

Literature, &c.

British Magazines for May.

From the London Illustrated Magazine.
THE FLOWER GIRL.*

A TALE OF THE METROPOLIS.

ABOUT three months after this circumstance, when spring was joyously bursting into life, and people were deserting her freshest smiles for the fashionable season in London, at a late hour of the night, a group of females were collected around a shrinking form, crouching beneath one of the penthouses in Covent Garden Market. No words of compassion were mingled with the low ribaldry which startled the night,—not one tone of sympathy was mixed with discord, while the poor creature seemed in vain propitiating by gestures of helplessness and pain. It was a group of the worst characters, gathered around a seemingly dying flower girl, and arguing her anguish by the coarsest jests upon the profitless occupation she followed. The expressions of low hatred would probably have assumed a more practical method of exhibiting them, when a young man stepping across from the Piazza, inquired the cause of the commotion. "Oh, she thinks too well of herself to speak to us," answered one; "she's only a paitry flower girl, who pretends to be mighty good, but she's as bad as the worst of us." The speech was uttered in the lowest language, while the young man, making his way to where the wretched being lay, asking in pitying accents, if she were ill. "Very, sir," she faintly replied; "I believe I'm dying." The voice of the girl thrilled through Herbert Lindsey, and, with almost a choked utterance, he answered, "No, you shall not die, my poor creature," and presenting money to one of the astonished women near sent her for a coach. The wretched beings skulked away; for the compassion displayed by one of their opposite sex for the helpless object before them, was so terrible a reproach even to their fallen nature, that really abashed they gloomily repulsed their miserable avocation. The coach drew up, and taking the girl in his arms, Herbert placed her gently in the vehicle, telling the man to drive to his residence.

In ordinary cases he would doubtless have seen a starving girl conveyed to a medical man and bestowed his charity merely in a handsome gift, but to find the very object of his constant thoughts, ill, helpless and surrounded by scoffers of her own sex, because she evidently refused, even to dying, bodily corruption was itself so rare an occurrence, and he believed so seldom found, that with the vanity adherent even in man's best purposes, he looked on himself as providentially sent to save her life, and afford her protection. Herbert's nature was sensitive almost to an infirmity; he waited not for precedent to guide his actions; for without exactly acting on impulse, he often obeyed the first dictates of his feelings; and those feelings were, in the present instance, something more than tenderness for the poor suffering creature now lying on his sofa, with the servants bathing her temples, and warming her cold, delicate hands. He felt confident she was not in immediate danger; but as it was long before she partially revived, it seemed almost a sin to awaken her back into the world of misery she appeared leaving for ever.

It is needless to prolong the details of her gradual recovery. She was removed to the house of a kind maiden aunt of Herbert's, and there he daily watched the healthful life to the lovely being he had twice saved. And now drew near the dangers of the young creature's temptations. That Herbert loved her fondly, and almost virtuously loved her, no one could doubt; and strange as it may appear, she so completely endeared herself to the whole household of the good old lady, that not even the chattering domestics hinted scandal, or talked significantly of Herbert's visits. And think you the affections of the friendless, the hitherto neglected orphan, found not life in the only verdant spot they long had known? Think you her woman's nature had been frozen to the core by the usage of a freezing world? Not so; indeed; dearer than the life Herbert had restored to her, did she love the giver of the boon. The most unselfish love that woman can bestow was here, and the knowledge that she possessed no means to prove it, gave an intensity to the feeling none can know but those who have been blest with such a love, or the women whose whole self-sacrificing nature has been poured through the channels of her grateful heart on the object she adored. Will she then fall? Will she refuse to one, one to whom she would give life itself, with all its new born sweetness,—could she refuse him any test of her affections? 'Tis a fearful question. It was evident, from a thousand circumstances, that her trials had been many, and her temptations terrible, and in the resistance of degradation death had nearly overtaken her; while it was equally apparent that a religious mind, how cultivated they knew not, had been the only support under her weight of misery, and her saviour in her most trying hours. But strange as was her having passed unscathed the horrible ordeal; she had never yet undergone the test which affection, even beyond suffering, renders most dangerous. She could have borne bodily torture, and mental anguish without wavering from the pure guidance of her nature, but could she refuse him whom she hallowed by her love ought that he should wish? Could she turn to bitterness the sweet knowledge of their affection, and by denial break the concord of their love? 'Tis a fearful question, and virtue trembles at the test.

*Concluded from our last.

Summer had advanced on the perfumed wings which spring had bequeathed him since the night the flower girl was so strangely rescued, and the long twilight hours were passed by the young lovers in the delicious intercourse of sweet affection. Care had not only restored the lovely young creature to health, but gave increased beauty; while attainments, such as no one believed she could possess, were developed, as returning bodily energies called forth the qualities of her mind. The kind old lady under whose care the now darling guest had recovered, witnessed with almost pleasure the rivetting love which enthralled her nephew for she perceived it had worked a most beneficial change in his tastes and manner of life. True love knows no pursuit that can tinge the purity of its course, and Herbert's affection, up to this period, was as unmixed with the grosser passions of the man as a life of constant intrigue could allow. The object of his attachment was evidently far superior to the station of poverty which unjust fortune had allotted her; but from the extreme pain the mere allusion to her parents occasioned her, both Mrs. Lindsey and Herbert studiously avoided touching the chord which vibrated with so much evident anguish. There was also a purity about her every pursuit and action, and so sweet and winning a religion stamped on all she said or did, that rendered those about her vigilant to say nought to wound her sensitive feelings. But this happy course of love could not long continue undisturbed, and serenely beautiful as her pure nature rendered it; and, as in most similar cases, man's vanity cast the discord into the heaven of their love.

Such as can remember—and where are those who are unable?—the first feelings of affection for woman, well know they were too fastidious by the very hues of its dawn, to have imagined the day which would follow could have a cloud to darken its brightness. And who, when the young heart beats with a new born love, ever yet dreamt of what the world terms consequences, or allowed one thought to be cast upon wisdom or prudence, to infringe the right of love's exclusiveness? Herbert felt he never knew what love was before, and the innocent girl only felt that her existence was one happy dream. But the selfishness of man's pride awoke them from the blissful trance.

Herbert was one day dining at his club, previous to his usual evening visit to the impatient expectant of his return when one of the party happened to allude to the elopement of a young ward of Chancery with a mutual friend of those present. This led to a general discussion of the merits of their respective female acquaintances, and Lindsey found himself good humouredly attacked upon his altered style of life. Without it being at all necessary to repeat the conversation, friendly satire and ridicule were pretty freely poured upon our friend and for his devotion to a "Flower Girl," which he fondly believed to be a secret, he found himself generally laughed. We all hate ridicule, especially when we have no good grounds for defence, and Herbert was much more galled than he chose to acknowledge. The conversation, however, took another turn, and the party soon separated.

But the evil seed on too fertile a soil was sown. The latent sparks of self-love and pride were revived; and although there was no preconceived determination of wrong in his mind, he was prepared for evil, if temptation proffered it. The guardian spirit of pure affection, affrighted at an uncongenial thought, flew from his heart, and left a vacant place for passion in his stead. To be ridiculed by men, perhaps laughed at by women, and to bear the expostulations of his friends, seemed too much to weigh against the happiness a union with even a loved object might produce. Then to loose all chance of fortune, and to relinquish all thoughts of marriage, in his own high station! such, alas, were his reflections, as he drove to his aunt's residence, now a few miles from town. The evening was one of those still soft hours when the air is almost heavy with fragrance, and its whisperings seem audible, as the flowers close their petals for the night. The lovers were seated near the open window, and both were silent, for the hour was oppressive, and Herbert felt the harbinger of evil in his beating heart. He, however, broke the silence with some remark on the beauty of the season, but his companion looked with an expression of anxiety as she observed a degree of hesitation in his manner. "Has any thing happened, Herbert to day?" she inquired. "You appear dejected," while she took his hand, and looked into his eyes, as if her affectionate glance could read the secrets of his soul. The anticipation of something unpleasant forthcoming, often hastens its expression. It is a sort of meeting a disagreeable circumstance half way; and Herbert felt this, while he replied, "Indeed my love, I am most unhappy, most wretched, for circumstances have occurred which, at least for a time, must prevent my fondest, my only hopes, from being realized. Oh, my darling girl," he continued, "you know how devotedly I love you, and how I have clung to the hope that we should be soon united; but events have to day been my bitterest enemies, and they have torn the cherished belief from my heart." The angelic countenance of the girl beside him grew deadly pale at this abrupt statement, but in tones whose constrained calmness bespoke their depth of feeling, she asked, "And for ever, Herbert?" "No, my love," he answered, clasping her to his heart, "not for ever, I trust to Heaven, not for ever; suspense it is that makes me wretched, and, until I call you mine by closest ties, I must be miserable still. You know the depth of my love, and in the certainty of yours I live,—'tis as essential to my being as the air I breathe. Let us then be blessed—delay no more to call me yours, by bond as binding, and almost as holy, as though ceremonial words

had made us one. Live with me my love," he passionately exclaimed, "as you already live in my heart, and prove I do not vainly judge of the strength of your affection, by the cold reply which the usage of society would bid you utter. I cannot bear this life deprived of all that blesses it; so muter just one gentle yes, and make me happy, oh! beyond the happiness that love has ever brought before." The shrinking girl could hardly extricate herself, and in the delirious moment, he could not perceive that his impassioned vehemence had been too much for her delicate frame, and he was pressing a cold senseless form to his burning heart. Her unresisting weight, however, soon showed him the true state of the unconscious girl; and, without alarming the servants, he bore her nearer the open window, waiting in almost a state of stupefaction the revival of her quivering life. As she slowly returned to consciousness, he felt the pressure of her hand on his, and the hope of fallen manhood construed it into the sign that the purity of her love was gone. The unrepentant smile of tenderness which she cast on his bending form, as he was endeavouring to breathe colour into her pale, pale lips, made his heart beat quick with hope that the swoon had been the sleep of reason, to corrupt her to his wishes! Strange anomaly, even at the very time her pure young heart had passed its last ordeal. Poor child! she had lived to find the being of her deep affection pleading for her downfall, and mistaking, even now, the tenderness of love and pity for the sign of resignation to a fallen state. "Herbert," she at length said, and the mournful tones of her voice fell like a knell on the young man's heart—"Herbert, I was prepared for this; a presage of ill has lately haunted me, and I almost expected this sequel to our love. What right had I ever to believe, that the high born and wealthy man of rank should step from his sphere, for the affections of a lowly woman, but lately snatched from a beggar's state? The hope, I will own, has crossed me as a bright dream, that the devotedness of love was a charm over the will of man, but sad experience tells me that the charm is broken when its purity is gone. Nay, my love, let me pour out my heart while it yet is beating; for no reproach is mingled with its devotion; and how grateful I ought to be that for so long a time you have formed your nature in a different mould from me. You little know the hard temptations I have undergone, and still less you know the simple cause which has enabled me to withstand them all. The pangs I have endured in the life from which you rescued me, to Heaven is only known; and yet, Herbert, I have been more blest in life than you, for I was early taught to love my God—and the fervour of that love has saved me in the time of peril, and of anguish." She paused a moment, as she was evidently suffering from the exertion of these few words; and Herbert, kneeling beside her, as she lay on the sofa, attempted no word, nor sign. He seemed paralyzed; for the light had broken upon his desolate heart, that he had lost the purest being this world could give; and, fortunately for his reason, tears came to his relief, and he sobbed on the neck of the dying girl in the utterable anguish of his woe. Yes, reader, dying! with the destruction of the hopes she had too fondly cherished, life itself was riven. Since her parents' death cast her on the wide world, she had never known human sympathy, until she met Herbert; and the constant communion with her own mind, and the ever-absorbing adoration of the invisible good, had so refined her whole being that she was almost unfitted for life; and the delicate chord which fettered her spiritual to her physical nature was too sensitively wrought to bear the shock of her crushed affection. For several days, however, life still flickered dimly on, and, oh that the world could have heard the eloquent music of her soul, as she endeavoured to instil into Herbert's mind her own angelic love of truth. The last moment of her life drew near; and as she feebly pressed her drooping head to her bosom, she whispered, "Adore your God in life, and we shall meet again." 'Twas the language of a dying woman for her earthly love, impregnated with the spirit of immortal beauty, and the last sound that ever quivered on the lips of Jeannette Warder.

Those who moved in the higher ranks of society, without mixing in the extreme fashionable portion, well knew, by frequent intercourse a man stricken with sorrow, but sorrow of that nature which saddens more than it depresses, and which softens the asperities of our nature. He was a being universally loved, for there was a genuine kindness of manner in all his intercourse with society that irresistibly won those who only casually met him; and those who were intimate never mentioned his name but in the tones of warm affection, and with sympathizing sorrow at his hidden grief. He neither sought nor shunned society, neither conspicuously took a part in the busy life of the metropolis, nor secluded himself in country solitude. He seldom spoke of his sorrows; and many were the surmises respecting his early life, and the changes which were said to have entirely altered his disposition and pursuits. In short, he was one of those rare instances occasionally met with in life, where sorrow, instead of crushing the heart, increases its sympathy for others, and nourishes even to plenteous the benevolent and loving faculties.

And did such a man pass into old age without the blessing of female love? Did he never seek to win one of the many warm hearts that ever welcomed his approach? The simple answer solves the enigma of his life. He loved, and so devotedly he loved, that beauty, rank, nor gold, could shake the firmness of his faith. One other sweet girl unwittingly bestowed her heart unsought by him; and when he saw with deep regret the chance of wrecked affections, he told the story of his life, and while

with grateful tears she wept at the recital, she felt she dared not be the rival of the dead, nor seek to break the charm that purified his life and led him to the spirit of another world—his early love.

Dublin University Magazine.

LIFE OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

[This periodical contains a highly interesting article, a review of "The Life of Sir Francis Drake," by John Barrow, Esq. We have marked a large portion of it for publication, a portion of which we give below.]

The story of a poor sailor-boy who became the most distinguished mariner of his time, the great admiral of England, and victor of the most formidable fleet that ever threatened her shores, presents attractions sure to make a volume at all times popular; and when to the wild adventures and fearless spirit of Drake we add the influence which his actions have had on the fortunes of his country—that he gave the great impulse not only to the naval advancement, but to the commercial enterprise of England, we must regard his life as one of cardinal importance in our annals, and take up the subject with a confidence that it will be acceptable to our readers.

No one of our remarkable men has had his life so often written or by more celebrated persons, than Sir Francis Drake. The latest testimony to the perennial interest of his memoirs, is the contribution of Mr Barrow. It is not in regard to style, equal to many of its predecessors; but we think there can be no doubt that it is the most valuable life of Drake at present before the public. Availing ourselves of all sources, and noting Mr Barrow's work as we proceed, we shall bring together whatever occurs to us as most interesting on the subject of Drake.

The navigator was born, as he himself told Camden, of humble parentage; and with this statement all the accounts of him commence. His father was a humble man and very poor, but, as we shall hereafter see, he was connected with another family of the name, who, whatever were their other possessions, had certainly a court of arms: as the claims of heraldry were at this time strictly enforced, and a king of arms was a king indeed, we must accept this as a proof of their gentility. Edmond Drake, the father, had received the rudiments of a respectable education, and having embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, fled from his native Devonshire into Kent, to avoid a persecution arising out of the law of the Six Articles made by Henry VIII. Times becoming more propitious, he was, on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, appointed to read prayers to the seamen on board the Queen's fleet stationed on the Medway. He was soon afterwards ordained deacon, and subsequently made vicar of the church of Upene. It is stated in some of the biographies, that Sir Francis Drake was born in the hull of a ship. This is a picturesque circumstance, which we regret to find is not true. When the father fled into Kent, he lived for a long time in a ship, where several of his many sons were born, but Francis, the eldest, first saw the light in a cottage about a mile to the south of Tavistock, in the year 1539, and was so named after his godfather Sir Francis Russell, the first Earl of Bedford. His father's duties called him among the seamen, and brought up thus in the boats on the Medway, it is no wonder the young Francis imbibed a love for the sea. He was the eldest of twelve sons, and his father, "by reason of his poverty," put him says Camden, to the master of a bark, his neighbour, who "held him hard to his business." The small vessel was engaged in the coasting trade, and in making voyages to Holland and to France—an admirable school for a seaman; and it was here that, by a persevering application, he made that intimate acquaintance with his profession which afterwards secured him fortune and fame. His zeal and fidelity gained him the good will of his master, who, dying unmarried, bequeathed him the bark. Thus, at 15, Drake became master of a ship of his own. He appears to have been engaged for more than four years in trips of a like kind, to have made some voyages to Biscay, and to have amassed a little money. By the advice of Captain John Hawkins, who is called his kinsman, he sold his vessel, and engaged his whole fortune in a venture with him to the coast of Guinea, and to the West Indies, at that time the El Dorado of all mariners. Hawkins, a bold and adventurous seaman. On the 2nd October, 1567, they sailed from Plymouth, and on reaching the coast of Guinea, Hawkins offered his assistance to a negro king against another, on the condition that he was to have all the prisoners. This offer was accepted, and a town of 8,000 inhabitants, strongly piled round and well defended, was carried by assault. The adventurers were to have their choice of their friend the black king's prisoners; but we are happy to say he deceived them. The negro, "in whose nation," says Hawkins, "is never or seldom found truth," disappeared in the night with his captives and camp. We have reason to believe that Drake revolted from the scenes he encountered here, as, though the slave trade was at that time the most money-making of all, he never afterwards had the least connection with it.

The squadron now proceeded in the usual course to the Canaries and the Spanish main; and the only incident of consequence that occurred was, that in calling at Rio de la Hacha, it pleased Hawkins to storm the town because the Governor declined trading with him. This was a strong measure, considering that England and Spain were then at peace; all that can be said in excuse for it is, that the governor acted in contravention of treaties, and that the Spaniards were at this time influenced by