



## LITERATURE.

From the Halifax Guardian.  
THE NUNNERY.

Let your light so shine before men that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in Heaven.—MATT. v. 16.

Let thy light shine bright and clear,  
That men may see its rays,  
And from the works in faith done here,  
Give God the Father praise.

But think not that the gloomy cell,  
And all its sad array,  
Will answer that great purpose well,  
Or wipe thy sins away.

Where is thy warrant thus to live  
Apart from all mankind?  
The Bible no such precepts give,—  
Go call its rules to mind.

"The Bible!" Ah! I had forgot  
Your Priests read it for you,  
And say that holy book is meant  
But for the chosen few.

Trust not to them! Go search yourselves—  
And see if you can find  
One passage that appears to say  
This was the Saviour's mind.

No! for to the simple fishermen,  
The Gospel first was given,  
And they, before learned Pharisees,  
Preached Christ, the Way to Heaven!

And now, the only sacrifice  
That we are called to make,  
Is to resign our hearts to God,  
For the Redeemer's sake.

Then put away all senseless forms,  
Self-righteous men impose,  
Our only garb shall be the Faith  
Of Him—the "man of woes." A. Y. L.

[From the Model American Courier.]  
THE HARD DUTY.

AN OVER-TRUE TALE OF LOVE AND SORROW.

On the pleasant banks of the Rhine there dwelt, in the beginning of the present century, a widow, whose sole companion, since her husband's death, was an only daughter. The loss of her husband had been indeed a heavy blow, but years gradually dulled the keen edge of sorrow, and as they wore out the bitter tracings of bereavement from her heart, they left in it a softened and kindly frame, and well disposed to sympathize with human woe in any form.

It was under these circumstances that a being, whose tattered garments still displayed some gaudy remains of an English uniform, faint at her door, and when her kindness had in some measure restored him, he begged for a morsel of food, with an earnestness that proclaimed that he and misery were too well acquainted.

With such attentive nurses as the wretched soldier found in the kind mother and daughter, he was soon able to prove to them that he was not insensible to that goodness—which he did by many little services—the garden had never been so thriving, nor the fence so well kept, as since the soldier had attended them.

In this way years rolled past, and still he slumbered away the summer hours as if he had never heard the stern music of the war drum; as if his soul had never exulted in the horrible grandeur of stormy battle.

He had so ingratiated himself with the cottagers that his presence had become quite necessary to the happiness of one of them. To their interrogations as to the misfortunes that had thrown him on the world, he had never made satisfactory answers, and always avoided the subject, as if it were a painful one. "Ask me not of the past, dearest Lucette," he would say, "be content to know that I am with thee, and I am all, all thine own. I shall wander no further, and ask no greater happiness than Heaven's bounty now blesses me with."

He spoke too fast; he was not entirely blest. He knew that Lucette's heart was his, but there was yet another link wanting to make the chain of his happiness complete.

This was objected to by the widow on account of her daughter's youth. "Wait but another year, Walter, wait but until the strength of womanhood is her's, before you bring the cares of life upon her," she answered to his passionate entreaties. Finding nothing was to be gained from her resolution, there was no course left but acquiescence; and in good truth they well might be content; for to them life was little else but enjoyment. Their life flowed in a still, calm current, unmoved by the rocks that often mar its course in the turmoil of the populous city; its smooth surface unbroken by the gusts of passion, that

are ever excited "where men do congregate." So gently life passed from them, that it might better be likened to a sleeping lake, in whose still bosom the deep blue of the summer heaven is found in unbroken reflection.

This year, however, was, in point of fact, whatever the parties so deeply interested in its termination might think, no longer than other years, and in due time its end approached. A few days before that appointed for the fulfilment of their cherished hopes, Walter went to Erholm, a town about a day's journey from the widow's abode, to procure some finery for Lucette—that is indispensable on such occasions, as well in the cot as the castle. He would return by the close of the following day, and on the next they would depart for the court of Hymen, which, for this humble celebration, was fixed in the village chapel.

The long day waned and night fell, and he did not come. Sleep of course was not thought of, and Lucette counted the weary hours until the dawn, and still he came not. Sick with anxiety and fear she watched hour after hour the road he must travel, but the silence of the night came again, and found her feelings in a state more readily imagined than told. Fancy painted a thousand terrible pictures—one moment she saw him torn by the monsters of the forest—the next showed him bleeding under the murderer's steel, and in the wild blast she heard his cries of despair. At last the trampling of a horse became distinct—she rushed to the door, but it was not Walter. As she opened the door, the rider threw a folded paper at her feet, and rode off without speaking. She eagerly tore the paper open, and read:—"Danger threatens me, dearest Lucette, and I must fly until it is over—do not fear—before this can reach you I shall be safe—kind Heaven threw this peasant in my way, or I must have left you in suspense. I was watched, and it would have been death had I attempted to see you; the danger will soon be past, and I shall return and explain all."

Painful as this intelligence was, it was nevertheless some relief to know that he was alive—and though danger had threatened him, he was now beyond its power—it was a relief from the torture of uncertainty. But what could this peril be that was thus fearful? Who could seek his life? He had long lived far from the busy world, and why should men thirst for his blood? These were mysteries beyond her power to resolve, and they left a heart-sickening weight upon her mind that bowed her spirit to the dust.

A few days after the occurrence that had fallen with the withering effects of a thunderbolt upon the heretofore joyous Lucette, she and her mother were alarmed by the appearance of two English officers with their attendants.

"We come, madam," said the elder of the two, addressing the widow, "upon an unpleasant errand—to seek one of our own nation, who has offended his country's laws, and long been a fugitive from justice; he was a few days since discovered by a soldier who had served in the regiment from which he whom we now seek had deserted. I presume we need hardly ask you to give us any information of him—our duty, however, commands us to examine your dwelling. Captain Warner," he continued, addressing his companion, "you will take Leopold and Heinrich and search the cottage—the former will recognize the deserter."

"You speak truly, sir," said the mother, as he ceased; "we can, indeed, give you no information; it is now four days since we have seen him; but are you not mistaken? It cannot be, surely, that one so good, so noble-hearted, could wrong his country?"

"I knew him not, madam," the officer replied. "I am yet but a stranger in the corps I now serve in; but the soldier, Leopold, is positive that it is the same, and the General has commanded that no exertions be spared to take him."

During this conversation, Lucette had stood silent—almost breathless. Every word had been a dagger to her heart. A passionate burst of tears at last broke the spell that chained her in silence.

"Oh, sir," she shrieked, kneeling at the feet of the Englishman, "if you have a human heart, if you have the kindness of manhood—spare him! oh, spare him!—if you have a wife, think of her, and save me from this terrible fate! He is mine—mine own—we will be your slaves—we will kiss the dust you tread on—anything, so you but save him! It may be you are a father!"

"A father! Oh, God! girl, thou hast touched a chord that vibrates to agony!" exclaimed the officer; and burying his face in his hands, his whole frame shook with some terrible agitation. "Aye! I was a father!" he continued; "but the cold clod covers him. He, too, was a deserter!"

He shuddered under what seemed the power of some dreadful recollection. At length, collecting himself, he said—"Yes, poor girl, if I can I will save him; but the chance is slender; he can scarcely escape the search that has by this time scoured every mile of this country. Yet, should he be taken, all my influence shall be used in his favour." At this moment the party from the house returned. The captain reported their want of success to his superior, and after a few minutes conference, they saluted the cottager and rode off.

Weeks passed wearily away, and brought no tidings to the cottage of him whose fate so deeply interested its inhabitants. The fears of Lucette gradually settled into a hope that Walter had escaped his enemies, as she must have heard of it had he been taken; but another pang had been added to those of uncertainty—his dishonour. He had deserted his country's banners; he was a dreadful explanation of the causes that had brought him a beggar to her mother's door. This, however, was hardly more than a momentary grief; woman's love is not to be shaken thus lightly—and the heart that worships has a wonderful faculty of keeping the errors of the idol in the shade.

Walter was once more an outcast, and it seemed to his sunken heart that the curse of Cain clung to him. He wandered many a weary league, shunning the sight of man, and almost the sight of Heaven. Hoping that the pursuit had been abandoned, he at length turned his steps toward the spot where he had so long found safety.

On a warm summer night, Lucette was roused from her dreams of the wanderer by a repeated tap against her window. Rousing, she heard her name called in tones she could never mistake. Words are too weak to paint that meeting.

"You tell me you have heard that I deserted my country's armies. It is true—I am a deserter. I promised to explain why my life had been haunted. Six long years ago I was a British soldier, my sword unstained save with the blood of my country's enemies. An untamable spirit was my ruin; I resented, with proud words, the harsh rebuke of a superior; he struck me with his sword, and ere he could recover his weapon, my own was in his heart! Death or flight was my only choice. After long years of wandering and concealment, Heaven directed me to this spot, where I long hoped my days would end in peace. On the day preceding that which would have been the happiest of our lives, I saw one who had known me in other days, one whose hatred I knew slept not. I found I was recognized, and fled. The danger is now no more, and I again fold my Lucette to my breast. I—ah! what glittered in the moonbeam beneath yon window? 'Twas the glare of arms."

The next moment he was a prisoner.

Erholm was the seat of the tribunal on which Walter's fate hung. His guilt was established,—his doom pronounced.

"It cannot be, Colonel; the case is too strong for loose measures."

"But think, my dear General, consider the ties that must be broken! Had you witnessed the anguish of the poor creature, whose very existence, as well as the prisoner's hangs on your word, you could not but be merciful. They tell me years have passed since he deserted. You cannot deny me this favour?"

"Urge me not, Colonel, I pray you urge me no further. The example is necessary. Order the execution within the hour, and superintend it yourself. Your goodness may alleviate what it cannot avert."

Heavy were the tidings Lucette was doomed to hear. There was no pardon; her friend had done all, but in vain; nothing could now save Walter. The General had pronounced his fate, and was now many leagues on his way to a distant post.

The final hour came—the guards were there—the men who were to do the work of death stood motionless in the ranks. Slowly the victim was led out; he wished not to look upon the light of Heaven again, and his eyes were bandaged. The parting with Lucette was over,—he was done with earth, and calmly knelt upon his. For a moment all was hushed—nothing but the heavy breathing of the soldiers was heard. The prisoner at this moment raised his head and beckoned. The Colonel approached him. "I had almost forgotten," said the soldier, in choking accents—"I had almost forgotten this letter for my father! Let it reach him."

"It shall reach him if he be on earth. I pledge you my life on it, unhappy man," replied the deeply affected officer, warmly grasping the convict's hands.

As he turned, he read the superscription, to *Granville Waller*. "Gracious heavens!" he exclaimed, as he rushed back, tore the bandage from the kneeling soldier's face; gazing for a moment wildly on him, he articulated "my son! my son!" and fell senseless to the earth.

Horror filled every breast at this sad scene, and one desire animated every bosom, to save the condemned one. The flinty hearts of men who had been deaf to the cry of infancy, or the wailings of bereaved women, melted at this burst of manly grief. But the only power that could save him was now far away, and no one dare take the responsibility of postponing the execution.

The stern mandates of military power might not be trifled with; the son *must* die—the father *must* be almost his executioner. Colonel Waller now recovered; all a father's feelings for a long lost child, for one whom he had long believed to be calmly sleeping in the silent grave, were in his heart, and struggled against his sense of duty. This told him his son must die! and, Brutus-like, his resolution was soon taken.

The ministers of doom were again drawn out, and their weapons levelled at the victim's breast. The Colonel stood firmly near his son.

"Soldiers!" cried the father, in a hoarse, broken voice, which he strove in vain to command; "Soldiers, take your example from me, and shrink not from your duty. Fire!"

At the fatal word he rushed upon his son's breast, and they fell lifeless together!

A ringing shriek was heard from a neighboring house, as the roar of musketry died away—it told that Lucette's heart had burst.

## THE PLAGUE YEAR.

The year 1665 was an awful period in the annals of London. During the two previous years, the plague had raged in Holland, and the reports of that dire calamity had formed the staple of many a conversation by the firesides of England. People had heard from their parents of a similar visitation in their own country, in the days of King James. Cases of plague, too, it was believed, had frequently occurred at home since then; and therefore the tidings of the Continental pestilence might well fill them with alarm. Two men sickened in Drury Lane, December, 1664. On inquiry, headache, fever a burning sensation in the stomach, dimness of sight, and above all, the livid spots upon the chest, indicated, beyond all dispute, that the plague had reached London. The affecting intelligence soon spread. The weekly bills of mortality for the next four months, exhibited an increase of deaths. The fears of the public rose to a higher pitch. The month of May showed that the dreaded disease was continuing and extending its ravages; and in the last week of June, 276 persons fell victims to the destroyer. The plague had indeed come, and was spreading its wings over the great city. Men fled in terror; coaches and other vehicles were seen hastening along the highways, filled with those whose means enabled them to change their