colonel's left hand, and was the first who, by his laugh, announced to the wondering mess that a good thing had been said. Regularly as the responses of the clerk in the service of the church, or as thunder follows lightning, did the adjutant's roar follow the colonel's flash; and, as not to be delighted at the joke of a commanding-officer would at once indicate a want of taste, policy, and politeness, no sooner did the adjutant make the accustomed signal, than we took the time from him, and the ready laugh ran along the table in the manner of a *feu-de-joie*. In addition to these characteristics, the adjutant was the very *beau ideal* of a bachelor,—looking upon marriage as at once unmi-

litary and unmanly, and holding married men in great and marvellous contempt.

But, alas ! the vanity of all human resolutions and principles ! At a ball given in honour of the regiment in a certain country town in England, his evil genius in an evil hour prompted him to sport his figure, and to lead a stiff, starched, and military-looking maiden to the head of a country-dance, (for at that time Cat-faced Quadrille had not, in this country, begun to dally with the graces). The music struck up, and away he started with such mechanical vivacity, that his legs moved for all the world like those of the little figures which the Scotch call " Tammy Loupers," when you pull the string suspended betwixt them ; and with the most unrelenting agility did he whisk about his fair partner, to the infinite amusement and delight of the company.

From the night that beheld Moscow in flames may be dated the decline and fall of Napoleon ; and from the night of that ball commenced the falling-off and apostacy of the adjutant from bachelor principles. On that fatal occasion did the

lady break ground before the hitherto impregnable citadel of his heart ; but whether she made her advances by the slow operations of sapping and mining, or, after having made a breach in the outworks, carried it by assault, certain it is, that, in somewhat less than a month, to the amazement and horror of his bachelor friends, his partner in the dance became his partner for life !



RECOLLECTIONS OF IRELAND.



RECOLLECTIONS OF IRELAND.

“ Erin! the tear and the smile in thine eyes
Blend like the rainbow that hangs in thy skies.”

MOORE.

“ YOU'RE welcome to the *sod*, comrade! Ireland is the place for a soldier!” exclaimed a private of the — regiment to his companion upon our landing at Donaghadee.

I had heard the same sentiment expressed before, and had long wished to visit a land so famed for hospitality, and of whose inhabitants wit and vivacity are the universal birthright.

We had marched by easy stages from Glasgow to Portpatrick; and though its distance from Ireland is very short, yet the latter being to me

a new country, excited much of that interest which new scenes and society naturally inspire.

We disembarked about eleven o'clock at night, and on the following morning mustered for parade, preparatory to proceeding on the route to Armagh.

Although a regiment on the march is a sight dear to the populace in all countries, in none does it seem so much so as in Ireland. As soon as the music struck up, and we began to move off, men and women, chubby-faced youths, and children almost in a state of nudity, formed our escort, and accompanied us upon the line of march; nor was it until we had proceeded several miles, that the last of our numerous retinue had dropped away.

We dined at the town of Newton-Stewart, and, after discharging our bill, gave to the waiter what we considered a liberal allowance. He seemed amazed, and asked for whom it was intended. Supposing that our generosity had exceeded his expectations, we re-assured him that it was all for himself; and were therefore not a

little surprised at hearing him exclaim, upon leaving the room, "Well, gentlemen, upon my soul it's shabby, shabby, shabby!" This was the first specimen of Hibernian politeness which we had met with, and we enjoyed it not a little.

From Newton-Stewart we proceeded by Belfast and Lisburn to Armagh, the capital of the county of Antrim, and the residence of the Primate of all Ireland,—a place, nevertheless, whose dignity is by no means a compensation for its dulness.

The surrounding country, however, is rather pretty, its green surface undulating like the waves of the sea; and in the immediate vicinity of the town are some pleasure-grounds and a mall, the general resort of the inhabitants, where our band of music performed during the summer evenings.

Shortly after our arrival at Armagh, various detachments to the neighbouring districts were sent from the regiment, to one of which I was appointed, and ordered to march to Aughnacloy, a village about twelve miles from head-quarters.

At this place I received instructions to transmit to Armagh, on the twenty-fourth day of each month, a journal of every day's occurrences. These were trifling and monotonous enough, illustrating nothing so much as the vanity of human life, and consisting of little else than the record of morning and evening parade. Never was editor of a provincial newspaper so much at a loss for news; almost the only varieties of which my columns could boast were the occasional arrivals of convicts under escort, on the march towards Cork, preparatory to embarkation for Botany Bay, whom I had orders to receive in charge, and to supply with a guard of honour to the next stage; and to a journal so barren of incident as mine such arrivals were hailed as leading articles.

The only other occurrences which I had to report were the night-marches and domiciliary visits among the houses of the peasantry, to protect the officers of excise in detecting the illicit distillation of whisky. On these occasions I was obliged to attend in person; and, in the perform-

ance of a painful duty, to behold many a wretched family bereaved of their little means of subsistence,—of the cow which afforded sustenance to a number of children,—the horse and cart by which the cultivation of a small patch of ground was effected,—and the pigs, by the sale of which they were enabled to discharge their rent,—all carried away in part payment of the penalty incurred by their little peccadilloes in the way of smuggling. On such occasions it was truly harrowing to the feelings to hear the cries of the poor women and children, thus left utterly destitute, and reduced to the direful alternatives of begging their way over the world, or of supporting a wretched existence by theft or robbery; but thus it is, that the extreme severity of laws often leads to the commission of crimes greater than those which they would check.

After a residence of nine months at Aughnacloy, I returned to Armagh, from whence the regiment was ordered to Dundalk. Upon arriving there, numerous detachments were again sent out through the surrounding country, and I was

once more appointed to the command of a party, consisting of thirty-seven men and a sergeant.

My seat of government, situated about seven miles west from Dundalk, was called Corcreagh, and consisted of a few miserable thatched huts, of one of which the principal apartment was allotted to me, and the other to such lovers of potheen as could pay for what they drank; in other words, it was a tap-room, from which my ear was ever and anon assailed with the call for "another noggin," and the uproar of a general battle at the discharge of the bill.

The chief duty of my detachment was to furnish a corporal's guard to watch over some gibbets, from which were suspended in chains the bodies of four criminals; of whose crime and punishment the following particulars were related to me.

At the distance of three or four miles from Corcreagh stood the farm-house of Wildgoose-Lodge, inhabited by an old man of the name of Lynch and his family. Lynch being a Protestant, and probably not feeling himself very secure among his Catholic neighbours, kept some

arms in his house ; which circumstance becoming known to the latter, an attempt was made by some marauders to obtain possession of them by breaking into his dwelling. But Lynch, assisted by his sons and the other branches of his family, not only defeated the robbers, but also succeeded in identifying and bringing to justice several of the gang.

This spirited conduct on the part of Lynch was the signal for a conspiracy against him, at the head of which was a Catholic schoolmaster and parish-clerk, named Devan.

As soon as his plans were ripe for execution, by means of anonymous letters, appointing a general rendezvous, and threatening destruction to non-attendants, he succeeded in assembling together upwards of a hundred persons, and some say nearly twice that number ; many of whom, it is believed, were ignorant of the purpose for which they were brought together, but were afraid to disobey the orders which they had received.

It was on a dark winter night that they assembled, and that the purpose of their meeting was made known to them.

In consequence of long-continued and heavy rains, the grounds around Wildgoose-Lodge were completely inundated; but the house itself stood upon a considerable eminence, and there was one circuitous pathway by which alone it could be approached on that occasion.

About midnight the conspirators entered a hut by the wayside, from which they carried off some live coals, and with stealthy steps approached and surrounded the house of Lynch, to which they set fire.

Its inmates consisted of the old man and his family, and some friends then residing with them on a visit; and as the incendiaries were armed with firelocks and pikes, and had completely surrounded the house, escape was rendered impossible.

It is said that a maid-servant appeared at one of the windows with an infant child in her arms, which she held out to Devan, imploring him to save it; but that incarnate fiend rejected the poor girl's prayer in behalf of the helpless innocent, and pushed it back into the fire.

The progress of combustion was accelerated by the nature of the materials which part of the house contained. In a short time it was enveloped in the devouring element, which shot up a column of fire into the sky, and then sunk down into darkness over the roofless and blackened walls, whose ill-fated inmates were consumed to ashes.

Having completed the work of destruction for which they were assembled, the miscreants dispersed under shadow of the night, and Devan, skulking back to his abode, went to bed. He arose in the morning somewhat later than usual, and when the news of the awful catastrophe at Wildgoose-Lodge reached Corcreagh, no one seemed more shocked and surprised than he did; and so well was the secret kept, that for a long time all investigations tending to throw light upon the horrid transaction proved ineffectual. It is remarkable, however, that the first person detected was Devan himself; and still more so, that his fear of discovery was the very cause that led to it.

After the lapse of several months this feeling

became so troublesome, that he quitted his residence, and entered as a labourer in the docks at Dublin, conceiving that he would be less liable to suspicion in the government employ than in any other.

In the hurry of his departure, however, he had dropt some written document, which proved the means of leading to his detection; and he was seized upon by the searchers just as he was about to leave the country altogether, in consequence of a return of his terrors.

Being tried and found guilty upon the fullest evidence, he was sentenced to death, and executed at Wildgoose-Lodge, the scene of his atrocity, where he showed no symptom of penitence, but rather seemed to glory in what he had done; and observing a gentleman present who had exerted himself with a laudable zeal in searching out the incendiaries, addressed him from the scaffold, telling him that his life was watched, and that a price was on his head, and that he would not escape long.

The detection of the ringleader was the pre-

lude to further discoveries, and in a short time twelve of his most guilty associates in crime were executed and hung in chains in the neighbouring villages; three of them at Corcreagh, besides Devan, who was suspended, in "bad eminence," on a gibbet apart from the rest.

The site of this awful spectacle was a few paces from the door of my hut, and, being on rising ground, was seen from a considerable distance all round; and often, when darkness had veiled the horrid exhibition, and when I had retired to rest, my lullaby was the creaking of the chains by which the gibbeted felons swung in the winter-storm.

At length, during a tempestuous night, the gibbets were blown down,—a circumstance which caused a great sensation among the common people, who looked upon it as an intimation from Heaven that justice was satisfied, and that the bodies of the criminals ought to be buried.

The chief magistrate of Dundalk, however, to whom I immediately sent notice of the event, was of a different opinion, and, as no regular

workmen would undertake the odious task of fixing them up again, sent out a party of mounted police, by whom they were once more reinstated in their former position.

To me it seems very questionable whether such exhibitions, long continued, answer any good purpose. Were I to speak from my own feelings, I should say they have a contrary effect, by producing in the mind a familiarity with horror, destructive of the very ends for which they are intended; and, moreover, they inflict pain chiefly on the better members of society, many of whom in the present case they were the means of banishing from their neighbourhood.

In further illustration of their petrifying effects upon the feelings, I may mention, that the mother of Devan, who lived at Corcreagh, and who followed her daily avocations in a field from which she could see her son suspended, was in the habit of directing attention to him, and calling him her brave little Captain!

After a banishment of nine months upon gibbet-guard, my detachment was relieved, and I

marched with the regiment from Dundalk to Dublin, which, notwithstanding its military duties, is a gay and pleasant place for a soldier; and from thence, after a short time, I returned on leave of absence to Scotland.

Feelings of mingled pleasure and pain are blended with my recollections of Ireland,—a country which nature hath covered with blessings, but which man has smitten with a curse.

During the winter of 1817, the first which I passed there, the exhibitions of human misery were more than usually appalling. The number of destitute beings who wandered over the country was immense; many of them, half-famished, tried to appease their hunger by picking up and devouring the skins of potatoes before the doors of the village-huts, where they frequently fainted in consequence of long-continued want. Pestilence, too, (for the typhus-fever, which broke out among the lower orders, could be considered as nothing else,) followed in the wake of Famine, and both, like loosened fiends, carried wo and death over the land. Many of

their homeless victims might be seen lying along the road-sides, each of them canopied by a blanket, propped up with sticks, as a shelter from the storm, and attended by some poor child, to receive the casual charity of the passing traveller.

A great and radical cause of the misery of Ireland is her excessive population, which, again, is immediately attributable to the system of subsetting the lands in small patches, so that a farm not more than sufficient for the comfortable subsistence of one tenant, is burdened with three or four, each of whom by marrying increases the evil in an enormous degree.

The remedy for this state of things is, perhaps, ultimately to be looked for in the progress of education among the people, which, by elevating the standard of public opinion with respect to the affairs of life, and creating a corresponding deference thereto on the part of individuals, will go far to prevent those marriages of misery, which will thus find a check in private feeling and the opinions of society.

In those districts of Ireland which I had an opportunity of seeing, the face of the country is in general of an undulating nature, sufficient to relieve it from the character of flatness, but scarcely to render it picturesque or striking. The rising grounds regularly alternate with hollows; the former being the arable lands, and the latter generally consisting of swamp and peat-moss. After heavy rains, when the low grounds become flooded, the scenery assumes the appearance of an endless succession of islands, through the vistas of which

“ Lake after lake interminably gleam ;”

but the more romantic districts of Wicklow and Killarney I never had an opportunity of visiting.

Considering the remote period to which the Irish trace back their history, there seems a wonderful lack of monuments of antiquity in their county. With the exception of some old towers upon the banks of Lough Neagh, and one or two dilapidated castles erected by Oliver Cromwell, I cannot say that I remember having seen any me-

monials of the past along the line of my excursions over the northern part of the island.

It is difficult to form a correct estimate of the national character of the Irish under the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed ; great crimes, in such a state of things, often arising from feelings praiseworthy in their nature, and only blameable in their excess.

The lower orders, under the exterior of a bluff and blundering simplicity, veil a world of shrewdness and talent. A combative turn seems universal among them ; for I have often observed at their fairs, when two people began to fight, the surrounding crowd, as if compelled by an irresistible sympathy, would in a few minutes be all at loggerheads together.

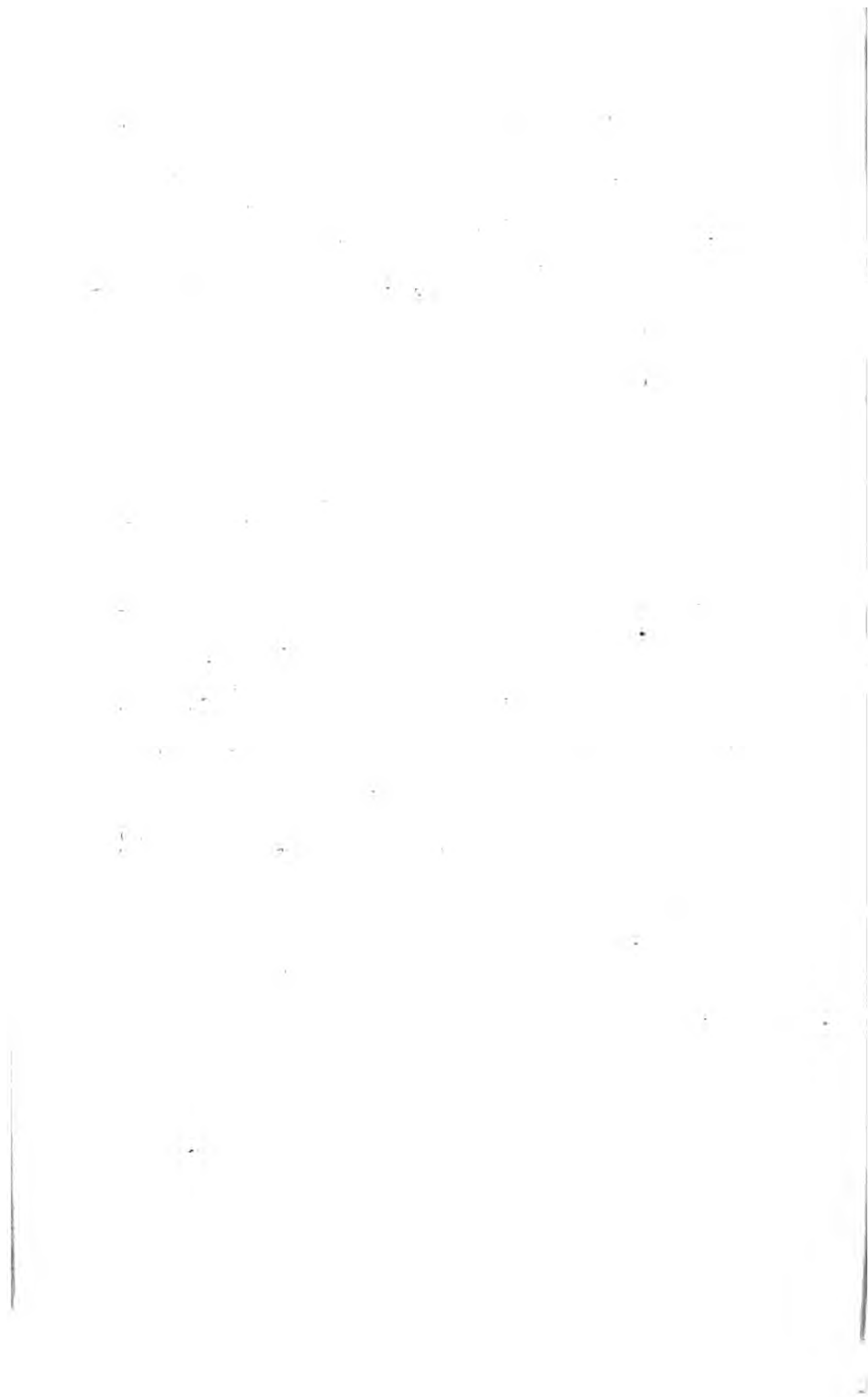
But in these cases there was no appearance of ill-blood either before or after the battle ; nor did I ever know a single instance of insult offered to a gentleman during the period of my residence in Ireland.

It seems somewhat remarkable at first thought, that of a people so gay and joyous as the Irish,

the national music, which we must suppose indicative of national character, should, generally speaking, breathe the very soul of sorrow ; unless, as Burns says,

“ Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure
Thrill the deepest notes of wo.”

To conclude.—The soldier who is sent, as I was, to sojourn in the remote parts of the country, will have no reason to regret the circumstance, and need not languish in solitude. Among the neighbouring gentlemen he will find the most considerate regard for his situation. On their domains he will be invited freely to pursue the sports of the field, he will find their horses and hounds at his service, and at their houses will experience such a warm welcome as will even more than realize all that he has heard of Irish hospitality.



THE BROTHERS.

THE BROTHERS.

“ 'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.”

CAMPBELL.

ALLAN and Eric Macara were twin-brothers, natives of Caithness, where their father, who had been a soldier in his youth, rented a small farm ; but, having a numerous family to provide for, with very inadequate means, the Brothers were early sent from home to seek their fortunes in the world.

Though their upbringing was in every respect the same, they soon showed that dissimilarity of character which proves that there are original differences in the minds as well as in the bodies of

men, and that although education may modify what already exists, it can neither create nor annihilate.

Allan, who was of a bold and restless disposition, was sent to sea, which seemed his proper element; and Eric, who evinced more shrewdness and forethought, was initiated into the mysteries of commerce, and obtained employment in a mercantile house in Holland.

His brother Allan, after passing through the usual period of servitude at sea, was appointed to the command of a revenue-cutter, then stationed on the north coast of Scotland for the suppression of smuggling,—a service for which he was considered well qualified, both from his activity in the duties of his profession, and his acquaintance with the coast and its numerous caves; in which, during the long winter nights, contraband goods were generally secreted by the crews of vessels engaged in the desperate trade of smuggling.

All along the coast of Caithness, like so many watch-towers of the deep, are numerous old castles, perched upon wild and precipitous rocks, al-

most severed from the shore, with which they are so slightly connected by fragments of rock and earth, as, in ancient times, to be rendered only approachable over drawbridges, when they might be considered as so many impregnable fortresses ; in which, during the days of private revenge and hereditary feuds, the Lords of Caithness might laugh at their leaguering foes.

The ruins of one of them may still be seen on the shores of the bay of Freswick, one of the few inlets of the sea, along that high and iron-bound coast, to which vessels can run for shelter in the storm.

At the time to which my tale refers this castle was the occasional residence of its proprietor, a branch of the great family of Sinclair,—a name in which is included nearly the whole aristocracy of the county.

He was a personage of much influence among all classes of society, not merely on account of his possessions, which were great, but also for the superior wisdom and energy of mind which he was believed to possess, to which was added the

imposing effect of a handsome and stately person, and a countenance of that lofty, majestic, and somewhat austere character which commands involuntary awe.

By the higher classes he was regarded with respect, and by the common people with a kind of superstitious veneration.

Indeed they were firmly persuaded that he possessed the gift of the second-sight, which belief he was known to have encouraged; and, as he appears to have been too good a man to have done so for the purpose of maintaining any undue influence among them by intentional deception, it is most likely that he really believed himself imbued with the prophetic spirit.

In returning from a cruise to the south, the cutter commanded by Allan Macara was overtaken by a storm, and put in to the bay of Freswick, where she rode, pretty well sheltered from its violence; and where, in a short time, a boat from the shore brought him an invitation to dine at the castle, such acts of courtesy being everyday observances of the Laird, whose gates no

stranger approached without being invited to enter, and whose hospitality or good offices no wanderer of the deep ever solicited in vain.

Macara availed himself of the invitation, and landed at the castle, where he found a numerous party of ladies and gentlemen assembled from the surrounding neighbourhood, for the purpose of enjoying the Christmas holidays.

The dinner was a profuse display of whatever delicacies the country could produce; and in the evening the party adjourned to the great hall, where the stirring strains of the Laird's own piper soon produced their proper effect, and dancing commenced with all the spirit of the olden time.

But while mirth and gaiety reigned within, without were tempest and night, and the roaring sea, which, lashed into fury by the gale, held fearful revelry below, and, during the pauses of the dance, might be heard bursting in thunder on the rock, from which the castle, pinnacled on high, was leaning o'er the deep, and nodding to the storm; and ever and anon the scream of the

seafowl, as they wheeled and soared upon the gale, rose like a wail above the dead, or shrieks from the foundering wreck over the midnight waters ; while the pibroch, " savage and shrill," screamed chorus from within, and the sounds of mirth mingled in strange and frightful contrast with the wild uproar and spectre-voices of the night.

But the company were too much occupied with their amusement to heed the storm, and especially Macara, who danced as if he would never tire, and indeed seemed extravagantly happy.

At this time the Laird was sitting beating time to the music with his feet, and looking with smiles of satisfaction upon the felicity of his guests, when all at once a change came over his countenance, sudden as a summer-cloud upon the sunshine of Heaven. The smile waned and withered on his lip,—his eyes dilated into a stony glare, and their orbs grew fixed upon the face of Macara as he whirled through the dance.

His eldest daughter, observing the change upon her father's face, and, ascribing it to the effect of some sorrowful thought which she knew occa-

sionally crossed his mind, drew near, and, seating herself beside him, endeavoured by conversation to rouse him from his reverie.

“Methinks, father,” said she, “your guest, Captain Macara, seems very happy to-night; surely some of our fair friends must have inspired him,—he dances as if dancing his last.”

“Thy words are prophetic,” replied her father with a deep sigh; “he is indeed dancing his last, and this is his final night at banquet or at ball!”

“Good heavens, father!” exclaimed the maiden, “you terrify me! what mean ye by these dreadful words?”

“I would not,” rejoined the seer, “that words of mine should pain thy young heart, but when the awful vision is upon my soul it may not be concealed. Oh! may'st thou never know, as I do, from fearful experience, that the gift of prescience is a curse. Others have their days devoted to joy and nights redeemed from care, but to me, from the visitations of the phantom future, no time or place is sacred. In the brightness of the morn I see the gloom of the coming eve, and in

the lustres of the festal hall the glare of the dim dead-lights. In the beaming eye and the face of bloom I behold the wan cheek and the benighted ball, and in the bridal robe the long listless shroud. Even now it is swathed, breast-high, around yon young sailor, whose phantom is gliding past me in pale similitude, all dripping from the cold sea-wave, and he, unconscious thereof, is revelling through the dance, while death is at the door !”

When the hour of phantasy had passed away, the old man’s countenance gradually became composed ; and as no one, save his daughter, had been a witness to his words, the happiness of the party was not disturbed.

They did not break up until the morning was far advanced, when Macara left the castle, and, not without considerable danger, as the sea was running high, and the gale but little abated, returned to his ship.

He had not been long on board when a suspicious-looking vessel was seen standing in towards the Pentland Frith. He immediately proceeded in chase, and, upon clearing Duncansbay-Head

and entering the Frith, he discovered her to be a Dutch smuggler; and, though she made every effort to escape under a press of sail, he gained upon her rapidly, and at length attempted to bring her to by firing a gun. But the smugglers seemed determined rather to perish than yield, and, after returning the fire of the cutter, bore away towards one of those raging whirlpools with which the Pentland Frith abounds, denominated *roosts*, and formed by the collision of currents, which, running in opposite directions and meeting together in full force, jet up into enormous breakers, fatal to the bark that is carried into their vortex.

The pursuers, who seemed equally determined that their prey should not escape, came up with the smuggler just as she had reached the margin of the roost, and, fixing her with grappling-irons amidst flashes of annihilating fire at the muzzles of the guns, succeeded in boarding her; but, while in the act of doing so, both ships were carried into the roost, where, amidst shout and groan, and the roar of breakers and the clash of

swords, the went down together into that boiling cauldron of the deep, where all on board immediately perished.

Several of the bodies were afterwards cast on shore, and, when the sea gave up its dead, Allan Macara was found lying on the beach, immediately below his father's house, locked in the arms of another man, who was identified as his brother.

The latter, from his knowledge of the coast of Caithness, had been sent from Holland by his employers along with the smugglers as a guide to its caves of concealment.

The Brothers had thus met in the scene of carnage, and, recognizing each other in the mortal strife, had only time to embrace, and, in that meeting of a moment, to bid an everlasting farewell !

FIRST LOVE.



FIRST LOVE.

“ There’s not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling’s dull decay ;
'Tis not on youth’s smooth cheek the blush alone that fades so
fast,

But the tender bloom of heart is gone ere youth itself be past.”

BYRON.

FIRST Love ! What a world of memory lies in these two brief words, and what a host of emotions do they awaken, giving us back at a glance the visions of our youth, and crowding into a moment the day-dreams of years !

What heart does not recur with a melancholy joy, with feelings that vibrate betwixt a smile and a tear, to the memory of its first glowing passion,—compared to which all that after-life

has to bestow seems “flat, stale, and unprofitable !”

And what although it be suggested to the enamoured youth that the object of his affections has an obliquity of vision, and that it is matter of delicate doubt whether the colour of her hair approaches nearest to that of carrots or of sand. Is not one tress of that hair more precious to him than the gold which, in his eyes, it resembles? and, worn in his bosom, is it not the chain that binds his heart? And is not that cast of the eye, which the sneering world denominates a squint, to him a sweet, modest, “sidelong look of love,” which renders her doubly interesting?

To him she is beautiful at all times, in all places, and in all her phases,—whether robed in the dishabille of a morning-gown, making the tea or knitting a stocking,—or at the brilliant pageant of the midnight-ball, rustling in satin, and floating through the quadrille,—or bouncing, all blowzed, along the country-dance, till the dew-drops glitter on her brow, which seem to him a coronal of pearls, or, trickling over her rosy

cheeks, are, by a brief process of the chemistry of love, immediately rendered into rose-water.

And laugh not at this, ye profane, nor seek to withdraw the veil of enchantment from his heart, since, if happiness consists in being well deceived, and,

“ If ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

But if love thus makes us dupes, it also makes us knowing ones. Only mark the enamoured youth when seated betwixt a jealous father and a kind condescending daughter. On such occasions his face has two phases, such as are sometimes exhibited by the moon; for, while the side next the father is in a state of eclipse, from which the light of gaiety is chased away by that sadness of the countenance by which it is said the heart is made better, the other side is ogling the daughter, and basking in the sunshine of her smiles.

Yet love, the “ flower of human joys,” is not without its thorns. Who does not remember, when seated next the girl of his heart, being

troubled in mind by the unwelcome intrusion of some "stout gentleman" on her other side, whose small talk and soft nonsense whispered in her ear seemed to be but too graciously received, and in the corner of whose eye "lurked a *devil*," which seemed to have bewitched her, and which he wished, in the bitterness of his heart, were laid in the Red Sea. Has he not, while escorting her home, taxed her with partiality to the stranger, and wondered alike at his impudence and her affability? Has not a quarrel ensued, and a *sulking* for days, and, when at last a reconciliation took place, was there not something in it that proved an irresistible inducement to quarrel again?

But far from the crowded haunts of men, and amidst the seclusions of nature, are the proper scenes of love. There, with the first "gentle mistress of the heart," how sweet to wander forth at breezy morn or dewy eve, when the voice of Spring invites to the feast of life,—or when the longest summer day seems all too short,—or in the pale autumn, serene even to sadness, to linger

amidst fading bowers and falling leaves, until the evening star rises to “witness and record our vows in Heaven,”—or, when the long winter night stoops down, in shade and storm, to sit by the cheerful fire, hanging upon the sweet voice of her we love, as it flows forth in the wild and witching melody of ancient song !

... The love which we feel in later life is but as the shadow of the first, and perhaps derives its principal charm from being associated in recollection with that of our youth.

The moralist may preach about the sweets of friendship, and the calm chastened feelings which succeed to the troubled joys of youthful passion, but he will preach in vain. It is, doubtless, very allowable for gentlemen of a *certain age* to make the most of the small reversion of pleasure which remains to them out of their wasted fortune, and to persuade themselves, if they can, that the interest is better than the principal ; but their arguments will have no weight with others, until backed by those of Time, or, in other words, until we are as old as themselves :—

“ Ne'er tell me of glories serenely adorning
The decline of our day, the calm eve of our night ;
Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning,—
Its clouds and its tears are worth evening's last light.”

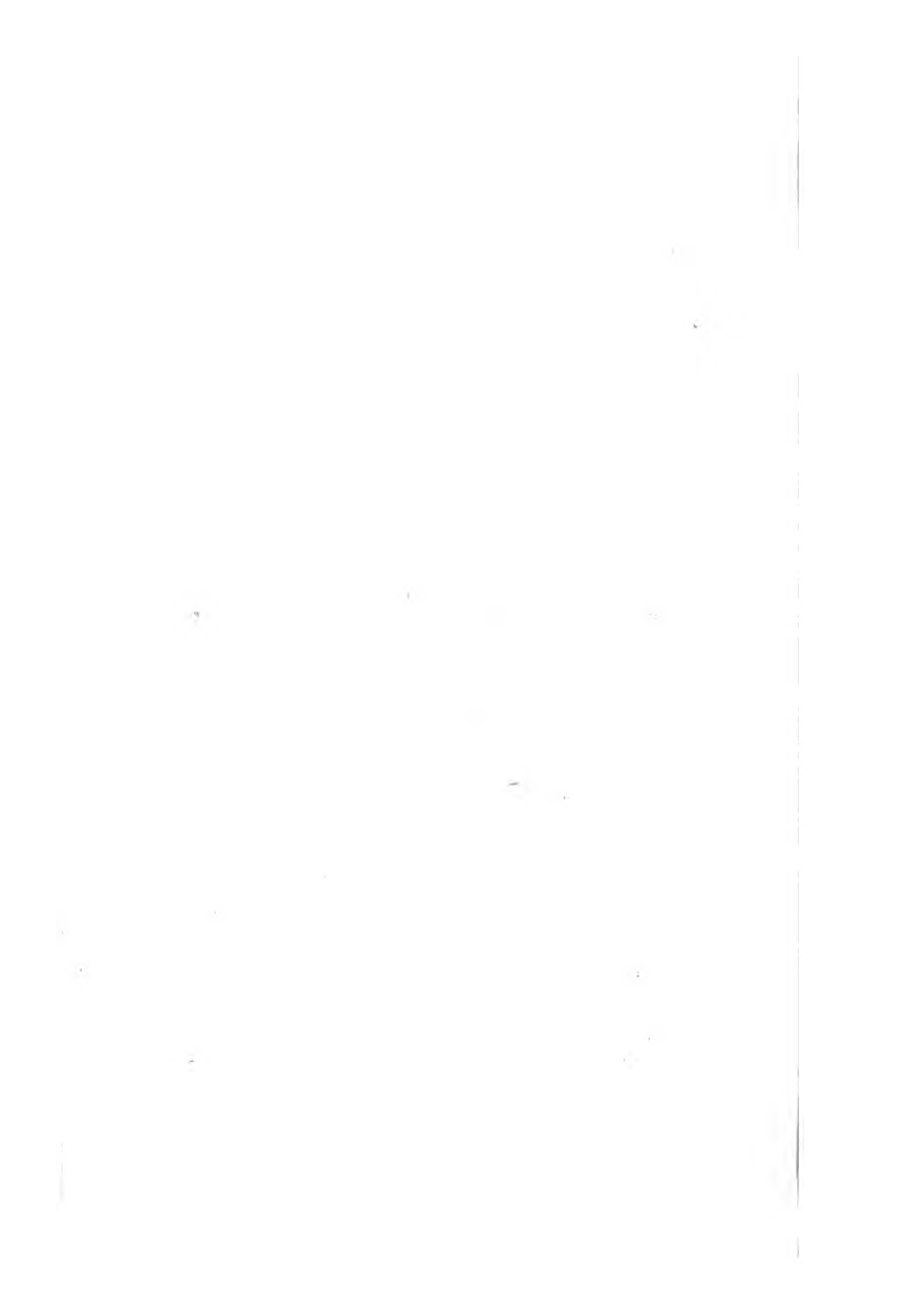
First Love ! thou visitant from Heaven ! whither art thou fled with all thine angel-retinue of nameless, undefined, but blessed emotions ? Where now the flushings of the cheek, the wild beatings of the heart, the sweet delirium, and the trance of joy ? They are gone—all gone ! all, save their memory, which rises through the “ shades of other years” on the hour of reverie and the lonely night.

Ah ! then, indeed, they are ours again,—the fair faint faces that glimmer on our dreams,—the echoes of voices hushed and gone,—the light of smiles that are set for ever, and the waving of playful tresses, now withered in the grave !

After-life may have its joys ; mirth and wine may still gladden the heart, and fame may sooth the soul with dreams of immortality, but the end of that mirth is heaviness. Fame is a phantom that leads us a weary chase from height to height, only to be precipitated into the grave ; while

Love, First Love, the growth of life's spring-time, in spirits unbroken and hearts unseared, is blessed in the enjoyment and the retrospect, and in the latest dream of remembrance is worth them all.

A DAY IN THE ORKNEYS.



A DAY IN THE ORKNEYS.

—————"The northern isles,
Placed far amidst the melancholy main."

THOMSON.

AGAIN, again my steps are on the hills! During the last half-hour I have been wading through the long heath which waves upon the mountain, and have at last reached a green knoll, ycleped "the Wart," which crowns its summit; the view from which will afford me ample compensation for my labour.

The spot is carved all over with the full-length names and initials of its numerous visitors; and to people who look upon things with the mere natural eye, would be considered un-

worthy of a moment's notice. To me, however, it is interesting; for I fancy that I detect, even in these "frail memorials," the feeling, that we would not be forgotten, which lurks in the depths of the human heart:—

"Their names, their years spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply."

It is a calm and somewhat sultry evening in the month of August, of that twilight softness peculiar to an Orcadian autumn, which steals over these islands in mellowed beauty, like the shade of the departed summer. Around me are the mountain-solititudes, whose silence is only broken by the hum of the home-returning bee, or the moan of the distant wave in the west, where "deep utters its voice to deep."

In the distance is the ocean, spreading its calm bright expansion all around to the horizon, and sprinkled with islands, some of which are seen stretching in a blue line along its bosom, and others rearing their gigantic cliffs into the evening sky, and blushing in the sunset-glow.

Here are long and almost tideless bays, with their green, flat, and fairy-like islets, embosomed among the hills, and sleeping in their cold dark shadow ; and there the prisoned waters rush wildly through their narrow channels, and foam in fetters. Far in the north I see the last land betwixt me and the pole. Lakes and streams, those reflecting mirrors of nature, are glancing back the sunbeams upon the eye in long and dazzling lines. Several of the islands would seem united together, but for the silvery spots of water glittering here and there betwixt them. The various friths by which they are intersected are mottled with innumerable boats, all bound for the ancient city of Kirkwall, the capital of the Isles, and the site of the great annual meeting called the Lammas Fair, which has already commenced, and continues during a fortnight, and which may be considered the carnival of the Orkneys. From the summit of the mountain where I now repose,—Wideford Hill,—I command a fine view of the town, with its venerable cathedral of St Magnus, and the ruined palaces

of the Earls and Bishops of Orkney, which lend a sad but hallowed influence to the scene.

The town itself is paltry ; but one part of it, named by courtesy the "Broad Street," has an open space on one side, which is occupied during the fair by several rows of tents ; some of them delighting and riveting the eyes of the fair Orcadians with the most gaudy and bright-coloured articles of female dress, and others displaying jewellery, gewgaws, gingerbread, and various other articles, suited to the tastes of all ages and classes.

Among these tents, and also through the other parts of the town, the tide of life pours during the whole day. Sale-rooms display their flags,—auctioneers lift up their voices in the streets,—St Magnus' bells are ringing,—and taverns and ale-houses resound with the sounds of fiddling and dancing from morning till night and from night till morning ; and (oh ! blessed reverse of the customs of other countries !) in these happy islands the fair sex invite their swains to the taverns, and, well knowing that the road to their hearts

lies through their stomachs, stuff them with bread and cheese,—articles with which every damsel, as she hopes to be married, comes well provided. In return for this the grateful and susceptible youths lead their blooming partners to the dance, and trip it on the “fantastic toe” to the strains of an Orpheus, (for his music would set the very beasts a-dancing,) who performs on the violin at the moderate rate of one halfpenny per reel, jig, or strathspey.

Every young man of spirit takes care to provide himself with a *chère amie* during the fair, who is called a Lammas Sister; but who permits, and doubtless expects, something more than mere brotherly love.

The sun has now gone down, and given place to the long soft twilight. The calm air is vocal with the choral sounds of the snipe, the plover, the curlew, and other wild birds of the hill, to which the wilder screams of the seafowl give response from the shore. But it is time for me to return, and make the best of my way to Kirkwall; for, now that I think of it, there is to be a

ball there this very night. The evening grows dusky ; but already I begin to hear the hum of the metropolis. I have now reached the centre of the town, and find myself standing “ under the Rose,” the sign-painting of which, though it cannot by any aid of the imagination sweeten the odours with which I am assailed, any more than the effects of fire can be charmed away by thinking on the “ frosty Caucasus,” yet announces an inn, where my outraged nose may find refuge, and from which in a short time I issue forth, indifferently well equipped for the ball.

About the centre of the Broad Street stands a quaint-looking building, containing a masonic lodge, the county-jail, and the town-hall, which last also serves for a ball-room. Alas ! that joy and sorrow should thus dwell within the very same walls ; that the poor prisoner, in his dungeon-cell, should have the horrors of his situation aggravated by his vicinity to the mirth and music of which he must not partake, and which can awaken no other echo in his breast than the groans with which he responds to them !

Ascending the well-known stair, I hear the inspiring strains of the violin, and now the recollections and feelings of my dancing-school days flow back upon my heart,—hallowed be their memory, for they were the happiest of my life! What is the love of after-years to that which I then felt? What, but a troubled passion mingled with a base alloy! People may laugh as they please, but if there be one gleam of a pure and sacred feeling which deserves the name of love in this weary world, bear witness the blushing cheek and beating heart of boyhood, that it is—let me write the words with reverence—*Child-Love!*

With what strange and mingled feelings of pleasure and pain, after a long lapse of years, do I once more enter the old hall, the scene of so many happy nights in my early youth! It is still the same as of yore, though to my eyes it does not now appear a place of such *vast* dimensions as it then did. At the very first glance over the room I behold some of my old sweet-hearts, or Lammas sisters; but the rogues have

got the start of me, and are all married. But who have we here?—as I live, the identical old ladies who were old ladies twenty years ago; still blooming like perennial roses, occupying the same favourite corner which they occupied then, while so many of the young and fair have passed away; some of them scattered over the world, and some gone the dark way of all. Well, well, there is no help; they have only left the hall a little sooner, and have gone to sleep a short time before us.

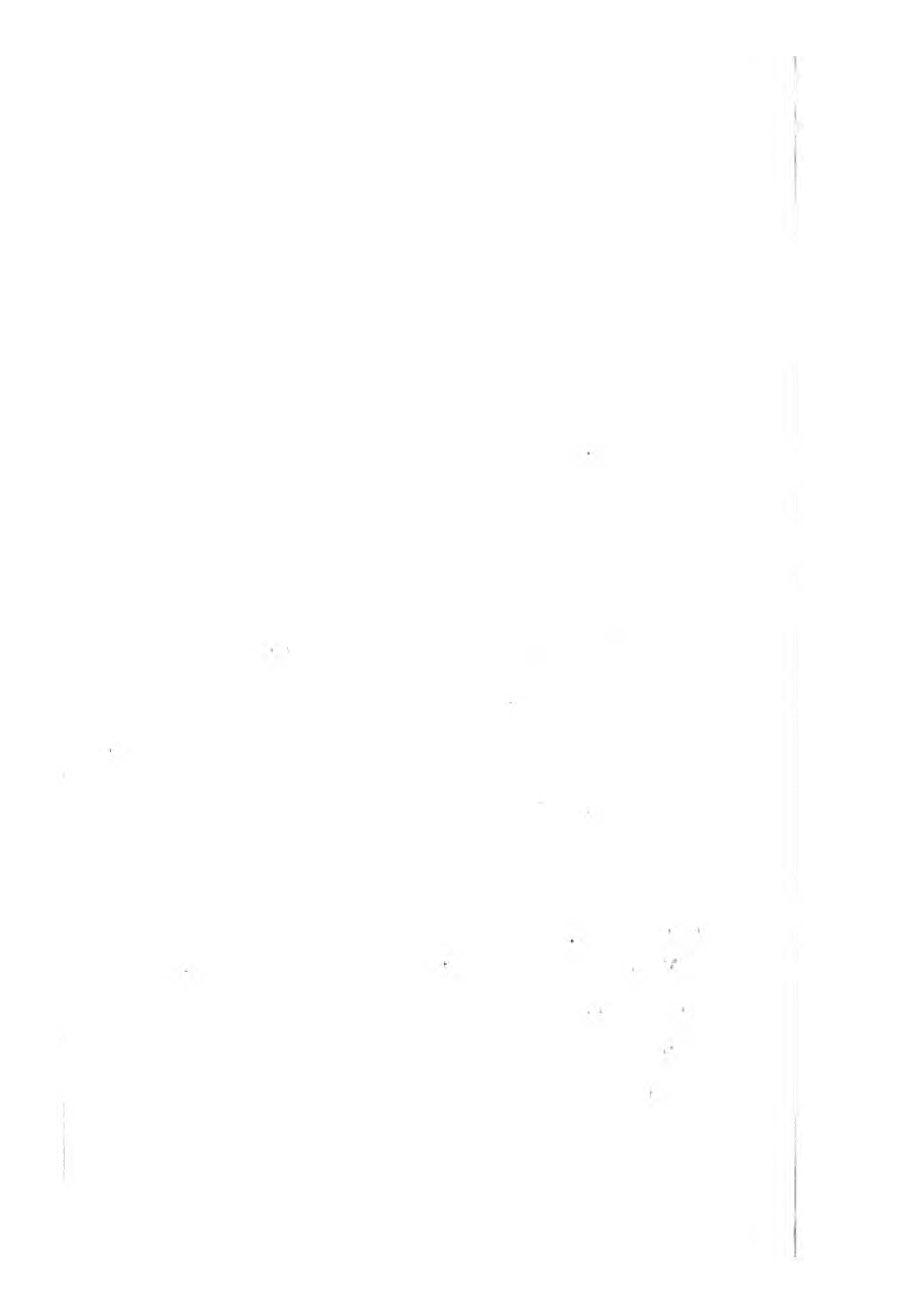
But the night wears apace, the matrons adjust their shawls and arise to depart, the younger nymphs follow in their train, the music ceases, the sound of their foot-falls die away, and their voices wax faint in the night. One group only lingers behind the rest, and urge me to be one of their party at supper; but, no, no; excuse me, my dear ladies; I am well acquainted with the excellence of your tables, of the matchless ales brewed and bottled by your fair selves, of your delicious smoked geese and cabbage, and your exquisite tempting mutton-hams; but though

these elegant luxuries might well tempt an "angel from his sphere," I must forswear them all, if I would not ensure the nocturnal visitations of troubled dreams.

So saying, I glide away to the Rose inn, where, previous to repose, I jot down this hurried sketch of the day, and now bid the reader a good night!



THE YOUNG POET.



THE YOUNG POET,

A FRAGMENT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“ Ah ! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steeps where Fame’s proud temple stands afar !”

BEATTIE.

“ It is pleasant,” says Byron, “ to win one’s laurels by blood or ink.” Of the two ways, however, the latter seemed to me the *more* pleasant, and by it, therefore, I resolved to rise into fame.

My modest ambition was to become merely the greatest poet of this or any other age. It appeared to me that there was still one little spot upon the very pinnacle of Parnassus which remained unoccupied, and I shrewdly suspected that I was

the favoured person destined by nature to fill it up.

During my fits of the muse I produced three Sonnets to the Moon, upon which I bestowed prodigious pains, and sent without signature to the editor of a Monthly Magazine.

Words cannot express the feverish state of mind with which I panted for the day of publication. Sleep fled from my pillow, and I passed the long nights in waking reveries on the panegyrics with which the editor would usher into the world, and the public receive, the first-born of my brain.

At length the eventful morning arrived, and I hurried away to the place of publication, where I purchased the Magazine; but, afraid to trust my feelings, which were wrought up to the highest pitch of expectation and excitement, I did not venture to look into its pages till I returned home, and was snugly closeted in my own writing-chamber.

There, with a trembling hand and beating heart, did I unfold the precious pages, and scan-

ned over the list of their contents. Was I awake ! that I did not discover among them my Sonnets to the Moon ?—I rubbed my eyes, and carefully perused the contents a second time, and to as little purpose. I was bewildered, and sat for some moments in a kind of stupor. At length, rousing myself again, I looked over the “ Notices to Correspondents,” and, sure enough, I there observed the following acknowledgment:—“ Among other trashy effusions, we have received three ‘ Sonnets to the Moon,’ the first one beginning thus,—

‘ Thou beauteous silver medal which the night
Wears on her vesture, buttoned with the stars.’

These lines speak for themselves, and smell so strongly of the shop as to indicate beyond a doubt that the author is a tailor, whose *goose* will never waft him to the heights of Parnassus.”

Had a mine of gunpowder been sprung beneath my feet the shock could not have exceeded that produced by this accursed witticism of the critical wag. A flash of horror shot through my brain,

my head became dizzy, and, had I not caught hold of a table, I should certainly have sunk upon the ground.

By the sneers of such critics many a rising genius has been nipped in the bud, and the tender plant, which, under the sunshine of favour, would have soared forth into a goodly tree, hath perished beneath the withering breath of Satire.

But I, being made of "sterner stuff," was not to be so disposed of, and, after giving vent to my feelings of rage in a round of hearty curses upon my self-constituted judge, sat down quietly, determined to double my exertions, to write more sonnets, taking care at the same time to preserve the "firstlings of the flock," and to try my fate in the pages of some other periodical, weekly, monthly, or quarterly.

Meanwhile, before exposing my productions to the unrelenting eye of public criticism, I determined to submit them to the judgment of some young friends, who, like myself, were ambitious of poetic honours.

If I had harboured any doubts of my own li-

terary merits, the verdict of my poetical jury would have removed them. They lauded my verses to the skies, and, at the conclusion of their panegyrics on my effusions, generally favoured me with a rehearsal of some of their own; to which politeness obliged me to listen with forced smiles instead of yawns; for it was truly a weariness of the flesh to hear them spouting their miserable drivel.

In this respect, however, as I afterwards discovered, we were much upon a par, and, while the most fulsome compliments passed among us, we secretly despised each other's productions.

Nor was this much to be wondered at, when such poets as Dryden, Pope, and Goldsmith, were the objects of our avowed contempt; and few indeed were the bards, even of the highest reputation, who found favour in our sight. Of this happy number, however, was Coleridge, of whose "Ancient Mariner" I condescended to write an imitation, which I sent to the editor of a periodical. Not finding it, however, in the body of the work, I consulted, as formerly, the Notices to

Correspondents, among which I read the following:—

“ The scribbler who writes an imitation of the ‘ Ancient Mariner’ has surely been bit by a mad poet, his verses having nothing but the madness of that extraordinary production. He seems to think that poetry consists in quaint conceits, similes that have no similitude to any thing in heaven above or on earth beneath, and in fancies vague, dreamy, and undefined; and, certainly, if obscurity be a principal source of the sublime, his effusions must be allowed to possess that quality in the highest degree, they being imbued with the attribute of utter darkness.”

Incensed but not humbled by this specimen of the actual-cautery of criticism, I made up the matter with myself, by deciding that the editor was an ass, or at best a prosing hack, who, not possessing the poetical sense, was as incapable of appreciating my verses as a deaf man of perceiving the harmony of sounds.

In order, however, to ascertain, beyond the possibility of doubt, the nature and extent of my

genius, and for what great purpose I was destined by nature, I resolved to consult an eminent Professor of Phrenology, with whom I had some acquaintance, who had given oracular revealings on the bumps and biasses of innumerable young ladies and full-grown gentlemen, thereby guiding them in the matrimonial choice, and was such a felicitous interpreter of Nature, and struck the balance of her favours so happily among them, as to render them all perfectly satisfied with her and with themselves, and to convert to the faith, as it is in Spurzheim, the most captious sceptics and seemingly impracticable unbelievers.

No sooner had I announced the purpose of my visit, and submitted my head to the itching feelers of my soul-searching friend, than he broke forth into the following rapturous exclamations: —“Heavens! what a head!—what beautiful developments of the intellectual faculties!—what Ideality!—what Veneration!—what Self-esteem! —what a Shakspearian, or rather, what an Alpine height of forehead!—*Poeta nascitur*; and

you, Sir, are born a poet, and one of Nature's own calibre too, and cast in her noblest mould. Sir, I will say no more, but conclude in the words of Milton, whom I trust you will live to rival,

' Accuse not Nature,—she hath done her part ;
Do thine.'—

I arose from the examination confirmed in the belief of two things, namely, of my being gifted with a splendid genius, and of the truth of Phrenology, which I now classed among the certain sciences ; and I was resolved that my talents should no longer be kept in the shade by editorial dulness or malignity, but that I would be judged of by an enlightened and impartial public. I therefore determined to put forth my whole strength upon a long didactic poem ; and, after a very fever of the brain, which lasted for two long years, occasioning a weary waste of thought, paper, pens, and midnight-oil, I completed a goodly work in ten cantos, upon whose title-page was inscribed, " Pensive Pleasures, a

Poem; by the Author of 'Sonnets to the Moon.' "

Not being so well known and appreciated, however, by the public as by myself, the bookseller declined running any pecuniary risk, so that I was obliged to bring out the work at my own expense ; but during its progress through the press my life was one reverie of bright and glorious anticipations, and I consoled myself for my present obscurity with the thought that a few weeks would withdraw the veil, and usher me, like a celestial phenomenon, upon a wondering world.

As the day of publication approached, this feeling of fame became so strong and besetting, that often, when walking the streets, I would start, stop, and look around, fancying that I heard myself mentioned by name as the author of "Pensive Pleasures," until I recollected that my book had not yet come out of the printer's hands.

At length I read in several newspapers announcements of its being in the press, and these I considered as the first blasts of the trump of Fame. Already I felt the laurel-wreath pressing

my brow, and forthwith began to assume airs of importance, and to affect the great man, as the following little circumstance will show :—

Happening to dine one day with a large and somewhat fashionable party, I was asked in a whisper by a friend who sat next me, why I did not eat my fish with a fork and a crust of bread as was the mode? to which I replied, loud enough to be heard by all present, in the following set speech :—

“ The author of ‘ Pensive Pleasures’ is no imitator, and though he might perhaps condescend to lead, will not follow ephemeral fashions. Moreover, in eating fish, he does not choose to run the risk of soiling his fingers in the sauce by assisting his fork with a crust of bread; nor will he ever adopt a beastly fashion, because it also happens to be a foreign one,—as foreign indeed to the feelings of Englishmen as it is to cleanliness and good taste.”

But to return. The great and eventful day of publication at length arrived, and the child of my hope and pride was ushered into this “ breath-

ing world," and, its birth being publicly announced, it was handed over to that gentle nurse of new-born genius, the periodical press. I had by this time forgotten its former sneers, and, afraid that my modesty might be put to the blush by the universal chant of praise with which I believed my work would be received, I kept the house ; taking care, however, that the daily and weekly papers should be sent to my lodgings.

Nevertheless a full week passed, and no notice of my work appeared. For this delay I endeavoured to account by various explanatory conjectures ; but, alas ! another and another elapsed, and still criticism was silent. Yes, reader, a full month rolled away, and, wouldst thou believe it ? "Pensive Pleasures" remained *incog*.

But why delay the truth ? By Heavens ! my precious poem, the labour of two years, produced by the agony and sweat of my brain, from which every line of it was wrung with the most racking reluctance, fell *still-born* from the press ! —the only notice which it ever obtained being an acknowledgment of reception by the editor of a

petty provincial paper, in which the impudent varlet thus expressed himself:—

“ We hereby acknowledge the receipt of a book written by the author of ‘ Sonnets to the Moon ;’ of which book, facetiously called a poem, we shall only say, in the words of Moore,

‘ Oh ! breathe not its name,—let it sleep in the shade.’ ”

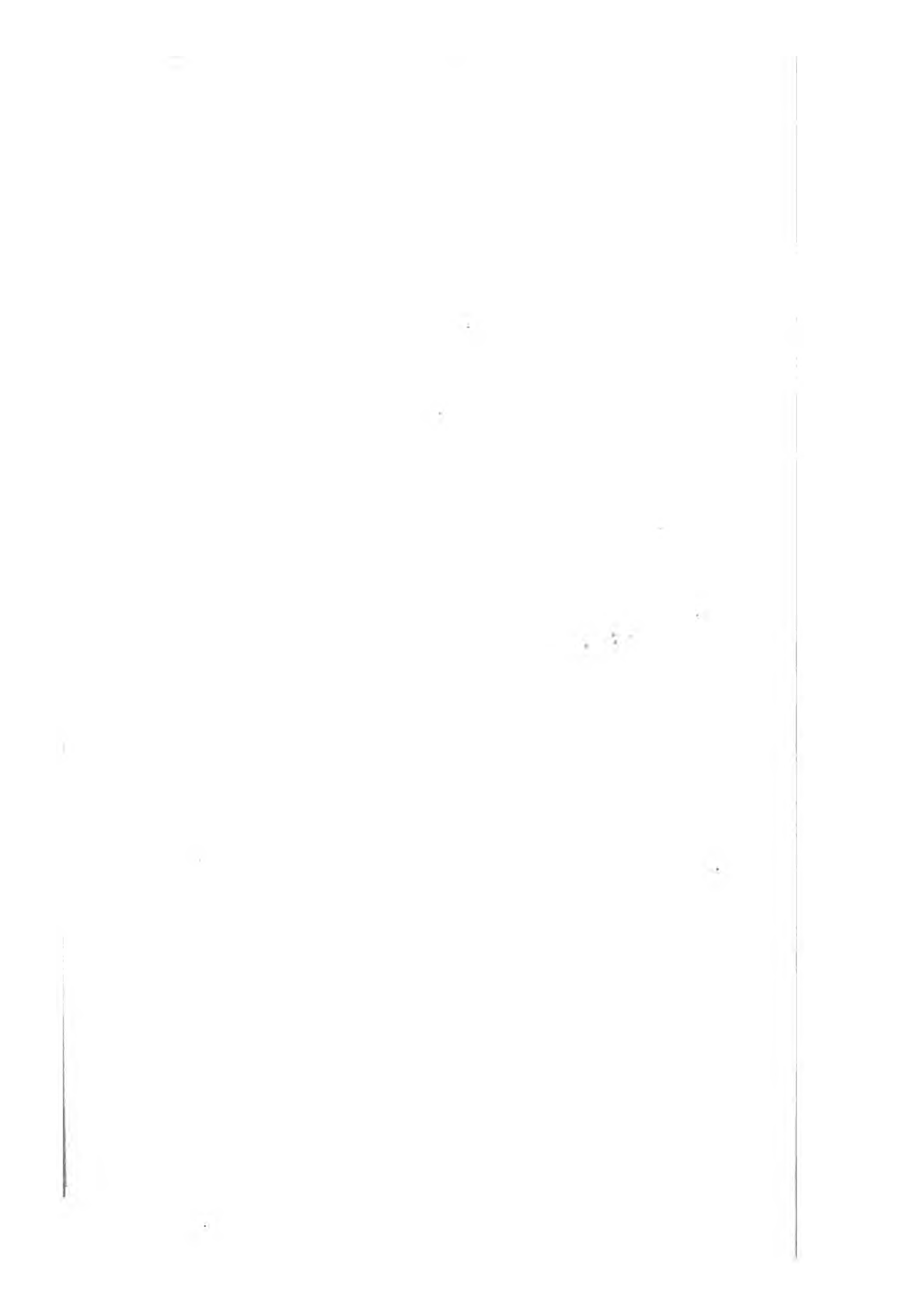
My spirit, which would have risen against persecution, began to sink under the combined effects of ridicule and neglect. I now became quite chop-fallen, and, for the first time in my life, did the thought cross my mind that it might actually be possible I was not born to be a great poet after all.

The advertisements of my book, however, had attracted the notice of several young ladies, and the title had found favour in their sight. My name began to be whispered about among the boarding-schools, and in a short time albums by the dozen arrived at my lodgings. To these last resorts of neglected genius, whose pages were now my only passports to immortality, I directed

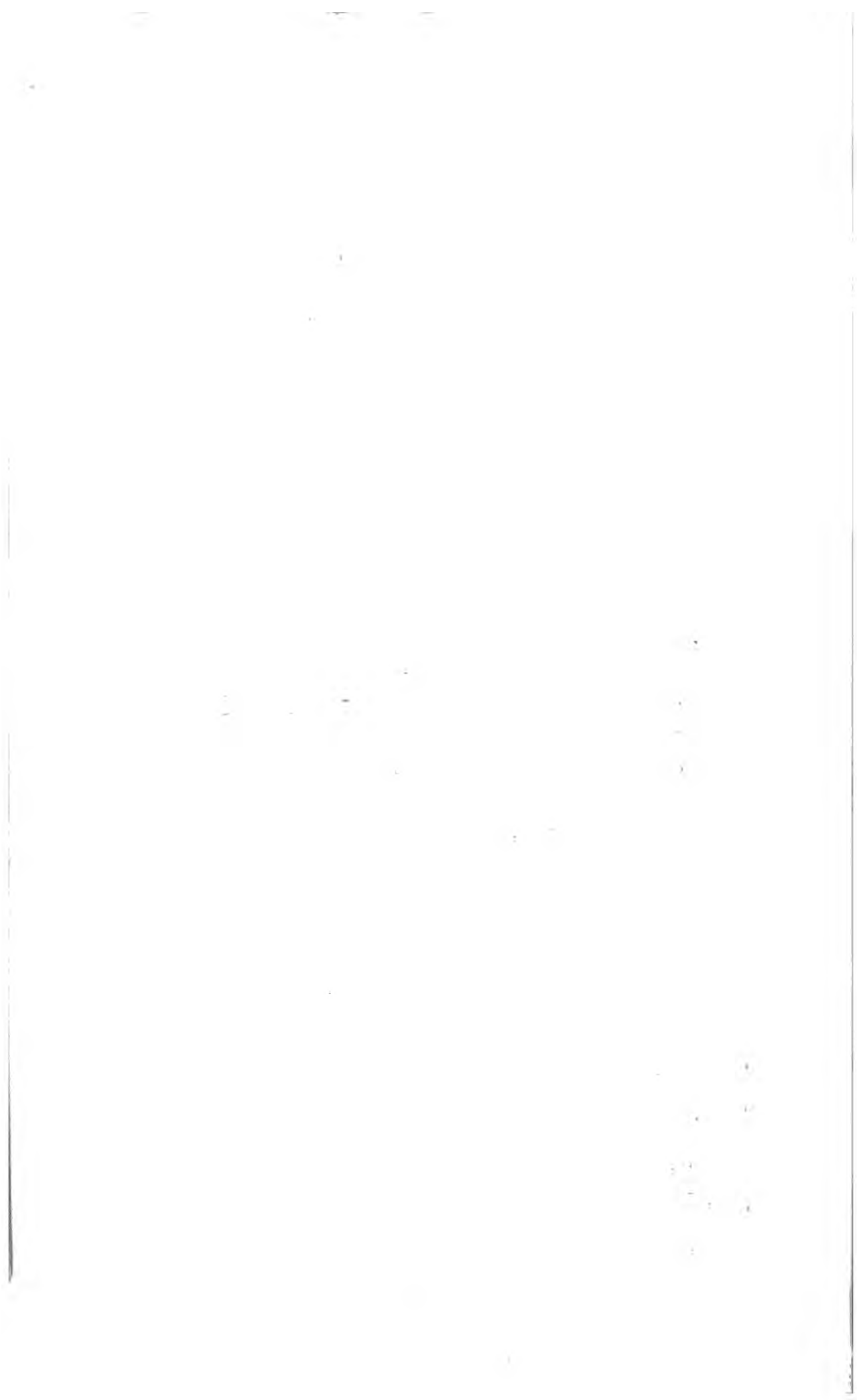
my whole remaining mental energies ; and often, after inscribing my verses and my name upon their smooth and creamy leaves, would I fall into pleasing and consolatory reveries.

“ Here at least,” would I sigh in mental soliloquy, “ shall my flowers of poesy, shrined like hidden treasures, be fanned by the sighs and watered by the tears of Beauty ! Here, hid from the vulgar eye, they shall bloom for her, while her cheek grows pale with midnight vigils over the pure and precious page inscribed with her poet’s name.”

In this way did I solace myself for the neglect of the world, and, like other great men, overlooked in their day, I sometimes even yet console myself with the hope, that “ posterity will do me justice.”



SCENES OF MEMORY.



SCENES OF MEMORY.

“ There is a land of every land the pride,
Beloved by Heaven o'er all the world beside,
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons imparadise the night ;
A land of beauty, virtue, valour, truth,
Time-tutored age, and love-exalted youth.

* * * *

Where shall that land, that spot of earth be found ?
Art thou a man ? a patriot ?—look around ;
Oh thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam,
That land thy country, and that spot thy home.”

MONTGOMERY.

I THINK it is Chateaubriand who says, that in his youth he derived sufficient enjoyment in traversing the wilds of America, and in the contemplation of nature alone ; but that in later life his mind required the additional excitement arising

from moral associations, and with these that Asia supplied him in the highest degree.

The rocks and ruins of nature, however vast, do not interest us like those of Babylon, Palmyra, and Persepolis, or create in our minds those feelings of sublime and awful melancholy with which we survey on oriental wastes the ghosts of cities and the graves of empires.

Of all objects in nature the ocean is the most sublime. If Infinity hath an image, it is the great deep; if Eternity hath a voice, it is the sound of the sea. I have mused upon it in all its phases, have listened for hours to its everlasting knell, and gazed upon its endless succession of multitudinous waves as they rolled towards the shore. But something still was wanting,—the sea's was but a dead magnificence after all. It had a voice, but not an ear,—a power, but not a will,—working a great work, yet unconscious thereof.

But if, while roaming along the beach, some broken plank hath met the eye, the want was in a moment supplied. The mysterious fragment

would forthwith call up the magnificent pageant of a stately ship, leaving her native port, amidst farewell-shouts from the shore ; and fancy would follow her over the waters, accompany her through the storm, and hear the last wild shriek that pierced the sky, as she went down amidst the roaring sea, which thus derived a double interest and overawing power from having been the scene of human action and suffering,—even as the battle-field and the spot which has been trod by the mighty of the earth are invested with a kind of shadowy sublimity, and become hallowed ground.

It was on a bright sultry day in September, that I was set down from a Parisian diligence at Versailles, when I entered its royal gardens, the most beautiful and extensive of pleasure-grounds, peopled with statues, and splangled with large ponds, in which Neptunes and Naiads were enjoying themselves in a manner which showed them to be quite in their element, and from the centres of which fountains in play were shooting up trees of water, delighting the eye and imagi-

nation with a sense of coolness, and brightening with rainbows the soft mist which hung over them, refreshing the sultry and fainting noon.

At every turn of the shaded alleys long green vistas would break forth in sudden expansion upon the view, and seem, with their alignment of trees, like aisles of endless length, vaulted in by the blue sky, and brightened in the distance by the gleam of silvery lakes and verdant lawns ; and, but that the hand of man was everywhere too apparent, and that nature was superseded rather than assisted by art, the place might have seemed like fairy-land.

The whole of these grounds are surrounded by the forests through whose gloomy depths in former days the Kings of France pursued the sport of hunting the wild boar by torchlight.

This circumstance reminded me that I was pacing the ground where kings and emperors had trod, and amidst whose secluded shades and hallowed retreats of peace they had perchance planned their unprincipled and bloody wars.

I recollected that it was in such a scene that

Napoleon one day stood musing all alone, and probably in the act of concocting some scheme of boundless aggrandisement, fraught with "woe and death" to the nations, when, amidst the silence of nature, the sound of a distant bell smote upon his ear, and, striking some mysterious chord of his heart, brought back like a gleam of enchantment the vision of his innocent youth, with its dreams of beauty and peace.

Amidst the various feelings and recollections called up by the scene, I lingered for hours, spell-bound to the spot, and it was not until the chill damps of night had warned me to retire that I was able to tear myself away.

But there are moods of the mind in which we prefer to classic ground and the scenes of great national achievements, the humble and sequestered spots, scattered over the path of life; and chiefly in our native land lie these green haunts of memory.

There is the "schoolboy spot," which we revisit in after years, and where we look in vain for the glad young faces of our childhood's friends,

but whose spirits, while yet upon earth, will return in dreams from the four winds of Heaven to that green play-ground, the little world of boyhood, and still the centre of a system of thoughts and feelings that are far away. There, too, lie the scenes of our first partings and returns, of our earliest joys and sorrows, and, it may be, that little Eden of the heart, the spot consecrated by its first affection.

How often have I revisited such scenes in the bright summer mornings, when none but the lark was abroad,—and at the golden hour of eve, when the din of the world had sunk into a dying hum,—and in the calm, pale, autumnal night, when the moonbeams were sleeping on the mountains and the main, and the song of the reapers, returning from the last labours of the year to their harvest-home, was blending with the notes of the birds of the ocean, whose wild cry seemed to have caught an echo of the melancholy sea!

And spring is again abroad in the world. She is smiling over our hills, that soar away unto heaven; and happy are they who can leave for

a while the "hum and shock of men," and seek in her green abodes the scenes of their early days, and gaze upon her fair young flowers that refresh in our hearts the love of beauty and of nature, and listen to her woodland strains that sing us back into our youth again.

The Scotch are accused by their neighbours of being partial to their country in a greater degree than other nations. They are honoured by the charge. The love of country is an extension of the domestic charities which link the social circle round the household hearth. It is the source of the most generous self-devotion for the public good, the chain that binds the heart to the most barren soil, the genial glow that brightens the bleakest hills, and warms at the pole.

Our native country !—There is music, there is magic in the words ; for do they not import the land where we first opened our eyes upon the light of day and the glorious frame of nature, and drank in the vital air from heaven, and the balm of life from our mother's breast ; where we first

learned to lisp our love, and listened to the words of affection, that soothed our souls in sickness, and in the hour of pain and sorrow first whispered to our young spirits the blessed tale of a better world?

He who loveth not his country is an outcast from nature, whose soul, shut against her benign influence and insensible to her holiest impressions and revealings, is not far from that frame of mind which leads to Atheism,—the last dreary dotage of a misty head and a seared and blinded heart.

But besides the universal reasons arising from nature for loving the land that gave us birth, the Scotch have many others of a proud and peculiar kind; nor need they wander to other regions in quest of scenes hallowed by the noblest associations; for these too they may find at home.

Yes, my country! thy halls have been the dwellings of kings and heroes; thy plains have borne the shock of an hundred battles, and echoed to the shouts of victories won in the sacred cause of liberty. Thy very wastes have been

the abodes of patriots, saints, and martyrs, who, spurning the chains of civil and religious thralldom, resigned without a sigh the hopes and allurements of the world, and chose rather to dwell in the wildest dens and caves of the desert with Freedom and with God !

The Roman eagles, that soared above the "everlasting Alp," perched not on thy blue hills, which the tyrants of the world left as they found, unconquered ; and thy sons have reared in the hearts of men enduring monuments of fame, better than the Pyramids, those stupendous trophies of power and pride, which, raised to perpetuate the memory of dead kings, have proved unfaithful to their trust, telling no tale but that of time, breathing an eternal homily on evanescence, and soaring from their desert place of graves—the altars of oblivion !

THE END.

