

LITERATURE, &c.

THE TWO BROTHERS.

Of the divided affections too often observable among brothers, a most remarkable instance happened a few years ago in the family of a gentleman of the north of Scotland. George and William Stirling were the only sons of the Gentleman alluded to, and they had grown to manhood in the exercise of that mutual kindness which it is so delightful to observe in relations of that degree of consanguinity. I am not aware that there was any thing remarkable in their characters: they were, simply, two respectable young men, of good education; and while the elder was reared to the enjoyment of a competent fortune, the younger soon attained such a degree of distinction at the bar, as rendered his fate little less enviable. On the death of their mother which took place when they were between twenty and thirty years of age, some dispute arose respecting a legacy, the destination of which had not been expressed in terms sufficiently clear, and which, after a brief suit at law, was determined in favour of the elder brother. At first, it was resolved by the two brothers that this plea should be amicably conducted, merely for the purpose of deciding an uncertain matter; but some circumstances unexpectedly occurred, which acting upon the inflammable nature of the elder, and not being met with a proper spirit by the younger brother, speedily produced a decided alienation between them. Each retired sullenly into the fortress of his own pride; nor were their father's entreaties and good offices, or their common recollection of twenty affectionate and happy years, of the least avail in bringing them once more together. They did not again meet for ten years: it was at their father's funeral. The old gentleman had died in presence of his eldest son only, reiterating with his latest breath those injunctions, so often before employed in vain, that his two sons might be restored to brotherly friendship; an object, he said, which engrossed his thoughts so much in life, that he felt as if he could not rest at peace in his grave unless it were accomplished. The two brothers met, but without taking the least notice of each other, when respectively mounting their carriages, in order to follow the corpse of their parent to the family burying-place in Aberdeen. Their hearts were still filled with fierce indignant feelings towards each other, though it is not improbable that the elder had been somewhat touched almost imperceptibly to himself, by the dying entreaties of his father. The procession, consisting of a hearse and the carriages of the two brothers, set out on its long and dreary journey, which was rendered additionally melancholy by the gloom of a December day. It was originally designed that there should be no stoppage, except to exchange horses, till they reached their destination; but this arrangement was destined to be strangely disconcerted. A fall of snow, which had begun only that morning in the low country, was found, when they reached the hilly region, to have been of two days' continuance; and it was with the greatest difficulty that they reached a lonely inn, about half way towards the capital, beyond which it was declared by the postillions there was no possibility of proceeding that day. This humble place of entertainment was accustomed to lodge only such guests as carriers, and as it was partly occupied on the present occasion by various wayfarers, the host, with all anxiety to accommodate such distinguished guests as those who had just arrived, found that he could not by any means offer them more than two rooms. It was his expectation, that, while one of these was devoted, as decency required, to the reception of the corpse, the other would serve for the two mourners, and he accordingly proposed to make up an additional bed in the room which he had marked as that which should receive his living guests. What was his astonishment, and what was the astonishment of all the inmates of the house, when he was informed by a servant, that one of the gentlemen would sleep in one of these rooms, while the other had no objection to that in which he had placed the corpse! It was not, however, for him to make any resistance to such an arrangement, and he accordingly caused the rooms to be prepared as befitted the taste of his guests.

It must communicate a strange feeling to know that two brothers—men of cultivated understandings, and each respected in his sphere for public and private worth—actually carried this dreadful arrangement into effect, in order to avoid what they must have contemplated as a more painful thing—the spending of a single night in each other's company. It was the younger who proposed, as a solution of the dilemma in which they were placed, to take up his quarters in the same chamber with the corpse: unpardonable as the elder was for his share of the dissension, it is but justice to him to state, that he could not, after the dying request of his father, have encountered the sensations which might be expected to arise in so dreadful a situation. During the evening, as the storm prevented them from

going out of doors, each kept his own room, and was severally served with the refreshments which he required. Night came, and each went to rest. Morning returned, and still the storm was unabated. It was therefore necessary to spend another day in the same extraordinary circumstances. Slowly, slowly waned the hours of the twilight day; and still the snow continued to fall in its broad and lazy flakes, seeming, to the two brothers, as each surveyed it listlessly from his window, the very personification of monotony. As the rooms were close to each other, and only divided by a thin partition, through which there was a door of communication, each of the unhappy gentlemen could overhear every thing that his neighbour did, almost to his very breathing. It at length became the amusement of each, unknown to his fellow, to watch the proceedings of the other—to note every footfall, to register every sigh. George, in particular, became interested in spite of himself, in the situation of his brother, which in consideration of what he had heard from the lips of his dying father, bore to him an aspect more repulsive and painful than perhaps it did to the actual sufferer. At length, when, after a weary day, the time of rest again drew nigh, and the house became more than usually still, he heard a groan—a groan partly suppressed but still bearing distinctly the impress of unutterable anguish—proceed from his brother's room. He listened more intently, and in a few minutes he could make out that the living tenant of the death-chamber was prostrated beside the coffin—weeping—bitterly weeping—but still making every effort to bury the expression of his grief in his own bosom. It may easily be imagined that such sounds, coming upon a heart which had been insensibly undergoing a softening process during the whole day, must have had the best effect. Still the rancour of ten years was not to be got over by tears shed under such circumstances. He softly stole, however, to the door, and watched with the most intense anxiety every respiration and movement of his afflicted brother. After waiting a few minutes, he distinctly heard William breathe forth the words, 'Oh, mother!' and that in a tone which referred so pointedly to the source of their unhappy quarrel, that he could no longer entertain a doubt as to the nature of his brother's present reflections. A thousand tender associations were awakened by that endeared word: he reverted to the early days when they had no contention but for her affections, no rivalry but for the kind bounty which she was always ready to bestow upon each alike. Human nature could hold out no longer, and he gently tapped at the door which had hitherto kept them apart. 'William,' he said, 'may I come in?' The voice of affection could not be mistaken. William opened the door in an instant, and, as if he had guessed intuitively the disposition of his brother, rushed into his arms.

The next day saw the two brothers amicably proceeding in one vehicle to the family burial-place, where, in the grave of their father, they inhaled every bitter feeling they had ever entertained against each other; and at present, taught by the sufferings which they endured in their period of alienation, there is no pair of friends who take such pains to cherish each other's affections, or to avoid all means of converting them into gall.

THE PRESS, THE COMPASS, AND THE STEAM ENGINE.

The art of printing has, perhaps, contributed more essentially to the welfare of mankind, to the advancement of society, and to the promotion and diffusion of political, physical, and ethical truths than all the arts beside. It is, in fact, an art that is 'preservative of all arts.' Wherever it is known and encouraged, the progressive improvement of society is certain, and the march of mind secure and unembarrassed. But where the press has never shed its light, or dispensed its intellectual treasures, the night of ignorance, and the gloom of superstition, rest upon the soul, and obscure the intellect of man; and should it be struck from existence, with its rich treasures of instruction, the world, ere long, would be merged in night and barbarism. The invention of the *mariner's compass*, or rather the discovery of that mystic and incomprehensible law which gives polarity to the needle, claims to be ranked, on account of its importance, next to the press. The navigator is no longer compelled to keep the coast within view, in order to steer his course aright, but now seeks the middle of the ocean with confidence and security; nor does it require a period of ten years, as in the days of Ulysses, and Æneas, to make a voyage from Ilium to the island of Ithica; or to the shores of Italy. Neither does the modern navigator require a Palinurus, as did the pious Trojan of old, to stand at the helm, and observe the stars of heaven. He possesses, in the compass, a safer guide than either Orion or Arcturus. But for the compass, those geographical limits, which, from the dawn of creation had concealed one-half of the world from the other, had never been passed; America perhaps this moment would have been a pathless world of woods, made vocal by

the serpent's hiss, the panther's scream, and the wild man's terrific yell; and, perchance, here—even on this consecrated spot, where now stands the temple of the living God—the wild fox would have made his den, or the red man his habitation! The *steam-engine* next takes rank in point of importance. Its effects on the condition of society are of incalculable importance. In almost every branch of the arts it is hailed as an auxiliary. Its application to nautical purposes is of greater utility and the deeper concernment to the world than the world at present imagines. It is an agent, whose power and influence will be beneficially felt in contributing toward the preservation of the American Union, by overcoming those physical barriers that have isolated one section of our country from the other. By means of its power, space is annihilated, and the inhabitants, from the extremes of the Union, are now brought into frequent and friendly intercourse. Let it be borne in mind, however, that neither the printing press, nor the mariner's compass, nor the steam-engine could have been produced without the aid of the common mechanic. The toil and skill of the artificers in wood and iron and steel were requisite to their completion. The square and the compass, the axe and the plane, the hammer and the anvil, were all indispensable to their production.

JOHN BUNYAN.

The history and genius of Bunyan were as much more extraordinary than those of Baxter as his station and attainments were inferior. He is probably at the head of unlettered men of Genius, and perhaps there is no other instance of any man reaching fame from so abject an origin; for the other extraordinary men who have become famous without education, though they were without what is called learning, have had much reading and knowledge, and though they were repressed by poverty, were not, like him, sullied by a vagrant and disreputable occupation. By his trade of a travelling tinker, he was from his earliest years placed in the midst of profligacy, and on the verge of dishonesty. He was for a time a private in the parliamentary army; the only military service which was likely to elevate his sentiments and amend his life. Having embraced the opinions of the Baptists, he was soon admitted to preach in a community which did not recognise the distinction between the clergy and the laity. His *Pilgrim's Progress* an allegorical representation of the Calvinistic theology, at first found readers only among those of that persuasion, gradually emerged from this narrow circle, and by the natural power of imagination over the uncorrected feelings of the majority of mankind, at length rivalled *Robinson Crusoe* in popularity. The bigots and persecutors sunk into oblivion; the scoffs of wits and worldlings were unavailing, while, after the lapse of a century, the object of their cruelty and scorn touched the poetical sympathy as well as the piety of Cowper; his genius subdued the opposite prejudices of Johnston and of Franklin, and his name has been uttered in the same breath with those of Spenser and Dante.—*Sir James Mackintosh.*

A SERIOUS MISTAKE.

Near some little town in North America, a carrier's horse happened to drop down dead. His owner immediately proceeded to the town in quest of a farrier to skin the animal. Not long after, another horse, in a farmer's cart, dropped down also near the same place; the driver, however, being sensible the horse was only in a swoon, went to get some oats in his hat by way of medicine. No sooner had he left his charge than the farrier made his appearance, and, mistaking the living horse for the dead one—as indeed there was very little difference in their appearance—proceeded to the operation of flaying. After making considerable progress the animal began to revive, and at the same time, the driver returned with the oats. The consternation of all parties may be easily conceived; but how the matter ended, the American paper, from which this occurrence is copied, does not say.

An Arabian in the desert had ate nothing for three days, and was on the point of death. He at last found a small leathern sack in the sand seized it, felt it, and exclaimed, 'Allah be praised! there must either be dates or nuts.' He opened the sack hastily, looking in, and sighed, 'Alas! they are only pearls.'

THE PLANET JUPITER.—Professor Airy, by a very mastery process, has determined the mass of Jupiter by observation of the elongations of the fourth satellite, and he has proved that the value assigned by Laplace is erroneous, and finds that the mass of Jupiter is more than 322 and less than 328 times that of the earth, being the 1048,69th part of that of the sun; a truly valuable result in physical astronomy.—*White's Ephemeris for 1834.*

ADVANTAGE OF SNUFFING CANDLES.

Count Rumford made various experiments to ascer-