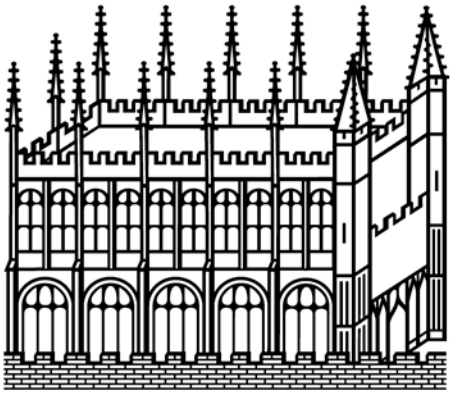

TALES AND POETRY.

49. 1674.

TALES

AND

POETRY.

BY ALPHA.

Wakefield:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY NICHOLS AND SONS, NORTHGATE;
LONDON:
SOLD BY SIMPKIN, MARSHALL AND CO., STATIONERS HALL COURT;
DARTON AND CO., 58, HOLBORN HILL.

(1849.)

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THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A FIVE POUND NOTE.

I well remember the first hour I saw the light. I was gently taken wet from the copper-plate by a sallow, hard-featured man, who, as he raised me from the metal, looked wistfully in my face. An expression of triumph and pleasure arose on his countenance as he scanned the clearness and sharpness of the impression traced on my features, and with a smile of approbation laid me carefully down on my back, until the ink was dry. While in this position, I had the opportunity of seeing the birth of 999 twin-brothers and sisters, so like myself, that I began almost imperceptibly to doubt my own identity. I was somewhat more satisfied when I perceived that we had each of us blanks left upon our faces, where very probably numbers, dates, and other names, might in future assist my infantile capacity in distinguishing my relatives from myself. I had scarcely left off this kind of dreamy, speculative train of thought, when I was raised up by my natural parent, and committed with the whole of my brothers and sisters, packed back to face, as closely as possible, into a small deal box. I heard over-head the nailing up of this wood coffin, and I almost fancied I could faintly perceive the scratching of a pen, as the direction was written upon it.

It flashed across my mind, that we were to be sent somewhere, packed like a cargo of negroes on their way to the Brazils. I was not mistaken, for I heard audible instructions given by him, who I now considered my *un*natural parent, that we should be forthwith conveyed to the railway office and properly booked for our journey. Being myself at the bottom of the box all my communications were confined to the brother immediately above me. I complained bitterly of the pressure. He replied that he could not help it—as the weight came from above, and that he had not the slightest power to move his position—that he had communicated with the sufferer immediately above him, who had made precisely the same remark, and that he believed the opinion of the whole family was, that "what cannot be cured must be endured." He told me, that in his case, the danger was imminent, as he believed he had left some of the finer parts of his countenance indelibly impressed on his brother's back, and that he feared, if he survived the journey, it would only be in a disfigured and mutilated form! Not being conscious of any such injury to myself, *I* became gradually more reconciled to my unpleasant situation, and said all I could to comfort my brother sufferer, and we resigned ourselves cheerfully to our fate, which appeared to me a very good illustration of the condition of those who live in a densely populated country, like England, where the upper and lower ranks must naturally press upon each other. We were presently aware that we were in very rapid motion, and then it was that we

first seemed inclined to believe that our close proximity was of service in preserving us from any shakes or concussions in travelling.

This consolatary idea gave way to a very anxious desire, on my part, to discover my own destination and that of my brethren. I had, before my journey, read over attentively the letters printed legibly on my forehead, which appeared to amount to this—"On demand, I promise to pay the Bearer the sum of Five Pounds, for Messrs. Rugby & Co., Bankers,—and here was a blank. Well, thought I, *I* cannot pay Five Pounds; I am not worth sixpence in the world! Messrs Rugby & Co. must be going to give me Five Pounds to pay the Bearer with —and with a feeling of some faith in Messrs. Rugby's generosity—or good credit—or wealth—I settled down into a comfortable nap. I was awoke from sleep by the violent movement of some instrument over head, which appeared to be wrenching open my prison door. I was not mistaken in this conjecture, for I soon felt the presence of light, and air, and by degrees, the pressure upon me lessened, until I was exposed to the gaze of a shrewd-looking, middle-aged man, with a chubby yet pale face and shaggy eye-brows, who lifted me out of the box and then set me down on a desk covered with green baize. I was soon handed to a young man with somewhat a dandyish cut about him and a pen behind his ear, who put "No. 1" upon my left cheek, filled in a date on my right temple, and made a corresponding entry in a long thin book, writing also upon my face "entered, Joseph

Cash." This seemed at once to settle my identity, as I observed "No. 2" written on my twin brother, and therefore I imagined that some one was taking special care of each of us, which was a comforting reflection among total strangers. I had not been in this position very long before Mr. Joseph Cash thumbed me up rather unceremoniously by the right ear, which practice I afterwards became more accustomed to, (like rabbits, terriers and other animals) (except indeed when some coarse fellow lifted me roughly with a wet and dirty finger!) and tied me up with some hundred of my fraternity with a piece of scarlet string or tape. I was now handed to the chubby-faced, shaggy-browed gentleman, who, after examining me carefully, wrote his own name, "Jacob Postall," upon my face, near my left jaw (if indeed I possessed one) and having done the same to my brothers and sisters, tied us up again, and carried us into the presence, as we afterwards learnt, of the Messieurs Rugby. An elderly gentleman and his son, as I rightly judged from the likeness to the father, were sitting at separate desks in a small snug parlour adjoining the Banking Office, when Postall laid me and my companions down before the elder Rugby. He was a fine intelligent looking man with silvery-white hair, belonging, I supposed, from the cut of his coat, to the Quaker persuasion. His son did not appear to be quite so strait-laced. "Will you sign us a few notes, Mr. Rugby?" said the confidential clerk as he laid us down with a bow. ("No. 1" being still uppermost) Mr. Rugby adjusted his

spectacles and looked me full in the face. I felt shy and awkward at the scrutinizing glance bestowed upon me, but observing that Mr. Rugby's eye expressed a slight gleam of satisfaction,—whether it was that his *own Firm*, printed in remarkably fine copper-plate, with some wonderful flourishes, like the snakes twisting round the heads of the Furies, struck him as peculiarly substantial looking, or whether it might have been the execution of the whole design which really delighted him, I never could exactly tell—but, anyhow, I felt relieved as Mr. Rugby replied with a mono-syllable—"Now?" "If you please, Sir," said Postall, with a lower bow, retiring simultaneously from the room. Whereupon Mr. Rugby took up his pen and valiantly signed his name at the right hand corner of my face; he then laid me down with an air of some satisfaction, and writing his name again on my twin brother, placed him just above me, so as to avoid blotting what he had written on me, and so on with all our fraternity. The moment Mr. Rugby's name was affixed to me I felt a considerable accession to my dignity—I felt, in fact, that I was now matured in every part, that Mr. Rugby was answerable for my credit, that I was a veritable note of the value of Five Pounds; and I panted to be allowed an opportunity of showing my importance, and, at the same time, of seeing the world. In the meanwhile, I observed that Mr. Rugby was merely engaged in a mechanical employment, as he soon began to give a lecture to his son on the duties and responsibilities of his future calling in life, that of a

country banker. I fear I cannot repeat the whole of Mr. Rugby's advice—but it began with a detailed account of the antiquity of the firm—of its gradual growth—of its high standing and prosperity, which Mr. Rugby attributed, as well he might, to the invariable good management of the concern. "Yes, Tom," said he, "I'll tell thee what the secret is—its the *management*, "boy, that has made us what we are. A bank is a very "nice thing while all goes on *smooth*, but a very plaguy "thing when anything goes on *rough*. The secret then is in "the management—the knowing who *may* be trusted and "who *may not*, and in the proper investment of the funds "of the bank. We don't lend much above half of our "funds, but keep the rest in good convertible securities, "that we may provide for all sudden demands. Don't "mind losing a little interest on your gold and bank "notes, but always keep a good 'till,' boy, and then you "can pay every body his own at a moment's notice, if "they've no better manners than to ask for it in a hurry. "Your funds are derived from *three* sources—your original "capital—your deposits, and your notes in circulation. "The *first* is the only thing under your entire command— "You may lend that with discretion—but your notes and "other people's deposits may be demanded of you, and "therefore you must have an equivalent sum or nearly "so somewhere, to fork out at a short notice. Dost thou "understand, Tom? 'Yes, Father, yes! I think I quiet "understand it!' Good discountable bills, well-backed, "are not bad things to hold for this purpose, for they are

"always running off and turning into cash without "trouble, and can be replaced by others, or allowed to "run due as you may require. There's nothing so good "as first-rate-two-months'-bills, for they will circulate from "hand to hand like a £5 note, and often save the till-"money. And there's another thing, Tom, don't have "any *leading* accounts. 'No leading accounts, Father?' "No, Tom, make 'em all small ones, and if that won't "suit 'em, why, thou'rt better without 'em, lad, and let "them go somewhere else. And here's another thing, "Tom, don't let 'em lock thy money up in their trade— "if it does not come back of itself, fetch it back with an "attorney's letter, if there's no other way—or else in the "long run thou may'st have to make 'em a present of it! "And as for discounting bills, its slippery work, Tom; "take 'em of somebody else who'll put his name upon "'em first, and have a good backer, beside the drawer "and acceptor, and see they're not all the same man, "Tom, with his name spelt a little differently, for that's "a bad sort of customer, its what we call 'hog upon "bacon,' Tom—and see there's value received in real "stuff passed between 'em, and then thou can't be far wrong with three strings to thy bow, Tom."

How long this conversation was continued I don't know, for Postall entered suddenly and said, that "Lady Grantley wanted £50 in Rugby's notes and there were no clean ones, might he have a few new ones for her ladyship?" "Of course," said Rugby,—and I and nine of my brethren were whipped off and carried into the

front office, handed over the counter, and my first agreeable sensation was that of being in the small, white hand of an elegant lady, whose pretty face I scarcely saw ere she popped me into a scented, silken purse and transferred me to her pocket.

As I had been told that the gentry were seldom hoarders of money, I supposed that I should quickly be turned out of my snug birth to pay some tradesman's bill or servant's wages, and that my residence with the higher classes would be very temporary. Whilst reflecting on the probabilities of my next destination, I felt the carriage, in which we were travelling, suddenly stop; whereupon her ladyship pulled me and my relatives out of her pocket, and choosing two of the number from the rest, handed them out at the window of her carriage to a mercer, who came out of his shop and received them in exchange for his bill with evident satisfaction. I was, however, replaced in the purse, and we drove on for half an hour, when the carriage again stopped, and I soon conjectured that we had arrived at Lady Grantley's own residence, as her ladyship was speedily surrounded by children's voices, among which 'dear mama!' frequently became audible, and was responded to by 'well Johnny!' 'My own Minnie!' 'My darling Alice!' &c. I soon found myself transferred from my snug retreat into an elegant devonport in a small parlour, where I and my friends were incarcerated, and the lock turned upon us. Thought I, my fate is very unfortunate, for wherever I go, bonds and prisons still await me! I am never allowed to see

the world except in tantalizing, transient glimpses. I am hurried into dark receptacles, where I may lie for months or years unnoticed and unthought of! The devonport in which I was now deposited was so substantially made, and the lid fitted so closely, that I found I was no longer able to hear ordinary sounds, which were generally audible in the room, from which I had chiefly thought my amusement would be derived while detained in a state of honorable captivity; the conversation, which was carried on by the inmates of her ladyship's boudoir, was no longer heard by me, and I became unable, for want of some extèrnal signals, to measure even the lapse of time or to distinguish between day and night! I was sometimes aware of the presence of individuals around me by the vibration of the floor, as they passed near my hiding place, but it was very seldom indeed that the shrill accent of a child's voice pierced, for a moment, my almost impenetrable covering of rosewood and velvet. The only other exception I remember to the monotony of my captivity, was the partial entrance of musical sounds, which I imagine proceeded from a neighbouring piano, and occasionally penetrated my ear to my infinite delight; and once I fancied I heard the ringing of the dinner-bell, which indeed sounded as faintly as if it had been rung at the bottom of the sea! How long I remained in this pitiful plight I cannot tell, but my reveries were suddenly disturbed by the forcible application of some instrument to the lid of the desk in which I was deposited. Thought I, has her ladyship mislaid her keys?

And is she obliged to have recourse to this rude mode of getting at her purse? Or am I to be the victim of some vile theft? The well-made lid at last gave way with a crash, which frightened me out of my wits, and made some sovereigns, which were lying by me, jump as if they were shot! The little drawer in which we were placed was rudely opened, and a man (O! fearful sight!) with his face entirely blackened, peered down upon us with one of the most sinister, diabolical expressions I ever beheld. He instantly snatched up the sovereigns and some silver, and deliberately read my countenance before he took me out of my corner. After a few moments' hesitation, he folded me up together with my relatives, and thrust us into his greasy pocket. Oh! thought I, how unlike my Lady Grantley's pocket! I was carried about the room for some time, when I heard a faint signal whistle given from without, which was answered by a low growl from my friend with the black face, who now appeared to be getting out of the window, and by the awful concussion between the sovereigns and myself which immediately followed, must have jumped from a considerable height to the ground. This concussion was succeeded by some rapid movements, which I did not fully comprehend, and by the discharge of fire arms, by which I conjectured that the presence of the thieves had been detected, and some pursuit set on foot. However, the rapid movements did not abate, and I became convinced that the depredators had made clear off with their booty. It was after the expiration of some hours, that I became

aware that my possessor, whoever he might be, had arrived safely at his destination. I was not long detained from a further acquaintance with my new residence; for amidst gruff voices and sundry imprecations, I was rudely thrown down on a rickety table, on which were glasses of spirits and half-smoked pipes, and round which sat three or four ruffian-looking men. One of them I recognised as my ravisher, and he appeared wounded in the left arm, as it hung powerless in a sling by his side. The eight £5 notes of Rugby and Co (including myself) and a few sovereigns and shillings appeared to be, together with some articles of plate, the whole booty of the night. This was divided pretty evenly among the thieves, but not without a great deal of wrangling and abuse. As my black-faced friend had been chiefly instrumental in obtaining the plunder, and had, moreover, suffered in the adventure, as his wounded arm amply testified, he obtained the lion's share of the spoil—and I, and several of my companions remained in his possession. The room soon became quiet, and my owner, who had been familiarly addressed as 'Jemmy,' after placing us at the back of a drawer in the heel of an old stocking, probably retired to rest, or to doctor his wounded arm. Early next day, I heard voices in the apartment, and became suspicious that *I* was the subject of conversation, as the words "Rugby's notes," were distinctly audible. At length, a bargain appeared to be concluded, and I was taken out of my hiding place, and a couple of sovereigns substituted in my stead. Well, thought I, this is too bad for any-

thing!—I, a new *five pound* note, sold by thieves for *two pounds!*—Sold when I am as fresh as the day I was paid to my Lady Grantley! All this comes of keeping low company! I am a *stolen* note—a dangerous commodity—difficult to pass like an honest £5 note—and so I must be content to represent *two pounds*—and not *five pounds!* There was, however, a consolitary feeling in my mind, that *I* was not to blame in all this—*my* conscience was at rest, whether Jemmy's was so or not! Well, Jemmy sold me to Davies, and who was Davies, thought I? You shall hear. I was pocketed and carried off by this Davies to a considerable distance—*where*—I never knew. One day I was laid out on my back on a desk by this man, who gave me one of the most awfully scrutinizing glances I ever remember. He peered with his coal-black eyes into every feature of my face—he read and re-read every syllable in my countenance—followed all the snake flourishes, and engine-turned ornaments on my temples and forehead—(the hyacinthine locks of the firm of Rugby and Co.)—and concluded by tracing a dry pen over old Mr. Rugby's signature. When he had done this several times, he appeared satisfied that the whole affair was within his comprehension, and holding me up to the light, said, "no water mark—that's well—a good piece of engraving—all plain-sailing tho', except that old miser's signature, but I'll hit that off so that he'll not know it from his own!" This was said with a chuckle of delight. What, thought I, have I got into the hands of a *forger?* Am I to be used for the dishonorable

purpose of creating a spurious breed of Rugby's notes? Are my features to be copied, line by line, and my master's name falsely written on these bastard counterfeits by this rascally fellow, Davies? I felt inclined to commit suicide on the spot—but, alas! I had only the propensity to do so, not the power! I, alas! must ever remain a passive agent in the hands of others! Davies set to work very industriously, and every day I heard him double-lock his door, and then out I was pulled to be the pattern for his graving tool, which silently and secretly traced every line on my countenance. In spite of my previous indignation, I became at length really interested in my own portrait, which went on, day by day, until the resemblance was so strong, that I started at the wonderful accuracy with which my peculiarities had been delineated, and even the names of "Cash," "Postall," and "Rugby," forged with astonishing skill! At last, a perfect impression was thrown off—this was followed by others, and the signatures were all traced over by Davies with pen and ink, and thus appeared a whole family of rascally, spurious notes, of which the Messrs. Rugby had no conception, and *I* was the innocent means, in wicked hands, of their actual existence!

Davies was not long in trying the merits of his forgery, for one morning he dispatched a youth of his acquaintance with me and one of my bastard-brothers (purporting to be sent by one of the respectable tradesmen for change) to the Bank of Messrs. Rugby and Co. to obtain sovereigns. This was a hazardous enterprise, but might have

succeeded very well, if it had not been for the late robbery at Lord Grantley's. Information having been duly lodged at Messrs. Rugby's Bank, of the depredation committed on his Lordship's premises, and the circumstance having occurred, that a portion of the first ten new Five Pound notes, just issued by the firm, were the identical notes stolen, thus enabled Messrs. Rugby to retain the numbers of the notes received by Lady Grantley in their recollection, and therefore to exercise every vigilance in case such notes should make their appearance for payment, and give a clue to the discovery of the thieves. Altho' I had collected a considerable portion of dust and dirt upon my countenance since I first left Messrs. Rugby's office, and tho' Davies had purposel soiled the features of my counterfeit-brother, yet the numbers were still clear and legible upon us, and when I was presented to Postall by Davies's go-between, I observed that a scrutinizing glance was instantly cast upon my designation of "No. 1." The clerk looked next at my companion's number, but that being above "No. 10," he seemed satisfied to bestow all further examination upon me. "Who do you bring these notes for?" said Postall, at the same time turning on his heel towards the desk occupied by Cash, the second clerk, to whom I fancy he whispered "Constable," and the alert junior instantly quitted the office. As his exit made some noise, Postall, appearing not to hear the reply, repeated the enquiry, and the youth again gave the name of a respectable tradesman. "Will you have gold or silver?"

said Postall, in an unusually drawling tone. "Gold," replied the youth, whereupon Postall began to count and weigh out ten sovereigns, which were re-counted and re-weighed, until they seemed performing some feat of gymnastics, as they repeatedly jumped from the counter into the palm of his hand, and swang to and fro in the scales! "Now, young man, count them yourself," said Postall, who knew that he was gaining time by every pretext for delay. The youth hastily grasped the gold-pieces and was in the act of transferring them to his pocket, when Postall, in despair of the constable's arrival, took the law into his own hands, and rushing round the end of the counter, collared the young man before he could escape through the door-way. As this scuffle made a considerable noise in the office, occasioning the fall of a heavy inkstand—a posting clerk or two left their remote desks, and the two Rugbys spontaneously came out of their inner-chamber, to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, and almost at the same moment of time, Cash entered with the constable. An explanation then took place, and our hero of the stolen notes seeming at length sensible of the hazard he was incurring by telling further lies, stammered out the name of Davies, as the real party from whom the notes were received. I need not detail the gradual discovery of the combined forgery and theft, which I heard frequently talked about in Messrs. Rugby's office and elsewhere—suffice it to say, that I had to make my appearance, not only before the magistrates of the district, where Davies and his accomplice were fully com-

mitted for trial, but also at the spring assizes, where they were found guilty and received sentence of transportation for life. When all this matter had blown over, and the whole of the stolen notes had been recovered and the forged notes committed to the flames, I was again sent out into the world, where I had the opportunity of making many observations on men and things, but lest I should weary my readers with too lengthy a recital, I will pass over my subsequent adventures, and merely relate the closing scene of my busy life. I was never able to discover the real ground of a mischievous rumour which was circulated, some three years after the discovery of the forgery and theft, that Messrs. Rugby were in difficulties. This rumour was so current in the neighbourhood that at last a run upon their establishment was the consequence. I, with many other of their notes, grown old in their service, was accordingly presented for payment. I remember observing the unusual crowd which filled the street, and almost precluded an entrance into the Bank. It appeared composed of parties who held deposits in Messrs. Rugby's hands, and the casual holders of their notes, who were all clamouring for the immediate payment of their respective demands. I happened at that time to be the property of a burly butcher, who forced his way through the concourse in the street and got fairly into the office, where I beheld my old friends, Postall and Cash, with unusually thoughtful countenances, paying away, what appeared to me, an almost indefinite amount of Bank of England notes and sovereigns. While

my owner was impatiently waiting his turn, a huge box arrived from London, under the care of one of the posting clerks, who had been dispatched to town for further supply of cash, and when this accession to the already large coffers of the bank made its appearance, a gleam of light shot across the countenance of the two Rugbys, who were superintending in person, the withdrawal of their deposits, and occasionally saying a word or two to allay the foolish panic, which was heedlessly hurrying their customers to so rash an act as that of bringing about, if possible, the very thing they were so desirous of preventing, viz:—the stoppage of the firm. The butcher who held me in his great fist, did not, however, seem disposed to change his purpose, and I was accordingly exchanged, for the last time, for sovereigns. I had now paid all pecuniary obligations, and was about to pay the debt of nature. I was laid with a great multitude of my fraternity in a receptacle for the purpose, and before an hour had elapsed, became aware, by the pressure from above, that an immense multitude of other notes had been added to the paid list. The bank had provided ample means to meet every demand, for old Rugby had not invested his customers' money in securities which he could not get readily converted into cash, and after a desperate run of three days, the panic, like all other panics, suddenly left off and money began to flow in instead of out of the bank. On this turn being once fairly commenced, instructions were given not to receive the money of those parties who had so recently exhibited their want of confidence in the

stability of the firm, by its sudden withdrawal; and those individuals had to walk away and find some other receptacle, perhaps far less secure, for their savings, as the merited reward of their indiscretion.

After the lapse of some weeks, which gave me time for reflection and the composition of my autobiography, I was sorted out of a great heap of my 'kith and kin,' and being now grown ragged in the skirt and considerably the worse for wear, I was ordered to be cancelled. My number was written off by Joseph Cash, I was counted up by old Postall, with my brethren in the condemned cell,—and to-morrow we are to be laid before young Rugby, as our executioner, in order that we may be finally committed to the flames.

Gentle reader! think with compassion upon my eventful life, gather what instruction you may from my acquaintance with the world, for I mixed with all classes in society,—with you I leave my only hopes of immortality.

LIFE'S ENIGMA.

LIFE's a Sage, whose teaching brings
Lessons of immortal things—
How to plume seraphic wings—

Life, the Teacher, tells one tale—
Opening with the infant's wail—
Then a mother's joys prevail—

Soon the infant waxes stronger,
Resting on her breast no longer,
Thoughts of *after-life* now throng her—

After-life—for *he* must play
Part, like others, for a day,
Then, like others, pass away!

Three great passions still divide
Life's morn, noon, and eventide,
And into each other glide—

These, in turn, will court his eyes
As his age the bait supplies—
Love, Ambition, Avarice!

Sickness may lay waste his frame—
Foul *Dishonour* blot his name—
Reason's seat be wrapped in flame—

He must drink of this world's lore,
Or he durst not quit the shore
When Life's rising breakers roar—

He must learn of *men and things*,
Lest he spread his silken wings
Towards the gaudy *fly* that stings—

He must put Christ's armour on
Ere the heavenly gate be won,
Fighting demons—many a one!

He some *sister-spirit* take—
'Twain may thus one journey make—
Happier for companion's sake—

And, when Life's short race is o'er,
Leave their children to deplore
Days when they shall be no more.

Or—if hers a *daughter* be—
Wealth, or *Beauty* may decree
Fatal snares of flattery—

Hopes betrayed—and heart-strings broken,—
Heartless vows in anguish spoken—
May be *her* life's bitter token!

Ponder not on *future* ill—
Bow submissive to God's will—
Life is all a mystery still!

LIFE hath *many* Mysteries!
Man's poor *heart* a host supplies—
What a *world* within us lies?

Here, where God should sovereign reign,
Oft His Spirit pleads in vain,
Whilst Earth's idols it profane.

Here we love, and here we hate
Every creature, small or great,
Summoned to our throne of state—

Here is Passion's chief resort—
Granting favors cheaply bought
By the votaries at her Court—

She to her own synod pleads—
Judging *others'* acts and deeds—
For her *own* she intercedes—

Here run Wishes, Hopes and Fears,
Bringing tidings to her ears,
Wakening smiles or raising tears—

Here she weeps o'er joys bye-gone—
Covets fortunes not her own—
Yields to Jealousy her throne—

Hence Despair oft leagues with Guilt,
And avenging blood is spilt,
Dyeing daggers to their hilt!

Ah ! what scorpions dwell *within*—
How they hiss with hellish din
Raging round the demon, Sin !—

What a paradise was this,
Till man heard the Serpent's hiss—
Then adieu to Eden's bliss.

LIFE hath many Mysteries !
Ceaseless when we close our eyes,
Whilst our frame in slumber lies—

Then the soul breaks forth in gleams—
Bodiless her passage seems
Through fantastic, airy dreams—

Then we meet the *dead* again—
Hear them speak—and see them plain—
Morning snaps the magic chain !

Time and *place* are *one* in sleep—
Thoughts unbidden o'er us creep—
Then we smile, and then we weep—

Life's stream owns a *double* flow—
One called *real*—one but *show*—
Which the real—who can know ?

Body, so alive all o'er—
Feeling breathes from every pore—
What can sentient life do more ?

Conscious of a mind within—
Great in thought, tho' soiled by Sin—
Still our upward course we win—

Soul has pledge of endless life—
Doubt with her can have no strife—
Immortality is rife !

But the *body*—when it lies
Dead before our weeping eyes—
Where's the hope that *it* may rise ?

Look at yonder giant tree—
Think how dead its Germ must be,
Is it not a type of thee ?

What is *matter?* all we see—
Touch or taste 's a mystery—
How such things from *nought* could be!

Mind or *matter*—what are they?
Properties of unknown clay,
Past our knowledge, some may say?

Mind, ethereal—cannot be
Else than *spirit's* property—
Tho' from matter not yet free.

LIFE hath *many* Mysteries!
Who can pierce the awful skies
Where the Maker's dwelling lies?

Every where, yet *no where* seen,
Hands that robe the Earth in green,
Pranking her with flowery sheen!

He who made the countless things,
Cleaving air with rushing wings,
Walking earth or ocean—brings

Witness of Almighty willing,
Angel's tongues with praises filling,
Through our feeble pulses thrilling!

But, what mystery of love
Steals upon us from above
Like the drooping—pinioned dove!

From the Father's heart extending,
On a rebel-world descending,
His own son, our Saviour, sending!

To our spirits comfort reaching,
Truths of mighty import preaching,
From His lips what heavenly teaching!

Then His sacrifice for man—
How His precious life-blood ran,
Saving from Sin's awful ban—

And the Comforter to dwell
In our heart's most secret cell—
As a witness all were well—

Why then drown His still small voice,
Bidding us so oft rejoice,
Making heaven our only choice?

LIFE hath *many* Mysteries!
What a load of misery lies
In this world before our eyes!

Why such agony should be
Laid on frail Humanity
Is a wondrous mystery—

Life is but a curtained room,
Faith alone can pierce the gloom
Shining through the living tomb—

Know—whate'er thy sorrow be—
God—whose love hath chastened thee—
Lifts his rod *unwillingly*—

If *this* life be wondrous all,
Shrouded in a mystic pall,
Life to come—what shall we call—?

Here, we can but dimly see,
When Faith sets our vision free,
Glimpses of the Deity—

There, the soul, escaped from Sin,
Lets God's daylight freely in,
And eternal joys begin—!

Life's *enigma* here below
Shall be solved, and all will know
Why Sin's weeds were left to grow—

There, the Godhead's mystery,
Trinity in Unity,
Shall to us unravelled be—

And Creation's grand design
Shall in harmony combine
In *one* vast, unbroken line,

And man's grovelling worm, that trod
Humbly o'er the earth's green sod,
Lift a *Seraph's* eye to God!

A VISIT TO GREYSTONE HALL.

"To one who has been long in city pent,
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven—to breathe a prayer
Full in the smile of the blue firmament."—KEATS.

(From Hood's Magazine.)

IT was one morning in the gloomy month of November that Arthur Lonsdale received an invitation from his college friend, Charles Percy Somerville, to spend a few days at his country seat in Yorkshire. The friends had not met for several years, during which period Somerville had married the daughter of a neighbouring nobleman, and settled on his paternal estate. His father having died during his minority, and Lonsdale, being in a great measure dependent on his own exertions, had steadily pursued the profession of the law, residing principally in chambers, like other bachelors whose hopes of preferment are greater than their means. It was, then, no small gratification to a lonely barrister to receive a warm and pressing invitation, couched in terms particularly flattering to himself, to join the young squire's select circle of acquaintance annually assembled at this season of the year, when country hospitality is more than usually active. Not many days passed before Lonsdale was seen making all haste in a cab to reach the Euston-square station in time to take his departure by an early train for Yorkshire.

Many were the thoughts which passed through the active and sensitive mind of the young barrister, as he found himself rapidly moving out of the precincts of the metropolis into the healthy and cheerful country, where his boyhood had mostly been passed in the enjoyment of all those out-of-doors recreations which fall to the lot of those who are not "pent up in cities vast." Life had been to him eventful. He had seen the last decay of a once ample fortune in the hands of his poor father, who was incompetent to retrieve the slow ruin entailed upon him by the extravagance and folly of his ancestors; and who, before his own and afflicted wife's death, parted with the last estate, upon which the family had resided for centuries. Lonsdale, at the completion of his college career (which was, by the by, a highly honourable one,) found himself an orphan, with nothing but his poor mother's marriage settlement secured to him for his subsistence, and with few friends willing or able to assist him in the outset of life. It was these trying circumstances which led him to shun the world, and much of its society, and seek in an honourable profession a constant occupation for his active mind, and an independence for his declining years. These efforts had succeeded more than he at first anticipated; and he had found time, in the comparative seclusion which he had chosen for himself, to cultivate a love of religious truth, which followed him, like his mother's last blessing, through all the vicissitudes of life.—In person he was about the middle size: his forehead was ample and lofty, his dark eyes were peculiarly fascinating,

combining the penetration of a man of ability and observation with the sunshine and tenderness of an affectionate and kindly disposition, together with an occasional archness of expression, which showed their possessor neither incapable of appreciating wit in others, nor of exercising it himself. His voice was firm and manly, and at the same time, musical, and being directed by a good ear, never failed to impress the hearer, whether engaged in public, or in private discourse; nor was he deficient in the exercise of vocal harmony, which he had frequently cultivated during his residence in town. To this slight accomplishment, Lonsdale added those of a good draughtsman, and sometimes flattered himself, of a POET also. Be this as it may, he was verily believed guilty of writing verses for the magazines! He played chess and billiards well; and hoped that he had not forgotten his seat in the saddle, or his use of the gun and fishing-rod; and therefore trusted that his presence at his friend Somerville's would not be unpalatable to the guests there assembled,—the male portion of whom, he supposed, might be great proficients in rural sports,—and the ladies, he flattered himself, would appreciate the exercise of his voice, of his pencil, and, perhaps, of his muse.

It was natural, then, that Lonsdale should almost unconsciously have thought over the events of his early life, awakened, in the first instance, by the glimpses of the brooks, fields, and cottages (gleaming under a bright morning sun,) which seemed hurrying by him, as he

moved rapidly foward in the train, which was to convey him to within a few miles of his friend's country seat.

Nor was it improbable that he should also run over his own scanty stock of accomplishments (as we are wont to do the contents of our portmanteaus, fearing lest we have left behind us some important article of clothing,) apprehending lest that stock should be too small—as his native modesty told him it was—to render his presence welcome to the circle he was about to fall in with. And then came the curiosity as to *who* would be there. His friend Somerville, he knew, remained unchanged; but his friend's wife he had never seen. Some of his friend's sisters might be there. Ah! his poor heart might get entangled! But all was mere innocent conjecture; for Somerville had not told him a syllable about his guests. He was certainly impatient to arrive; and became fidgetty when the train drew up at small stations. He spoke little to his fellow-passengers, and seemed more pleased with his own thoughts than with theirs. At length he found himself approaching the end of his journey. The train stopped. He heard the name of the neighbouring town: it sounded like music for the first time in his ear. There was a pony chaise, a livery servant—yes, it was Somerville's servant—waiting for him. He was soon trotting off to Greystone. He had not been there for years. He looked with delight on the rural village—its square-towered church and parsonage. Yes, he remembered the parsonage—a slight colour rose into his cheek; he had been there when a boy, and

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played with the Vicar's daughter, a sweet girl, younger than himself, of whom he had heard nothing since. "Can Laura Stapleton be there now?" thought he. "Is her excellent father, the Vicar of Greystone, living?"—He would have asked the driver of the pony-chaise, but the words stuck in his throat. They drove on, and soon passed the lodge of Greystone Hall, and were traversing the park. It was a beautiful scene. The setting sun was gleaming in the short-lived splendour of a fine November evening over the majestic trees which stood in almost leafless avenues around—their huge branches all burnished with gold. The deer were brousing on the sward, and soon the mansion of Greystone rose on the hill facing the traveller, its windows glittering in the dying blaze of day! This was a moment when Lonsdale felt that he had *a heart*. It rose and beat within him; it was the recollection of past scenes, which crowded upon him more rapidly and more forcibly than he knew how to control. He thought of those days when he had parents living—when they too possessed a family seat—when he visited Greystone Hall on a seeming equality. But it had pleased God that this should no longer be so. Enough!—he was content. He strove manfully, and at last overcame his emotion; and by the time the carriage had reached the front of the mansion, he was himself again. It was a handsome stone building, with a centre and wings. The centre had a double flight of steps leading to the entrance, and was ornamented with four massive columns surmounted by some Grecian decorations—only

a poor substitute for the Gothic mansion which once stood on its site: although the elegant suite of rooms, the commodious offices which stretched out behind, and the princely stables, dog-kennels, and gardens which stood among the trees to the right and left of the building, were undoubtedly more in accordance with the luxury of modern life; and therefore had been substituted in this, as in many other instances, for the massive turrets and jealous mullions and casements of the Elizabethan age.

Lonsdale was met in the entrance-hall by his friend Somerville, and a moment was sufficient to convince him that the long interval which had elapsed since their last meeting had not impaired his friendship or lessened his cordiality. Lonsdale felt entirely at his ease. He was speedily conducted into an elegant library, and introduced as a particular friend to Lady Charlotte, who received him, though a total stranger, except by report, with all that ease and kindness which good-breeding has invariably at command. Lady Charlotte was of rather small stature, with great delicacy of contour and complexion. Her eyes were beautifully blue and full of expression, increased by the fine arched brow and long fringed lash which hung over them; her forehead and nose were chiselled like a Grecian statue, and there was great sweetness and kindliness in the expression of her lips. Her noble lineage shone through the natural grace and simplicity of her carriage. Lonsdale thought his friend had formed an admirable match, and soon made acquaintance with

a lovely little girl and chubby boy, who were playing about their mamma's chair.

There was much which the friends had to talk over, in which Lady Charlotte took a lively interest, having already received many particulars of Arthur Lonsdale's early life and connection with the family from her husband. A half-hour passed rapidly away, until the dressing bell reminded the company that dinner-time was approaching.

"Let me show you to your room," said Somerville. "You will wish to dress after your journey. We are expecting a few neighbours to dinner, whom I know you will like to meet." "We dine punctually at seven, Mr. Londsdale," said Lady Charlotte. The guests who were staying at Graystone had already retired to their rooms, fatigued with the sports of the day, or wishing to be alone before Londsdale's arrival. As he again passed through the hall, which was now brilliantly lighted, he was struck by the beauty and value of the paintings which hung on every side. He mounted a spacious staircase, traversed a corridor, conducted by his friendly host, and soon arrived at his bedroom, where he found a snug fire and candles burning on the dressing-table. "What luxury," thought he, "and comfort combined, in these English mansions; I have nothing to do but enjoy myself! The care, if there be any, is not with me; it is with my wealthy host and hostess. May God bless them, and theirs!"

It was too dark to look out of the window; so, having made his toilet, he quickly found his way down into the

drawing-room, where the guests were assembling for dinner. Here Mr. and Lady Somerville were engaged in conversation with an elderly gentleman and a young lady, who were soon introduced as the Stapletons; and Lonsdale recognised, not without some slight embarrassment, his former playfellow, Laura Stapleton, and her excellent father, the Vicar of Greystone.

He looked to see whether he could trace any expression in Laura's face betraying a similar consciousness of bygone acquaintance; but she appeared perfectly at her ease, and did not return his glance, until her father pointedly alluded to the subject, and spoke to Lonsdale of their early association; then, indeed, he thought he perceived the beautiful eyes of Laura wandering anxiously over his countenance and figure, as if recalling, or endeavouring to recall, some image that dwelt as a cherished inmate in her mind's eye. But all this might be mere fancy; for men are such presumptuous creatures, when they *hope* for notice, they almost always think they *receive* it.

These meditations were interrupted by the entrance of Lord Methley, Lady Somerville's brother, and Sir Henry Fortescue, a particular friend of her husband's. The former was in Parliament as a Whig, and had distinguished himself by his eloquence, political foresight, and philanthropy. Unlike his sister, he was very tall and commanding in appearance, with a fine lofty brow, but divested of all hauteur in his manner, which, on the contrary, was invariably winning and respectful to all

classes. He was a great favourite wherever he went, and was never known to make an enemy. The latter was also a member of the House of Commons, and was generally supposed to have attached himself to the Young England party. He was an accomplished scholar, and had written well both in prose and verse. He was a short, broadset man, with long black hair, and rather a Jewish expression of countenance; a most incessant and entertaining talker, and a capital hand at private theatricals. Lonsdale had scarcely spoken to these fellow-guests when Mrs. Somerville, the mother of his host, and her daughters, Clara and Louisa, entered the room with their brother Tom, an Etonian. Mrs. Somerville was a fine portly lady, retaining much of her early beauty. Clara was a tall handsome girl, rather dashing and showy in appearance, with an off-hand manner, which rather alarmed than attracted the gentlemen. She was a capital rider; an excellent care-taker of the sick, especially of the poor; hated music, and liked dancing and romping. Louisa was a very timid retiring creature, who seldom could be fairly drawn out in society; though possessed of excellent abilities, a fine form and voice, an affectionate disposition, and great taste and accomplishments. Tom was full of roguery and fun, a true Etonian; teased his sisters more than enough, yet was a great favourite with them; knew more about dogs and horses than Latin and Greek; and had not lost his relish for currant-wine and plumb-cake!

Lady Methley now made her appearance: she was very elegantly dressed, and was altogether a very striking

person, and made a good match to her commanding-looking husband, her manner being no less pleasing than his, and her company therefore always acceptable. Captain Jones, a great fox-hunter and steady bachelor, followed her ladyship into the room; and the door was scarcely shut, when Mr. and Mrs. Goldrood, the country banker and his wife, were announced. Goldrood was a banker and magistrate, a man of good family and good breeding, who was admitted into the best society in his own neighbourhood. He was supposed to possess great wealth and a consummate knowledge of business of every kind, and was frequently consulted by those who had money to lend or money to borrow. He was believed to be the only man who knew the exact worth of every man's estate, and the limit of every man's income, for twenty miles round; and this gave him something of the same standing in the world which the possession of other knowledge invariably gives in the eyes of those who do not possess it. He was, beyond the circumstances of being connected with business, in no way distinguished from the society in which he moved; and his character as a banker was more known for liberality than for niggardliness. He possessed good landed property, and lived in a handsome country-seat adjoining the town where his bank was situated; and he was known to cultivate a taste for the fine arts. Dinner was now announced, and Somerville led the way with Lady Methley to the dining-room. Lord Methley took his sister Lady Charlotte; Sir Harry Fortescue was asked to take Mrs. Somerville, which

he did not do until he had ogled all the young ladies round through his gold eye-glass. The Vicar took charge of the banker's wife. Lonsdale instinctively walked up to Laura Stapleton, which move was not unobserved by her vigilant father. The country banker made many apologies on account of his age and want of eye-sight, and offered his arm at last to Louisa Somerville. Jones made a rush at Clara, fearing she would escape with Tom, who hooked himself on to her left arm; and thus a pleasant party of fifteen moved into the dining-room.

Mr. Stapleton said grace in a clear and solemn tone; and the company were quickly seated around a handsome table, in the centre of which stood three massive silver-racing-cups, which had been won at Doncaster in by-gone days. There was nothing to remark in the dinner itself, as it consisted of the usual courses of soup and fish, turkey and venison, beef and mutton, game of all descriptions, and a few French dishes, and a profusion of sweets and fine foreign fruits at dessert, and an abundant supply of light wines, and ale for those who preferred it, with capital old port and claret after dinner. The only feature which struck the observing Lonsdale was the quiet manner in which every thing was conducted, especially by the servants, who moved about without the slightest noise, under the superior direction of Somerville's old butler Jenkins, handing every thing to every body, not omitting the fruits at dessert. Lonsdale was of course very attentive to his neighbours, Laura Stapleton being on his right, and Louisa Somerville on his left hand; but

their wants were so admirably supplied by the servants in attendance, that little remained within his power to accomplish. He did his utmost to keep up a cheerful flow of conversation, which was responded to by Laura in particular with great spirit. The presence of a new guest at table, in a party accustomed to little variety beyond family connections and old acquantances, is always apt to stimulate conversation, and put additional life into that quarter of the room where the stranger happens to sit. This Lonsdale thought was the case now, and he was not mistaken; for neither Laura Stapleton nor Louisa Somerville had talked in so animated a strain for many long months as on this occasion. Lonsdale was much pleased with his place at table, between these lovely girls, and felt really sorry when the time came for the ladies to withdraw.

He was gratified, however, to receive a warm invitation to the vicarage from Laura's father, whose vigilant eye he had frequently detected resting upon him during dinner. The worthy host now called his guests towards the top of the table, and was successful in drawing them out, according to the known ability and likings of each. Somerville was a man of good natural endowments, and excellent qualities. With a very considerable culture of mind, he united a love of field-sports. His occupations was chiefly those of an intelligent landlord and agriculturist; taking his turn on the bench as county magistrate, he was considered to discharge that important duty with ability and strict impartiality. He would sometimes run

the gauntlet with Lord Methley on the subject of the corn-laws, never having brought his mind to relinquish a small fixed duty on foreign wheats. Those discussions were always carried on by both sides in the best temper possible. He sometimes trotted out Goldrood on the currency question, which fairly floored the patience of Sir Harry Fortescue, who said he never could comprehend what Peel was about when he tampered with that important, but perfectly inexplicable circulating medium—bills, bank-notes, gold and silver, &c. The Vicar, Lonsdale, and Fortescue soon became interested in a discussion on the Fathers, which convinced the latter that he had got on the wrong scent, and that the pastor of Greystone had not troubled himself much with the Oxford divines of late days, and was too staunch a Protestant to go back to antiquated customs, even in his own Church; but rather wished to do all in his power to render his parish an example of charity to those who differed in matters of doctrine with himself, considering them as much a part of his flock as those who were regular frequenters of his ministrations. Captain Jones was very merry at Tom's expense, whose drolleries had greatly amused him, and with whom he kept up a perpetual joke. It was now proposed that they should join the ladies; and moderation being the rule at Greystone, no one appeared in any way excited by the good wines that had been placed so freely within his reach. When the drawing-room door opened, the rich tones of the piano, and the sweet voice of Laura Stapleton, met the

ear of Lonsdale. He was loud in her praise, when her song was concluded, and he thought she seemed gratified at his hearty approval. There was now a rapid distribution of the party—some to whist, some to chess, whilst others remained in conversation; the ladies chiefly continuing their work, unless interrupted by a request to play on the piano. It was during this agreeable evening that Lonsdale made himself more fully acquainted with the different members of the circle into which he had unexpectedly fallen; and though he had a singular disposition to seat himself beside the lovely Laura Stapleton, he discovered in each of the party something which won his regard; and this feeling was evidently reciprocal, for he found himself growing a general favourite, especially with the ladies, who had seen much in him to admire. The Stapletons and Goldroods took their leave rather early; and the remainder of the party slipped out, one by one, when the great turret clock had chimed the midnight hour. Lonsdale also was glad to seek his chamber, not without a feeling of some fatigue, for the day to him had been a tiring one, commencing as it had done with a long journey; the whole appearing more like a dream than a reality, so rapidly had he passed from the gloomy metropolis to the society of old and new faces in a house full of old recollections. As Lady Somerville wished him good night, she informed him that, if it was agreeable to him, they would be glad to have his company at family prayers in the morning, at nine o'clock. This invitation gave Lonsdale much plea-

sure, as it assured him that the Somervilles were wishful to begin their day with a suitable acknowledgment to the great Author and Giver of life. He was also informed that Mr. Stapleton always attended the family chapel, to conduct the morning prayers, agreeably to the wish of the Somervilles, and that Laura frequently presided at the organ.

When Lonsdale looked out of his bed-room window on the following morning, he saw the dew lying thick on the lawn and over the gentle swells of the undulated park. He observed many happy little children approaching by the carriage-drive, carrying their small milk cans, on their way to receive the bounty of the squire's dairy. Some of the farm servants were also seen going to and fro; and the village postman, covered with letter-bags, cantered up the drive and disappeared. The sun was now gaining power; and some of the mists, which hung over the lower part of the park, gradually disappeared, and displayed a gleaming sheet of water. The rooks occasionally broke the silence of the morning; and the distant clamour of the dog-kennels found its way on the keen fresh air.

Lonsdale did not forget Lady Somerville's mention of family prayers, and was agreeably surprised to find almost all the guests, and the chief part of the domestics, assembled in the little chapel at the back of the mansion. Prayers were conducted, it is needless to say, in a most appropriate manner, by the esteemed Vicar; and the morning hymn burst from the organ, and a small quire

of village scholars, with surpassing sweetness. It was the voice of Laura Stapleton and her favourite pupils, and met with a response in the deep-toned bass of Lonsdale and others present in the family pew.

Breakfast was now ready in the dining-room. It was difficult to recognise, in the simplicity of their morning garb, the same elegant men and women who had adorned the drawing-room circle of the preceding evening. Each male guest seemed devouring, not only his breakfast, but, at the same time, a budget of news, which had arrived by the letter-carrier whom Lonsdale had seen approaching the house half an hour before. Lord Methley and Sir Harry Fortescue were equipped for shooting; whilst Somerville, Jones, and Master Tom were blazing in scarlet, in preparation for the fox-hunt. Lonsdale was solicited by both these parties to join their ranks; but lacking the needful habiliments, and perhaps some of the zest which animated them, he seemed reluctant to do so: however, at length, he consented to mount a pony, and witness the "throw-off."

There was now a stirring sight from the windows of the hall; for, by this time, the whole pack had left the kennels, with huntsman and whipper-in, and was proceeding at a slow pace to "*the meet*" down in the hollow, on the skirts of the park. The splendid steeds of Somerville and Jones came neighing to the front door, pricking up their ears at the sight of the distant hunt, which was slowly collecting from all quarters. The horsemen were soon in the saddle, and Lonsdale thought he never saw

his friend Somerville look more thoroughly the squire, from head to foot, than at this moment. Somerville was, in fact, a fine aristocratic-looking young man: all his hunting equipments were in first-rate style and order; he had an excellent seat on horseback, and never felt more at home than in the saddle. The ladies waved an adieu from the dining-room windows; and the four horsemen took the direct road to "the cover." Here they found a large "field;" the day promised excellent sport, and the dogs were immediately "put in." A few minutes now elapsed, during which frequent salutations were exchanged among the riders, who were either neighbouring squires or their dependents and guests, with a sprinkling of young merchants from the neighbouring town, and a few officers from the barracks. The delay was only brief. A fine fox was seen stealing out of the north side of the cover, and the pack rapidly broke out in full cry in pursuit. There was some jockeyship required, in so numerous a field, to prevent "heading" master reynard; but he had a clear start, and away the whole "field" galloped, at a magnificent pace, across the farm land to the northward! Lonsdale's first impulse was to follow in the rear; but when he remembered the diminutive size of the pony on which he was mounted, and the magnitude of the fences over which the horses were leaping, and, moreover, recollected that his steed belonged to Louisa Somerville, and might receive some injury at his hands, he reluctantly reined in its fiery little head; and when the last red coat had disappeared, turned down a lane towards some

plantations, where the shooters were to beat for game. Here he was not disappointed in the object of his pursuit, and found Lord Methley and Sir Harry Fortescue, and several keepers and rangers, enjoying what they considered excellent sport: but there was something about the dreadful certainty of their aim, which gave the humane mind of Lonsdale a dislike to stand cooly by, and witness the inevitable destruction of these beautiful tenants of the woods and meadows; and he made a promised call at the vicarage a sufficient excuse for withdrawing early from the scene of slaughter.

It was then with a fluttering heart that he found himself traversing the village of Greystone, and approaching the vicarage, so connected in his own mind with the early associations of boyhood. His pony's bridle was soon hanging on the garden-gate, and he leisurely sauntered towards the door. The wall-flowers and mignionette were still fragrant in the noon-day sun: there were a sufficient number of evergreens to refresh the eye on every side, and ivy in profusion covered a portion of the house and garden-wall. Lonsdale raised the shining brass-knocker; the door was opened by a cleanly maid-servant, and he was ushered into a back parlour, where the Vicar and his daughter were seated at their several employments. The former had just completed his preparations for the succeeding sabbath; and Laura was counting up and balancing the pence she had received for the village clothing society. They both looked pleased at the entrance of their guest; and the worthy Vicar gave him so

cordial a squeeze of the hand, that Lonsdale almost felt him stand for the moment in the stead of a second father!

"We were just going out to the school, Mr. Lonsdale," said he; "will you accompany us? Any other day we would have deferred our visit; but this is Saturday, you know, and there is no afternoon school: it will be all over by twelve o'clock, and my daughter wants to fix the hymn-tunes with the mistress and elder children, before they separate." Lonsdale gave a hearty consent; and Laura put on the bonnet and shawl which were lying on a chair beside her; and all three were immediately on their way to the school at a rapid pace.

It was some time since Lonsdale had seen so many happy faces congregated together, The whole school rose as the Vicar and his daughter entered,—the girls curtseying, and the boys making their best and most respectful bows, and eyeing the stranger with considerable curiosity. The little arrangements for the singing were soon made, and as the church clock struck twelve, the Vicar, after a brief admonition to the children, would not detain them beyond their usual hour.

Lonsdale and his conductor now bent their steps down the village, and were pleased to see Clara and Louisa Somerville busied in conveying some little comforts to the sick. Lonsdale was also gratified to hear from the Vicar that Somerville had set out about thirty allotments, of one half-rood each, in the village, which were most acceptable to the more indigent poor, and had given promises

of more, the moment they were required. Somerville was also glad to hear what a good character his friend bore among his tenantry for consideration and kindness; that he seldom omitted to look into their wants himself; and though always ready to hear what his bailiff had to say, formed his own judgment of the case by personal inspection. It was with real pleasure that Lonsdale received an invitation to spend the sabbath with Mr. Stapleton, at the vicarage; and his own inclination, apart from the pleasure he derived from Laura's society, led him to prefer the quietude which is so desirable on that day of rest, and which he feared could not be so easily commanded in his friend Somerville's hospitable mansion. Though in this, we believe, he would have been agreeably disappointed, had he remained the Sunday at Greystone Hall. Before leaving the worthy Vicar, to return to the mansion, he inquired whether he should have the pleasure of meeting him that day at dinner? To which Mr. Stapleton replied, with a smile, that he and Laura made it a rule never to go out on the Saturday afternoon; and that Lady Somerville knew this, and would not expect them. Lonsdale felt that his presence might be in some degree an interruption to the active duties of his excellent friend; and remembering that he was to be his guest on the following day, disengaged himself from his fascinating company, and returning for his pony, which he had left at the vicarage, rode off to the Hall.

On his arrival he found an excellent lunch on table, at two o'clock, for those who were pleased to partake of it;

Lady Somerville doing the honours of the table. Lord Methley and Sir Harry Fortescue had returned from shooting, and having changed their dress, sat down as if determined to do ample justice to the good fare.

After luncheon, Lonsdale had a round or two at billiards with Methley and Fortescue, at which Clara officiated as "scorer." He could not help admiring her exuberant spirits, merry laugh, and hearty good humour. Louisa was engaged with Lady Somerville in instructing her little nephew and niece, whose education had hitherto been entirely undertaken by their amiable mother. The gentlemen at length, tired of play, found their way into the library, which was amply stored with curious and substantial literature. A literary conversation sprung up between Lord Methley and Sir Harry, in which Lonsdale was glad to take part, and found that his acquaintance with English literature was such as to enable him to attract and command the attention of two men of considerable literary attainments. It was a gratification to him to find that these members of the English senate could recreate themselves so completely during the recess, and that they both were foremost in countenancing and supporting the diffusion of knowledge among the working classes. The ladies coming into the room, became frequently interested in the conversation, especially when their favourite authors were mentioned; —showing that they could well appreciate what was excellent in literature, without being guilty of pedantry, or claiming to be thought "blue-stockings."

All the party now thought a walk would be agreeable before the day closed in; and the gardens and conservatories were visited; and afterwards they strolled towards the point from which the hunters were expected to return from the chase. The three "red coats" soon made their appearance, at a terribly slow pace, to be sure, for the horses seemed "dead beat." Somerville flourished a fox-brush in the air—an evident token that they "had killed."

"We ran reynard to Old Daggle-Bottom, and there finished him," said he. "Only think! he took us twenty, or five-and-twenty, miles!" "However, here we are, all safe," said Jones; and prettily splashed and dabbled they were! Tom had tumbled off at a fence, but was no worse for the fall, except a stiff shoulder; his sisters were full of commisseration at his misfortune; which pity, by the by, he did not half like!

The whole party now returned to the Hall at a foot's pace. The only difference at table, between this day and the last, was an increased cordiality towards Lonsdale, whose company was acceptable to all present, and who was insensibly becoming a general favourite, even down to Jenkins, the butler, who told Mrs. Lily, the lady's maid, that he thought "*that* Mr. Lonsdale a very correct young gentleman!" The party broke up an hour earlier than usual, as it was Saturday night; and thus closed the second day of Lonsdale's visit to Greystone Hall. There seemed to him much to be admired in the freedom and affection which extended over this amiable family, and the entire absence of effort, either in entertaining a

guest, or in attempting a display. There was, in fact, little to remark between the habits of the Somervilles and those of the first nobility of the land. Things with the nobility are merely on rather a larger scale; there is no essential difference in their pursuits or amusements.

The following morning brought with it the solemn sound of sabbath bells. There seemed to be an additional charm, at least in the eyes of Lonsdale, thrown over wood and valley, hill and plain. His pleasure, however, was somewhat disturbed by the receipt of a letter, with the word "immediate" upon the cover. This was handed to him upstairs—Jenkins very properly thinking it might be in a hurry! The letter related to professional business, and required his personal attendance on Monday morning in London. He thought it better to keep his engagement at the vicarage, and take the night mail-train to town. Having come to this determination, he explained matters to his kind host and hostess, who made all the necessary arrangements for his convenience, and only coupled them with a promise that his visit (which was to have lasted some days longer, and embraced some private theatricals and other amusements, a county ball included,) should be resumed at his earliest convenience. Lonsdale took an affectionate leave of his kind friends and their guests before church-time, and made the best of his way to the vicarage. Here he found only the Vicar at home, who had just returned from the Sunday school, where Laura still remained, and was about to proceed to the vestry, as the bells were ringing for morning

service. They went out together, and met the Sunday scholars, headed by Laura, whom Lonsdale thought never looked more lovely, as she modestly acknowledged his bow: the whole party filed into church together. Lonsdale found himself alone in the Vicar's pew—for Laura had gone into the organ loft. The church rapidly filled with decent worshippers, from the villages and farm-houses scattered around the parish.

It was a plain ancient building, with scarcely any monumental tablets but those of the Somervilles, and a few stained-glass windows, of no great beauty. The Squire's pew soon filled. It was a goodly sight. The conduct and behaviour of Somerville and his guests was all that the Vicar himself could desire.

The reverend man, followed by his homely clerk, now ascended the reading-desk; and after a short pause, in which his venerable face was buried in his hands and snow-white surplice, the full-toned organ broke the stillness of the church, and every member of the congregation rose simultaneously, and joined in the heavenly melody of the morning hymn! The shrill treble of the Sunday-scholars, led by the clear tones of Laura's voice, mingled in the deep bass of the organ and the manly strains of the "forefathers of the hamlet" of Greystone. Lonsdale could not but rejoice that he had early learned and loved the mode of worship which the Church of England has appointed in our land. Soon came that admirable form of confession on bended knees, the reading of the psalms, and lessons appointed for the day,

intermingled with those magnificent chaunts which raise the soul in one gush to heaven;—followed by that admirable Litany, which seems appropriate to every state and condition in life. Then came another thrilling hymn,—then the reading of the commandments, epistle, and gospel, and lastly, the earnest address of the Vicar from the pulpit. Lonsdale was able to join *in heart*, with all this appointed service, and felt himself more than ever attached to its founders and upholders: believing it to be, under God, the means most conducive to that devotional exercise, which must spring from the *heart alone*, to be acceptable to the great Father of spirits. He met Laura at the church-door, after the sermon was over; she seemed rather flushed with her exertions in the choir, but said she was not overdone. She pointed out her mother's grave, as they passed through the churchyard to the vicarage. It was a touching moment to both: Lonsdale remembered Mrs. Stapleton, who had treated him with great kindness when a boy. They soon sat down to a frugal repast, constituted principally of cold meats and fruit pies,—all which had a peculiar relish to Lonsdale, who appreciated the motive which induced these excellent people to save their servants from all the trouble they could on Sundays, by eating a *cold* dinner instead of a *hot* one, which once a week, at least, is no hardship, and permits the kitchen domestics to attend a place of worship, if they are so disposed. The afternoon service speedily succeeded this homely meal; and brought with it the same refreshment to the mind of Lonsdale, which

the more lengthy one of the morning had previously done. This being ended, he found Mr. Stapleton entirely at leisure, and he entered into that intimate conversation with him, which a young man may feel himself warranted in doing with a pastor of high standing and character; and delighted was that pious man to find that "the good seed" had already taken root in the heart of Lonsdale, and was likely to bring forth therein much fruit to the glory of God. Tea being over, there was a pleasing time for mutual converse between Laura and Lonsdale, who now thoroughly appreciated her worth as well as her *beauty*. He felt that much of the happiness of his future life might possibly be interwoven with their common destiny; and though prudence prevented his committing himself on such a short acquaintance, he left the vicarage with a firm determination not only to ponder over any future proposals he might be disposed to make, but also to weigh the chances of success, should such proposals be made on his part. He bid adieu, for the present, to his kind friend the Vicar, with many thanks; and much of the night-journey was spent in thinking over his brief but agreeable visit to Greystone, —leaving an impression that the *wealthy and the noble are frequently instruments of great national good in our country, and are the stewards and almoners of God's bounty to thousands of the humbler classes throughout the length and breadth of the land.*

ODE TO BURNS.

Now, hurrah! for old Scotland,
The land of oaten-cakes—
Of mountains and moorlands—
Of rivers and lakes!

I've roamed o'er thy battlefields,
And stood by each grave—
My soul has turned in glory
To thy gifted and brave!

But who among thy children
A wider homage earns,
Than the Poet of the people
The loved and loving Burns!

O! dearer now to Scotland
The songs of her Bard,
Than the fame of Bruce or Wallace
In the days when they warred.

The Highlands they are bonny—
The Lowlands they are green—
Ah! but show us a lassie
Like Robert's May-queen!

Like the bluebells of Scotland
So lowly and meek—
Like the heath on the mountains
The bloom on her cheek!

'Tis the *soul* in thy musings,
And the *heart* in thy song,
That are worth all the rhymesters
That rhyme the day long!

Then a blessing on thee—Robert—
Wherever we may be—
Who thinks of bonny Scotland
Will proudly think of *Thee*.

PERCIVAL; OR, THE NEW COMER.

"O for a world in principle as chaste
As this is gross and selfish! over which
Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,
That govern all things here, should'ring aside
The meek and modest Truth, and forcing her
To seek a refuge from the tongue of Strife
In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men;
Where Violence shall never lift the sword,
Nor Cunning justify the proud man's wrong;
Leaving the poor no remedy but tears."

COWPER'S "TASK."

Considerable sensation was excited a few years ago, in a small market town in the north of England, in consequence of the public announcement, that the sale by auction of certain estates, belonging to a Baronet, lately deceased, was about to take place. On the day appointed, a motley group of real and pretended buyers was collected together. In one of the largest rooms of the principal inn waiters were busily employed handing glasses of wine to these gentlemen. The auctioneer opened the proceedings of the day by a speech, in which he expended more than his usual amount of eloquence, interspersed with various rather doubtful phrases, one of which—"*undiluting*" (instead of *undulating*) addressed to the nature of the soil, raised a laugh, at his expense, among the more educated portion of his audience.

The bidding was now commenced by a few pretended buyers (previously acquainted with the reserved bid of

the deceased Baronet's executors,) who run up the value of the estate, indoors, to an ace of what it had been computed at, by the most sanguine valuer, out of doors.

At this moment, a person, previously unobserved, made an advanced bid, which the auctioneer eagerly caught up. The bidders who had preceded him appeared greatly relieved, instead of disappointed, and every eye was fixed on the stranger. The auctioneer now looked round the company in vain. The price was already higher than that of a mere investment; it was, in fact, almost a fancy price.

The waiters plied the assembly with more wine—but to no purpose. The auctioneer declared that there was now no "reserved bid"—that the estate was actually in the market—and that he should immediately knock it down to the highest bidder! He waited a little longer, however, and then said he should count three! "*One*"—"*Two!*"—(going, gentlemen—going—going)—"*Three!*"—"*Gone!*" It was, in fact, knocked down to the stranger, who paid the deposit-money, and almost immediately afterwards left the room. Thus ended the sale, as most country sales end, there being but *one* sweeping buyer present. The neighbouring landowners would have taken adjoining fields—buyers from a distance would have taken separate lots, or thirds, or halves; but there was only one *bona fide* purchaser of the whole estate; and it was well for the sellers that such an individual was found to take the property off their hands entire, at so handsome a price.

But there was some mystery about this stranger. He gave in his name "Percival;" but nobody knew anything about him. "Was he a Lord? Was he a Londoner? What was he?" No one could tell. The tenants (who always come to sales to see who their new landlord is to be), were equally puzzled. They only caught a glimpse of him as he left the room. He seemed "a decent-like gentleman," as far as they could tell, and that was all. The country gentry promised to make enquiry in quarters most likely to afford information, before the new-comer should arrive on his estate, in order that his quality and pedigree might be fully ascertained.

We must now pass over six months to the period when Percival took possession of his property; the title being clear—the conveyance executed—and the money handed over in due form. This took place immediately after the mid-summer rents had been paid to his predecessors, in the delightful month of July. The estate comprised a whole village, with some four thousand acres, containing good, indifferent, and bad land, in pretty equal proportions—some excellent preserves, abounding with game—a considerable sheet of water, stocked with fish—a capital family mansion—all within no great distance of a small market-town, sending a member to Parliament—the surrounding country being particularly picturesque, and abounding in similar independent properties. Such was the investment which Percival had made. As he was a new-comer, all eyes were upon him. His politics, religion, habits, and character, being the subject of

enquiry—to say nothing of his personal appearance, to which the ladies were by no means indifferent. "He has given some hundred and fifty thousand pounds for the property; and cannot be, '*a Nobody*,'" said one. "He does not look like '*a Nobody*,'" said another. "He looks like a Gentleman, all over," said a third. "They say he's a *bachelor*," said a fourth. In fact, nothing transpired, and people were, for once, left to judge of a man by his real actions, and not by prejudiced reports. The first person who ventured to call upon the new-comer, was the Clergyman of the parish, who observed Percival at church on the preceding Sunday. On this occasion, they had a good deal of conversation, from which the worthy pastor gathered thus much;—that the new squire was as charitably disposed as the old one. He enquired about clothing, benevolent and sick clubs—about Sunday and and week-day schools, and expressed his desire to subscribe to all of them—begged the good minister would acquaint him with cases of distress in the parish, that he might endeavour to relieve them; and told him that his house was always open to his visits, and that he should value his spiritual advice for *himself* as well as for his poorer neighbours. The Clergyman went away much gratified; and, from this time, Percival appeared to have gained, at least, a character in his new home. This good name was speedily increased among the tenantry, by a new adjustment of their rents, which was founded upon the valuation made by Percival's agent, previous to his purchase of the estate; and upon which, leases were

granted in some cases, and in others a liberal reduction in rent was made; and very handsome terms offered to those tenants whose land required further draining and culture.

It was soon also discerned that Percival was a reading man; for a large collection of books found its way to his country seat, and he spent much time among them in his library, This did not particularly raise him in the estimation of some of his neighbours, who feared that he would prove an indifferent sportsman. Here, however, they were mistaken; for, although Percival cared and talked less than they did about such matters (and whenever field-sports were mentioned, it was merely as *amusements*, and not as *occupations,)* yet, his horses and dogs were as well-bred, and well-trained, as theirs; and did their work fully as well, when required.

The Clergyman found him a constant attendant at church; but was rather disconcerted to observe that he helped a dissenting congregation in their schools and charities, when solicited to do so. He was, however, soon satisfied that this assistance proceeded from a Christian feeling of good-neighbourhood, more than from any heretical notions which the new squire had imbibed. Nobody found fault with Percival's habits, manners, or morals—he was kind to everybody. The mystery which hung about his birth, parentage and early life, nevertheless, remained undispelled.

One country gentleman, after another, paid his respects, partly, perhaps, with a view to the unravelling of this

secret. They agreed, however, in nothing but this;—that their neighbour had something very uncommon about him. His politics puzzled them extremely—they savoured of *both* parties, but lacked the accustomed seasoning of partizanship, to which their palates were previously accustomed. The Lord Lieutenant of the county recommended Percival's name to be placed on the commission of the peace, and he was accordingly raised to the dignity of a county magistrate. This brought him, at stated intervals, to the magistrates' bench, in the neighbouring town; and subsequently in contact with its inhabitants, who were glad to avail of his assistance in their various meetings for benevolent purposes. Percival soon became one of the most popular men in the neighbourhood; and, at the same time, the most useful and influential, which was mainly attributed to one inflexible rule from which he never deviated,—that of divesting himself of all prejudice before he examined any subject of enquiry, and by deciding upon its *merits* apart from all party bias. He had this advantage over many persons—he was determined to be *impartial.* He never first asked *who* people were; and never first assumed that *they* knew who he was: but he said—"*what* is it you require? When I have considered the matter you shall have my reply."

A whole year having elapsed, Percival now found things sufficiently settled on his estate to leave them with perfect ease, having re-appointed the old steward with fresh and precise instructions for his future guidance,

feeling, perhaps, some degree of satisfaction in leaving matters better than he found them, and wishing to see how they would be conducted during his temporary absence. We may here observe that in the society in which Percival had mixed since his arrival at Newlands, (for that was the name of his estate,) although he had no complaint to make on the score of want of hospitality or good-breeding, yet there was nothing in it very captivating to a mind like his, and repeated periods of solitude in a large house and domain, even when attended by all the luxuries, conveniences and occupations of country life, are apt to pall after the novelty has worn away. This feeling had probably invaded the otherwise tranquil mind of Percival, and had he seriously contemplated marriage as a remedy, in looking round him for a partner in life, he was somewhat in the predicament of our first parent, until a real Eve was created. There was no help-meet for him! However this might be, he resolved to quit his abode and make a short sojourn at a neighbouring bathing place on the sea coast. Here the various inquiries which had been instituted respecting his family history were again resumed, and with some success, for it was ascertained beyond a doubt, by some inveterate gossips, the Talkingtons, who were staying there,—that Percival had become possessed of his fortune by the decease of his younger brother, who had made him his heir to an amount which had given great surprise, as Percival's means had previously been limited, and those of his brother not

generally imagined to be particularly ample, as he had always lived in a remarkably careful style, being a partner in a London mercantile house. Of Percival's early life they could learn little, except that he had received an University education, and had travelled repeatedly on the continent, where he was staying when the tidings of his brother's decease first reached him. It was thus that Percival found himself the only survivor of his family, his parents having died during his infancy, and he thus unexpectedly placed, by the death of an only brother, with a considerable sum of money at his disposal, which he had ultimately invested in the purchase of Newlands.

There was something melancholy in his solitary position, which gave an interest to his peculiar circumstances, and as the discovery, which the Talkington's had made, spread rapidly, these particulars reached his own neighbourhood before Percival's return, and went far towards satisfying the curiosity of his acquaintance thereabouts.

One morning, as he was carelessly glancing over a list of arrivals at the watering place at which he was staying, his eye was attracted by the name of *Marchmont*—"Mrs. and Miss Marchmont, at No. 4, on the Esplanade, "can those," thought he, "be the Marchmont's my poor "brother and I used to know in London, some fifteen "years ago? Let me see—Marchmont—the barrister, had "a little girl—Cary, or Katy—who used to sit on my knee "and say 'she should like to live with Mr. Percival and "take care of his cat,'—as pretty a little thing she was

"as ever breathed! I think I heard of Marchmont's "death—Yes—Poor Henry mentioned it in one of his last "letters to me at Rome, and these ladies must be the "widow and daughter now grown into a woman. I should "certainly know the mother again. I really feel some-"what ashamed of having entirely lost sight of these old "friends since my early days—but after all, it may be "somebody else." After soliloquising in this fashion some time, our hero sallied forth to reconnoitre 'No. 4 on the Esplanade,' and to his great satisfaction recognised in the elderly lady who was leaving the house, as he passed the door, Mrs. Marchmont of early memory, with a lovely girl on her arm. Percival did not wait for an introduction, but boldly made himself known, and was speedily recalled to the widow's recollection as one of her late husband's younger friends, which made him welcome to her for her husband's sake. Caroline was, of course, introduced, and altho' she truly affirmed that she could not remember having ever seen Mr. Percival before, and slightly coloured when her babyish speech was repeated, yet, seemed disposed to regard him with a friendly feeling that she could not well account for towards one so apparently an entire stranger. There was an awkwardness in the unprotected position of these ladies which Percival felt very distinctly at the commencement, and he never lamented more the want of a sister or female relative, to set the party at ease, than on this and subsequent occasions, on which he was desirous of being thrown with the Marchmonts, and of cultivating their intimacy. "No

"doubt," thought he, "Caroline was a most lovely and in-
"teresting girl—but was she the Eve he had pictured to
"himself as indispensible to his happiness? I must gain
"her confidence," said he, "and overcome her natural
"reserve before I can judge of her real mind, which, if it
"be at all like what I remember of her father's, must be of
"no common order." Time and opportunity were soon found for relating the events which had intervened since their first meeting, and by this kind of mutual recital, a confidence sprung up, which was particularly what Percival desired and which Caroline and her mother did not appear loath to encourage. Percival was soon convinced that his young friend had been brought up in 'a good school'—that she had been early impressed with a sense of her own responsibility in the eye of her Maker, and that she must not seek a pretext in fashion, or in any other hollow plea, for actions in themselves culpable, altho' held excusable in the eyes of the world.

This kind of home education gave a sincerity to her words and actions which delighted Percival in no small measure, "who," thought he, "would intentionally mis-
"lead one so natural and sincere as Caroline? He was
"not the man to do so—in fact, it had never been his
"habit to deceive any body, much less so engaging a crea-
"ture as she was!" But it was time to make up his mind firmly and resolutely—he had advanced as far as any prudent man could go, in cultivating the friendship of so lovely a being, nay, perhaps *further*, without being aware of it. "What was to be the next step? How could he

"withdraw? How could he stand still?" Percival felt his position and acted accordingly. Caroline received his proposals with considerable emotion, and spoke of her mother's dependance upon her society and attentions. Percival esteemed Mrs. Marchmont too highly not to feel the force of this objection. He promised her a home on the estate, if not in the house. "But are you sincere in making this offer of a home to mama?" said Caroline, and this was the first time she had questioned his sincerity. "Yes, perfectly sincere, I assure you!" was Percival's reply. Caroline seemed to waver a few moments, and then clearing her beautiful brow, accepted him with a joyful heart! If Percival was rich when he left Newlands, he was richer by far when he returned there with his cherished bride. She became 'the admired one' of the whole neighbourhood, and she was as good as she was beautiful. She was almost an idol with the poor, and a favorite with the wealthy and aristocratic. They saw in her, as in her husband, the true nobility of soul which raises its possessor above the multitude of all ranks. But we have said enough—we have attempted to delineate in this recital, the spirit of those who must renovate the age in which we live. They must be determined to lay aside all prejudices—they must not live only to themselves—they must have a heart open to all ranks and grades of society—they must not make occupations of mere amusements—they must not be intent on driving hard bargains—they must exercise christian charity to all who differ from them in religious or political

opinion—they must, in short, be patterns of the highest mould in which poor humanity can be cast—and they will never fail to sway the destinies of this mighty nation, and command the confidence and gratitude of an industrious and admiring people.

LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

Life is like yon fisher's boat—
Gay she quits the friendly shore—
On life's ocean thus we float—
Till the morn of youth is o'er.

Youth is cloudless over head—
Sparkling billows round are spread—
Softest breezes fan our sail—
Pleasure's voice is on the gale!

Ah! but may we ever glide
Gently thus on ocean's breast?
Rise no breakers on the tide!
Swell no storms to mar our rest?

Ask life's aged mariner—
"Winds may blow as foul as fair,
"And this smooth and peaceful sea
"Ope her jaws and swallow thee!

"Gaze around with jealous care,
"Watch the sky and watch the waves;
"For the rising storm prepare,
"He who heeds—the tempest braves.

"I have seen a small black cloud
"Darken like a mighty shroud—
"I have seen the coming wind
"Leave the lagging waves behind—

"When I hear the distant wail
"Of the tempest's voice above,
"Closely then I reef my sail,
"Steering for some sheltering cove—

"Thus may danger's earliest form,
"That of guardian angel be—
"Thus I've weathered many a storm
"On life's wild tempestuous sea."

Wakefield :

PRINTED BY NICHOLS AND SONS, NORTHGATE.