

Literature.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE FOR NOVEMBER.

Shepherd.—Let us have about half an hour's talk o' politics—and then has done wi' them for the rest o' the night. What o' France?

North.—James, all men who had visited France with their eyes and ears upon since the accession of Charles—now Ex-King—knew that a struggle was going on—only to cease with the overthrow of one of the parties—between the Royalists and the Liberals. Each party strove to change the charter given by Louis XVIII. into so many dead letters. But the Liberals—as they are called—were from the beginning far more unprincipled than the Royalists were even at the end—and had Charles and Polignac not acted as they did, in the matter of the ordinances, the monarchy had been virtually destroyed by their enemies.

Shepherd.—Do you really say so, sir?

North.—Two courses were open to Charles—to abdicate the throne rather than sit there a shadow—or to support the ordinances by the sword. That would not have been easy, but it would have been possible; and had Charles been the tenth part a Napoleon, it would have been done—and his enemies having been overawed by the army, the streets of Paris had not been stained with one drop of blood.

Shepherd.—Oh! but he was a weak man!

North.—I do not know that he is a weak man, James; but on this emergency—this crisis of his fate—he reckoned without his host—and thence his second visit to Holyrood.

Shepherd.—I will ea' on him neist time I come to Embro'; and if he's no at hame, leave my caird.

North.—Liberty, my dear Shepherd, is like the air we breathe—if we have it not we die. You have heard these words before—and you and I have felt their meaning on the mountain top. Slavery is a living death.

Shepherd.—That's a bull—

North.—But of all slaveries the worst is that, which, dancing in chains, supposes itself Freedom.

Shepherd.—But didna ye admire, sir, the behaviour o' the Mob o' Paris?

North.—An old man like me, James, is chary of his admiration. In my youth—some forty years ago—I was too prodigal of it—and the sun I worshipped, set in a shower of blood. The French—with many and great defects—are a gallant—a noble people, but the mob that fought—and they fought well—though victorious over but feeble opposition—during what I leave others to call the Three Glorious Days—were not the French People—and I should be ashamed of myself were I to waste any of my enthusiasm on such actors, prepared long beforehand to play their parts—yet, after all, little better than puppets—though the machinery worked well—and was triumphant.

Shepherd.—I thought you wou'dna attend the Meeting.

North.—Had I been a republican, I would; and have declared my delight and exultation at the downfall of a great and ancient monarch. Probably I should have thought it a despotism, and would have sung odes and hymns of thanksgiving when all its towers and temples toppled into dust. Some such men, I believe, were at the meeting here—and believing them to be conscientious and consistent, they have my respect.

Shepherd.—And mine too—and I hope they'll be proud o' it.

North.—Other men, again, were at the meeting, James, who love what they call a limited monarchy—and limited the French Monarchy is now to their hearts' content? Till Louis-Philippe began to reign, (to reign!) eyes never such saw a cipher.

Shepherd.—I have mair power in the Forest—under the Young Hyuck, I verily believe—though I'm no his greave—than the son of Egalite now has in Paris, under old La Fayette and that sweet innocent invention for preserving Freedom, the National Guard.

North.—Good, James. They therefore lifted up their voices on high—like sounding harp and tinkling cymbal, and were applauded to the echo.

Shepherd.—Sae far a' seems to hae been richt. Then what hae you to complain o' sir?

North.—I complain of nothing—not I, James—I have left my gout at John-o'-Great's House—and my complacency and peace of mind are perfect. But oh! the superlative stupidity of all those sumphs and sumphesses—those Jack and Jennie donkeys each row above row, rising up with ears with still increasing longitude, till those at the acme swept the spiders from the cornice, and crushed the undevoured flies asleep on the ceiling!

SHEPHERD.—Haw! Haw! Haw! Haw!—What do you mean?

North.—Tories leaning on the bosom of Whigs, and encircled in the arms of Radicals! Church-and-King men shouting their praises of alter-pullers-down, and throne-shatterers, and of all the fierce and ferocious foes of Old Establishments, with mattock and pickaxe raising them all from their very foundations, and howling in each cloud of dust that went darkening up the heavens!

SHEPHERD.—Puir infatuated fules! I'm owre angry to pity them—nor ought leal men and true to accept now the peace-offering o' their humiliation and their shame.

North.—People there are, as you well know, James, who never can move one single step either backwards or forwards, unless led by a finger and a thumb, gently or rudely pinching their nose. No will of their own have they—for will and reason go together—and only the intelligent are free. More abject slaves never trooped together in a gang before the whip of the overseer to the sugar-canes, than those slaves of both sexes, that sat in our Assembly-rooms, in chains flung over them by masters who despised them too thoroughly to honour them with any portion of their hatred, shouting and bellowing at the prospect of dominion and empire about to be given to them who would trample them into dust.

Shepherd.—Oh! the minnies!

North.—Why—not even though the mob of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine had, as if by some seeming miracle, performed their parts like angels—angels of blood at best—and thereby set at defiance all our knowledge, all experience, all history of human mobs, which the Liberty-and-Equality-men, and the old and young Anarchists, have the audacity to ask us to believe—ought they who swear by the BRITISH CONSTITUTION to have uttered one word in eulogy of the 'Three Glorious Days,' till they knew

something more of what was likely to be the upshot of it all—indeed ignorance could be supposed so dense as to be impenetrable to the lurid lights already gleaming all around the horizon—

With fear of change
Perplexing monarchs!

Shepherd.—What'n a face! Dianna fa' intil a fit. Tak a swig. Na—I didna tell you to drink out o' the green bottle—that's spirits—but to kiss the jug. If you speak that way noo that you're sober—mercy on us, what a fury when you get fou!

North.—Some there were—many—and certainly not the least silly of the set—who held that a demand was made upon their admiration, simply by the bravery and moderation of the Parisian mob—which demand they were bound to answer—without any reference whatever to the past or the future—and even when the Revolution afterwards to turn out the greatest of all evils. They pledged themselves, they said, to no political opinion on the subject—and begged that to be understood clearly by both sides of the whole world. But nothing should prevent them from giving vent to their admiration. No doubt, James, if their admiration were of the nature of a wind-cholic, they were right in giving vent to it—time and place considered—though roses and lilies forbid that I should have been there to hear! But admiration is not a vice of the stomach, bowels, and intestines, but a virtue of the heart and brain; and so far from seeking to evaporate itself in noisy explosions, it loves to breathe in long-continued and silent incense over the whole actions of a man's life. A stronger proof of a weak mind cannot be exhibited than an impatient, restless, and feverish anxiety to hail every coming or new-come event, action, or character that seems to be good, with instant applause. In private life they, whose admiration is perpetually bursting out, are always the most frivolous; the shallow rills of their sympathy soon run dry—and when you talk to them a few weeks, say a few days—even a few hours after the unmeasured expression of their enthusiasms, of the cause which excited it, they look at you with a face of blank forgetfulness of all their former feelings, and you discover that they are occupied with some new favourite event or incident, which in its turn is forgotten before next day's dinner.

Shepherd.—Hoo that used to be the case wi' Sir Walter's Novelles! Strang minds read them with deep delight—said some sentences to that effect when the tawk gaed raun' the table, and were silent; but they retained all the glorious things impressed unobliterably (that's a kittle word to pronounce) on the tablets o' their memories—that is their understandings—that is their hearts, that is their souls, for they are a' ane in the lang run, and o' a composite character. But bits o' triflin' laddies and lasses, and auld women o' baith sexes, used to keep chatterin' and jabberin' about each new navelle as it came out, just as if it never had a predecessor, and was never to have a successor, as if it had been the only hyeuk in print—when la and beheld in less than sax months, out came another in four volumes, and then they clean forgot that the aye they had so long bothered you about, till you wished yourself dead, had ever been in the press!

North.—An apt illustration, James. The shallow persons of whom I was speaking had not the small sense to see that it was in the nature of things utterly impossible to pronounce an isolated panegyric on the personal conduct of the actors in a political revolution, that should not include approbation of much, if not at all, involved in that revolution. And even for a moment granting that such an isolated panegyric could have been pronounced, they had not the still smaller sense to see that all the opposite party would insist on either dragging them in among their ranks—though, heaven knows, they would be no acquisition to any party—or on representing them thenceforth as lukewarm or milk-and-water adherents to their own—or more probably—say certainly—talking of them in all companies as needles, and incapable, from sheer ignorance, and folly, of forming any opinion at all on political questions of any pith or moment.

Shepherd.—You hae treated the subject, sir, wi' your usual masterly discrimination. It's easy noo, in lookin' back at the newspapers, to ken the kind o' cattle that ca'd thae meetings.

North.—Two or three eminent, and some half-dozen able men, attended the meeting here, (which was got up by my friend John Bowring!) but otherwise it was a poor affair, and forgotten sooner than an ineffectual fancy ball. In England such meetings were all of one character. No distinguished or conscientious man of our side, James, attending them; and even the great Whig leader stood aloof,—nay, the bulk of the Whig gentlemen. True it is, as is said in the last number of the Quarterly Review; an admirable one,—that 'the meetings and dinners, and subscriptions set on foot by our old-established disturbers of the public peace, have been countenanced by hardly one person, which any human being will dare to call respectable.'

FROM THE SAME.

TO THE MOUNTAIN WINDS.

How divine

The liberty, for frail, for mortal man,
To roam at large among unpeopled glens,
And mountainous retirements, only trod
By devious footsteps! Regions consecrate
To oldest time!—And, reckless of the storm
That keeps the raven quiet in his nest,
He as a presence or a motion—One
Among the many there.

WORDSWORTH.

Mountain winds! oh! whither do ye call me?

Vainly, vainly would my steps pursue!

Chains of care to lower earth enthrall me,

Wherefore thus my weary spirit woo?

Oh! the strife of this divided being!

Is there peace where ye are borne on high?

Could we soar to your proud eyries fleeing,

In our hearts would haunting memories die?

Those wild places are not as a dwelling

Whence the footsteps of the loved are gone!

Never from those rocky halls ensue swelling

Voice of kindness in familiar tone!

Surely music of oblivion sweepeth

In the pathway of your wanderings free;

And the torrent, wildly as it leapeth,

Sings of no lost home amidst its glee.

There the rushing of the falcon's pinion,

Is not from some hidden pang (to fly;

All things breathe of power and stern dominion—

Not of hearts that in vain yearnings die.

Mountain winds! oh! is it, is it only

Where man's trace hath been, that so we pine?

Bear me up, to grow in thought less lonely,

Even at nature's deepest, loneliest shrine!

Wild, and mighty, and mysterious singers!

At whose tone my heart within me burns;

Bear me where the last red sunbeams linger,

Where the waters have their secret urns!

There to commune with a loftier spirit

Than the troubling shadows of regret;

There the wings of freedom to inherit,

Where the enduring and the wing'd are met.

Hush proud voices! gentle be your falling!

Woman's lot thus chainless may not be;

Hush! the heart your trumpet sounds are calling,

Darkly still may grow—but never free!

MRS. HEMANS.

FROM THE FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING FOR 1831.

THE STOLEN SHEEP.

AN IRISH SKETCH.

By the Author of "Tales of the O'Hara Family."
Concluded.

Peery Carroll, sitting on the road-side after he lost sight of the prisoner, and holding his screaming grandson on his knees, thought the cup of his trials was full. By his imprudence he had fixed the proof of guilt on his own child; that reflection was enough for him, and he could indulge it only generally. But he was yet to conceive distinctly in what dilemma he had involved himself as well as Michael. The policemen came back to compel his appearance before the magistrate; and when the little child had been disposed of in a neighbouring cabin, he understood, to his consternation and horror, that he was to be the chief witness against the sheep-stealer. Mr. Evans's steward knew well the meaning of the words he had overheard him say in the cabin, and that if compelled to swear all he was aware of, no doubt would exist of the criminality of Michael, in the eyes of a jury. "Tis a strange thing to ax a father to do," muttered Peery, more than once, as he proceeded to the magistrate's; "it's a very strange thing."

The magistrate proved to be a very humane man. Notwithstanding the zeal of the steward and the policemen, he committed Michael for trial, without continuing to press the hesitating and bewildered old Peery into any detailed evidence; his nature seemed to raise against the task, and he said to the steward—"I have enough of facts for making out a committal; if you think the father will be necessary on the trial, subpoena him."

The steward objected that Peery would abscond, and demanded to have him bound over to prosecute, on two sureties, solvent and respectable. The magistrate assented; Peery could name no bail; and consequently he also was marched to prison, though prohibited from holding the least intercourse with Michael.

The assizes soon came on. Michael was arraigned; and, during his plea of "not guilty," his father appeared, unseen by him, in the gaoler's custody, at the back of the dock, or rather in an inner dock. The trial excited a keen and painful interest in the court, the bar, the jury-box, and the crowds of spectators. It was universally known that a son had stolen a sheep, partly to feed a starving father; and that out of the mouth of that father it was now sought to condemn him. 'What will the old man do?' was the general question which ran through the assembly; and while few of the