



LITERATURE.

EARLY TO BED AND EARLY TO RISE.

BY ELIZA COOK.

"Early to bed, and early to rise,"—
Aye, note it down in your brain,
For it helpeth to make the foolish wise,
And uproots the weeds of pain.
Ye who are walking on thorns of care,
Who sigh for a softer bower,
Try what can be done in the morning sun,
And make use of the early hour,
Full many a day forever is lost,
By delaying its work till to-morrow;
The minutes of sloth have often cost
Long years of bootless sorrow.
And ye who would win the lasting wealth
Of content and peaceful power,
Ye who would couple Labour and Health,
Must begin at an early hour.
We make bold promises to time,
Yet, alas! too often break them.
We mock at the wings of the King of kings,
And think we can overtake them.
But why loiter away the prime of the day,
Knowing that clouds may lower?
Is it not safer to make life's hay
In the beam of the early hour?
Nature herself ever shows her best
Of gems to the gaze of the lark,
When the spangles of light on earth's green breast
Put out the stars of the dark.
If we love the purest pearl of the dew,
And the rich breath of the flower,
If our spirits would greet the fresh and the sweet,
Go forth in the early hour.
Oh, pleasure and rest are more easily found
When we start through morning's gate,
To sum up our figures, or plough up our ground,
And weave out the threads of fate.
The eye looketh bright, and the heart keepeth light,
And man holdeth the conqueror's power,
When, ready and brave, he chains time as his slave,
By the help of the early hour.

Providential escape from death by Hanging.

A TALE OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

BY G. P. R. JAMES.

In the reign of an ancient king of Great Britain whose name was George, and who consequently is supposed to have flourished on this side, both of the Conquest by the Norman William and the Reformation of our Church under the renowned British Bluebeard, Henry the Wic-huller; and about the period at which the British stage-coach first sprang into existence, under the form and condition of a snail, and the title of a diligence, there appeared—by the side of a highway, which ran along the southern coast of England, and led to that spot with an awful name, still called the Land's End—a solitary public-house with a little circular piece of ground before it, and an apple orchard thickly planted with trees behind it; beyond which, again, was a place called The Garden; though it must be acknowledged, that those who did call it so were very courteous and liberal in their epithets.

Every one who has seen Mount Edgecombe knows well that the most luxuriant vegetation which it is possible to imagine what can be produced at the very verge of old ocean's reign; but no such pains as are there bestowed had been given to the vegetable kingdom of the garden of which I speak, and a scanty array of cabbages, turnips, and carrots, was all that the spot of ground could boast. Even that was looked upon in those days, as all but miraculous, considering that the garden crept to the very edge of the cliff which overhung the sea; and Neptune, as if indignant at the presumption of the thing, would angrily come up to the very bottom of the bank at high water, during all seasons of the year; and when he got choleric in the spring and autumn, would bestow a buffet with his trident upon the cliff itself, which swept away, from time to time a row of cabbages or a bed of onions, together with the soil in which they were planted. The house to which this garden belonged had an aspect somewhat gloomy, and its gables were turned towards the road, the entrance being reached by a step, not up, but down.

The face of the landlord was a merry face and a gay; but with all that he was a prudent man, took care that his wit should go as far as it would, made one joke serve many customers, had a loud laugh to answer any question to which he did not choose to give a more definite reply, eked out his meaning by a knowing look, which is not tangible to the fangs of the law, and always spoke well of the justice of the peace. His wife looked as if

she could have been a Quaker; she was an Anabaptist, however; and it is supposed, or at least was supposed by the people in the neighborhood, that the beer in that house turned more rapidly sour than in any other in the county.

On a nasty, squally, rainy afternoon, the diligence was winding slowly along upon the aforesaid road, at the average pace of three miles and a half an hour; while the rain kept beating in at various parts of the crazy and ill-contrived vehicle, when one traveller in the inside said to another—"Forty miles more, Frederick, forty miles more."

"Ay," said the other, "and this snail of a machine goes on as if it never intended to arrive at the end of the journey."

"While your heart flies on the wings of love," replied the first who spoke; "and yet you cannot reach Fanny's feet any faster than the diligence."

The two gentlemen who thus conversed were the sole tenants of the machine, and they were both young men of five or six and twenty years of age. The one who was called Frederick, and whose name was, moreover, Prevot, was by far the handsomer of the two, and upon the whole a very good looking man, though there was a certain grave and anxious look about his countenance, which those who loved him, and his friend's sister Fanny was one of those who loved him most, called deeply interesting; while those who did not love him pronounced it to be gloomy and sullen. Sullen he was not, for his was in truth, a very quick and impetuous nature; but he had a strong imagination, which was by no means addicted to over bright hopes. After his friend had spoken he remained silent for a minute or two, and then said—"Well Willy, when will the diligence arrive after all?"

"Not till this time to-morrow," replied his companion, laughing.

"Nonsense, William Gore," said Frederick; "you do not mean to say that the wretched thing will take four-and-twenty hours to go forty miles?"

"Why it stops at a little inn a mile or two farther," replied William Gore, "for eight hours to sleep, as it is called, and you may think yourself very lucky if you do the rest of the journey in sixteen hours more."

Frederick Prevot bit his lip, and said—"Cannot we get a chaise?"

"Not in such a night as this," replied his companion. "Besides there is none to be had here. However, in consideration of your lover-like anxiety, I'll tell you what we will do. We will sleep here this night; have a good bottle of Burgundy if it can be procured; let our things follow by the diligence; hire two horses, and in five hours we shall be at home."

This was all agreed to by his companion, although, to say the truth, Frederick, if he had had his own will, would have mounted a horse as soon as he got to the inn, to ride on at full speed towards the end of his journey. By this time it was beginning to grow dusk, so that he would have had a darksome ride; it was raining as hard as it could pour, so that he would have had a cold one, and he himself was already extremely tired; so that every thing seemed to show that, though contrary to his own inclination, his stay at the inn would be for his benefit.

On arriving at the place of public reception we have described, the travellers made known their purpose, both to the driver of the diligence and the landlord of the inn. The first of these two personages, as he intended to charge full price for the whole way, cared very little whether they went with him or not. The landlord, on his part, vowed that he could give the travellers the best of everything; but that the gentlemen must put up with a large double bedded room, as every other room in the place was occupied. Frederick said that he hoped it was at the back, as they should be out of the way of all the noise and disturbance which was even then going on in the front. It was a capital room, however, he said, large and roomy; and they were consequently obliged to make up their minds to their fate.

As to the food set before them, the landlord kept his word. The dinner was most excellent, and though neither Claret nor Burgundy was a known commodity in the place, yet mine host declared that he had some Port of a very superior quality, some Maderia which had made more voyages round the world than Cook and Anson together, and some brandy, which also had been as much improved by travelling as any peer's son in the realm.

A crackling fire of dry wood, cheerful lights, though they were but tallow candles, some excellent fish, some game, for it was now autumn, with a broiled fowl, and other accompaniments of the sort, greatly cheered the travellers; and although the landlord could produce no wine except Port, which proved of a very doubtful and unpleasant character, and a portion of which might well be suspected of growing upon English hedges rather than in Portuguese vineyards, he offered to bring forth rum of such a sort as they had never tasted before in their days. That was an age in which punch was considered as one of the most urbane and polished of all beverages; the travellers willingly agreed to betake themselves to the bowl; and the rum produced by the landlord even exceeded his promise in excellence, and made both of the travellers marvel at finding any thing so excellent in a country inn.

They were deep in their potations when the landlord entered with the coachman of the diligence, who, knowing that the travellers did not intend to proceed with him now appeared to demand his fare. Both put their hands in their pockets, and William Gore speedily settled his own part of the charge. Frederick Prevot, however, felt in his pockets in vain; he then drew out a number of letters and papers, and then said with a laugh, "Lend me some money, William, I must have left my pocket-book in my portmanteau."

After affecting for a moment to refuse, so as to make his companion somewhat cross, William Gore gave the money that was wanted, and they went on with their supper. The lender ate and drank more than the borrower, and towards ten o'clock they retired to rest in the double-bedded room which the landlord had mentioned.

Frederick Prevot had one quality, which is not very unusual with quick and impetuous men, he slept, when he was asleep, like a stone, though it was often long after his head touched the pillow ere slumber visited his eyes. It was thus on the night which I have mentioned; for an hour or more he lay awake, listening to all the noises of the inn, and they were many; but after that he fell into a sleep that seemed as sound as if it were the sleep of death itself.

We must now take up a new personage in the drama, and speak of the Boots of the inn, who at an early hour of the following morning went to the door of the travellers' room to waken them as he had been told. At first he modestly knocked, but no answer being returned he went in and opened the window shutters. What was his surprise, however, to find the bed next to the window, in which William Gore had slept—if the poor wretch had been allowed to sleep at all—now vacant, though sadly tossed and tumbled about; the pillow and the bed clothes deluged in gore, and all the signs, in fact, of some terrible act having been committed.

The Boots looked round the room and into the other bed, and then quitting the chamber in haste, told the landlord what he had beheld. The landlord, the landlady, the chambermaid, and the ostler, all instantly rushed towards the stairs, but the landlord stopped the progress of the hostler, by sending him immediately for a constable and a neighboring justice. The rest of the party then returned with the Boots to the double-bedded room, where they found everything as Boots had described; and, moreover, discovered that the towel and basin which Frederick Prevot had used the night before, were stained with blood. On peeping into the bed, where he lay sound asleep, his face and the pillow were found to be slightly bloody, while his right hand and arm, which was stretched out above the bed clothes, had a good deal of blood upon the fingers, and upon the shirt. The landlord wisely determined not to wake him till the constable came, and in the meantime further perquisitions were made. The stairs were covered with drops of gore; traces of the same kind were met with all the way through the garden to the top of the bank above the sea; footsteps were seen deeply sunk in the plashy ground, as if a man heavily laden had passed along; and in some places long trailing marks were found, which might very well have been produced by a person dragging along a dead body to throw it into the sea below. At length the constable arrived; Frederick Prevot was awakened with difficulty, and gazed round with a look of astonishment, which, if feigned, was very well put on. That look of astonishment changed to indignation on being charged with the murder of his friend, and he had well nigh knocked down the man who made the accusation, but he refrained; and what was his horror, when, on rising and dressing himself, as he was told to do, the pocket-book of William Gore, marked with a bloody thumb and finger, was found under his pillow.

Were we to follow the fashion of the day, we should dwell upon his examination before the magistrates, and his trial before a jury of his country; but, for the sake of being singular, or rather, perhaps, of going a step beyond our contemporaries, we will pass over all the painful incidents of his trial, and dwell upon the still more painful incidents of his execution; for the chain of circumstantial evidence was so strong, that the additional facts which came out on the trial, namely: that he had no money on the preceding night to pay the coachman, that the pocket book which he pretended was in his portmanteau could not be discovered there, and that the chambermaid had heard a man go out and come in, were quite sufficient to convince the Jury of his guilt. Not a doubt indeed remained upon the mind of any person but one, and that was the sister of the murdered man—the promised bride of him who was about to end his days on the scaffold.—She did not believe him guilty; she knew him well, she had loved him long, and it would have taken evidence ten times more strong, even to have raised a doubt in her mind. She openly and boldly declared her conviction of his innocence; she visited him in prison; she took leave of him with tenderness and devotion; she consoled him with reiterated assurances that she was as certain of his innocence as of her own.

The fatal morning dawned at length; and as it was then the custom to execute persons convicted for murder in chains, and as near the spot where the deed had been committed as possible, the sentence of Frederick Prevot declared that he was to be hung in chains upon the moor about half a mile from the inn where he had passed that inauspicious night. The prison in which he had been confined, was at some distance, and though the time appointed for his execution was early in the day, the gazing spectators, who had assembled to witness the agony and death of a fellow creature, were disappointed for some hours of that pleasant pastime, by various accidents and misadventures which took place, and interrupted the march of the sad procession from the far off county town.

(Conclusion in our next.)

"No YER DON'T, JUDGE."—Scene in a Court of Justice—Boy, witness in case of assault on Mr. Brown.

Judge, (with dignity)—Young man, do you know this Brown?

Boy (looking roguishly at his Honor, and shaking his head)—No yer don't, Judge.

Judge (indignantly)—What do you mean, by that, sir?

Answer my question—Do you know this Brown?

Boy (with a peculiar wink)—No yer don't, Judge.

Judge (in a rage)—Answer me, you young villain, or I will commit you for contempt of Court—Do you know this Brown?

Boy (applying his thumb to the tip of his nose, and wriggling mysteriously his elongated fingers)—Yer can't come it, Judge; I know what yer want—yer want me to ask what Brown, and then yer goin, to say Brown Stout! No yer don't, Judge!

Musquitoes and fleas are supposed to be the souls of backbiters and slanderers.