



LITERATURE.

LIVE AND LET LIVE.

BY ELIZA COOK.

Methinks we should have this engraven
Where all who are running may read,
Where Interest swoops like a raven,
Right eager to pronounce and to feed:
For too often does Honesty dwindle
In bosoms that fatten on wealth,
While Craft, with unsatisfied spindle,
Sits winding in darkness and stealth,
It is fair we should ask for our labour,
The recompense fairness should give;
But pause ere we trample a neighbor,
For Duty says "Live and let live."

Shame to those, who secure in their thriving,
Yet fain would keep poorer ones down—
Those who like not the crust of the striving
To grow to a loaf like their own.
Shame to those, who for ever are grasping
At more than one mortal need hold,
Whose heart-strings are coiling and clasping
Round all that gives produce to gold.
Shame to those who, with eager attaining,
Are willing to take but not give
Whose selfishness—coldly enchain—
Forgets it should "Live and let live."

There is room in the world for more pleasure,
If man would but learn to be just,
And regret when his fellow-man's measure
Runs over with tear-drops and dust,
God sent us to help one another,
And he who neglects the behest
Disgraces the milk of his mother,
And spreadeth Love's pall o'er his breast,
And the spirit that coveys unduly
May doubt if that God will forgive;
For Religion ne'er preaches more truly,
Than when she says "Live and let live."

MARY OF ELTHAM.

[CONTINUED FROM OUR LAST.]

"Did you ever see the like of that," exclaimed Wilkins. Why who may this French Mounseer be? Guy Fawkes, Cookwood, Digby and the rest, I know it was said at the time were in correspondence with the French Papists, and this is one of them, and he is afraid to go to London or fear he should be known and get hanged himself."

"Master Wilkins," said Mary, "you travel at great speed, and yet carry more than any common pack-horse, once you can at once decide that a young man deserves to be hanged as a knavish conspirator, because he liked not to hear the sad details of a frightful execution."

"I was only going to relate for his improvement a matter of our English history, which he did not seem to know. Well! I say no more, but this is my opinion, that some of the associates of Guy Fawkes are now at Eltham, forming a new plot against our laws and religion."

"That is hard judging," said Mary, "and I do not think you have any right to come to such a conclusion."

"No nor do I," said the farmer, "yet often I am much surprised at the fixed and solemn aspect of this young man, and of the deep despondency he manifests. His father too is the same, I met the latter in the neighboring wood, two days back. Before he saw me, I heard his voice hoarse and disconsolate. What he said, for he spoke French, I cannot tell, but I could have supposed him at one moment to cry to God for mercy, and in the next almost to threaten him with vengeance."

"That is the way with all these papists," said Wilkins.

"It is the way," said Mary, "in which those act whom woe has bereft of reason. That this is the case with our unhappy inmate I strongly suspect."

"Then the old woman," said Brown, "see how she twitches herself about as if some body kept sticking pins into her skirts."

"Do not laugh at misery," interposed the daughter. "She is deeply to be pitied—her health is gone, her heart is broken, and some one most dear to her, is lost for ever to her love. Memory still fondly turns to vanished happiness. Her only cry from morning to night is—"

"*Mon pauvre Francois*," exclaimed the unfortunate subject of their conversation, who now making her appearance, rushed hastily across the room and into the street.

The husband and son followed, and with difficulty succeeded in overtaking her. They brought her back. As they entered, the younger Rossiter little recovered from his late shock, and exhausted by the more recent exertion, looked deadly pale. While he conducted his disordered parent through the room in which Brown and Wilkins were seated, she repeated—

"*Mon pauvre Francois*," and fixing her staring eyes first on her husband and then on her son, she seemed to shrink

with maternal alarm at marking the paleness of the latter, and she added, "*et mon pauvre Philippe aussi*."

Farmer Brown and his companions were startled at what they saw. Wilkins questioned Mary closely as to the expressions which Madame Rossiter had used in her paroxysms. She repeated some of the dismal words which she had heard from the deranged female and he thereupon pronounced his opinion.

"All that I hear confirms me in the belief that these people are no better than they should be. Depend upon it they have committed a murder or some dreadful deed for which they all ought to be hanged, and that is the reason why they come skulking here. Aye! aye, the junior Mounseer liked not to hear of the doings of Palace-Yard, when the old devil Johnson, or Guy Fawkes as he is called, was hung up for two or three turns, cut down and dragged to the quartering block, and then ripped up that his bowels might be thrown into the fire before his face; he liked not for me to tell of that I say, foreseeing that his own turn might shortly come."

Mary remarked that to hold such language was both cruel and unjust. A tender heart, though estranged to crime, she held, might shrink with natural and allowable repugnance from a recital of the vengeful doings which law sanctioned in the case of convicted traitors.

"Then why does he not give some account of his former life, instead of shrouding himself in mystery?"

"As yet," Mary replied, "he has not been called upon to do so; and he might think it would be deemed troublesome or impertinent to tell his story unasked."

"Why, he has certainly won Mary's heart," said Wilkins; "Master Brown, how would you like to have a Papist son-in-law?"

"As to that, I don't know," the farmer answered, "that I should choose a Roman Catholic for her husband."

"But even a Papist," said Mary, "may have as much charity in his bosom as some sight-loving members of the Protestant reformed church, who think hanging and embowelling grand things to see."

Wilkins felt the reflection was a severe one, but he also felt that it was not undeserved. That consideration, however, did not reconcile him to the speaker, and he left somewhat disconcerted, and in no very good humour.

Brown went to attend to the business of his farm. Mary was alone when the younger Rossiter stood before her.

"I did hear your voice," said he, "but now, for you spoke louder much than you do sometimes, and I heard you as the advocate of the absent and unhappy; and, shall I tell it, those words of kindness came with the softness of a gentle zephyr to soothe my fevered spirit. I shall not be mistaken when I say that I feel grateful, and that I admire, for that is all I may do. I cannot—I must not love; but I do thank you from my heart of hearts."

"I did not expect," Mary said, "that my words would reach your ear, Sir."

"And if they had not," said he, "still the expression of your countenance would not have escaped my eye. You are a true woman. You feel for the wretched, and ask not if they are perished before you pity. My case is one—"

"Nay, interrupt me not, I have no right to hear of it."

"You shall not hear of it, for I do not wish to afflict you, and will therefore be silent; but only this will I tell, that it is not what your friend from London would make you believe; I am guiltless, but I do not wish to utter one word more. I have your compassion now, what besides could I desire? for again I repeat it, I wish not for your love." The voice of his mother was heard, and he withdrew. Mary sadly pondered on his words. His thankfulness and his ingenuous air caused her more than ever to feel for his distress. She feared the injurious conclusions of Wilkins would transpire in the village, that the annoying reports already circulated would derive new strength from his co-operating voice. Yet fully convinced that the Rossiters had been deeply wronged, she meditated best how to vindicate them.

The sufferings of the mother increased. Anguish had exhausted her bodily strength. Her delusions became more alarming than ever. In the stillness of the evening her plaintive voice was heard in the old strain, but other sentences of dreadful import were associated with her calls on her "poor Francis."

Their language it was supposed no one there understood but themselves, and as the illness of the sufferer became more severe, the farmer's wife offered her assistance to the dying Frenchwoman; it was accepted, and Mary attended with her mother.

The scene was melancholy in the extreme. By the side of her bed the husband sat mute with sorrow, at once the offspring of the dreadful past and the afflicting present, his face covered with his hands, and groaning audibly. The son admonished the sire, while he vainly sought to pacify the mother. Her reason had departed never to return; but memory still lingered near its ancient dilapidated home. Then did Mary lament that she had gained any knowledge of a foreign tongue. She could not understand all that was said, but she collected enough to make her shudder, and even to doubt if Wilkins might not be nearer the truth than she had wished to believe.

In her struggles the sufferer spoke, as Mary collected, to the following effect:—

"My poor Francis! you were wrong—you were mad—you were wicked, and unfit to live or die; but you merited not your dreadful fate. The wretches—the miscreants—the demons who have tortured you, brimstone fires shall torture in their turn." While thus speaking, she fixed her straining eyes on her husband and son. "Yes, wretches, you shall yet know the torments of the damned. Perdition, black, everlasting perdition, is not sufficiently severe to punish crime like yours."

The son repeatedly tried to check the wandering speech of his parent. Mary heard him caution her, though it was impossible for the sinking man to profit from the hint, that her speech might be heard and interpreted by others who were near. She raised her voice, and proceeded with greater violence.

"I speak the sacred truth. If he erred, his wanderings could not justify murder—murder the most horrible that fiends could invent, or mortal man perpetrate. The black

raven of despair shall sit on the miscreant ministers of death. My poor Francis! I hear his screams—I see his struggles;—Ah! is not that murder? It is, ye traitors, it is! Thou knowest it, and thou wilt avenge it, O God of justice, both in this world and the world to come."

She strove desperately. All efforts to console were useless, and to restrain was impossible. At length, completely exhausted, she ceased to speak. Mary and her mother gave over watching, as she seemed about to sleep. In the morning she was no more.

No sorrow was expressed, either by the father or the son, that death had taken their relative. The former was unmoved; the latter appeared in same measure relieved. Without delay, indeed with unseemly haste, as Brown and his family thought, the body was committed to the earth.

The expressions which she had heard, made a deep impression on Mary. Recalling what Wilkins had said, she found something very like a confirmation of the worse he had imagined, in what had thus fallen from the lips of the dying woman. If imperfect as her knowledge of the French language was, she might trust her ears, Madame Rossiter had felt all the horrors of remorse for a dreadful deed perpetrated on some one, and as she collected for a slight offence. The intolerable weight of guilt, she could not doubt, had caused the agony she had witnessed, and the dismal anticipation that fierce vengeance would overtake the guilty, Mary regarded as applying to her criminal husband and son, as well as to herself. However reluctant to think ill of the strangers, proof so strong her mind knew not how to resist; but still, the interest she took in their case made her desirous of further proof. To obtain this, it occurred to her, might not be impossible. The younger Rossiter, as has already been mentioned, was not aware that Mary had any knowledge of French. When opportunity served, she determined to question him on the subject of the death-bed ravings of his parent. His answers might remove her doubts. At all events, she would have the means of judging, so she thought, whether on this point, he had any wish to deceive.

But before this experiment could be made positive, information was supplied which strengthened her suspicions. Wilkins reported, that he had watched the two surviving Rossiters at the grave of their relative, and listened to a conversation which for him was quite sufficient. It was, they said, a good thing that she was gone, as, after the crime they had assisted to commit, it was impossible for her to rest, and her disordered state placed them in constant danger of being betrayed into the hands of justice.

Aware of the unfavorable opinion which he entertained of the parties, Mary received this information with distrust, but she herself heard that evening what proved that his statement was not wholly unfounded.

It was dusk, and the father urged by the son to walk, accompanied him into the paddock behind the house. Mary was there when they entered, and desiring to avoid them, placed herself against a huge beech-tree so that she could not be seen. They drew near it, and she distinctly heard these words exchanged as they slowly passed.

"Grieve no more," said the son, "it can do no good. The past is not to be recalled."

"No," replied the old man, with a voice broken by sobs, "I know it, and therefore I have no hope for the future."

"For our lost partner in woe," said the son, "it is a blessed relief that she is with us no longer."

"Well, well," said the senior, "let us deem it such. Had she survived, deranged as she was, I know not what suffering might have been brought upon us all, for our name, that name doomed alas! to eternal infamy, would not have been concealed from those about us."

"Then he consoled."

"Yes, when the past can be expunged from memory—when I forget what we have become—never till then."

Their words became indistinct from distance, but Mary had heard enough to fill her mind with grief. She, however, clung to the hope that a satisfactory explanation might be offered, and to elicit this, held her former resolution to question the son on the subject of the death-bed scene. "But how," thought she, "can he vindicate a name?" which she had learned from the lips of the senior was doomed to everlasting infamy.

Many days had not passed since the grave received the remains of Madame Rossiter, before Mary found herself alone with the young man. The gloom, which from his first appearance at Eltham had always overclouded his countenance, was undiminished, but no marked expression of grief for the recent loss of his mother could be remarked in his deportment or speech. To some words of condolence from Mary, he replied:

"The opening and the close of life are always attended by pain and sorrow. But as your English poet says—'We must bear our going hence, even as our coming hither.' My mother is now at rest, and I desire to be thankful that she is so, that she can know no more the cares and sorrows of the world."

"Her death-bed was awful," Mary remarked. "Her mind seemed disturbed by no common recollections."

"We live," said Rossiter, "in strange times. Startling events are not uncommon. My mother had a dreamy recollection of dismal scenes, which she never beheld, but which had been so vividly painted to her, that they were ever present to her disordered thoughts."

"She spoke of murder."

"She did."

"Of slight wanderings being visited with miscreant vengeance. Of horrors here, to be renewed hereafter."

Rositer's art did at finding so much had been understood by the rustic maid. He was embarrassed for a moment and then said:

"Her's was a tale of woe; so I have intimated before and more I would not scruple to unfold to you, but that I know the pain you would feel in listening would equal that which I must experience in telling it. You can sympathise with the wretched, but that is no reason why all their misery should be poured into your ear."

"She looked at you and your father," said Mary, "while she spoke of murderers."

"And at you too," he replied. "Her eye was incessantly glancing round the apartment, and resting for a