



LITERATURE.

THE TWIN BROTHERS.

Young Genius walked out by the mountains and streams, Entranced by the power of his own pleasant dreams, 'Till the silent, the wayward, the wandering thing, Found a plume that had fallen from a passing bird's wing, Exulting and proud, like a boy at his play, He bore the new prize to his dwelling away; He gazed for awhile on its beauties, and then He cut it, and shaped it, and called it a PEN.

But its magical use he discovered not yet, 'Till he dipped its white lips in a fountain of jet; And oh! what a glorious thing it became, For it spoke to the world in a language of flame, While its master wrote on like a being inspired, 'Till the hearts of the million were melted and fired. It came as a boon and a blessing to men, The Peaceful, the Pure, the Conquering Pen.

Young Genius went forth on his rambles once more, The vast, sunless caverns of earth to explore; He searched the rude rock, and delighted he found A substance unknown, which he brought from the ground He fused it with fire and rejoiced in the change, As he moulded the ore into characters strange; 'Till his thoughts and his efforts were crowned with success, For an engine uprose, and he called it a PRESS.

The Pen and the Press, blest alliance combined, To soften the heart and enlighten the mind; For that to the treasures of knowledge gave birth, And this sent them forth to the ends of the earth. Their battles for truth were triumphant indeed, For the rod of the tyrant was snapped like a reed; They were made to exalt us, to teach and to bless, Those invincible brothers, the PEN and the PRESS.

THE CHELSEA PENSIONER.

ONE fine day, a few months since, as I was on my way home, my attention was attracted to a picture in a Curiosity Shop, at the bottom of Grosvenor-place, at the door of which hung a landscape, which promised to repay me for the trouble of stopping. A casual glance sufficed—it was a copy by an unskilful hand, so I turned away, and was about to proceed, when I observed two Chelsea pensioners, regarding with great apparent interest, a print representing one of the sorties made by the garrison of Gibraltar, under the gallant Elliott, upon the Spanish lines.

The "College men" were fine old fellows, good specimens of the class of veterans to which they belonged.—There was, however, something so peculiarly prepossessing in the face of one of them, that I singled him out from his companion, and bent my gaze exclusively on him.

He must have been remarkably handsome in his youth; his well proportioned features, covered as they were with the wrinkles of, I should imagine, some seventy years, were cast in a mould of almost classic beauty. An expression of great benevolence predominated, though doubtless,

"In the trade of war he had slain men," still he looked as though born to be the friend of innocence and peace. His eyes were dark grey, well set in his head, whilst his snow-white brows were smooth as marble—a rare thing to be seen in old age. His whole appearance indicated great personal neatness.

He was examining the picture through a pair of spectacles, mounted in homely brass; and, as he finished his survey, wiped away some moisture that dimmed their clearness, and, putting them deliberately into his jacket pocket, exclaimed, in mournful accents; "Ab, Gib! Gib! Gib!"

A deep-drawn sigh followed these words, and with slow steps he went on his way.

"Poor old fellow!" I thought; doubtless you have some sad reasons for remembering Gibraltar.

The figure of the veteran and his reminiscence took full possession of my thoughts, and I indulged a thousand speculations upon his melancholy associations with Gibraltar.

Some time afterwards, I was sitting in the Royal Hospital Garden, which is devoted to the amusement of such of the brave inmates as may choose, to cultivate flowers or vegetables; and, as I was watching some of the diggers and delvers, to my great delight, I observed the soldier who had excited my curiosity, making his way to the bench I occupied. I was now determined, if possible, to extract from him that portion of his history which I was so anxious to know. "A warm day," I observed.

"Yes, it is, sir. Thank God for it! We want such weather as this for the corn."

"I scarcely ever felt it warmer in the West Indies," I continued. "Oh! I have as hot again," he replied.

"Doubtless," I remarked; "but I was not long enough

on shore to know the worst of the climate. We only touched at the Islands to take in troops. I was never quartered there." And I accentuated the word for the purpose of letting him know that I claimed brother-hood as a soldier.

"Then I suppose, sir, you have worn a red coat in your time?" he replied, accepting the word as I had hoped.

"A blue one for many years," I answered. "I served in the artillery."

"And a noble service it is, my companion remarked: 'I don't know what we should do without it, particularly in fortified places, such as Malta and Gibraltar.'"

"You know both of these places well, no doubt," I continued; trusting that I should lead him to the point I desired. "One of them too well," he replied, and a sigh followed the admission.

"I am sorry to hear you say so. Some wound, or severe accident, perhaps, occurred to you whilst there?"

"Wound! ah, it was a wound that has not healed yet! I shall carry its marks to my grave; but nobody will ever see them, because they are upon my heart."

"I understand," I observed—"some mental grief, worse than bodily hurt. I wish it were in my power to soothe it." "Thank you, sir; thank you!" said the old man, and bled out his shrivelled hand; then, suddenly checking an action he thought too familiar, he added, "I beg pardon for my boldness, but I do believe you would console me if you could, though that's impossible."

The old man remained silent for a short time; putting his hand to his forehead, his elbow resting on the side of the bench, and appeared to be communing with himself, whether or no he should relate any particulars of his life to an absolute stranger. I watched the workings of his countenance with intense interest; at length, a faint smile played round his lips, his eyes swam, and he spoke.

"Well, then, you shall know; for, somehow, I think it will do me good to unburden myself, and though we never have met before, you've worn the King's uniform, and won't think the worst of me."

He passed his handkerchief rapidly across his eyes, and thus began:—

"Tis now getting on for fifty years since, with my regiment, I first set foot upon the rock of Gibraltar. I was then about twenty years of age, belonging to the grenadier company, and, though I say it that shouldn't, was reckoned a smart soldier."

"My father was a farmer, down in the shires, and he had given me a decent education. I could read, I wrote a good plain hand, and knew something of cyphering. I was fond of reading, and preferred a book to the canteen."

"Close to the quarters of our regiment stood a small house in which lived the paymaster-sergeant of the 14th Foot. He had permission from the governor to keep a sort of store, and sold various little odds and ends which a clean soldier is always wanting. Well, I took a pride in keeping myself and my accoutrements in order, and often visited the little shop. The sergeant had a daughter—(Here the narrator's voice suddenly sunk, and he drew his breath with considerable difficulty.) "She was the handsomest creature that ever God made; and as good as she was beautiful. Catherine (for that was the dear soul's name) often used to serve me, and I always treated her with respect and civility in return. She was not what you may call free of her speech, but there was such a way with her when she did open her sweet lips, and the sound of her voice was softer and clearer than a silver trumpet, that I used to make some excuse to stop and listen to it."

"I used now and then to receive a letter from my father, with a Bank of England note in it, and as soon as I got it, off I used to go to the paymaster sergeant to get it changed into dollars, and a good many of these I laid out before I left the store; that is, if Catherine could serve me. Sergeant Webber seemed to have no objections to any civil speeches I made to his daughter. He allowed, that I was a good customer, and once or twice hinted that he could supply me with *aqua dente* or tobacco, much cheaper than I could get it anywhere else in the garrison. I wasn't a smoker or a drinker, and I knew, besides, that he had no right to deal in such articles."

"My visits to Catherine were the happiest moments of my life; but there's no happiness without some drawback, and I had to put up with two things. If I went of an evening, I usually found three or four ill-looking Spaniards sitting in the room with Catherine; their shabby appearance and loose manners were not fit for her presence. The other thing that vexed me was a certain Corporal Murphy, an Irishman, who used to pay fulsome compliments to Catherine, and sometimes talk to her in a familiar manner. Kate disliked this swaggering jackanapes as much as I did, and whenever he came in, left him to be attended to by her father, with whom he appeared to be a favourite. Be this as it may, I gained her consent to be mine, got my commanding officer's leave, and, to my surprise, her father's also."

"The day was named for our going to church, and all seemed to promise well. The night before our intended wedding I was trying to beguile the tedious hours with reading, when I heard people talking loudly close to the window, and one of the speakers used the name of Catherine; this made me listen, and shortly I distinguished the voice of Murphy, and heard him say, in a scornful tone:—

"Yes, Sergeant Webber's off, sure enough, and with all the regimental pay in his pocket. I wonder he didn't take his proud daughter along with him, a female deserter would have been a novelty."

"These words set my heart beating; a thought crossed me that the Irish corporal had spoken to annoy me, and they were without foundation—however, I lost not a moment in hastening to Catherine's home to ascertain the truth. The instant I saw the dear girl I was convinced that something terrible had really happened; there was a strange wildness in her eyes, her beautiful hair, always in such nice order, was hanging loosely about her face and neck; she would have run from me, had I not caught her hand, and detained her by gentle forcing. In vain, I called her 'My own beloved Kate,' and assured her that no change in her father's life could alter my love; tears

and sobs were my only answer. I did all I could to soothe her, knowing it was near the hour when I must return to my quarters, I dreaded leaving her in such a state of lonely wretchedness. A neighbour's wife, fortunately relieved my mind of the last part of my fears. I took an opportunity of reminding the dear girl that she had promised to be mine the next morning; this shook her terribly, and with a struggle that seemed to cost her nearly her life, she said—

"Dear John, all that is over; you shall never be disgraced by marrying the daughter of a deserter, and a—"

"She fell back in her chair; the good woman attended on her. I was obliged to leave, and reached my room just in good time to answer my name and to hear it called over again as warned for guard the next morning. I told the non-commissioned officer that I had leave for the following day; but when I remembered how very unlikely it was that, in Catherine's condition, she would go to church with me, I gave up the point."

"As soon as the gates were opened, I ran down to the store; the kind soul I had left there, told me that, after a night of raving, the unhappy sufferer had fallen asleep, and that she would watch her till I could rejoin them. With a heavy heart I mounted guard that day; from my first post as sentry I could see the house where my poor love lay, and watched the windows till my eyes grew dim."

"By ill luck, Murphy was corporal of the guard, and shewed to take a fiendish pleasure in talking about Sergeant Webber's shameful flight, and the punishment that he would suffer if taken. I bore all this as patiently as I could, and kept myself as much as possible out of the sound of his hateful voice."

"It was close upon midnight when I went on sentry again. I had then to pace up and down close to the edge of one of the highest points of the Rock, some hundreds of feet above the sea, that rolled at the foot of it. The lonely spot seemed just suited to my sad thoughts. I had not long been on my post ere I saw a figure coming towards me. I challenged, of course, who goes there? no answer was made. I repeated my question again, still the person remained silent, but, at the sound of my voice, hastened towards me. I soon made out that it was a woman, and recovered my aims from the 'port'; but, as in duty bound, called out for the third time, Who comes here?"

"'Tis I, John," was answered in the voice of Catherine; but, oh, how terribly changed! It sounded as though it came from a deep cavern, instead of her sweet lips. She went on in a hurried manner, "I come to say farewell to you, and for ever. This was to have been my wedding night, and I have chosen Death as my bridegroom. I cannot live to be pointed at as a felon's child."

"My own love," I said, placing my musket on the ground, and taking her to my arms, "for the love of Heaven be calm, and listen to me. No one shall dare insult you whilst I live. You cannot help your father's faults. I love you better than ever, because you are unhappy, and without any other protector. Compose yourself, and hearken to what I say."

"You speak in vain. My strong love for you would not let me quit this world without seeing you once again. Good bye, dearest!"—and she struggled to free herself from my arms. I strove to detain her, and in so doing, her delicate and lovely face came in forcible contact with my breast-plate; the pain caused her to throw her head back, and I perceived that streams of blood were flowing from her mouth and nostrils. Scarcely had this horrid sight met my eyes, when, with superhuman strength, she broke from my arms, rushed to the edge of the cliff, and in a moment was lost to me for ever."

As he spoke these words, the old man's agitation was, indeed, terrible; he trembled as though his form was palsied, and his utterance was nearly choked with strong emotion. After some minutes' pause, and evidently with considerable effort, he resumed his narrative.

"I stood like one struck senseless, on the spot where she had disappeared, straining my eyes in vain in looking down the dizzy and almost perpendicular rock, not a sign or token of my lost Catherine was to be seen. I wonder that I did not throw myself into the sea, but I was stopped by the horrid sight I had witnessed. How long I remained staring upon the far below strand, I cannot say; I was roused from my trance by the detestable sound of Murphy's voice, who had come up with the relief. He put his hand roughly upon my shoulder, and after looking at me from head to foot by the light of his lantern, said, with a hellish grin upon his face—

"You are my prisoner. No wonder you left your post, having such murderous work to do."

"I could not speak, but suffered myself to be placed between two of my comrades and marched to the guard-house. The lights there showed me that my crossbelts and jacket were spotted with blood. I trembled from head to foot at the sight of these precious drops, a dizziness came over me, and I fell to the earth, as much overwhelmed as though I was, indeed, the guilty wretch they suspected. In this state of torpor I was placed in the black-hole, from whence I was taken to the garrison prison, to wait a court-martial. It assembled the following day, and before the proceedings commenced, my colonel came to me to say that himself and every officer of the regiment were in attendance, to speak in favour of my character, as they could not believe the charge brought against me."

"Murphy swore, point blank, that he had seen me state Catherine with my bayonet, and afterward hurl her body over the rock; the soldiers who were with him gave evidence of my being found covered with blood at some distance from my post; but one of these positively swore that he had picked up my musket on the spot where I had left it, and that the bayonet was on it, quite free from any stain. This statement appeared to shake Murphy's testimony, and he was about to be cross-examined by the Court, when a Spaniard, who had been watching me during the trial, and whom I well remembered as one of the visitors to the pay-master sergeant, stepped boldly up to the president, and with great earnestness of manner, and in tolerable English, said—