

POETRY.

SONNET TO A CHILD.

Thou darling Child! When I behold the smile
Over thy rosy features brightly play,
(Its light unrivalled by the morning ray)
Thy fair and open brow upraised the while
With an appealing glance so void of guile,
(Untaught the trusting bosom to betray)
Thy sinless graces win my soul away
From dreams and thoughts that darken and defile
Scion of beauty! If a stranger's eye
Thus dwell upon thee,—if his bosom's pain,
Charmed by thine holy smile, forget to smart,—
Oh! how unutterably sweet her joy—
Oh! how indissolubly firm the chain
Whose links of love entwine a mother's heart!

A NICE POINT.

Say, which enjoys the greatest blisses,
John, who Dorinda's picture Kisses,
Or Tom his friend, the favoured elf,
Who kisses fair Dorinda's self?

Faith, 'tis not easy to divine,
While both are thus with raptures fainting,
To which the balance should incline,
Since Tom and John both kiss a painting.
THE POINT DECIDED.
Nay, surely Tom's the happier of the twain,
Because—the picture cannot kiss again.

CANADIAN LEGENDS.

MIDSUMMER EVE.

A TALE OF THE OTTAWA.
Concluded.

This man's relation arrested my levity, and strongly impressed itself on my imagination. I knew him too well, to suppose he was palming a fiction of his own framing upon me; or that it was the wild effervescence of a disordered fancy was equally improbable in one of his sober and steady temperament. The more I pondered on his words, the more inexplicable I thought his story, till I at length resolved on having my doubts and conjectures on the subject, removed or determined, by watching myself the next Midsummer Eve, which was not far distant. When I informed the fisherman of my intention, he decidedly and warmly disapproved of it, and strenuously endeavoured to prevent me from putting it in practice, observing withal, that he was morally certain I would suffer by my temerity. But his words being as the were, in opposition to, served only to more firmly fix my determination, and in truth, I began to waver in my opinion of his veracity, from the supposition that he wished to prevent my detection of what I was inclined somehow to think an imposition.

When the eventful night arrived, I left my companions with the ostensible purpose of trying my luck at night fishing. On arriving at my station, I seated myself with my loaded gun in my hand—a precaution I merely took to secure myself against the quondam visit of any straggling beast of prey from the forest behind—at the foot of a large rock, whose summit was crowned by a stunted pine, in the dark shadow of which I was enveloped beneath. The river in front of me ran smoothly over a shelving ledge of stone, and not more than six inches in depth for about twenty yards from the shore, where commenced a line of rocks and raging surf that extended quite across to the opposite side, attended with a bellowing din that was peculiarly horrible in the stillness of night.

The moon did not rise till a late hour, and then her light was overcast and partially lost in the floating density of a cloudy atmosphere, from which, shining at times, caused a kind of flickering mirkiness, that gave to every object a frightful indistinctness of expression. The roaring of the troubled waters seemed sometimes to be far more vehement than at others; and the occasional rushing sound of the wind sweeping through the branches of the dark mass of trees in my rear, together with the distant, and often near howl of a prowling wolf, impressed me

with a fearful sensation of loneliness. I would start, when a crackling noise in the wood, as if some voracious monster was forcing his way through to me, would arrest my attention, and grasping my gun more firmly, await the anticipated attack. That I felt rather uncomfortable I cannot deny; and more than once, I wished I had taken the fisherman's advice.

As midnight approached, I fancied things became more quiet and serene; and a sort of chilling weariness creeping over me, I was disposed to forget the purpose of my vigil in a drowsy fitful slumbering, when the roaring of the rapid seemed to be entirely hushed, and all around me to glow with an unearthly light, and at the same moment a long and prolonged shout as of exultation, resounded in my ears, roused my dozing senses from their stupor. I raised my head and indeed saw, or fancied I saw, a ship bearing gallantly up through the midst of the furious commotion before me; all her sails were set, and her decks crowded with people. A man in red apparel stood out at the end of her bowsprit; another whose dress denoted authority, often came from the after part of the vessel, and leaning over the bow, looked earnestly into the water, and then, by the tone of his gestures, appeared to communicate with him on the lookout.

Except the person arrayed in scarlet, there was nothing extraordinary or peculiar in the dress or demeanor of the others. There were females on board, for I noted well their white drapery as it floated in the breeze; and they kept walking to and fro on the quarter deck, sometimes singly and at others in groups. There was a crowd of persons in the waste of the ship, where all was hurry and confusion, and blows and stripes would appear to predominate for a while. Loud peals of laughter would burst forth frequently, interrupted by lamenting strains of mournful music, which would be succeeded for some moments by a deathlike silence, during which all was motionless and still; and then the same uproar, mingled with wailing and sorrow would commence again.

Torches would gleam with a strange fitful brightness round a spot where seemed stationary the majestic figure of a beautiful woman, whose earnest gaze was fixed on a lovely child at her feet; and the flash of steel in the torchlight, indicated that warriors with bared weapons were mingled in the throng.

I followed this apparition with my eyes, as it kept on through the foaming billows and rocks, till with another terrific and long-continued cry—that cry Oh, God! I can never forget!—it melted away, and vanished from my sight I know not how.—And the darkness returned, and the rapid resumed its roaring, the wind again moaned among the bending trees, and all was as before.

Whilst this vision lasted, which it did for the space of two or three minutes, my faculties were absorbed in an intensity of contemplation; but when it had past, actuated by an impulse which I cannot define, I started up, and in a frenzied agony made the air resound with my shrieks and vociferations, till, as if struck an overpowering blow by an unseen hand, I sank senseless on the ground.

The morning sun had been shining for some hours, when I found myself extended on the earth some distance from my seat of the preceding night, a slight cut in my temple, which I suppose was from falling against a stone, and my gun still fast clenched in my hand. I had just strength left me to crawl home to our establishment, whence I was sent down to my friends in Montreal for the benefit of proper medical attendance; and I rose from a sick bed, after a confinement of six months, emaciated in person, and a prey to mental agitation.

Many will suppose, that what I had witnessed was an illusion of the senses, arising from a disordered imagination acted upon by former impression; but this could not virtually apply to my case. I had been told of a ship, it is certain, but no farther explanation or particulars were given, and I had never seen any other than the petty smjll craft that traded to Montreal in those days;—whereas, this was a ship of a size far superior to any in the mercantile trade, and was fitted and equipped in every respect like a vessel destined for war, as I have since had the fullest opportunity of ascertaining by comparison, from my vivid recollection of many peculiarities in her construction as it appeared to me.—So it is evident, no prior idea had been entertained by the faculties of retention. But the marvel of this wonderful apparition did not cease here.

Twenty years afterwards, some commercial transactions occasioned me to make a voyage to Barbadoes. The night before we made Carlisle bay, in which Bridgetown, the Capital of the Island is situated; as our vessel was standing on under easy sail, I was leaning against the taffrel on the quarter deck, enjoying the freshness of the night breeze, which the sultry heat of the day in these warm latitudes makes so desirable, and which, in the present instance, was rendered delicious by the perceptible aromatic fragrance wafted from the shore, a characteristic of the vicinity of the West India Islands remarked by all seamen. The moon shone with a clear and mellow light in an unclouded heaven, and tinged with her silvery beams the glistening sails of our vessel, whose slow progress through the briny flood, was attended by a rippling noise, the only break on the silence around, and had a pleasing effect on the ear at such a lovely moment the heavenly calmness of which disposed my mind to serene meditation. The various events of my past life revolved in quick succession before me,

when the fact of its being Midsummer Eve flashing upon me, with the consequent certain recollection of my adventure at the *Longue Sault* of the Ottawa river in Canada. I became soon enrapt in a train of mental reasoning on the unaccountableness of that circumstance, until a loud cry which I too well remembered, roused my attention; and the same ship with the same crew, and exact in every particular as I had seen her that night twenty years before, swept past me with a swiftness that hurried her from my view ere reflection could be brought into action, and enable me to form either an idea or a conclusion. But so strongly was I impressed with the reality of what I had seen, that I turned to the man at the helm, and asked him if he had seen or heard any thing unusual, he replied that he had observed a light in the sea at some distance, and fancied he heard at the same time a strange kind of cry, but could not account for either. I likewise inquired of the watch on deck at the time, and they gave a similar statement to that of the helmsman. This second appearance of the spectre ship was to me attended with the same consequence as the first; and it was the utmost exertion of the highest medical skill and attention that rescued me from the grave. And I have a presentiment that if ever I am cursed with another sight of that ghostly vessel and her spectral crew, it will anticipate the quick approach of my dying hour.

* H. *

Isle St. Helens, May, 1826.

FUNERAL CEREMONIES IN CHILI.

The burial of the dead in Chili is most indecently performed, even with persons in good circumstances. A shell is brought from the church, in which the body is laid almost

as soon as dead; it is wrapped in a shroud, and in two days' time carried to the church for burial. The procession is always at night time, and performed according to the expense which the friends of the deceased choose to bestow upon it, with the twofold object in view, respect to his memory, and a desire to release his soul from purgatory. On the night appointed, the sacerdotal of the Church where his remains are destined for interment, attended by a host of friars from the different convents, assemble at the house of the deceased, where a grand entertainment is laid out for them, in which the friends of the defunct participate. To the crowd assembled round the house is distributed a number of glass lanterns fixed upon staves, each furnished with a lighted candle, and the people carry them upon their shoulders. This crowd of lights precedes the procession in a slow step, and is followed by the friars chanting loudly the Requiem: these are succeeded by the priests in their tunics, before whom the tall wax candles and silver chalices are borne: then comes the body, carried in the shell, upon a litter supported in the hand of the bearers, the shroud being held by the nearest relatives; his intimate friends succeed, and another crowd, carrying lanterns, closes the procession. Arrived at the Church, the body is uncovered, and exposed to the crowd while the service is read and mass performed: no sooner are all retired from Church, than the sexton, who has prepared the hole before-hand, unceremoniously tosses the corpse out of the shell, and throwing over it a quantity of lime, proceeds to cover it with earth, while two assistants with heavy wooden rammers beat down all the earth; the body must consequently be squeezed and broken in a manner that shocks our notions of delicacy. The cost of such a funeral is from 500 to 1,000 dollars, including the masses that are afterwards said for his soul.

Flax Spinning Machine.—A newly invented article of this description is now at Tammany Hall, N. York. The machinery is by no means complicated; the flax is spun with great rapidity, and received by the spool with much regularity; the movement of the feeders is easy and correct, and the number of spools may be increased at pleasure. The whole is worthy of the ingenious projector.

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GEORGE K. LUGRIN.

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