

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From Hogg's Instructor.

## THE GOOD FAIRY OF SUNNY BURN.

The Home Cottage of Sunny Burn was situated in the centre of a natural crescent, the slopes of which were thickly covered with oak-coppice and hazel, and interspersed with birches, ashes, and Scotch firs. Sunny Burn, from which the cottage took its name, whirled along the base of the crescent, as if for love of the cottage, which it enfolded in its crystal embrace, or of the wood and its summer songs. It passed close by the western end of the cottage, and describing part of an oval, which formed the garden ground, returned by the eastern end, and moved away to the music of its own song, to mingle with the world of waters in the distant sea. All burns dance joyously in the sun, and the name of this one therefore, does not denote any characteristic. But more fortunate than some others, or, indeed than a manifold, countless array of beautiful and sublime forms, in which nature weaves us to her pure and purifying love. This burn must have been seen upon a time playing with the sunbeams at morning, noon, or evening, and inspired with joy of the sight. Sunny Burn was the thanksgiving prayer of the beholder's heart. This is our interpretation of the hieroglyph of its name, with which, indeed, we are very well content.

The cottage door looked out in the eye of the mid-day sun. A little peninsula in front afforded pasture, in the summer months, for a pet cow, and a playground for the children in the days of childhood. The prospect would not have satisfied the experience eye of one who had looked upon nature from her high vantage-grounds; but it was all in all to the inmates of the cottage, especially to the children, to whom the first scene of the drama of life and infinitude was opened up in that spot rather than in any other in the universe. There was ample room for them in those days in the narrow glen. An expedition to the blackberry bushes in the adjacent brass was a great feat; the more so as they were watched with jealous care by their *braid-bonneted* owner, who was a perfect Bluebeard or Jack the Giant Killer to all the children in the neighborhood. The youngsters thus found, on the threshold of life, that objects of desire are hedged round with prohibitions, and that the freedom and rights of one are bounded and determined by the freedom and rights of all others. Even in the cottage wood there were repellent as well as attractive powers, though no Bluebeard watched over it, and in the days of which we write no inhospitable signboard threatened trespassers with prosecution. A narrow footpath ran through the garden, and, passing Sunny Burn on a wooden bridge with one parapet handle, you were at once in the dim religious light of the wood. The children loved to venture in, but an awe fell upon them even at mid-day, which deepened towards evening. They had never fully explored its boundaries, and the spirit of the infinite, therefore, was upon them. The monotonous but solemn anthem of the wind in the fir trees, the eerie cooing of the wood pigeon, and the spirit-like white rind of the birches, which seemed to have borrow'd their garments from the sun, often checked the exuberant joy of the young explorers; and though they loved the fascination which attracted while it repelled them, they breathed more freely and were more heroic when they recrossed the wooden bridge and found themselves again within the all-protection of a mother's love.

But with all its natural beauties, and pleasant environments, the cottage of Sunny Burn might have remained unchronicled, like ten thousand other cottages of our native land, but for one feature which did not at once meet the eye of the picturesque explorer. True, apart from this it would have had a history worthy to be written and read too; for it was the abode for a while of immortal spirits, their sphere of toil and probation on their passage to eternity. Old men lived there on the verge of two worlds—their little past behind and around them—the dimmer past of their fathers, stretching far into the vista of ages, dim, yet radiant with lights which shot into the future, and gilded the mountain tops of immortality. Young men of two spans long first opened their eyes on the mystery of being and creation beneath its humble roof. They grew up in the light of paternal affection, leaning and living upon it as a part of the thing which nourished them, their faculties opening to influxes from afar, even from the infinite fountain of life and love. At length, partially fledged, like the little birds of their own woods, they went forth to essay their powers and try on the barthen of responsibility. Nourished and taught by all visible things, rejoicing in the sunlight and songs of nature, awed by the solemnity of night and the splendour of stars, they grew up to man's estate, entered upon man's work, mingled in man's conflict. Some conquered, some were conquered. In some, the fire kindled at the great central sun of life struggled successfully through the morning mist of temptation, and culminated in the brightness of noonday; in others, it mingled with the grosser things of time, and burnt out its hour in the lurid fires of passion. In this mingled splendor and gloom, in the old but perennial conflict of good and evil, sufficient materials of history might be found in any of our cottages. But it is not for this we re-

cord the history of the cottage of Sunny Burn, but because it was the haunt of a fairy.

In the good old times, when our great-grandfathers and mothers were little boys and girls, every spot was haunted by the good neighbors. Patriarchs yet alive have seen their long processions, and heard the bells tinkling on the pathway of the fairy queen as she rode at their head on state occasions. The mermaid and willie-water-wraith were not confined to the sea and large rivers, for popular tradition record their haunts by the smallest burns and lochs. Many of the present generation could tell that this mythic faith was strong within them in boyhood, and kept them beyond the bounds of water-mark after run-set, as they herded cows by their native streams. There was a two-fold world in our native land in those days—the visible world of men and children, and the invisible world of fairies. Some think that fairy-land has now passed away, and nothing remains but the world of toil and sorrow, all the elements of which, and even the long-standing miracle of its creation, a child might be taught to understand. We can only quietly but most decidedly protest against this scepticism, and do what we can to discourage it. The wonderland of day—the world swimming in the infinite space, canopied by the everlasting heavens, and vibrating influences from the most distant star—is not less wonderful and romantic than the old fairyland which is said to have vanished—say rather, not vanished, but changed, like many other things, whose changes were new births, the passage to greater strength and sweeter beauty. We have had changes in our religious faith as well as our fairy mythology; not only changes, but revolutions in both. Christianity has supplanted Druidism—Protestantism Presbyterianism, Roman Episcopacy. The fairyland of our fathers, with its long-stretching hierarchy of mischievous, capricious, helpful and affectionate creatures, is now, by order of colleges and the spirit of the age, stowed away into museums and lumber rooms; but sure enough we have not yet done with it. For consider how it came, and by what tenure it held sway in the nations. Creative imagination, meeting in loving marriage with the calm or fitful beauty of the outer world, peopled woods and streams, every nook of earth, and all the regions of air, with semi-spiritual beings, creatures lovely as their archetypes in nature, but fickle, changeable, withal, and more vital than the natural forces, by virtue of the promethean fire of their creators. Or the same creative power, in fearful nuptials with the dark and fierce things without and within, brought forth the long continued but ever-shifting race of malignant demi-gods, from Bel and Moloch down to the more respectable of our elfin tribe. Imagination gazing on the ocean, and inspired with its manifold idea, in one age brings forth the goddess Venus; in another, the Mizarid serpent. In like manner, poets of various faculty, in dalliance with zephyrs, brooks, fountains, bowers, and other natural forms, gave being to the various orders of air-spirits, naiads, sylphs, and the mixed race of fairies. The same creative power still sits brooding over elements which quicken into life at its touch; and if one fairyland is lost, there is hope of another. We have still the loveable in nature and the loving heart, the wonderful and the faculty of admiration; we have still the blue heavens and the green earth; all we want is the seeing eye.

From this episode we proceed to the special history of the good fairy of Sunny Burn. We need not say whether it was a water-wraith or a wood-nymph, or appeared in the orthodox fairy costume of 'green and yellow,' or chose its form and garments as time and circumstances suggested. The legend, we confess is not specific on this point, but we are led to think the fairy appeared in many shapes, was changeable and spirit like as thought itself. It took the form of the thing most loved at the time by the human creature whom it delighted to serve and bless, and strove to reproduce in their original freshness and beauty things loved in past times, and to present them to the mind and heart when the shadow of the present fell darkly on the path, or the burthen of life weighed like lead on body and spirit. Neither does the legend say when the fairy first obtained a local habitation and a name at Sunny Burn. From some obscure hints we are led to think that its appearance was coeval with the origin of the cottage and the nuptials of its first inhabitants. They were soon agreeably surprised to find that their home was haunted by a creature which always took the shape of their own better selves, ebering them in their toils, and following them like their brightest thoughts in their evening rambles. Though we cannot directly trace the fairy's history further back than this, a careful study of the subsequent narrative will, we think, lead our readers to conclude with us, that it stretches to a venerable antiquity, and that, under many names and transmigrations, the good creature has played its part both with success and failure, in many and widely different human habitations.

We first meet with the fairy at Sunny Burn soon after Henry Wilson and Mary Graham entered upon their wedded life in the Home Cottage. Two acts of the great drama were played out; childhood and youth lay behind them; and now they entered upon the third and highest of the three. Their hopes were brighter than ever; or if premonitory shadows now and then fell upon their hearts, they soon passed away, like flitting shadows on the green fields of June, and gave intensity to the joy of the season, as evening clouds crimsoned with sun-light are levelled than the pure ether itself. They had had a happy childhood, as most children have; for there is joy in the foun-

tains of young life to every child, however adverse its outward circumstances. Nature so ordains it, and even poverty cannot repeal the Divine decree. Folly and wickedness may abbreviate the term of enjoyment, and tangle the cup of the young spirit with poison, which will fatally operate in after years; but the child even of sin and shame, which awakes to consciousness in the blankest hovel, feels that being is a blessing, and before it begins to curse and suffer, sends up to heaven its thanksgiving hymn of joy. Nature, in thus endowing her little ones—in planting in the heart of each of them an Eden garden, fairer than the terrestrial paradise which Adam lost—reads a great lesson to their guides and teachers. What though the tempter must and will come as of old, and every little Adam, and Eve, as of old, be driven out into the wilderness, yet this primeval joy will well up, a fountain in the desert—this Eden-bower will blossom in seasons of refreshing from on high—those Sabbath hours of the young spirit—this heritage of the child, will follow the man in all his wanderings, a vital power, ever operating to raise him from the depth of depondency, and to cast off the eclipse of temptation and sin. Fathers, mothers, breathe the love of word and action on the living flowers of your household; fill the hearts of your little ones with happy, joyous thoughts.

Henry and Mary had a happy childhood, and loved (as who does not?) to reproduce it in their riper years. Its earliest beginnings lost in impenetrable darkness, childhood first presents itself to memory as a centre without a circumference—a vital point in the manifold infinity. Slowly a horizon spreads around it a ring of affection and enjoyment, to which, on all sides, the child can stretch its rosy fingers. The circle widens as the hours accumulate, but the tiny man or woman runs round it without weariness in the course of the day's play. The centre of moral gravitation is the parental hearth, to which a love, which all other love and hate shall never quench, draws the nurslings of humanity. As they go forth every day, they find new objects of love and enjoyment. The old loves are still supreme but no longer the only ones. Through the era of childhood they are not loved less but more, that other things are loved beside them. Brothers, sisters, companions, the household dog and cat, the flowers—all things claim a part of the child's little heart, and there is room enough for all. Nay, all is not enough; for those yearnings for unknown joys, for larger happiness than the heart can hold, begin early to stir in the depths of our wonderful nature. But heaven is kind both to boy and man, and directs them to pursuits suited to their circumstances. If it does not, even when the object of pursuit is overtaken and enjoyed, give with it all that was anticipated and is essential to the fulness and satisfaction of its nurslings, we even thank it for this, and rejoice that its successive gifts, good in themselves, are but steps in the ladder which leads up to the absolute good in the heights of eternity.

We said, also, that Henry and Mary had a happy courtship, though it were going too far to say that it was without squalls and rainy days. But if we might have looked into Sunny Burn Cottage as Henry sat beside his bride in the joyous circle of wedding guests on that nuptial evening, he could have told us such a tale of the enchanted path, dream-like behind him, which had led him to the summit of the hopes and aspirations in which they originated. We should also have had the bride's tale, the same and yet different; for though human love unfolds itself in unearthly beauty to all unsophisticated hearts, it comes not in the same form or degree to any two persons. Like light it is modified by the medium through which it passes, and is ever the most blessed presence to the best and purest. Henry and Mary had felt its power, and found wider liberty in submission to its law. This they could have told but not much more. The new life which it had infused into them was still a secret to themselves. They had grown in the sunshine and showers of its 'April day' unconsciously, as the flowers grow, but more highly blessed in their unconsciousness. They could hardly have told the earliest beginnings of their love. It dawned upon them like the morning. It was nourished by the earlier love of their infancy and childhood, out of which it sprang; and by the love of everything which had touched the sympathies or awakened the echoes of their hearts, it widened their horizon and expanded their nature. Springing from the earth, it was yet a spiritual teacher, and in its earlier stages subordinated the material impulses to a pure devotion. Blessed love-birth! Morning hours of a new day spring, fresh and cool with dew—clear, but not too warm. No cloud had yet shaded the Auroral heavens; all was tranquil as a child's slumber. The Eden hours of courtship are of necessity brief. The lovers, drawn together by a spiritual magnetism, felt that their completeness was in each other, yet in those morning hours they were to each other as higher natures, which it were impious to approach and touch. Brief but happy time, once to happen to the pure heart, but never more on earth. The illusion vanishes with the first chaste kiss, and afterwards lives but in memory. Love may still be pure enough, but never more divine. The spell is broken. The beautiful and lovely may still be there, but the beautiful only of earth and decay. A higher and purer love, to be sought and won through the lower, must now be the object of pursuit.

The bark of life drives on, wafted by the winged hours, and the wedding festival recedes like a beacon-light at sea, casting a gleam upon the waters, and even in dark and stormy

weather visible to the eye within, and felt by the magnetic compass of the heart. It is one of many lost-stars—the centre of a constellation in the mental firmament—under the lights of which the voyagers on stormiest seas are never without guidance and hope. Unsettling stars, but not shining at all times with equal lustre; nay, sometimes all but invisible in the clouds and darkness which gather round the laboring bard; sometimes all but forgotten in the stress of difficulty and sorrow. Stormy petrels came instead of them, and no bird of good omen among them. Spectre ships pass and re-pass before the bewildered imagination, and the monsters of the deep rise from beneath to remind the mariner he is far out at sea, encompassed by the toils and dangers of the middle passage.

[To be Concluded.]

From the London People's Journal.

## GARDENS.

BY JOHN EMMETT.

[Concluded from the Gleaner of October 15.]

Gardens are strangely poetical spots. No man is truly a man, no man is rightly gifted by Nature, unless he loves his garden. We can conceive of such a dry, flinty old genius as Johnson scouting such an opinion; but one very much questions whether he had a heart for anything beyond Bolt Court. We may be wrong, but he seems not to have had the animus necessary for rural delights. Yet, who would desire a richer garden than he created in the 'Happy Valley' of Abyssinia? Somehow, the old gentleman concentrated his rural idea to a focus, and then he planted the flower, and trained the shrub, and fringed the steep and enamelled the lawn; and among all he spread the crystal mere, that the sun might lighten it with glory, and it became a happy garden indeed. I'll tell you where there's a garden—it makes a sort of picture in my mind, and in the proper month I see the crocus coming out, and the clematis blooming. This garden belongs to Wordsworth, at Rydal Mount; far away, as you stand upon its laws, you may see Windermere, and underneath you the baby-lake Rydal runs joyously into the embrace of its sister Grassmere. It is a snug spot, and if a garden be not snug, it is no garden for me. The properest garden is that which allows you to be buried a whole day unseen and unknown if you list,—a spot where you can wander into all sorts of mazes and serpentine—sometimes into a grotto, and anon among the convolutions of privet and holly bowers.

Give me a few rods of garden-plot, and I'll make for myself an Elysium. The garden shall be secluded from the public haunt, and trees shall grow there where the bullfinch may alight unmolested, and hop about in the sunshine. A few beeches shall form the entrance, and make a frieze like that of Nature's Parthenon in the woods. The entrance shall be canopied with eglantine and interwoven with roses, and in this portico shall the linnet construct its nest, and here the redbreast shall warble his song, and become my musician and gate-keeper. And then!—among honey-suckles and elder-flowers I will fix my seat, and erect my alcove; a painted window shall admit the sunshine, and it shall make the place a store-house of rainbows. Here in early June the hawthorn branch shall come over the roof, and find its way within. 'Tis embroial bloom, the hawthorn!—and when the door opens, the perfumes of Nature shall be borne on the gentle wind. Quiet spot it shall be!—where none may find it but myself, and the nymphs and elves who have helped me with it. Here, shut out from the common babble of wrangling voices, the wind shall whisper its lyric odes, the bee wander with its music, and the chime of village bells, far away, make the melody complete. Who, beside me, will have such a spot? And if some friendly stream could be taught to run that way, its waters might be collected in a lake, where the gold-fish would swim. Here the water hen might ply her oars, and the swan sail tranquilly along. A pleasant place would this be for the bulrush and willow; and the dragon-fly would skim over the reeds, and the wren make its dome in the margin.

One of the happiest aspects in which we can behold a garden is in connexion with our peasantry. Almost every man who has been nurtured among the open fields, and can tenant a cottage, has a garden linked with it. Large or small, it is a garden; it may have neither lawns nor statuary, but there is always a bed in the corner where the daffodil comes as regularly as March, and where there is always a wallflower or sweetwilliam as long as either will bloom. This is the FLORA of the cottager. The other beds grow his cabbages and potatoes, but here he has his pet posies which are always the best blown or the best cared for of any in the parish. Here, also, you have the sweet-briar bush, and lavender, and southernwood, each shrub coeval with the good man's infancy. And amongst these scents he strays on the Sabbath morning to pronounce which of the favorites shall make a sprig for his coat on the holy day. Look at our country churches and chapels, and see how many rosy-faced old fellows are smelling their lavender! Our cottages are proud of their floriculture. Each can wear the garland of his own growing. Each can entwine his brow with a laureled crown.

England's glory is in her gardens; she is all a garden—full of gardens. They are unbeset except by the sea-shore. They hang upon her precipices, they cover her hills, they spread along her valleys; they make the whole island like an ideal landscape. Not a casket of streamlet leaps from the rock, but it runs on its joyous errand of irrigation; it falls in showers