

POETRY.

MR. STERLING'S POEMS.

This little volume (a considerable part of which was originally published in Blackwood's Magazine) contains a collection of poetry distinguished by peculiarity of not originality; by a close and penetrating observation of nature; and by a power, not only to see, but to seize the essential and the beautiful, apart from the material forms in which they are enveloped.

It may be said that Mr. Sterling is indebted to Wordsworth both for his theme and his mode of treating it; and no doubt he is so far a follower of the Lakers, that the study of Wordsworth suggested to him his field of observation, and the method of discovering its treasures; but the observations themselves have been made upon nature, and made too with great nicety of discrimination and patient care.

An apprehension clear, intense, Of his mind's work had made alive, The things it wrought on; I believe Wakening a sort of thought in sense."

To extract the essential, and the beautiful, whether moral or formal, from nature or human life, is Mr. Sterling's vocation: when he quits the actual, he becomes unsatisfying, if not mystical. Witness the needless vision of Death and Heaven, and some of his reflective digressions.

The subject of "The Sexton's Daughter" is the characters of the grave-digger's family and an humble village schoolmaster, with the incidents of their uneventful lives. The theme is not only apparently barren, but sordid; yet the qualities we have mentioned, and a truly poetical spirit, have produced a story of sufficient interest, and made it the vehicle for much of moral beauty, thought, and tenderness.

The father's hand let fall the spade, His cheek grew pale, he heaved a groan; And when the children's graves he made, Thenceforth he always worked alone."

Then soon the burial pang was o'er, And calmer flowed the stream again; But Jane would never witness more An open grave, or funeral train.

The maiden now was left to be Her father's only prop and stay, And in her looks was plain to see A heart resolved, but never gay;

A loveliness that made men sad, Like some delightful, mournful ditty, Too fair for any but the bad To think of without love and pity.

Each household task she duly wrought, No change but one the house could know, And peace for her was in the thought Her mother would have wished it so."

A gentle widow's only child, He grew beneath a loving rule; A man with spirit undefiled, He taught the village school.

And many books had Henry read, And other tongues than ours he knew, His heart with many fancies fed, Which oft from hidden wells he drew:

What souls heroic dared and bore In ancient days for love and duty, What sages could by thought explore, What poets sang of beauty.

With these he dwelt, because within His breast was full of silent fire, No praise of men he cared to win, More high was his desire;

It has been pronounced a difficult task to choose between excellences; but that difficulty is increased when one excellence is open and striking, another latent and less effective. In "The Sexton's Daughter," for example, the characters and death of the lovers, with other passages of a similar kind, will be rated the best; and if we estimate success by difficulty, the Sexton himself is the chief-d'œuvre.

One daughter, little Jane, had he, The silent Sexton's only child; And when she laughed aloud and free, The grave old Sexton smiled.

For she within his heart had crept, Himself he could not tell you why, But often he has almost wept Because he heard her cry.

All else to him appeared as dead, Awaiting but the shroud and pall; It seemed that to himself he said, 'I soon shall dig the graves of all.'

And when she still could hardly walk By holding fast his wrinkled finger, So well he loved her prattling talk, He often from his work would linger.

Around her waist in sport he tied The coffin-ropes for leading-strings, And on his spade she learnt to ride, And handled all his churchyard things.

One day upon a baby's grave His morning's work must Simon spend, And Jane her seat by him must have, And all his well-known task attend.

Soon 'mid the herbage soft and green The little place of rest was made, Whence daisy-covered meads were seen, And where the Hawthorn cast a shade.

Old Simon, almost resting now, With slackened stroke his labour plied, And raising off his moistened brow, With longer looks his darling eyed.

Then Jane cried out in sudden glee, 'Oh, what a pretty grave is there! It would be just a bed for me, With room enough, and none to spare.'

The father's hand let fall the spade, His cheek grew pale, he heaved a groan; And when the children's graves he made, Thenceforth he always worked alone."

ESTEEMED FRIEND.—There will be pleased to hear that we are now in sight of America, to which country the Lord has graciously vouchsafed to guide us in safety through many perils, giving us permission at times to see the light of the sun by day, and sometimes the stars by night, that we may steer our lonely way through the dreary waste and solitary expanse of the pathless ocean.

Strange sensations have affected me by such associations as I have had here. A maiden and her brother, from London, are fellow passengers. She is very affable and kind, very condescending in her manners, humble minded, though of high birth, and of a great talent of conversation.

TO BE, TO KNOW, WHATEVER OF GOOD To man below is given; And, asking truth as daily food, Seek little more from Heaven.

To him the friend of all his days Had been his fervid mother, And even the playmate of his plays— He never wished another.

For he was weak and oft in pain; From noisy sports he shrank away; But songs to sing or tales to feign, For him made holyday.

And she had lived in cities wide, Had sailed across the fearful ocean, Could tell of wealth, and camps, and pride, And peopled earth's commotion;

Full many a face with brightest eye serene Those plain unfashionable bonnets bear! Full many a rose they doom to blush unseen, And waste its sweetness now the ringlets there.

Nay said I, dear lady, now these convince me that the Friends very properly forbid the use of those vain and idle decorations, for these make me vain. These hast summoned up more pride in my heart, in those few brief minutes, than I knew before to have existed within me.

Do not be alarmed, Martha, thee must not think I am going to adopt the dress of these people; I have no such thoughts; but methinks we place more importance upon this subject than it deserves; but perhaps my understanding is too weak to penetrate the reasons wisdom assigns for their exclusion.

All else to him appeared as dead, Awaiting but the shroud and pall; It seemed that to himself he said, 'I soon shall dig the graves of all.'

And when she still could hardly walk By holding fast his wrinkled finger, So well he loved her prattling talk, He often from his work would linger.

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And books had she a precious store, With words whose light was never dim; Five crowded shelves, like mines of ore— Like undiscovered realms for him."

From the Loudon Morning Herald, Feb. 3.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN BANK.

Yesterday a special meeting of the proprietors of shares in this establishment was held at the Company's House, Great St. Helen's, for the purpose of receiving a report from the directors, Alexander Gillespie, Esq. in the Chair.

The Secretary, Mr. J. de Besocoe Attwood, read the report of the directors, which was as follows:—"Report of the directors of the Bank of British North America, to the proprietors, at an extraordinary General Meeting, on Tuesday, the 4th February, 1840.

"At the last General Meeting a wish was expressed by several of the proprietors, that the meeting should be held yearly, when it was explained that on account of the peculiar nature of the business in the Colonies, it would be inexpedient to make up the accounts oftener than once in the year; but it was stated that the directors would be prepared at any time to call an extraordinary general meeting, when they had matters of interest to communicate or explanations to offer.

"A call having been now made of £10 per share, payable in April and July next, the directors have convened the present meeting to afford explanation in reference thereto.

"The directors having had before them the branch returns so far as they have been received, have satisfaction in stating that they exhibit a steady and progressive advance in the business of the Bank throughout 1839, which would have been more extensive had they thought it prudent to comply with the pressing applications from most of the branches for additional capital.

"The object of the Court of Directors has been to encourage a gradual and safe, rather than a rapid extension of business; but the branches are now so firmly established, and have acquired so much commercial influence, that the time has arrived when, in the opinion of the Court, their operations may be securely and profitably expanded.

"For these reasons the directors have considered an increase of capital indispensable to enable the Bank to maintain a high character, and to compete successfully with other institutions.

"By the provisions of the Deed of Settlement, a special authority was reserved to the directors, to apply for and accept a royal charter, on such terms as they might judge advisable.

"Circumstances connected with the political state of the Colonies were considered at the formation of the Bank, to present difficulties to the granting of a charter by the Imperial Government.

"These objections have ceased, the directors applied for a charter, and they have the pleasure to announce that the details have been satisfactorily arranged, with her Majesty's Government, and that it is now before the law officers of the Crown, preparatory to receiving the royal sanction.

"Bank of British North America, Feb. 3. The Chairman said the directors had full confidence that the proposed increase of the capital of the Bank would be most beneficially employed in the British North American Colonies. He was glad to inform the proprietors that, notwithstanding the late pressure in the money markets of the United States, and which had extended to commerce, the business of the Bank had proceeded satisfactorily; that it had gradually increased, and that they had no bad debts of any consequence—(hear.)

With respect to the charter, the Court of Directors had that morning received a letter from the law officers of the Crown, stating that the preliminaries were all arranged, and that the documents only remained to be passed through the regular office—(hear.)

Mr. Gould in moving that the report be approved and printed, considered that the proprietors had grounds for exultation, as, notwithstanding the pressure which had existed so many months, their Bank only required more capital. The charter had been refused to this and other establishments during the troubles in Canada, not because it was thought that the colonies would be injured, but because there were parties in Canada who thought this country was attempting to override their interests. If Lord Durham's report had done us no other good, it had, at least removed this impression—(hear.)

In reply to a question, the Chairman said that the charter was granted for 21 years, that the terms were very favourable, limiting the liabilities of the shareholders to the amount of their shares; that amounts would be called to complete £500 per share before the expiration of three years from the date of the charter; that out of 20,000 shares, the original capital of the company, £17,000 had been appropriated, and that the directors would, after the sum of £50 had been completed on each share, appropriate the remaining shares for the best interests of the bank. The Chairman also stated that the profits of the Bank, since the last annual meeting, were fully such as to continue the payment of the dividend that had been declared—(hear.)

After some further conversation the report was adopted, thanks were voted to the chairman and to the directors for their able management, and the meeting adjourned.

QUEBEC, March 24. We have received the Montreal Gazette of Thursday, in which are some able editorial remarks on the correspondence of Mr. Fox and the American Secretary of State, and of the undoubted right of the British authorities to the full possession of the Madawaska settlement. On this last point the Gazette advances the following important testimony:—"We have before us a recent valuable publication, shewing that there is on the public records at Quebec, a grant of concession from the French Government of Canada, to a French subject, of a territory called 'The Fief of Madawaska,' dated the 25th of November, 1683, eight years prior to the date of the Massachusetts Charter, which forms the basis of the American claim. By this document, it appears that the Fief of Madawaska includes the whole of the Temisouata Lake, and nine miles farther in length, down to the Madawaska River, extending in depth six miles for the whole distance, as well around the lake as on each side of the river.

Her Majesty's marriage having been officially notified to the Major General Commanding, the Royal Standard was yesterday hoisted at sun rise, and at noon, a Royal Salute was fired from the Citadel in honor of this happy event. No other Military ceremonies were observed, and indeed the state of the ground from the recent thaw is such that a parade of the troops would only harass the men without gratifying the spectators, or exciting that pleasure which is felt at the display of military parade under more favourable circumstances. As for evening festivities the joyful news has been received at an inauspicious period, as the observance of Lent is austere amongst the Roman Catholics, and hardly less strict amongst many who are members of the Established Church. There is however no good reason why, at the expiration of Lent an entertainment should not be given, if a room can be obtained sufficiently capacious to accommodate the number of

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guests, who might be expected to assemble at such a celebration.

Yesterday afternoon the remains of the late Sergeant Major Geer, of the Coldstream Guards, were committed to the grave with all military honors. His untimely death had excited a strong feeling of regret not only in his own corps but in the garrison in general and his funeral was followed by all the troops off duty, by the officers of the several corps in garrison and by Major General Sir James MacDonnell, who paid this last mark of respect to the memory of a highly respectable and most efficient non-commissioned officer.

The Beauty of the Heavens. By Charles F. Blunt. This is decidedly the most ingenious, practical, and effective of all treatises on astronomy. It presents itself in the form of a book-shaped box, containing a brief but clever essay on the science, and a set of 104 cards, each bearing a diagram, a figure, a landscape, a section of the starry heavens, a constellation, or group of constellations, or some distinct and valuable illustration. By its aid alone a competent knowledge of astronomy may be gained in the family circles in a few evenings, and as matter of amusement. With a celestial globe, an orrery, &c. a profound acquaintance with every star, may be formed in a remarkably short period, and without any *vide roce* instruction. It that too be added, then the young astronomer will pierce to the depths of the science by the most delightful path.

The cards having reference to the descriptive portions of the essay, represent first a map of the northern celestial hemisphere, (after the introductory explanation), and then each constellation is given separately, so that the card being held over the head the stars appear of their several magnitudes, in true proportion, place, and distance; even their motion may be imitated, and then by an appeal to the heavens themselves, that constellation, its history, allegory, and astronomical relations, will be stamped for ever on the youthful mind in a way at once the most agreeable and impressive. The pictorial effect of these sketches is not their least merit, meteorology, eclipses, the crescent, and the waning moon, the zodiacal light, the aurora borealis, the parhelia, &c. are exhibited over striking and well illuminated landscapes, and every figure is so represented as to borrow for science the charm of art. We earnestly and cordially recommend the Beauty of the Heavens to every father who desires his children to be imbued with a real love and knowledge of the night-time works of the creation. This is to perfect praise out of the mouths of babes, and to make them, even in their sports, "declare the glories of the Lord," and reverence his "handy work."

Suicide, and attempt of a Father to poison his children.—An inquest was held before Mr. Carter, at the Bull Inn, Mitcham, respecting the death of John James Gann, who last week destroyed himself by taking oxalic acid, having first caused his children to swallow a similar poison. Previous to Gann's death, he stated that he intended to murder his children and destroy himself, but an antidote of chalk being given to the poor little sufferers, they partially recovered, but at the time of the inquest were not considered out of danger. The jury retired for a considerable time, and brought in a verdict of temporary derangement.

Horrible Vengeance.—On the night of the 19th ult. the village Falseo Tharkey, in Hungary, containing 250 inhabitants, and a population of 900 souls, was entirely consumed. In the day the daughter of a rich farmer was married to a young man of the village of Lechy. At midnight, when the happy pair retired, Charles Thelkey, who had sought the hand of the bride, but been refused, set fire to the dwelling, and it was completely enveloped in flames, which spread throughout the whole place. Upwards of 200 persons perished in the conflagration, and 300 more were severely injured. The bride was among the first, and the bridegroom one of the other sufferers. Thelkey the incendiary, is in custody.

A Story for the House of Commons.—In the "Persian Tales" there is a story of an atrocious Khan of the Tartars, who having heard that the Son of the Sun and the Moon had spoken something of him not much to the purpose, sent word to his celestial highness that he required a sum of money in satisfaction. The Son of the Sun and the Moon called his Mandarins, and it was resolved that they should say anything he pleases of any body. Let it be a decree! The Khan, however, was determined to have his account settled on better terms than these, and attacked the subjects of his celestial highness without mercy; whereupon the mandarins were again called, and they resolved in like manner, thus:—"If the Khan proceeds further, he and all his people shall be put in the stocks. Let it be a decree!" The Khan, nevertheless, did proceed; and while the Son of the Sun and the Moon were down in the country, laid his hands upon sufficient to meet his demand. Some disloyal knaves said that his celestial highness had stopped out of the way, because he was afraid that he had got into an ugly business after all; but be that as it may, without calling the Mandarins, he wrote with his own hand—"I am the Khan has paid himself there is an end of the matter; let it be a decree!" and he forthwith sent a trusty servant in the dark to ransom the plunder out of the Khan's hands. The name of this celestial monarch is not known, but his three decrees are still celebrated in China as instances of resolution in the first place, and sagacity in the second, which never were and never would be equalled in China or elsewhere, though from what has recently happened amongst ourselves, this may reasonably be questioned.

FOR SALE, AND PAYMENTS MADE EASY. Possession given on the 1st of May. THAT pleasantly situated two story HOUSE, in Waterloo Row, occupied by Lt. Col. Robinson, having four good Rooms on the first flat, six Bed Rooms on the second flat, five good Rooms in the Garret, and four Rooms in the Cellar, lathed and plastered.

—ALSO— A good Kitchen and Wood House, a new Barn stalled for four Horses and two Cows, and abundance of room for Sleighs, Carriages, &c. &c. and will also contain a number of tons of Hay.

If the above property is not disposed of by the first of April, it will be leased for a term of years. Frederick, Feb. 1st, 1840.