

with something like envy, while contrasting his position and probable fortune with those of her own poor weakly child. And it chanced that circumstances should place their interests in opposition to one another.

The little boy, instead of gaining strength had grown yet weaker, and at six years old consumption was apprehended. Determined to have their minds relieved of the worst known, the anxious parents consulted separately three physicians. Two were of opinion, that, with care and watching, the danger might be avoided; but the third, who was indeed eminent, but had some years before attended several members of Mrs Barham's family, declared stoutly, that as far as his knowledge and experience, or human foresight, could divine, the child's life could only be spared by removal for the next year or two to Madeira or the south of Europe. For some hours Mr and Mrs Barham remained with minds undecided which plan to adopt—one moment leaning, with sanguine hope, to the brighter side of the case; the next proposing, at any sacrifice, to remove their darling child to a warmer climate.

After a while, Mrs Barham felt that the casting vote remained with herself; but, though her heart yearned for the wished for decision, the very consciousness that it was in her own power made her hesitate. At most, the hesitation would have been but that of a few hours; yet during even so short an interval, Mr. Barham received a letter which, at such a moment, was of vital importance, from his elder son.—Charley was at that time diligently engaged at Oxford; and he wrote to his father, with all the earnestness of sincerity, beseeching his permission to commence a course of studies, and keep certain terms, which, though not absolutely necessary before he could be called to the bar, would be, he felt assured an inestimable advantage to him. The poor stepmother watched her husband's countenance; she saw the inward struggle; she knew how fondly he hung to the hope of his first born's advancement; she understood that one project or the other must be abandoned; and she felt that in another scale, which before had been so evenly poised, a heavy weight was thrown. Certainly it was with a trembling hand and anxious countenance that Mr Barham gave her the letter; but he dwelt very strongly on the higher authority of the physicians who dreaded the least, though he left the final decision to herself. Alas! to appeal to the generosity of the generous is the surest way to vanquish them.

After many bitter tears, and a few hours of self-communing, the step-mother made one more sacrifice—the greatest she felt it to be that fate had yet demanded. She reasoned for once as it is hard for the warm hearted to do by putting feeling out of the question; and since she decided at last from principle, she might grieve but she did not repent. The delicate child was nursed carefully and anxiously for the succeeding months in London, and young Barham remained at Oxford, his ardent wishes gratified.

But death, that does come like a thief in the night, was near, and the fond father was not permitted to realize the day dream he had indulged in his son's success. Mr Barham died suddenly, leaving his widow in some measure provided for by her marriage settlement; but on the winding up of her affairs, it was discovered that only a mere pittance remained for the elder children—not more than a few hundred pounds each. Mrs Barham's settlement was secured after her on any children she might leave; for being a very rich man when he married a second time, Mr B. felt that it was in his power to equalize by will his children's fortunes. His reverses had changed the case, but still he acted as justly as it was in his power to do, by bequeathing the little he did possess to his elder children. The relations, however could see no justice in the affair; and one of them being executor, and judging the poor stepmother's disposition by their own ill feelings to her, he removed Ellen Barham from her care and took the management of the young people as well as of the property upon himself.

Meanwhile, the younger son, the poor sick child had grown worse and worse, and the bereaved and afflicted widow was in the very depths of misery and desolation. He was indeed, beyond the reach of human aid; and five months after her husband's death, the widow's cup of anguish overflowed, and a small grey coffin was placed in the silent vault upon that of Mr Barham. Not till the first stunning blow was over—not till she had time to feel her desola-

tion, and reflect, did the deserted widow know that her own days were numbered. The insidious disease which had slumbered in her blood through the bright seasons of youth, had destroyed her child, and strengthened in herself, most probably by affliction, had began its same ravages.

She believed her own case to be hopeless, and felt indeed that death could scarcely claim to one who would meet him with less reluctance. She had little inclination or spirits to join again her own relations, from whom years and distance had in a great measure estranged her, and she determined to remain in London among a few tried friends she had made there. Her husband's children resided at some distance from the quiet dwelling Mrs Barham had chosen, but they certainly visited her frequently. Naturally, Ellen was oftenest her guest, and instead of relaxing in her attentions, they gradually increased, till at the time of the child's death, she was seldom absent. It was a few weeks after this event that Mrs Barham first observed a marked change in Ellen's manner, to her a most blissful one—a tenderness and affection she had never experienced before. Must the truth be owned? Yes, for it was owned at last to her they had so much wronged; their altered circumstances and new home had taught the step children to appreciate the kindness, indulgence, and protection they had so little valued. They had discovered that relations, who as guests of their father, or hosts at home, had only caressed and petted them, could be, when dressed in a little brief authority, exacting, tyrannical, or capricious.

The young have almost always kindly feelings and impulses, unless these goodly seeds are choked by evil culture; and it was at the moment when the heart ruled, that Ellen Barham, with streaming eyes, threw herself upon the stepmother's neck, and implored permission to remain with her, to be her nurse, her companion. She addressed her by the endearing name she had used in childhood, and called to mind those tedious illnesses through which she had been so tenderly watched. It was a trying scene, and yet the widow felt it as a bright gleam of happiness, the more welcome that it had been unexpected. Ellen's petition was granted, for her relations had become indifferent to oppose what was so evidently her own wish. In the affectionate confidence which henceforth subsisted between them, Ellen often spoke of her brother, his trials and disappointments, wanting yet a year of his majority, he could not touch a farthing of the little property he would inherit; and his guardian, differing from him in his views, refused to advance the money he required to complete that course of study for which already one sacrifice had been made.

It was after a conversation of this kind that Mrs Barham—who was now by illness confined to the sofa, and so weak, that to raise herself was almost an exertion—wrote, with much emotion and fatigue, a long letter to Charles Barham, the contents of which we may as well give to the reader at once. It settled a point about which the relations had been rather undecided, namely that Mrs Barham had the power of willing away her five thousand pounds. She told her stepson that she had bequeathed it between himself and sister; and that for his own sake, as well from its having been the ardent wish of his father, she was most anxious that he should complete his legal studies. She regretted that the settlement disabled her from touching the principal, but she told him what she knew, that she should not live many months; and she offered, if even this delay would be injurious, to enter into any legal arrangement he could devise, by which the money could be raised on this expectation.

We will do Charles Barham justice: his heart had smote him before the arrival of such a letter, but it kindled at once all the better feelings of his nature.

Only three hours after the letter had been despatched, he entered unannounced the little drawing room, where stretched upon a couch, and worn by suffering and illness to a mere shadow, lay Mrs Barham. Ellen was near her, reading in a low voice from the sacred volume. The ardent, high spirited, self-willed man was subdued, and bursting into tears, clasped the emaciated hand which was extended to him, sank upon his knees beside the couch, and almost burying his head in the thick shawl which covered her, exclaimed, 'Mother, forgive me! There was a long and tremulous embrace, and the stepmother broke the silence by murmuring, 'I am not childless now.'

Charles Barham took no thought of raising money on his 'expectations,' but persisted in sharing his sister's anxious wish, first by the couch, and then by the peaceful death bed, of the long neglected stepmother.

#### British and Foreign Review.

#### CEYLON.

Facts about Ceylon.—Ceylon possesses a most productive soil and a fine climate, but

a very scanty population. An Island, nearly as large as Ireland, contains barely a million and a half of inhabitants; the published returns, indeed, which are somewhat imperfect, give but a million and a quarter. Until within a few years its energies were cramped by a strange system of misgovernment, but happily a general reform has now taken place, the results of which begin to appear at the very moment when the decline of our possessions in the West Indies compels us to look round for colonies where we can raise by free labour of the slaves. For this purpose Ceylon possesses advantages unrivalled among the British colonies. The only possession which could rival it, Java, was tossed over to the Dutch as a make weight at the peace; and they are now doing for it what in imitation of their colonial system, we have done in Ceylon till within a few years. The cultivation of sugar has only now commenced, but with such success that Ceylon promises in a few years to take the place of Jamaica. It is stated that waste lands purchased a few years ago for five shillings an acre are now giving a return of nearly £70 per acre. The cultivation of coffee gives a smaller, but still an ample return. Twenty years ago there was no export of this article; in 1836 the export amounted to £150,000. This we must always bear in mind, is the exclusive produce of free labour of Ceylon in the slave trade of Brazil. While we are exerting our utmost energies to put an end to slave trading, we are holding out an enormous premium to the employment of slaves by permitting the import of coffee through the Cape of Good Hope at reduced duties. Such competition must ensure the absolute ruin of the West India planter; and although Ceylon will not suffer so severely, it cannot but sustain great injury.

#### THE FALL OF THE OAK.

##### AN AUTUMNAL SCENE.

A glorious tree is the gay old oak,  
He has stood for a thousand years,  
Has stood and frown'd  
On the woods around,  
Like a king among his peers.  
As round their king they stand, so now,  
When the flowers their pale leaves fold,  
The tall trees round him stand array'd  
In their robes of purple and gold.  
The autumn sun looks kindly down,  
But the frost is on the lea,  
And sprinkles the horn  
Of the owl, at morn,  
As she hies to the old oak tree,  
Not a leaf is stirred,  
Not a sound is heard  
But the thump of the thresher's flail,  
The low wind's sigh,  
Or the distant cry  
Of the hound on the fox's trail.

The forester, he has, whistling, plunged  
With his axe in the deep wood's gloom,  
That shrouds the hill  
Where, few and chill,  
The sunbeams straggling come:  
His brawny arm he has bared and laid  
His axe at the root of the tree,  
The gray old oak,  
And, with lusty stroke,  
He wields it merrily;  
With lusty stroke  
And the old gray oak,  
Through the folds of his gorgeous vest,  
You may see him shake  
And the night owl break  
From her perch in his leafy crest.  
She will come but to find him gone from where  
He stood at the break of day:  
Like a cloud that peals as it melts to air,  
He hath passed, with a crash, away.

Though the spring in bloom and the frost in  
gold  
No more his limbs attire;  
On the stormy wave  
He shall float and brave  
The blast and the battle-fire:  
Shall spread his white wings to the wind  
And thunder on the deep,  
As he thundered when  
His bough was green  
On the high and stormy steep

#### From a Lady's Residence on the Shores of the Baltic.

#### A JEWISH BEAUTY IN POVERTY.

In a narrow passage leading to a court, stood a slight female figure clad in the most ragged garb of beggary; a cluster of rusty saucepans and tin pots slung over her shoulder, and an air of vagabondism, which, added to her dirty rags, made us shrink closer together to avoid contact. This apparently she remarked, and turned slowly upon us as we passed, a face not vulgar, nor bold, nor coarse, nor degraded, but of such surpassing loveliness, such a resemblance of that most touching of all delineations of female beauty, the the Beatrice Cenci, but more youthful still, and if possible more pathetic, that we gazed in perfect wonder. \* \* \* There stood that abject figure, with that *Mater Dolorosa* head, like a beautiful picture framed in tatters. Long and riveted were our glances, but that marble face heeded us not; listless and unconscious as a child, she turned away, and seemed to have no idea beyond her saucepans.

We passed on, and had proceeded about a hundred yards, when,—*c'etait plus fort que nous*,—we tacitly and simultaneously turned about and retraced our steps. \* \* \* My dear companion addressed her in Estonian, the current language of most of the lower orders, but shook her head and pointed to her vile saucepans. German was tried, but with little better result, when impatiently I stammered out in a most barbarous Russian, 'What art thou, then?' *Ya Yevreika*, 'I am an Hebrew, was the laconic reply,—but it spoke volumes.' The lady next describes how she tempted this fair apparition to sit to her. 'The name of this beautiful being was Rose: she knew no other; and my companion and myself exchanged looks of increasing sympathy and interest on learning that the young creature, only sixteen years of age, who stood before us, had been three years a wife, and was now the mother of a child old enough to run about. Her manners corresponded with the unconscious graces of her person. She gazed with abstraction and languor at us as we continued our glances of admiration, and while preparations for a sitting, which was to furnish some visible moment for future days of a face never to be forgotten, were going forward, sat down and carelessly examined some trinkets which lay on the table, while Sascha, not partaking of her mistress's poetry, kept a sharp eye upon her. But this she heeded not; and, having satisfied a passing curiosity, this young Israeli woman laid down with apathy, and folding her small hands fringed with rags, sat like the statue of Westmacott's 'Distressed Mother,' the image of uncomplaining poverty and suffering. Comprehending now the object of her visit, she remonstrated against being taken in the headdress of a Russian, which her plain handkerchief denoted, and earnestly requested the materials for her national turban, which she always wore at the Saturday synagogue. We left the girl-mother to do as she would; and selecting from our stores a large handkerchief of bright colours, and tearing a slip of muslin, which she bound round her temples, and fastened with long ends behind the identical ancient—Hewbrew fillet, she proceeded to fold the handkerchief, in the requisite shape, upon her knee. \* \* \* She said she was not unhappy; that her husband, a sailor in the Russian navy, was good enough for her, and she made no complaint of poverty, but this it was, combined with the inheritance of passive endurance, which was written on her pale brow. Our delicate Rose of Sharon sat gracefully and intelligently, and, when the drawing was completed, took our offerings with courteous thanks, but with more of carelessness and apathy than avidity.

#### NEW WORKS.

Visit to Remarkable Places; Old Halls, Battle Fields, and Scenes illustrative of striking Passages in History and Poetry; chiefly in the Counties of Durham and Northumberland. By William Howitt.

Passing over the thickly clustered records of Durham, not because they are not replete with interest, but because, with our limited power of extract, we dare not trust ourselves amongst them, here is a capital description of two of the most striking baronial houses of the north—the castles of Lumley and Lambton:—

\* At Lumley we have the abode of an ancient race, left to solitude and decay. The course of time has not annihilated the line of its possessors, but led them elsewhere. The stately extent of its possessions about that its ancestral castle has diminished, the broad lands more southward have fallen to the house, and lured it to rejoice there in modern abodes. All at Lumley is of the past—sad, solitary, dim; full of mighty and proud remembrances, but belonging to them only. Here, all is new, having a mixed fashion of the old and new, but with few great retrospections into the far off ages, and building its fame, as its actual towers, with workmanship of recent times. We see in the castellated character of the house a moment to that its line also traces itself from an old date and through feudal years; but in its freshness, its modern sharpness, its polish and contrivances, and conveniences of to-day, all the evidences of a family that has risen and flourished more especially in recent times. We have here the stern architecture of our feudal ancestors, adapted to the higher luxury and more refined needs of our own day. The halls of Lambton are not the halls of gigantic moat and terrific portcullis—grim with age, and perhaps rusted with the spattered gore of crushed assailants; they are not those of huge, gaunt roofs, black with the smoke of wood ascending from fires in the centre of the floor; of rude rush strewn pavements, and rude tables spread with heaps of beef and sturdy black-jacks; of walls here hang with grotesque tapestry, and there with time worn shields and battered helmets—they are full of the hearts and elegance of the present. Lambton Castle is a perfect and expressive image of the feudalism of the nineteenth century; of feudalism made easy, to the present generation; of feudalism which has never ceased to exist; whatever convulsions shook the empire, or whatever spasms rocked the constitution, which has for the greater part of a thousand