

Literature, &c.

The British Magazines
FOR AUGUST.From Flowers and their Associations.
THE FADED HEATHER.

[It is recorded of the Highland emigrants to Canada, that they wept because the heather would not grow in their newly adopted soil.]

There may be some too brave to weep

O'er poverty, or care, or wrong,

Within whose manly bosoms sleep

Emotions gentle, warm, and strong;

Which wait the waking of a tone

Unmarked, unthought of by the crowd,

And seeming, unto them alone,

A voice both eloquent and loud,

And then the feelings hid for years,

Burst forth at length in burning tears.

He wept, that hardy mountaineer,

When faded thus his loved heath-flower;

Yet 'mid the ills of life no tear

Had wet his cheek until that hour;

You might have deem'd the mountain tree

Had sooner shrunk from the blast,

Or that his native rock should be

Rent by the winds that hurried past,

Rather than he a tear should shed,

Because a wild flower drooped its head.

It would not grow—the heather flower,

Far from its native land exiled,

Though breezes from the forest bower

Greeted the lonely mountain child;

It better loved the bleak wild wind

Which blew upon the Highland hill,

And for the rocky heath it pined,

Though tended both with care and skill;

An exile on a stranger strand,

It languished for its native land.

O! if the heather had but grown

And bloom'd upon a foreign scene,

Its owner had not felt alone,

Though a sad exile he had been.

But when he mark'd its early death

He thought that, like his mountain flower,

Wither'd beneath a foreign breath,

He soon might meet his final hour,

And die, a stranger and alone,

Unwept, unpitied, and unknown.

From Hogg's Instructor.

CLIFF COTTAGE.

In the south-western district of one of the northern counties of England, there is, or there was upwards of fifty years ago, a village, or rather a hamlet, so singularly secluded, that, without some clew to its locality, a stranger might have spent many months in search of it without succeeding in his object. This hamlet, which we shall call Cragburn, lay at the very bottom of a deep narrow ravine, which had evidently been formed by some powerful convulsion of nature. A narrow, winding, toilsome horse road formed almost the only method of ingress and egress to the few inhabitants of Cragburn. After winding hither and thither, until it enabled its traversers, by slow and painful steps, to reach the upper surface of the mountain, the road took its course in a southerly direction until, after many a mile, it mingled its dust with that of a more frequented highway at a short distance from a small seaport town. We said this road was almost the only path into the hamlet, but we must except certain hazardous zigzag tracks, from the bottom of the dell up the all but perpendicular cliffs by which it was hemmed in. These tracks exercised the skill and hardihood of the youths of Cragburn, who at any time would have preferred risking their limbs in the daring ascent, to having their effeminacy proclaimed by taking the more common-place and safer road with which their elders were fain to content themselves. As to the hamlet itself, there was little about it to attract notice. About twenty small cottages were scattered here and there on either side of a brook or beck, which rising from a spring at one end followed the course of the valley until lost amid the interstices of the broken cliffs at the other; these cottages formed the more prominent part of the scenery so far as human habitation was concerned. More retired, and almost hidden from view by the trees with which they were surrounded, were two dwellings of a more commodious size and somewhat more ambitious appearance. One of these was the residence of the curate of Cragburn, of the other we shall presently have to speak more at large. To complete the picture, we must not omit the little church, which somewhat detached from the village, and surrounded by its correspondingly small grave-yard, seemed scarcely capable of containing even the limited population of the valley. Such then was Cragburn fifty years ago.

The arrival of a stranger in so primitive a village was an event of no ordinary occurrence. Accordingly, every dwelling sent out its quota of gazers when, towards the noon of a summer's day in the year 178—, an unknown wayfarer was observed slowly descending the road

already spoken of. The stranger was a young man respectably accoutred, but evidently way-worn; and the observation he had attracted, together with a few clownish remarks from the villagers which reached his ears appeared neither to improve his temper nor his spirits. With a hasty exclamation which sounded grievously like an imprecation, he quickened his pace and passed on. But another, though a mere polite interruption awaited him. The curate of the village had, from his window, watched the stranger, noticed his demeanour, and, it might be, fathomed his wants, for, stepping from his door as the youth passed his garden gate, he courteously invited him to turn aside from his journey and take the chance which a bachelor's meal in a country parsonage-house might afford. It was no superfluous act of hospitality thus manifested. The young pedestrian had that morning left Seabeach, the seaport town previously indicated, on an exploratory tour, and had been looking in vain for a roadside hostelry, upon the existence of which he had too rashly calculated for the necessary supply of his appetital wants.

And you must have travelled much further before you would have met with any supplies from such a source," replied Mr Evelyn, for such was the name of this rural divine. "It is one of the blessings of this isolated spot that we have no village ale-house to corrupt our habits and morals."

"Your people are somewhat rude and over-curious," remarked the stranger, "however good their morals may be."

"Oh, you must allow something," said the curate, "for the novelty of such a visit as yours. When such a circumstance does take place, we all seem to have a right to make the most of it, though each in his own way. You see my very footboy looks at you with amazement; and as to myself, why, have I not tricked you into bestowing upon me the charity of your society?"

"You have a fair right to it, sir," interrupted the guest, "for otherwise I should have fared as badly to-day as a sailor on short allowance. But are visitors so scarce with you?"

"So much so," replied Mr Evelyn, "that during the six years I have lived at Cragburn, you are, I believe, almost the first actual stranger that has set foot within its borders."

"Ha! indeed," said the stranger, with an appearance of interest which he had not before exhibited. "Well, I should not dislike it on that account."

"A few weeks residence might alter your views," replied the curate, with a smile.

"Not at all; by the way, I observed an untenanted house at the farther end of the village, can you tell me whether it could be hired?"

"Certainly it can, though I fear there is little hope of its being so. The late owner occupied it himself until his death, which took place a few weeks ago; and in such a lonely spot as this it is not very likely to meet with another tenant."

"I don't know that," hastily returned the youthful guest. "On must know that I have taken a strange liking to this village of yours. I have lived in a crowd, sir, until I am sick to death of it; and the solitude of this place has inexpressible charms for me. I hate the world, sir; I hate it with a perfect hatred. I would be a second Crusoe, could I but find his happy island; but this place may do—it shall do."

He spoke so rapidly and fiercely that Mr Evelyn was both startled and amused. Apparently the better feeling predominated, for he looked humourously at his excited guest, and quietly interposed—"But the savages, my good sir."

"The savages!" exclaimed the youth, with evident perturbation. "You don't mean to say sir—but I beg pardon—ah, I take you now, you mean the natives. Oh, we shall be very good friends. But to come at once to the point; if you can direct me to the landlord of yonder cottage I shall feel very much obliged to you."

"That is easily done," said Mr Evelyn, "since I happen to be the sole executor of the late owner, and have the key of the house in my study. There is some old fashioned furniture in the house, which might be hired with it; and as to the terms—but are you really serious, sir, in your wish?"

"Quite serious, I assure you. I like your village amazingly, and I dare say we shall come to terms."

"You had better look at the place before you decide," resumed the curate. "I must tell you honestly that it is not well adapted for a family."

The young man laughed and then blushed. "I have no family," he said; "I am alone in the world, without even a relation to care for me. Parents, sisters, brothers, wife, friends, are all terms of no import or significance to me. I stand alone."

"Alas!" replied Mr Evelyn; "so young and so entirely bereaved! Yours is a painful condition."

"Not without its advantages," hastily returned the stranger; "since it gives me unlimited control over my own actions, as well as the means to indulge my own whims. As to the house," he continued, "I will take it upon your recommendation."

"But I have not recommended it," said the curate.

"On your description, then."

"But I have not even described it."

"Well, well, without either description or recommendation I will take it. The fact is, sir—but no matter—I am enraptured with this solitude. And as to the terms—he laid a bank note of some value on the table—"make your own terms and place this to the credit of half-a-year's rent. Whatever else is necessary I will pay; and if I am not tired of the place

at the end of that time, I shall consider myself at liberty to remain your tenant."

"Well, sir," said Mr Evelyn, "I must not refuse a tenant thus offered; but—I mean when do you propose to take possession of the house?"

"To-morrow," replied the stranger. "I will return to-morrow and make what further arrangements are necessary."

"And by what name—"

"Brown, sir; Brown is my name; Henry Brown."

Within a week after this interview, the untenanted house showed unequivocal signs of occupancy. The window shutters were thrown back the doors and windows were open, and a thick column of smoke curled from the one chimney which arose in sturdy proportions above the roof. But, previous to this, it had been known by every inhabitant of Cragburn, young and old that a single gentleman was coming to live at Cliff Cottage, for so the tenement was called; that, through the medium of Mr Evelyn, he had engaged a young lad, the son of a poor widow, to wait upon him as his constant attendant; and that the widow herself, for a certain consideration, was to superintend all the necessary operations of housewifery to which her son was thought inadequate.

The cottage, as Mr Evelyn had hinted, had nothing positively to recommend it. It was, in fact, but a step or two above the tenements occupied by the shepherds and labourers of the hamlet, either in appearance or comfort. A mud floored kitchen, and a somewhat superior apartment, called by courtesy the parlour, and which could boast a pavement of brick, were the only rooms on the basement. A narrow wooden staircase conducted to an equal number of chambers above, which possessed an advantage in commanding a view of the hamlet and its sole entrance. The front of the cottage, like that of the parsonage, was separated from the common ground of the hamlet by a tolerably extensive garden, thickly stocked with fruit trees; and a corresponding strip of ground behind terminated at the foot of the cliff, from which the house itself derived its name. Such then were the conveniences and inconveniences of Cliff Cottage; and with them the new tenant seemed satisfied. On the occasion of his second visit to Cragburn, he had taken with him a small knapsack, which he left in the care of his landlord, and when he finally returned to take possession of the cottage, he was accompanied by a countryman who carried a larger but still a modest portmanteau. With these, his only importations, he quietly set himself down in his new home, neither requiring nor making any alteration in its outer or inner economy, but professing to be well pleased that everything should remain in precisely the same state and order in which the late owner had left it.

Little communication did the tenant of Cliff cottage hold with the villagers. The widow and her son were indeed almost the only persons with whom he deigned to converse, and this only for the purpose of making known his wants and securing his necessary supplies. With Mr Evelyn he almost entirely dropped the acquaintance which had commenced, as soon as the result of it was secured. On the first week of Mr Brown's residence, the curate had called to enquire if anything more were needed to promote the comfort of his tenant, and was briefly answered in the negative. On the second week, he paid a morning visit as a neighbour; but was received with so much unconcealed reluctance, and treated with so much moroseness, that he was compelled to retire, grieving that his hopes of a pleasant and profitable companion were, like so many worldly hopes, blighted in the bud; and almost regretting that he had so hastily accepted such a tenant. But he checked himself with the reflection that, in all probability, some deep and painful disappointment had soured the mind of the young man, and that time, that great healer, and more especially the consolations of piety, might heal the wound thus made. And this very consideration produced a much larger share of friendly interest than would have been called forth by the most openhanded friendship. From this time, however, all communication between the young men—for Mr Evelyn was still young—ceased. A distant bow when they accidentally met, which was very rarely, formed the only token of their acquaintanceship.

The six months of tenancy expired, and for the first time since the term commenced, Mr Evelyn received a visit from his tenant for the purpose of renewing the agreement. In this, as in all the pecuniary transactions of Mr Brown with the inhabitants of the place, the necessary amount of cash was promptly produced, and no opportunity afforded, had a pretext been sought, for discontinuing the connexion. The curate, however, ventured to hint a regret that the society of Cragburn, limited as it was, should afford no pleasure to the recluse; but this was met with the stern reply of this strange young man, "I am perfectly satisfied, sir; if I were not I would leave the place."

Time wore on. Three years of this solitary and monotonous life had passed away, when Mr Evelyn was surprised by a visit from his in-comprehensible tenant.

"I am about," said Brown, "to leave Cragburn for a few days, perhaps a week or more; and I will thank you to take charge of the key of my cottage during my absence."

The curate assented to the request.

"I have another favour to ask," he added, producing a small packet well sealed which he had brought with him. "Will you have the kindness to take charge of this also; and if I should not return, or you should hear nothing from me in the course of one month from this day, then break open the seal. You will find

directions there how to dispose of the little property I leave behind me; and if you ever think more of me, let it be as one of the phantoms of a dream."

"I accept the charge," replied Mr Evelyn, "though unwillingly. But alas, sir, you are no phantom; and though I cannot press for your confidence, I would that it were in my power to give you that consolation which you evidently need. There is, however, a source of comfort of which you surely cannot be altogether ignorant. The Gospel, sir, has hope for the hopeless, life for the dying, and—"

"Enough, enough," replied the young man fiercely. "You mean well, sir, and I know what you would say. Oh, yes," he continued, and his voice assumed an ironical softness; "there is a balm in Gilead. I know all about it, sir. Nay, and there was no longer irony in his tone. 'I have heard of it; I have seen its effects; I believe it after a sort, that is as devils believe it; but I never shall know more of it.' Adieu, I thank you for your good wishes, but they will not avail me."

Near a small town in the south of England, some three or four hundred miles distant from the village to which hitherto our story has been limited, there was, fifty years ago, but it is now pulled down, a small mansion built in the style of the sixteenth century. This house was separated from the turnpike road in front by a shrubbery of large laurel trees, and from a narrow mill-lane behind by tolerably extensive pleasure and kitchen gardens.

Towards midnight, some time in the year 179—, a man, shrouded in a horseman's cloak, might have been observed, had observers been near walking silently and slowly to and fro under the shadow of the tall hedge which separated the garden from the narrow lane just mentioned. At length he stopped, and removing the cumbersome wrapper, rolling it up and casting it over the hedge, he sprang upwards, caught the branch of an overhanging tree, and, with some degree of strength and agility, drew himself up among the branches and descended on the garden side of the hedge. This accomplished, he looked around him for a few seconds, and then hastily paced over the paths which led toward the house. From time to time he stopped in his progress, and endeavoured to penetrate the gloom which hung over the limited scene of vision, and which the faint light of a waning moon could not entirely dissipate. Had more light been thrown upon the objects around, it would have shown evident marks of neglect and decay. That the garden had once been an object of care and attention, was manifest from the arrangement of the walks and beds; but this care must have ceased some time, for the paths were overrun with weeds and the beds were rough and fallow. Again the intruder quickened his pace, and in a few minutes arrived at an open lawn which spread beneath the windows of the house. Here he paused and looked onwards. From one room of the mansion gleamed a pale sickly light, rendered more so by the moonbeams which played without, and besides this no signs of habitable life were visible. Apparently the breast of the wanderer was agitated by conflicting emotions; he remained standing for some minutes still as a statue, gazing at the light; then a deep groan burst from his bosom, and he staggered like a drunken man to a garden seat which was near, and, covering his face with his hands, wept and sobbed as only man may weep and sob.

[To be concluded.]

FLOWERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATIONS.

How pleasant it is to wander into the country when the breath of early morning is upon the dewy hills, the lark singing at heaven's gate, and when the slight mist in the atmosphere and the deep blue of the sky give promise of a warm summer's day. The spider is busy repairing the slender line which the dew-drop has broken, and weaving a tenebrous which will perhaps last some hours, since no breeze seems likely to arise that will do more than sway the bough on which it hangs. A pleasant day it will be to wander in the wild wood and gather strawberries; but still pleasanter is it, while the day is yet young, for the poet and the lover of nature to linger on the borders of the quiet cops, to watch the opening flowers as they lift their meek eyes to heaven, silently, though unconsciously, speaking the praise of their Creator:

"Sweet is the breath of morn, its rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds."

The country is so calmly beautiful in the morning, that it seems rather to belong to the world of dreams which we have just quitted, to be some paradise, which suffering and care cannot enter, than to form a portion of a busy and anxious world, in which even the very flowers must share in decay and death. How glad are they who love nature too well to sleep when she is putting on her loveliest dress, to wander away in the woods and meadows! The mower, with his scythe, is laying low the flowers of the field, and like his great prototype, Death, will spare neither the proud nor the lowly, and now will fall many

"A coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers,
While that same dew, which sometimes on the buds

Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,
Stands now within the pretty flow'rets' eyes,
Like tears which do their own disgrace bewail."

But the flowers of the hedges and copses will remain to pour out their fragrance long after the hay is carried from the field. The sweet woodruff is secure for it is a lover of the