

The Muse! what'er the Muse inspires,  
My soul the tuneful strain admires.—Scott.



FRAGMENT.

Domestic bliss, that, like a harmless dove,  
(Honor and sweet endearment keeping guard)  
Can centre in a little quiet nest  
All that desire could fly through the earth;  
That can, the world eluding, be itself  
A world enjoyed; that wants no witnesses  
But its own slayers, and approving Heaven;  
That, like a flower deep hid in rocky cleft,  
Smiles, though 'tis looking only at the sky.

Literary Extracts, &c.

Variety's the very spice of life,  
That gives it all its flavor.

FROM THE VILLAGE RECORD.

THE TOKEN OF LOVE.

One cold stormy night, last winter, after the labors of the day were closed, and the family were gathered round the cheerful fire, I bade Lucy to hand me a volume of my favorite Goldsmith from the book-case. She rose to do so, and as she passed the window, the snow and hail rattled sharp against it. "It is a fearful storm," said she; "I hope there is no poor traveller abroad and shelterless." "Thou art a good child, Lucy," said I, "the poor are always in thy mind." And methought at the moment, as I gazed on her eye, beaming with benevolence, that she never looked so much like her sainted mother. She had scarcely taken a seat, when a rap was heard at the door. "Who in the world can be there," cried I, "this dreary night? run, run, children, and see." The lad was in a moment at the door, and presently returned, saying that there was a poor man who had lost his way, and asked for shelter. A seat was immediately prepared for him at the kitchen fire, which was yet blazing brightly; his locks were white with snow, and his clothes wet and frozen. Methinks he could not have survived another hour. We soon learned that he was on his way from Downingtown to Wilmington—had missed his road, and by mere accident fallen into the path that led to our mansion. His clothes were changed, and such refreshments given him as his situation rendered necessary; when I told Lucy to invite him into our little sitting-room, for she said he looked like a decent man, now he was decently dressed. As he entered, I thought I could observe, combined in the humiliation of manner common in one who asks charity, a step and air that showed a spirit once proud, if not independent. I bade him welcome with frankness, and congratulated myself in having found a stranger in my guest who might have seen much of the world which I had not, and from whom some amusement, and perhaps instruction, might be obtained. I love my book well, but I also love to read men; and often find an hour spent in the company of a stranger from any part of the globe, well repaid by the information acquired.

His tongue bespoke him from a foreign land; and after a few inquiries, his confidence and spirits seemed to have returned, and he gave us this account of himself; which, as it interested me, I cannot think will be entirely unacceptable to the readers of the Record.

"It is true," said my guest, "that I am from the old country. I was born in a little village in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the year 1788. My father had no land of his own, but he rented a farm which had been occupied by his father and grand-father; and it had, to us, all the charms of home. My mother was a sensible woman, and had received a better education than is common to those in her condition in life; and being a strict member of the Methodist persuasion, she endeavored to instil into my youthful mind useful knowledge and pious sentiments. In my book I made considerable progress, but loved pleasure too well to profit by her instruction in more serious matters. Among the companions of my youth was one James Atkinson, a lad two years younger than myself, the son of our landlord. Open countenance and open hearted, fair in look, and in conduct frank, generous and good; his blue eyes, light hair, aquiline nose, high forehead, and white teeth, all regularly proportioned and combined, gave a perfect specimen of ancient English beauty; presenting at once strongly marked features, with sweetness and nobleness of expression. James was a favorite throughout the whole neighborhood; for while he was on no occasion guilty of a mean action, he was prompt to defend, even at the hazard of a battle, the rights of the oppressed."

"But you forget your own story in that of your friend," said I, interrupting him.

He wiped a tear from his rugged cheek, turned away his head a moment, and proceeded:

"But it matters little now," said he; "it is useless to grieve, and I must not make my story too long:—James had formed an attachment for Mary Ann Sheldon, a sweet girl, the daughter of one of his father's tenants, but a considerable and respectable farmer. She was very fair, (I think not so handsome as James,) sprightly and agreeable, sensible and well educated; she appeared more and more interesting every moment she was in your company. There was a secret charm thrown around her which it is difficult to describe or account for; it was not beauty—it could not be wealth; yet it was felt and owned by every one. The partiality of James was manifest; and it was not difficult to see that his love met its desired return. There never was a couple promised fairer for happiness. Interest in their own affairs seemed almost suspended among the farmers and villagers, so much were they occupied in the approaching marriage of James Atkinson and Mary Ann Sheldon.

"But this calm of peace, of love and pleasure, was a delusive halcyon, the forerunner of a desolating storm. A severe contest arose in the neighborhood for member of parliament, in which Mr. Atkinson, the father of James, and Mr. Sheldon, the father of Mary Ann, espoused opposite interests. The contest was bitter to an unusual degree. Mr. Atkinson was a high tempered man, and having rashly pledged the votes of his tenants, he was irritated to phrenzy against those who resisted and counteracted his wishes. A quarrel upon the hustings ensued; his candidate failed; and on his return home, he told James, in the most solemn manner, that if he continued his attention to the daughter of his enemy, he must expect not only the forfeiture of his hopes of prosperity, but of his affection: 'James,' said he, taking his hand, 'I thus deliberately swear by Heaven, the wrath and curses of the father who has held your infant head so oft on his bosom, shall follow you, if you marry into that family while I live.'

"James flew to me, threw himself on the earth, and cried audibly like a boy; then rising, his eyes swollen and bursting with rage, he struck his breast, and threw his hands to Heaven: 'I will not disobey you,' said he, 'but I will be revenged on your cruelty.'—'What, James?' said I; 'revenged on whom? what is the matter?' When his feelings would permit, he told me the whole tale. 'I cannot and dare not bring on my head that fearful and cruel curse of my father,' said he, 'but I am resolved. Life without Mary Ann can be but lingering death—not worth preserving—I care not how soon I die. I am resolved secretly to leave home, and go to the wars. I do not know what possessed me: the thought struck me that I would accompany him. Some secret notion of glory—some idea of promotion; a wish to return and be the wonder and pride of the village, operated upon me: and perhaps my attachment to home had been impaired by the unkindness of one, whose kindness was, I then thought, necessary to my happiness; so singing,

"She now prefers some richer swain,  
For gold, alas! has banish'd love,"

I told James that death should only part us. "The farewell of James and Mary Ann I did not witness; but when we set out, he never spoke a word for more than an hour. It was a bright moon-light night—sometimes I could see that his fists were clenched; sometimes his hands were laid on his breast—his eyes raised to Heaven, and he sighed deeply as if he was in great distress. My own heart, too, grew heavy and very sad, as I reflected upon the pangs that my departure would bring upon the tender bosom of my beloved mother; and too tender, though manly heart, of my father. At London I wrote them a most dutiful letter, promising to behave worthy of them, and to return, I hoped, with honor.—We joined the army, and according to our request were immediately sent abroad to Spain, where Wellington was contending with the French.

"The war was active, and we were soon engaged. I can't tell how it was, but as we began the battle we always felt a little trembling about the heart, but it was soon over; and so accustomed did we become to scenes of slaughter, that a man shot dead at our side produced little more emotion than the death of a hare or a partridge. James always fought, not only with bravery, but with desperation, and soon attracted the notice of Capt. Churchill, who commanded us; from whom he soon received the appointment of sergeant.

"The evening before the great battle of Talavera, James came to me with a strange expression of melancholy upon his countenance. He stood some time without speaking; at length, 'William,' said he, 'William

Harlan is my name, said my guest, bowing, as if just that moment sensible he had not before told me.) 'William,' said he, 'you know I am no coward; I have braved death in many a field, and have never shrunk from his most terrific approach: But I foresee that my hour has nearly come; I am sure I shall not live through to-morrow.' I endeavored to rally him; but it gave pain, and I desisted. 'Here,' continued James, taking from his bosom a silver brooch—it had once been a double heart, and was broken in two—I well remembered to have seen it formerly, and on Mary Ann's snow white bosom to confine her handkerchief. It was now bound round and interwoven with a fine auburn lock of hair—'take this, William,' said James; 'you may survive me, and return to our native village: If you do so, present this to Mary Ann; tell her I wore it next my faithful heart, that ever beat fondly and truly to her. Tell my father—but no, if my mother lives, say to her, that I never dishonored her; and bid her be a mother to my poor, widowed love.'

"He turned away, and I saw him no more, until the next morning, with a blithe and soldierly step, he marched forth to the battle; passing to the left of our platoon, in the midst of the fight, a ball struck him, and he fell into my arms. 'Is it you, William?' said he as he opened his eyes: 'I told you so—I am gone—tell them at home I died like a soldier; and O! tell—the words died on his lips; he gasped, and expired. The battle raged fiercely, and his was the lot of thousands of slain.

"I kept the precious relic with the utmost care, and it was among my most melancholy yet pleasing thoughts that I should give it to Mary Ann in our native village; but it was ordered otherwise. After the wars on the Continent were over, we were ordered home. We sailed, and the high and white clouds of Old England broke first like a distant cloud upon the sight, and slowly but sweetly grew nearer, larger, and more distinct. I sat on deck, and gazed with new delight every moment. Methought I could see near the spot where the dwelling rose. My father and my mother seemed to be standing at the door, ready to welcome me. I saw Mary Ann come with hasty and disordered steps, to ask for James. His cruel father came too—but I resolved to give him little satisfaction.—My old dog, methought, fawned around me so that I could hardly tell my tale; but I would not strike him—that would have been too cruel. Dear native vale! Hone! O God! but this is too much. We anchored, and expected every moment to be permitted to land; when orders came to weigh anchor, and take us all to enter into the war that had broken out in America!

"I cursed the day I was born; and in the bitterness of my soul, swore vengeance against my unfeeling country. They brought me here—but the moment I landed I put my firm resolve into execution, and deserted. I have been since wandering around, I hardly know how or where. I dare not return—I should be stigmatized as a deserter, and perhaps be punished. 'But here,' said he, taking from his neck a blue ribbon, to which it was fastened, 'here is the brooch and lock of hair—this is the MEMORIAL OF LOVE from Mary Ann: She will never see it more.'

We endeavored to persuade him to part with it. "Not for the world's wealth," said he, "poor as I am; it shall go from my hand to Mary Ann, or be my companion to my grave."

In the morning he left us; but if he should return this way, he shall be welcome to another night's repose. In the mean time I write this in hopes it may pass the Atlantic, and perhaps tell Mary Ann Sheldon the fate of her lover. JOHN HARWOOD.

MORAL and RELIGIOUS.

FROM THE CHARLESTON COURIER.  
THOU SHALT DIE.

"Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." (2 Kings, xx. 1.)

In the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, there was a faithful Man of God, whom not even the trappings of royalty could dazzle or seduce. He was firm and steadfast in his duty to his maker; and too true to his king to flatter vice or pamper with injustice. If the Lord sent him to encourage his king, by promised aid and support, while a vindictive enemy was in the land laying waste his cities, and to pour into his wounded bosom the precious balm of consolation—he was not slow to perform the pleasing duty; or, to reprove him on his throne, in the plenitude of his power, for his vanity, in showing his treasures to the messengers of the king of Babylon—he boldly, but respectfully, executed his orders; or, to warn him of the certainty of death—he was not backward to appear before him, and deliver his commission. That faithful servant was the Prophet Isaiah, who enjoyed the most comprehensive views of the coming of the Messiah.

In the present instance, when king Hezekiah was "sick unto death," Isaiah came to him, by command of the Lord, to warn him of the necessity of "putting his house in order, as he should die and not live."—The monarch (the sacred history informs us) "wept sore," and pled for his life, yet called not in question the justice of the Divine requisition. His prayers, his sighs, and his tears ascended to the Mercy Seat—he was spared fifteen years, when he slept with his fathers.

Hezekiah's reign, though not faultless, is one on which the mind of the christian and philanthropist delights to dwell. It is called "the good reign," to distinguish it from the wicked and idolatrous reigns of too many of the other kings of Judah. He ruled righteously, and trusted in the Lord, who was with him, and he "prospered whithersoever he went forth."—He destroyed idolatrous worship, and re-established the true worship of God. Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, made war against him, but the Angel of the Lord, in one night, smote the whole army of the blasphemous invader. Yet this favored king, who had "exceeding much riches and honor," and was dispensing blessings around him, had to die. The awful decree, first promulgated in the Garden of Eden, to apostate parents, for their transgression and disobedience, has also to be enforced against all their degenerate sons and daughters. Hezekiah's days, it is true, were prolonged for a season, but he at length had to lie down in the same sepulchre with his ungodly predecessors. His works, his labors, and his pious exertions in the cause of God, could not deprive the grave of its victim.

Death is no respecter of persons; he puts an end to all human efforts. The imperious monarch, before whom millions tremble—and the meanest beggar of his realm, who is so poor "there's none to do him reverence"—are reduced to the same condition by his unsparing hand. The ambitious, aspiring chieftain, who grasps at universal dominion, and wades through blood to attain his object—and the modest, unassuming youth, who lives in the performance of all the tender charities of life, and is content to die unseen and unknown—are in the same moment cut down. He, who is by oppression and extortion, grinding the very sinews of the poor—and the victims of his cupidity, reduced to beggary and want—mingle together in the cold clay. The anxious father, who is intensely engaged in the execution of deep-laid schemes for the aggrandisement of his family, is suddenly called to his parent earth. The affectionate mother, who is surrounded by her ornaments, the pledges of her love, and contemplating the period when she will see them ripen into maturity, is instantly summoned to make up her bed in the grave. The smiling infant, the theme of many an anticipated happiness, is snatched from the too fond arms of its agonized parents, to moulder in the silent tomb. The maiden, whose eyes beam with radiance and pleasure, and whose beauty and virtue render her an object of adoration to all around her—in the height of her conquests and in the pride of her power, is conquered by Death—neither her beauty nor virtue can disarm the King of Terrors. The "tall, the wise, the reverend head," are all alike to him;—he strikes, with unrelenting hand, at every rank, age, and distinction, and brings them to one common level. And of the day and hour knoweth no man; but its certainty is beyond all question. Its victims are every day warning us, by the silent, but emphatic language of the tomb, to "set our houses in order," for the cold earth must be our beds. In the "pestilence that wasteth at noon-day," he sometimes forces his requisitions;—at others, by the sword, by famine, and by the sure and steady strides of decaying nature. Frequently he aims his malignant darts in ambush—and, at a moment least expected, his victims are hurled from time to eternity. Escape is impossible. There is, however, a power beyond the grave, who triumphed over Death, despoiled him of all his terrors, and made a shew of them openly. That Almighty Power invites the whole ends of the earth to come unto him, that they also may triumph over this great scourge and fell-destroyer of the human race. Obey the kind invitation, and his rod and his staff will support you in the dark valley of the shadow of death. Beyond the tomb there is Eternal Life for all who have hearkened to the voice of Love and Mercy. To such, Death has but a temporary triumph, whilst their victory is everlasting. His sting ceases to wound beyond the grave. "Set thine house in order," by the preparation of the heart, and by keeping a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and thy last aspirations shall be victory and praise. E.

Wealth corrupts.—"With the Snoues," says Facius, "riches are in high esteem; and this people are accordingly disabled, and reduced to slavery."