

POETRY.

Written after attending the funeral of a young Man, suddenly carried off by the Yellow Fever, in the West Indies, 7th July 1827.

But yesterday, and thou wast one of us, A goodly presence, hale and vigorous; And from thy looks short sighted Man would say, 'Thine is the prospect of a lengthen'd day. But now, what art thou? cold, stiff, and dead, Life with its hopes and its delusions fled; And all thy flattering visions, like a spell, For ever laid, by thy sepulchral knell.

Together, when a few short moon's before We left our father's for a foreign shore, Just as the lav'ring breezes swell'd the sails We felt the impulse of hope's generous gales. And as by youth the future oft is seen We saw our future, cloudless and serene; Then little did we dream that I should see The train that form'd thy closing Pageantry, Should see thee placed within thy sandy bed To rise no more, but with Creation's dead.

And one there was, who stood beside thy bier Whose grief was, what it seem'd to be, sincere; His sigh was borrow'd not, nor her'd his tear. Strangers may wear the semblance of distress And put on mourning, as they do their dress: But when a father mourns a much lov'd son, And down his cheeks the impetuous drops run, 'Tis nature prompts each agonizing thro', And gives the sad reality to woe.

To-day and yesterday, in common phrase But mark the period of revolving days, As unperceiv'd the moment's pass to-day, So will to-morrow's moments real away, But what momentous import lies between This little space, when death shall intervene, When destiny her solemn call shall sound, And 'twixt to-day and yesterday is found Eternity's vast, fathomless, profound! Now undeciv'd for the ten thousand time Reflection prompts the moralizing rhyme, And iterating reason bids us see The Emblem of our vanity, in thee. Havana, July 8, 1827.

THE EPICUREAN; A TALE.

BY THOMAS MOORE. [Concluded.]

But the spell is too powerful, from its very purity, to be easily broken. Alciphron returns again to the Pyramid; and again descends. The chapel was without its mourner; and he resolves to seek her in deeper and more dreary labyrinths. His rash descent at once precipitates him into the power of the Egyptian priesthood; and he is hurried through a succession of terrors and wonders which almost rival the stupendous mysteries of the Dom Daniel. The power of the author is here put forth in the most sublime and the most beautiful descriptions. This Epicurean passes through the appalling ceremonies of Initiation. The terrific parts of the scene possess astonishing interest; but it is in the repose which succeeds that Mr. Moore revels and luxuriates:

"At the same moment, a light of the most delicious softness filled the whole air. Music, such as is heard in dreams, came floating at a distance; and, as my eyes gradually recovered their powers of vision, a scene of glory was revealed to them, almost too bright for imagination, and yet living and real. As far as the sight could reach, enchanting gardens were seen opening away through long tracts of light and verdure, and sparkling every where with fountains, that circulated, like streams of life among the flowers. Not a charm was here wanting, that the imagination of poet or prophet, in their pictures of Elysium, ever yet dreamed or promised. Vistas opened into scenes of indistinct grandeur, streams shining out at intervals, in their shadowy course,—and labyrinths of flowers, leading, by mysterious windings, to green, spacious glades, full of splendor and repose. Over all this, too, there fell a light, from some unseen source, resembling nothing that illumines our upper world—a soft golden moon light; mingling the warm radiance of day with the calm and melancholy lustre of night.

"Nor were there wanting inhabitants for his sunless paradise. Through all the bright gardens were wandering, with the serene air and step of happy spirits, groups, both of young and old, of venerable and of lovely forms, bearing, most of them, the Nile's white flowers on their head, and branches of the eternal palm in their hands; while, over the verdant turf, fair children and maidens went dancing to aerial music; whose source was, like that of the light, invisible, but which filled the whole air with its mystic sweetness."

We cannot pursue the Epicurean through the extraordinary incidents in the subterranean temple of Isis, in which he is either a spectator or an actor. In some of these his beautiful priestess is compelled to minister to his deception; but, at the moment when his Initiation is about to be perfected, his adventure suddenly assumes a more natural and more interesting shape;—for the object for whom he had risked this fearful descent, suddenly appeared from under the veil of the sanctuary, and, placing the end of a riband gently in his hand, said, in a tremulous whisper, "Follow, and be silent." He obeys;—"full of confidence in the belief, that she, who now held the other end of that clue, was one whom he could devotedly follow through the world." They escape to the light of day; and hurry from the shores of Memphis.

During the voyage down the Nile; Alethe, for such is the name of the beautiful priestess, discovers to her new friend, that at the dying injunction of her mother, who was secretly a Christian, she had resolved to seize the first opportunity of escape from the hated importunities of the Egyptian priesthood. Her early history is related with great simplicity and beauty; and it may be easily supposed that the devoted passion of the Epicurean terminates in a declaration of the most ardent love. Alethe does not repress his advances; but the purpose of her flight forbids their indulgence. Her object was to place herself under the protection of a Christian anchorite, who had fixed his solitary dwelling "on the eastern bank of the Nile, to the north of Antinoe." Alciphron is filled with despair at her firmness in obeying this resolution; he suddenly resolves to feign a belief in the doctrines of Christianity, and to become a convert, that he may breathe the same air as the being for whom he now alone lives:

"We had proceeded for some time through a gloomy defile, when at a distance before us, among the rocks on which the moonlight fell, we perceived, upon a ledge but little elevated above the canal, a small hut or cave, which from a tree or two planted around it, had some appearance of being the abode of a human being. 'This then,' thought I, 'is the home to which Alethe is destined!' A chill of despair came again over my heart, and the oars, as I gazed, lay motionless in my hand.

"I found Alethe, too, whose eyes had caught the same object, drawing closer to my side than she had yet ventured. Laying her hand agitatedly upon mine. 'We must here,' she said, 'part for ever.' I turned to her, as she spoke; there was a tenderness, a despondency in her countenance, that at once saddened and inflamed my soul. 'Part! I exclaimed passionately,—'No!—the same God shall receive us both; Thy faith, Alethe, shall from this hour, be mine, and I will live and die in this desert with thee!'"

"Her surprise, her delight, at these words was like a momentary delirium. The wild anxious smile, with which she looked into my face as if to ascertain whether she had, indeed, heard my words aright, bespoke a happiness too much for reason to bear.

At length the fulness of her heart, found relief in tears; and murmuring forth an incoherent blessing on my name, she let her head fall languidly and powerlessly on my arm. The light from our boat fire shone upon her face. I saw her eyes, which she had closed for a moment, again opening upon me with the same tenderness, and merciful Providence, how I remember that moment! I was on the point of bending down my lips towards her, when, suddenly, in the air above our heads, as if it came from heaven, there burst forth a strain from a choir of voices that with its solemn sweetness filled the whole valley.

"Breaking away from my caress at these supernatural sounds, the maiden threw herself trembling upon her knees, and, not daring to look up, exclaimed wildly, 'My mother, oh my mother!'"

"It was the Christian's morning hymn that we heard; the same as I learned afterwards, that, on their high terrace at Memphis, Alethe had been often taught by her mother to sing to the rising sun.

"Scarcely less startled than my companion, I looked up, and, at the very summit of the rock above us, saw a light, appearing to come from a small opening or window, through which also the sounds, that had appeared so supernatural, issued. There could be no doubt that we had now found... if not the dwelling of the anchorite... at least, the haunt of some of the Christian brotherhood of these rocks, by whose assistance we could not fail to find the place of his retreat."

We must abruptly hasten to the close. The profession of Christianity, which had with Alciphron begun in hypocrisy, gradually matured to a holier feeling, as the principles and the practice of the faith which he had so much despised were placed before him by the anchorite. The betrothing of Alethe was the reward of his conversion. But there was a cup of earthly misery to be drained to the dregs, which could only be compensated by those hopes of "eternal life," for which he had gone "unto the shores of the dark Nile." Mr. Moore sternly and painfully follows up the moral object which he has evidently proposed to himself in this Tale,—that the aspirations of the soul, after unfading delights, are not to be satisfied on earth; but that the longings of the heart are alone to be relieved by "that God of benevolence, in whose hands sin and death are but instruments of everlasting good." Alethe suffers a painful death in a persecution of the Christians, and the Epicurean flies from the world for ever.

THE BOUNCE OF THE HEAD.

"In the year 1800, a labourer dwelling near the town of Athy, county Kildare (where some of my family still resided,) was walking with his comrade up the banks of the Barrow to the farm of a Mr. Richardson, on whose meadows they were employed to mow; each, in the usual Irish way, having his scythe loosely wagging over his shoulder, and lazily lounging close to the bank of the river, they espied a salmon partly hid under the bank. It is the nature of this fish that when his head is concealed, he fancies no one can see his tail (there are many wise-acres, besides the salmon, of the same way of thinking.) On the present occasion the body of the fish was visible.

"Oh Ned dear!" said one of the mowers, "look at that big fellow there; isn't it a pity we ha'n't no spear!"

"May be," said Ned, "we could be after piking the lad with the scythe handle."

"True for you!" said Dennis; "the

spike of your handle is longer nor mine; give the fellow a dig with it at any rate."

"Ay, will I," returned the other; "I'll give the lad a prod he'll never forget any how."

"The spike and their sport was all they thought of; but the blade of the scythe, which hung over Ned's shoulders, never came into the contemplation of either of them. Ned cautiously looked over the bank; the unconscious salmon lay snugly, little imagining the conspiracy that had been formed against his tail.

"Now hit the lad smart!" said Dennis; "there now... there! rise your fist: now you have the boy! now Ned... success!"

"Ned struck at the salmon with all his might and main, and that was not trifling. But whether "the boy" was spiked or not never appeared; for poor Ned, bending his neck as he struck at the salmon, placed the vertebrae in the most convenient position for unfurnishing his shoulders; and his head came tumbling splash into the Barrow, to the utter astonishment of his comrade, who could not conceive how it could drop off so suddenly. But the next minute he had the consolation of seeing the head attended by one of his own ears, which had been most dexterously sliced off by the same blow which beheaded his comrade.

"The head and ear rolled down the river in company, and were picked up with extreme horror at the mill-dam, near Mr. Richardson's by one of the miller's men.

"Who the devil does this head belong to?" exclaimed the miller.

"Whoever owned it," said the man, "had three ears at any rate."

"A search being now made, Ned's headless body was discovered lying half over the bank, and Dennis in a swoon, through fright and loss of blood, was found recumbent by its side. Dennis, when brought to himself (which process was effected by whiskey), recited the whole adventure. They tied up his head; the body was attended by a numerous assemblage of Ned's courtymen to the grave; and the habit of carrying scythes carelessly very much declined.

This story leads to a humorous remark by the author of it. "In truth," says he, "the only three kinds of deaths the Irish peasants think natural, are, dying quietly in their own cabins; being hanged about the assize time; or starving when the potatoe crop is deficient."

RHEUMATISM AND GOUT.

A Frenchman being afflicted with the gout, was asked, what difference there was between that and the rheumatism. "One very great deference!" replied Monsieur. "Suppose you take one vice, you put your finger in, you turn de screw, till you bear him no longer—dat is de rheumatis—den, suppose you give him one turn more, dat is de gout."

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