

POETRY.

LIFE AND DEATH.

FROM THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

O fear not thou to die!
For rather fear to live, for Life
Has thousand snares thy feet to try
By peril, pain, and strife.

O fear not thou to die!
No more to suffer or to sin;
No snares without thy faith to try,
No traitor heart within:

Fear least in evil hour,
Thy pure and holy hope, o'ercome.
By clouds that in the horizon lower,
Thy spirit feel that gloom

O fear not thou to die!
To die, and be that blessed one,
Who, in the bright and beauteous sky,
May feel his conflict done—

Imitation of L'Amour Antique of the old French poet Marot.

GOOD OLD TIMES.

In good old times, when Love was jolly,
And prudish arts were deem'd but folly,
And gifts, were gifts, and honest coaxing
Was little like your modern hoaxing;

But now 'tis nought but mimic tears,
And hollow grief, and studied fears:—
Then cease my want of Love to blame,
For Love, I ween, is not the same.

Variety.

All pleasure consists in Variety.

THE FIRST OF APRIL.

The conjectures of authors as to the origin of the custom of making what are termed "April Fools," on this day, are numerous, but little satisfactory.

"There is nothing hardly (says the author of the Essay to relieve the old Celtic) that will bear a clearer demonstration than that the primitive Christians, by way of conciliating the Pagans to a better worship, humoured their prejudices by yielding to a conformity of names, and even of customs, where they did not essentially interfere with the fundamentals of the Gospel doctrine.

Mr. Douce partly adopts this opinion, but differs as to the origin of the custom itself. "I am convinced," says he, "that the ancient ceremony of the Feast of Fools, has no connection whatever with the custom of making fools on the first of April.

"This Feast of Fools," he continues, "had its designed effect, and contributed, perhaps, more to the extermination of those heathens, than all the collateral aids of fire and sword, neither of which were spared in the persecution of them.

The continuance of customs, especially droll ones, which suit the gross taste of the multitude, after the original cause of them has ceased, is a great, but no uncommon absurdity."

The name Andrew, according to this writer, signifies a head Druid or Divine. Hence it was, he adds, that when the Christians, by way of exploding the Druids, turned them into ridicule, in their Feast or Holiday of Fools, one of the buffoon personages was a "Merry Andrew;" a character of whom Pennant (British Zoology) has this remark: "It is very singular, that most nations give the name of their favorite dish to the facetious attendant on every mountebank: thus the Dutch call him Pickle Herring—the Italians, Macaroni—the French Dean Potage—the Germans, Hans Wurst, i. e. Jack Sausage—and we dignify him with the title of Jack Pulling.

The learned Dr. Pegge, in an article in the Gentleman's Magazine, (May, 1766), rejects this origin of the custom in question, and ascribes it to a completely different cause. "It is a matter of some difficulty," he begins, "to account for the expression, 'an April Fool;' and the strange custom so universally prevalent throughout this kingdom, of people's making fools of one another, on the first of April, by trying to impose on each other, and sending one another upon that day upon frivolous, ridiculous, and absurd errands. However, something I have to offer on this subject, and I shall throw it out, if it were only to induce others to give us their sentiments.

Mr. Douce partly adopts this opinion, but differs as to the origin of the custom itself. "I am convinced," says he, "that the ancient ceremony of the Feast of Fools, has no connection whatever with the custom of making fools on the first of April. The making of April fools, after all the conjectures which have been made touching its origin, is certainly borrowed by us from the French, and may, I think, be deduced from this simple analogy. The French call them April fish, (poissons d'April,) i. e. simpletons; or, in other words, silly mackarel, who suffer themselves to be caught in this month. But as, with us, April is not the season of that fish, we have properly substituted the word fools."

That the custom of making fools on this day, is not unknown to other countries besides England, contrary to the supposition of Dr. Pegge, we have sufficient evidence from several writers. Torrens, a Swedish author, in his voyage to China, says, "We set sail on the first of April, and the wind made April fools of us; for we were forced to return before Shager, and to anchor at Riswopol."

Of this kind is the practice alluded to by Decker, in his Seven Deadly Sinnes of London, (1606): "The bookseller everafter, when you passe by, pinnes on your backes the badge of fools, to made you be laught to scorn, or of silly carpers, to make you be pittied." And Sauval, (Antiq. de Paris), hints at a similar custom on the festival of St. Simon and St. Jud when, he tells us, "simple persons are sent to the temple to ask for medlars. (des nefles), in order to entrap them, and make sport for the by-standers."

In the North of England, persons thus imposed on are called "April gowks." Zouk, or gowk, is properly a cuckoo, and is used here metaphorically, in vulgar language, for a fool. The cuckoo is indeed every where a name of contempt. Gouch in the Teutonic, is rendered stultus, a fool, whence came our northern word, a goke or a gawky.

In Scotland, upon April day, they have a custom of "hunting the gowk," as it is termed. This is done by sending silly people on fool's errands, from place to place by means of a letter, in which is written:

"On the first of April
Hunt the gowk another mile."
And in the old play of the Parson's Wedding, the Captain says, "Death! you might have left word where you went, and not put me to hunt like Tom Fool."

A writer in the World, supposed to be the late Lord Orford, exhibits a happy display of irony, in some pleasant thoughts on the effect the alteration of the style would have on the first of April. "What confusion," he observes, "would not follow, if the great body of the nation were disappointed in their peculiar holiday? This country was formerly disturbed with very fatal quarrels about the celebration of Easter; and no wise man will tell me that it is not as reasonable to fall out for the observance of April fool day. Can any benefits arising from a regulated Calendar, make amends for an occasion of new sects? How many warm men may resent an attempt to play them off on a false first of April, who would have submitted to the custom of being made fools of on the old computation? If our clergy come to be divided about Folly's Anniversary, we may well expect all the mischief attendant on religious wars." He then desires his friends to inform him what they observe on that holiday, both according to the new and old reckoning; "how often and in what manner they make or are made fools; how they miscarry in attempts to surprise, or baffle any snares laid for them. I do not doubt but it will be found that the balance of folly lies greatly on the old first of April; nay, I much question," he adds, "whether infatuation will have any force on what I call the false April Fools' day!" and concludes with requesting an union of endeavours "in decriing a reformation which only tends to discountenance good old practices and venerable superstitions."

The Rev. Mr. Dutton, who was in Turin in 1780, says he witnessed there the following singular scene in a church. It was the beginning of February, when the days are short, a very popular preacher, who was accustomed to give sermons of an enormous length, expatiated one day after dinner so long on his subject, which was repentance, that he had passed a full hour into the night, before he had concluded. Scarcely had he finished, when one of his auditors raised his voice and requested to be heard. All listened; and the stranger continued, that the holy man's pathetic discourse had made so lively an impression upon him, who was a miserable sinner, that he had forthwith resolved entirely to change his course of life; and to give sincere proof of his contrition, he would instantly, before all the congregation, freely confess his crimes. He then declared himself to be an Advocate by profession, and openly avowed that he had abused the confidence of his clients, and told their secrets, and sacrificed their interests to the adverse party; he acknowledged himself to be a faithless husband, a bad father, and an ungrateful son; and having followed this up with an enumeration of various offences he had committed, he offered, he said, the last proof of his sincerity in declaring his name; and concluded by saying he was such an advocate, living in such a place. Immediately another voice was heard from another part of the church, calling out that the penitent was an impudent impostor; that he was the advocate named, and that he could not reproach himself with any of the faults so calumniously imputed to him. He besought the audience to secure the villain; but in vain, for the mischievous wag had slipped away during the moment of surprise when the real advocate began to speak; and notwithstanding the most diligent inquiry, was never discovered.

Dr. William King, the celebrated principal of St. Mary Hall, in Oxford, 1778, in vindication of himself, from his enemies of the court, who attributed intrigue, if not treason, to him, said—"I inherited a patrimony, which I found sufficient to supply my wants, and leave me at liberty to pursue those liberal studies which afforded me the most solid pleasures in my youth, and are the delight and enjoyment of my old age. Besides, I always conceived a secret horror of a state of servility and dependence; and I never yet saw a placeman or a courtier, whether in higher or lower life, whether a priest or a layman, who was his own master."

ANECDOTE OF DR. BIBB.—We have heard a very good anecdote, says the Virginia Patriot, of Dr. Bibb, the truth of which we do not vouch. Business rendered it necessary for him to dine several days at a public house, with several other gentlemen. On calling for his bill, he found a certain sum charged each day for wine. The doctor, who, strange as it may appear, drinks no wine, made objections to the charge. "The wine," said the landlord, "was on the side board, you might have helped yourself." Some time after, the landlord called upon the doctor, to look at a whitlow on the finger of one of his children. On adjusting their mutual accounts, the landlord found a charge for medicine exactly equal to his charge for wine. "How is this, doctor? I have had no medicine."—"It was on the shelf," said the doctor, "you might have helped yourself."

Caught a Tartar.—A few days since a wagoner having tugged and toiled throughout the day, "halted" at one of the numerous "Travellers' Rests" with which the great thoroughfare between Winchester and Baltimore is so abundantly supplied, and having watered and fed his horses, snugly seated himself by a blazing fire, with a pipe forgetting his past fatigues, and disregarding those that were to come. By and bye, a rogue passing by, discovered a box in the wagon, which he could not resist the desire of examining, and accordingly shouldered it and carried it to an adjacent field, where the contents are speedily brought to view. But instead of finding a comfortable piece of broad cloth or costly silks, a HUMAN SKELETON is displayed to the bewildered vision of the midnight prowler. Need more be said? A snow having just fallen, it was discovered that the thief had jumped about ten feet from the box and as far as he could be traced, his fleetness by no means flagged. It was now ascertained that a medical student at Baltimore had carefully boxed up a skeleton which he was sending home, and had proceeded thus far safe, until so unceremoniously disturbed by the affrighted rogue. Winchester Gazette.

Monkey Trick.—On Friday last a merchant of New-York received a notice from the Post Office, that a very large package, post-marked "Philadelphia," directed to him, had been received, upon which the postage would amount to upwards of sixteen dollars! The gentleman to whom this information had been conveyed, was not a little puzzled to guess what could be the contents of this expensive bundle, or to whom he was indebted for it. On replying to the Post Office, the package was found as stated—bulky, put up with consummate neatness, and skillfully corded and sealed.—Great care was used in removing the numerous envelopes, lest the contents, which might prove to be fragile, should be injured; but judge his amazement on tearing off the last wrapper, to find within a dead monkey!—Exemplifying with a vengeance the proverb of "Great cry and little wool."

Affection is a greater enemy to the face than the small pox.

Moral.

Mr. BINGHAM: The publication of the following, taken from a northern religious paper, may probably call the attention of the friends and professors of religion in this place to the Prayer Meeting, lately established at the Academy. Should it have that effect, the object of Clío will be answered, and a benefit be imparted to more than ONE DISCIPLE.

From Zion's Watchman.

THE PRAYER MEETING.

It is delightful, after the labors of the day are closed, to assemble with people who collect in our country villages, for the purpose of spending an hour in prayer. It is attended with no noise. One individual after another enters and falls silently into his place, till a sufficient number are collected to begin the exercises. Silent greetings are exchanged, and a few words by way of encouragement or consolation are whispered from one to another. The Bible and the hymn-book are brought forward, and all reverently compose themselves for the duties of the meeting. The good man "wales" a portion of Holy Writ, and "with solemn air" commences the worship of God.—A hymn is read, and the little band lift up their voices in their Creator's praise. The prayer follows—exhortations succeed, and we may believe that the blessings of Heaven often descend "as the dew upon the mountains of Zion," to refresh the heart of the humble believer.—Good it is for Christians "to speak often one to another"—pleasant to feel that the presence of Christ is vouchsafed to grace such unostentatious meetings—and more than all, the Christian disciple comes out from such places, better prepared to resist temptation—strengthened for the conflicts which await him—and looking up with a holier confidence to the world of unclouded light and blessedness.

The eye of the uninterested spectator sees nothing in all this to admire. He finds religion without her pomp, and turns aside and passes on. The scoffer, indeed honors them now and then with a malignant sneer, and the better disposed call it the effects of a harmless delusion. But far the greater part are ignorant, or forget, that there are any who turn aside to think and pray for a careless

World who thinks not on herself."

Those who join in the scenes of worldly amusement, where amidst the bursts of the music and the revelry, God is forgotten, look upon the joys of the humble Christian as insipid and dull. They think there is nothing of life in them.—True, there is no note of preparation—there is no assemblage of beauty and fashion: there is no spirit stirring music—no halls lighted up, and decked with the blandishments of art, by which pleasure lures giddy and unthinking votaries. But there is often found the "music of a thankful heart." The assembling speaks of a preparation as august as the assembling of all this world's generations. The prayer which is breathed forth asks for pardon and forgiveness, and sends up its aspirations to be admitted into the "company of the just made perfect." The hymn which is sung, tells of joys, pure unearthly joys; beauty, undecaying beauty; and of bowers and streams of paradise. I have seen the world, and mixed with its companies, and have ever gone away disappointed. I have joined in the mirth and noise of dissipation, and found that "in laughter the heart is sad." I have entered the garden of pleasure, and revelled for a while on its sweets; yet I have ever found the thorn of remorse lodged under its fairest flowers. But I have taken sweet counsel, and gone where two or three were met in the name of Christ, and have there found a "peace which passeth all understanding."

CLIO.

THE SUTTEE OF AMERICA.

Written for a Lady's Album.

In beholding the customs of foreign nations, they sometimes surprise us by their strong contrast with those of our own country, and occasionally shock us by their entire opposition to the spirit of Christianity. But if we more closely analyse the scenes daily exhibited before our eyes, whose familiarity may be said almost to blind us, this contrast vanishes. Take for instance, the deplorable habit of intonation which has so widely spread over our favoured land, and say whether there can be any evil of such a calculable magnitude? The peace of families becomes destroyed by this demon of desolation. Talent, and reputation, and power, are sacrificed at his shrine. Even the magic wand of wealth is never less in the hands of his votary, or less at his shivered feet. His children proclaim his degradation—his habitations pass into the possession of another—disease, and disgust drive away his friends; and able to sum up this catalogue of human misery, many a charming woman, within the walls of polished cities, is doomed like the deluded Hindoo to suffer tortures on the funeral pyre of her husband, who is dead to her—no religion and no happiness. Phil. Post.