

Poetry.

THE DIRGE OF WALLACE.

They lighted a taper at the dead of night,
And chanted their holiest hymn;
But her brow and her bosom were damp with affright—
Her eye was all sleepless and dim!
And the lady of Elderslie wept for her lord,
When a death-watch beat in her lonely room,
When a curtain had shook of its own accord,
And the raven had flapped at her window-board—
To tell of her warrior's doom.

"Now, sing ye the death song, and loudly pray
For the soul of my knight so dear;
And call me a widow this wretched day,
Since the warning of God is here.
For a nightmare rides on my strangled sleep;—
The lord of my bosom is doomed to die;
His valorous heart they have wounded deep;
And the blood-red tears shall his country weep
For Wallace of Elderslie!"

Yet knew not his country that ominous hour,
Ere the loud matin bell was rung!
That a trumpet of death on an English tower
Had the dirge of her champion sung!
When his dungeon light looked dim and red
On the high-born blood of a martyr slain,
No anthem was sung at his holy death-bed;
No weeping there was when his bosom bled—
And his heart was rent in twain!

Oh, it was not thus when his oaken spear
Was true to that knight forlorn,
And hosts of a thousand were scattered, like deer
At the blast of the hunter's horn;
When he strode on the wreck of each well-fought field
With the yellow-haired chiefs of his native land;
For his lance was not shivered on helmet or shield—
And the sword that seemed fit for Archangel to wield
Was light in his terrible hand!

Yet, bleeding and bound, though the Wallace wight
For his long-loved country die,
The bugle ne'er sounded to a braver knight
Than William of Elderslie!
But the day of his glory shall never depart;
His head unentombed shall with glory be palmed;
From its blood-streaming altar its spirit shall start;
Though the raven has fed on his mouldering heart,
A nobler was never embalmed!

—Campbell.

Select Tale.

PARSON ANDERSON AND SON,
OR, PREACHING vs. PRACTICE.

It was a clear, frosty, Thanksgiving Day. The clock upon a certain village church tolled forth the hour of eleven, as the Rev. Jacob Anderson glanced into a pocket mirror to assure himself that his person and face were in a prayerful trim—slowly elevated his portly figure from behind the crimson velvet hanging of a high and somewhat antique pulpit—took one solemn and deliberate view of the thinly scattered congregation—drew out his long sharp features to a still greater length—raised his eyes imploringly to heaven—spread out his thin, soft, white hands, as if to embrace within the arms of his paternal love the few representatives of his numerous fold, and in a deep and thrilling tone, uttered the words, "Let us pray." With a simultaneous movement, the congregation arose and bent their heads reverently to unite with their pastor in that prayer which immediately precedes the sermon—a sermon in which it was supposed he would exert the utmost power of his eloquence in his fervent pleadings with the Almighty. Parson Anderson commenced; his deep bass voice resounded through the almost vacant church, like the sudden peals of distant thunder. In long-accustomed and well-measured terms he described the high and holy object of their adoration; expressed the most unbounded gratitude in the privileges of again offering up their hearts' sincere devotions—implored the divine blessing upon Christians throughout the world, but especially upon those of his own flock—invoked wisdom and strength for the rulers of "our beloved and highly enlightened land"—desired that the gospel news of salvation might be spread among the "slaves of this free and noble country"—and most earnestly besought the Lord to visit with mercy and retributive justice, the haunts of poverty, degradation and vice, in which our cities abound.

Here the Reverend gentleman paused for pure necessity; his voice, in the excitement of the hour, had forgotten its solemn and legitimate base, and receding step by step, as if during the prayer, the Almighty had receded farther and farther from the mouth of the pleader, he had at length terminated a beautifully rounded sentence in a sharp, shrill cry. "Here, as we remarked, he paused, inhaled a long full breath, and with a cambic of spot to purity, removed the perspiration from his brow. And he proceeded:

"We bless thy name, O Lord, that amid the numerous bounties of thy Providence we are not forgotten; upon this day especially, open our hearts to feel for the sufferings of the poor, the sick, and the forsaken—incline us to seek them in their homes, to relieve their distress, to console the mourner, to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to smile upon the objects of thy compassion, O Lord, and to share equally with them the luxuries which this day affords."

At this period of the service, a bonnet in the front pew was slightly elevated, and a pair of black eyes peeped cautiously round to note the effect of the words so emphatically pronounced. Those eyes belonged to the parson's honored lady, who was noted far and wide for the peculiar and far-reaching shrewdness with which she contrived to eke out the two ends of her husband's moderate salary.

As usual on Thanksgiving Day, only a simple dinner had been prepared, the fires extinguished, and the good lady with her son and daughter had followed the devout preacher to church at an early hour. While inhaling spiritual food so abundantly she nevertheless reserved a thought for the more worldly luxuries with which she had reason to know their wealthy parishioners were well supplied, and of which experience had taught her to anticipate an ample share; it was, therefore, a very natural thing that a pleasant and satisfied smile should creep over her round dimpled face, as she met a few glances quickly thrown from surrounding eyes—assurances that she was not doomed to disappointment.

Among this bowed and worshipful congregation, one alone—a young man of twenty—the only son of the Reverend Jacob Anderson—stood proudly erect, his arms gracefully folded across his broad chest, his glossy black hair, lightly curling, and his large eyes, full of sparkling brilliancy, bent carelessly on his father's face. His falling collar was knotted with a band of dark silk, his frock coat fitted his figure with ease, and his boots were of that degree of polish that indicated self-respect rather than the extreme anxiety for the world's opinion.

Laurens Anderson had been, for years, deemed a wayward and ungodly son by his rigidly pious father, and the narrow compass of whose mind would have borne witness to many acts of discipline, both temporal and spiritual, designed to guide his unsteady feet into the narrow and well-beaten path of popular orthodoxy. But, as yet, all these efforts had proved unsuccessful, and Laurens had reached the age and stature of manhood, almost purely a child of nature. Thoughtful, sagacious, independent of creeds, careless whom he pleased or displeased—but noble, generous and affectionate—he loved to trace out what he considered to be the numerous inconsistencies between his father's creed and life—his professions in public, and his domestic short-comings. It was a fruitful source of agony to the reverend gentleman to be thus commented on to his face, but neither brute force nor persuasive eloquence had accomplished an iota in checking this characteristic of his son, and reprehensible as he might have been in the matter, it was nevertheless frequently effective of good results.

At the close of the long and eloquent petition, a peculiar expression curled the features of the young man, and he sat down with a promptitude that indicated some new and sudden resolve.

At length the congregation dispersed to their various homes, and soon the tables of Parson Anderson began to groan beneath the rich presents poured in from every quarter. The divine was in his study, Mrs. Anderson was busy with the kitchen maid, her daughter entertaining a guest in the parlor, and it fell to the lot of Laurens to receive and arrange these gifts. Without any hesitation he threw open the door of a large cupboard, tumbling its contents into the smallest possible space, and with a sharp knife quickly severed each article brought as near the centre as possible, placing one half in the cupboard, and the other at the disposition of his mother, when the proper time should arrive.

No sooner had these presents ceased to flow in than Laurens filled an immense basket to overflowing with his reserved halves, and set forth on his benevolent errand. Many a lone or sorrowful heart, many a deserted and degraded outcast was that day cheered by a morsel from his basket, as with unwearied patience he plunged into the dark alleys, nooks, and corners, where lived those sons and daughters of poverty. Blessings, sincere and soul-begotten blessings were profusely showered upon his head, and his dark lustrous eyes beamed with inward joy as he turned his steps homeward, where the annual dinner was waiting his return.

"Mrs. Anderson," said the parson, as with solemn dignity he raised the first cover, "what is this? *Half a Turkey!* Is it possible that my prayer and sermon have been less acceptable than

formerly, and that half the usual gifts are retained? Explain it, Mrs. Anderson, if you can."

"It is equally a mystery to me," replied the disappointed and somewhat angry lady; "being quite busy, I deputed Laurens to receive the gifts and thanks of our friends. He went out immediately after sending me word that all had arrived; you may judge of my surprise to find everything in halves."

"Everything!" echoed the divine, hastily rising from his seat and catching off the various covers and napkins. A quiet and intelligent smile sat upon the features of his son, and when the discontented father had resumed his arm-chair at the end of the table, Laurens slowly closed his hands, and slightly raised his handsome face, and with a subdued emphasis repeated the words of the morning prayer:—"Incline us to seek them in their homes—to feed the hungry—and to equally share with them the luxury which this day affords."

"I do not often pray as you understand it," continued the reprobate son, "but I sometimes assist in procuring answers to the prayers I hear.—You, sir, believe in the prayers of the mouth—it may be in that of the heart—I believe only in that which is followed by immediate and corresponding action. You have prayed for the hungry—I have fed them."

The parson felt the justice of the act, and smothering his vexation beneath a look of extreme gravity, replied:

"The poor minister is one to whom it is commanded to give."

"But the servant of the Lord ceases to merit such gifts when the table is laden with silver and china," pursued the incorrigible son, bestowing a deliberate glance upon the well-appointed dinner-set. "Say no more, I beseech you, sir; you will continue to pray, and so often as it lies within my power, your prayers shall be suitably answered.—A slice of that turkey, sir, if you please; my walk has sharpened my appetite."

With a fiery scowl, the father seized the carving knife, while the scheming Mrs. Anderson bit her lips, and bent her eyes upon her son with a look which plainly said—"What was the use of giving away those nice things?"

But the domestic clouds at last disappeared beneath the cheering influences of a Thanksgiving Dinner, and the conversation turned upon a select party which they were to receive that evening, and which for the first time was permitted to displace the accustomed meeting for prayer and exhortation.

Shortly after dinner the rooms were properly lighted, the evening refreshments in order, fresh fuel heaped upon the glowing coals, and Mrs. Anderson's smiling face was everywhere visible, while the parson occupied his arm chair in stately dignity, enjoying the scene far more than he thought proper to allow. Laurens had not been seen since his hasty departure from the dinner table, but his absence excited no surprise.

The scene was becoming more brilliant. From respect to their minister, boisterous mirth was restrained, but there was a refined and subtle gaiety among the elegant and wealthy parishioners, who alone composed the party, that rendered it sufficiently attractive to all.

"Where is your son?" enquired a lady of the parson, "I hope you will not deprive us of his society the whole evening."

"I cannot answer for him, madam," replied the spiritual guide; "his waywardness will break my heart."

At this moment the clergyman's daughter entered and whispered something in his ear, which caused an angry flush to overspread his sharp, pale features, and without delay he hastened from the room.

Arriving at the kitchen, he was surprised, and for a moment dismayed, to find that Laurens had returned with somewhat more than a dozen persons, who moving in the humbler walks of life, had been considered unworthy of invitations to the minister's party.

"My friends, my dear friends, sir," exclaimed the young man, without giving his father an opportunity of speaking, "let me introduce them;" and quickly presenting each by name, they proved without exception to be members of that society which he was wont so fondly to term his flock.

"I have been gathering the lambs, the long neglected lambs of your fold, sir," continued the son, "and I have brought them here, that for once they may feast upon the good things of this life, and be merry."

The parson was desperate; the lady was fairly beside herself; to admit these persons among their aristocratic guests was not to be thought of, and yet the character of "the good shepherd" must be sustained.

"My son," gravely commenced the latter, drawing him to one side, "it will never do to introduce these people among our visitors, they would consi-

der it a personal insult; still, as I recognize them among my hearers, I have no wish to treat them rudely. Give them a supper in the kitchen, and dismiss them, I pray you, I command you," he added, with a flashing eye, as he read the refusal of Laurens' ingenious countenance.

"No entreaties, no commands will be of any avail to alter my plans," replied the son firmly, "come my friends, we will now enter the parlor," he added, suddenly appearing to them; "do not be disconcerted, rely upon me to make you friends." Presently Laurens Anderson entered the brilliantly lighted rooms, with a blooming girl on each arm; one the daughter of a washer-woman who officiated in the families of most of the persons present; the other a young milliner's apprentice, delicate and beautiful as the silks and flowers which she daily wove into such exquisite forms. With elegant and easy condescension, Laurens presented his friends to his father's guests, and despite the freezing coldness, the distant and dignified bows, the smothered sneers, and half uttered ridicule, he continued to introduce his little party, and in half an hour they were merrily engaged in games which attracted the attention of all present.

Deeply mortified at so unwarrantable a proceeding, the parson had seized an opportunity to withdraw to his study a few moments, to gain that tranquillity of mind which had twice that day been disturbed. Instantly taking advantage of his absence, Laurens gathered his friends into a back parlor, closed the folding doors, led his sister to the piano, and with a few who consented to join them, were soon whirling in the maze of a merry dance.

Gradually the voices in the front parlor were more subdued, till silence reigned supreme; little by little the folding doors unclosed, with anxiously sympathizing faces peeping through the aperture; then suddenly they flew open, and in rushed a multitude to join the revellers, leaving those only who were prohibited from dancing by church membership.

"And this is real enjoyment!" exclaimed Laurens, as after exhorting his sister to play with spirit and without fear of consequences, he seized the hand of the milliner, and with her led off the dance.

The unwonted noise at last reached the ears of Parson Anderson, and completely overthrew all his late attempts of equanimity of spirit. Starting suddenly from his easy chair, he descended the stairs with hasty and ministerial steps, and passing unceremoniously, the spectators, intruded his solemn phiz among the wild dancers. With an imperious gesture he commanded his daughter to cease playing, and in an instant all stood silent and awe struck before him. Laurens—the brave but unchristianized Laurens—alone confronted the rage of his pious father.

"Only a little harmless amusement, sir," said he carelessly, as if no angry word rested with him. "The Bible, you know, gives us time for dancing as well as praying—come, sir, be so good as to join us it will cheer you. Go on Mary, go on," he added with a glance of his black eye, "and if father chooses to join us, we will make room for him; I dare say he can find a partner among those elderly ladies, go on, Mary;" and in the twinkling of an eye the parsonage again shook beneath the tread of many feet.

Parson Anderson twice essayed to speak, but his voice was twice drowned in the wild bursts of merriment, and turning away, he said, in a melancholy tone of voice, to those around him, "that boy will bring me down in sorrow to the grave."

Miscellaneous.

THE ARCTIC REGIONS.
DR. KANE'S BOOK.

Stir up the fire, on this cold November evening, and send a glow of grateful warmth through the chilly atmosphere of the room. Draw your chair to the table, and, with feet towards the fire, open the pages of Dr. Kane's volume, and read his stories of adventure in the northern seas. In your comfortable room, while the winds whistle without, read his account of winds fiercer than those that rattle at the casement, and of a cold so severe that the congealed mercury refused to measure its intensity. Read his account of perils in the ice, dangers on the land and water, expeditions of discovery and daring adventures; his descriptions of geographical features, of the character and habits of the occupants of that cold country, and of his scientific observations. Read of the privations of captain and crew, during their residence in the Arctic regions of two winters of unprecedented severity,—some of their number stricken by disease; deprived by an epidemic of the dogs upon which they depended for travelling; obliged, in lieu of better provisions, to live on blubber and rats, and finally forced to abandon their stout craft and seek safety by flight in their boats. Read all this, and