

LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines.

From the London People's Journal.

WHO ARE THE GREAT.

By J. P. DOUGLAS.

Who are the great? are they those who trace
Their pedigree from a noble race;
Who dwell in high ancestral towers,
The magnates of this land of ours?
If theirs be open and heart hand,
Frank, kindly speech and manners bland;
Free, liberal thought, and purpose high,
With soul attuned to sympathy;
If, though to wealth and titles born,
For poverty they have no scorn,
And in their broad and rich domains,
Labor receives its honest gains;
We quarrel not with their rank or state;
Spite of such baubles—they are the great!

Who are the great? are they those who stand
In the solemn councils of the land;
Whose names are writ in history's page,
The lights that glorify the age?
If, in their pride of place they feel
The wish to serve the common weal;
If, with pure enlightened mind,
They seek to elevate their kind;
If the laws they frame be what Justice
teach,
And lowest and humblest reach;
If wealth and power, and fame are sought
As means by which great ends are wrought;
One jot of title we would not bate
Of homage due—they are the great!

Who are the great? have they lower birth,
The merchant princes of the earth;
Who fill the marts of every shore,
Whose ships to furthest seas explore?
If honor, like a star serene,
Their guardian and their guide has been;
If mild integrity hath poured
Its spirit on each act and word;
If of their plenty they have shared,
And to their poorer brethren spared;
The orphan's tear—that precious gem—
Hath gratefully been shed for them;
Rich blessings on their path await,
They are the great! they are the great!

Wherever honest worth is found,
Wherever love and truth abound;
Wherever deeds of earnest thought
In a just cause are boldly wrought,
Mark well the man! what'er his lot,
Whether a palace or a cot;
Whether the world, censorious, blame,
Or waft applauses on his name;
As soars the clouds above the earth,
He scorns the accident of birth;
His soul imbued with that true light,
Which leads it upwards in its flight;
Upward, and onward, armed with fate,
The slave, not master, of the great.

From the London People's Journal.

THE BLACKSMITH'S FOUNDLING

A VILLAGE NARRATIVE.

By Mrs Caroline C. White.

My story, said my friend, drawing his chair a little closer to the fire, is not the less curious because it happens to be true, nor less interesting because its characters moved in the very humblest walks of life. I well remember as a lad that the prettiest girl in our village was Lydia Reynolds, the blacksmith's daughter; her soft clear cheeks, her large brown eyes, and silken hair, and the almost child-like delicacy of her features and figure, bore little affinity to the coarse lineaments and brawny limbs of the blacksmith, whose raggedness, however, was all on the outside: a warm heart and kind disposition lay within, and often evidenced themselves in acts of the most generous benevolence. The friend of suffering in every shape, in hard winters the smithy became the 'Maison Dieu' of the district; and few days passed in which some poor petitioner had not left its threshold, warmed and fed, and better prepared for the exigencies of the morrow than when he had entered it.

Long after lucifers were introduced, John Reynolds persisted in patronising matches—those ancient passports of beggary from village to village; at the very outskirts of which, prosecution and Bridewell were uncompromisingly threatened to all who should enter them as vagrants; while, by way of seconding the inhospitable assurance, the cage and stocks, in most significant fellowship, stood side by side. Pardon me for entering on such titles, but it is in such minute traits that the inward man discovers itself. It was a joke among the neighbors, that, although considerable of the hammer, the blacksmith encouraged more proper than he made prisoners; and, to tell the truth, he had so softened the code of our local laws, that stocks, and cage, and even the terrors of

of his own office seemed fast falling into abeyance.

It was edging on towards evening one sharp December day; the pond at the end of the smithy, with its breastplate of ice, lay smooth and polished as a mirror; icicles a week old hung from the eaves of the adjoining cottage, and the frozen snow crunched beneath your feet, almost as crisply as the ashes from the forge. The ringing of the anvil, the shower of sparks shook out by each percussion of the hammer on the glowing iron; the snoring of the ponderous bellows; the bright blaze of the forge fire, and the brawny figures of the blacksmith and his helpers, with blackened arms plying their athletic craft in its glare, made a cheerful picture, which was presently shadowed by the appearance of a miserable woman in a cloak of all colors, scanty and threadbare, a tattered gown, and handkerchief tied cornerwise over her head, who, leading a mangle-looking child in her hand, with humble and beseeching accents, implored shelter for the night, and some food, for God's sake.

At the sound of her voice a little girl, who, a moment before had tottered in from the blacksmith's dwelling, to show a glorious chain of horse chestnut and mountain ash berries to her father, glided to her side, and taking the child's hand, endeavored to lead him to the smith, as if to second the woman's application; but he needed no other appeal than her own wayworn and half famished appearance; and having seen her provided with food, some clean straw was heaped in a corner of the workshop, and a horsecloth and some sacks spread over it for bedding accommodation, that to the footsore and exhausted creature seemed almost luxury; and, when working hours was over she was left in quiet possession of the forge.

Reynolds had no wife, nor any child but Lydia; but a sister, as much the handmaid of mercy as the smith was its minister, lived with him to take care of his child, and regulate his humble household. Long before the blacksmith rose next morning, Mary Reynolds crept softly down stairs, and commenced making preparations for breakfast, in order that the poor mendicant might be ready to leave the smithy before the workman would want to enter it; and having completed her preparations, and looked together some superannuated wearing apparel for her use, she gently unlocked the forge door, and was about to arouse the seeming sleeper, when something in the aspect of the woman's features withheld her; and with a stifled scream ran in doors. Wakening her brother, she soon found her fears correct; shelter had come too late to save the poor creature from the effects of past exposure—she was dead; and the haggard looking boy, unconscious of his loss, lay clasping with attenuated fingers the thin cold bosom of the corpse.

This incident, I recollect made quite a sensation in the village—a crowner's quest affair—and all through the imprudent humanity of the constable! and, while the majority of the inhabitants invoked blessings on his charity, that had saved the houseless creature from dying by the wayside that bitter night, two or three rigid accountants of parish expences always knew how it would be; only wondered that it had not happened before, sheltering he did not know who or what; a pretty thing, indeed, for the parish to be saddled with the expense of the funeral, and then have the child to provide for; but there—and they blinked their horny eyes one at another—the constable was allowed something handsome in these cases for fetching the crowner, &c. That gentleman, however, took a very different view of the case, and, before the jury separated, pronounced an eloquent encomium on the blacksmith's benevolence, a sentiment that almost every one echoed, and in which even the dissentient grumblers joined when they found that, instead of throwing the child on the parish, he had determined on fostering it himself.

It was said, how truly I know not, that the dead woman was the daughter of a small farmer in the neighborhood, and the first love of the honest blacksmith, but who, lured by the fine form, free gait, and glittering eyes of a gipsy youth, whose tribe had for many years frequented the valley where she lived, had deserted home and lover to follow his wild life, and dwell in the tents of his people. The results of so unnatural a union may be imagined; intimacy with the semi-civilised community soon dissipated her romance; the coarse and comfortless details of her position rendered her disgusted and wretched; but shame, and a remnant of affection for the man, prevented her endeavoring to return home till he himself deserted her, when, finding strength and life failing, she had, after some difficulty, obtained possession of the child, and set forward for her father. But death had been before; the old man was in his grave; and, indifferent to everything but anxiety for her child, she now bethought her of her former lover, and determined to implore his protection for the boy. She had calculated her strength too accurately, and had died before she had declared her purpose, or informed him of her identity. Some papers had, however, revealed all to him, and decided the smith in a course which his own kind feelings had at first dictated; and Jasper Carew, for so was the young gipsy called, became to him as a son. The same care was bestowed on him as on little Lydia, whose elder he was by two years, and his rapid growth evinced how well he thrived in his new homestead. Bye and bye as years passed on, he took his place at the anvil and learned to wield the hammer, and beat out nails and horseshoes; and many a

time have I passed my half holidays in watch-ieg, through the smithy window, the envied skill with which he moulded the glowing iron into shape. Shortly after John Reynolds began teaching him his trade, I left home to pursue my studies at a public school; but as I annually returned to Hazlewood, I did not wholly lose sight of the blacksmith or his protegee, who, from year to year, lost nothing of his interest in my eyes, nor in those of another—the gentle, and alas! loving Lydia. He grew up tall, slight, but sinewy, with the supple limbs, sharp features, tawny hue, and flashing eyes of his race; impatient of controul and dissolute, (despite the care poor Reynolds had taken of him) and deaf to all remonstrance and advice, unless conveyed to him through the lips of his foster sister. If orchards were robbed, snares set or any other rural misdemeanor perpetrated, Jasper Carew, if not the principal, was sure to be a party concerned; and, unfortunately as he grew up his crafty propensities were no longer confined to such venial practices, and many a depredation in the lord of the manor's adjoining park and preserves were but too truthfully attributed to him, although his quick eye and lightness of limb, enabled him in every instance to avoid detection. Meanwhile his glozing tongue, gay laugh, and lively air made him appear to Lydia all frankness and sincerity. She would believe nothing, hear nothing, that threatened her faith in him, but hid to the account of prejudice and ill will every aspersion against his honesty and truth. Even kind-hearted Mary Reynolds, who was the last to see evil in any one, and who loved the lad only secondary to her niece, fell under her displeasure, because she could not blind herself to the vices of his character; and, seeing how things were progressing, endeavored to awaken Lydia to his imperfections, at the same time contrasting his irascible temper and unsettled habits with the quiet diligence and candid disposition of Frank May, the gardener at the park, and an old neighbor's son. But her mother (that might have been) was not more infatuated with Jasper's father than was Lydia with Carew; she saw virtue in his very vices, and was blind to perfection in any one but him. As for her aunt's simple policy, it proved the very worst, she could have used; for the fact of hearing May's good qualities lauded at the other's expense, acted on her niece in the opposite manner she intended, and sealed all hopes of his suit prospering, though seconded by the blacksmith's wishes, and her own most strenuous efforts.

It was now more than fifteen years since (to use the phrase of his neighbors when speaking of the circumstance) John Reynolds had brought a pest into the village, and nothing was talked of but the multiplied copies of a large handbill which appeared on the park walls, the forge gable, the hand post, and every other conspicuous place, offering a considerable reward for such information as would lead to the detection of certain parties concerned in deer-stealing from Sir Robert Heywood's park. Such an occurrence was unprecedented in the recollection of the parish, and called forth no little excitement and speculation; and in the midst of it, and while the knot of grey headed villagers who met nightly at the Heywood Arms had got no further than conjecturing the how and who of the case, another deer was stolen, and the game-keeper shot; and, to add to the general wonder and perplexity, a day or two after this affair, Jasper Carew absconded. Nothing could be more opportune for the scandal lovers at Hazlewood than his disappearance at this juncture. Although the wounded man had described his antagonist as a much stouter and older person than the gipsy, it was immediately remembered that he had frequently been met in the company of well-known poachers; that he had always more money at command than it was likely his master allowed him; and had been seen at hours when it was well known to everybody that the smith's peaceful household were in their beds. To all this John Reynolds said nothing; the lad's conduct was evidently a severe blow to him, but to the chagrin of the gossips, he neither refuted or confirmed any of the suppositions hazarded in his hearing, for the purpose of sounding his own opinions as to the cause of Jasper's flight. As for Lydia, not all the whispers and shrugs, and dark hints shook her faith in his innocence; her cheek paled when she heard them, with indignation, not with despair; and while anxiety slowly undermined her health, and robbed her of her spirits, her heart continued firm in its convictions and its love. It was but a wild trick, the consequence of words with her father, who, on more than one occasion, had recently been obliged to remonstrate with him on his conduct. He would come back, she was sure that he would come back to redeem his promises to her, and refute those suspicions, that, to his face, not one of his slanderers had dared to utter. Alas, poor girl! weeks and months passed away—and, except one dirty scrawl without date or address, that for the sake of the truth it contained, deserved to have been attended to—namely, that he felt he was undeserving of her, and that, for both their sakes, it was best she should forget him, no news reached her, no hints of his whereabouts, or of his doings; and thus, year after year wore on, and plainer and more portionless girls married, while Lydia continued to all appearance as far off from it as ever. She had refused half a dozen matches, and such matches! that no mother in the village had patience with her. Sir Robert's bailiff, and Mr Miles, at the mill, with two or three others, almost as

eligible; and, though handsome Frank May had never risked the fate of his fellow candidates, everybody knew what his constant visits meant, and all the rare and beautiful flowers with which he filled the cottage windows and garden. By and by it was rumoured that Carew had been met with at a distant town, where he had married the widow of his employer, and with her money was about to take a small business for himself. After this Lydia Reynolds grew more like herself than she had been for the five years of his absence; and the young gardener, too, appeared to have gained a sudden accession of good spirits. As for Mary Reynolds she did more kind things than ever; and the blacksmith himself worked and sung as vigorously as he had twenty years before. But alas! these brightening prospects did not long continue. In the midst of his rude health and strength, John Reynolds was struck down by paralysis; and having realised sufficient for his independence, at the persuasion of his child and sister, he consented to give up business, and, taking a detached cottage, a little distance from the forge, that and their former dwelling became to let. It was well he did so; for within a month after the new couple had entered on its occupancy, poor Reynolds was a second time attacked, and confined to his room, weak and helpless as a child. And who do you think was the new blacksmith? The foundling who had been fostered within its walls, and fed and taught his trade by its late owner—the false-hearted and ungrateful Carew. As I was saying, the smithy had not been much more than a month in his occupation, when Reynolds was again unable to crawl out, even as far as the forge, which was a favorite resort of his when he had strength enough to reach it, for he bore no ill will against its proprietor, whose conduct he had ever regarded in a much more venial light than his neighbors; and so far as himself was concerned, readily forgave, believing that for Lydia's sake, it was the most fortunate thing that could have happened. And so it was, in more sense than the one in which the smith considered; for Lydia, who had been more or less of a spoiled child through the over-indulgence of her aunt and father, had been bitterly humbled by the conduct of Carew, and now saw all the wisdom of her friends' advice and the affection that had dictated it, and could not sufficiently exhibit her gratefulness and contrition to them. Out of her sorrow there had sprung a gentle humility, which was only wanting to make her as amiable in disposition as she was interesting in appearance.

It was a dark November evening, and Jasper, who as usual, had been spending it at the Heywood Arms, almost stumbled over an old man named Hatty Banks, a pensioned shepherd of Sir Robert's, in his way down the lane towards home; for neither the smith's shop nor John Reynolds's cottage stood near the village; but in a sheltered and rather lonely lane leading to the park, and about half a mile distant from it. The shepherd had been with a neighbor on rather important business to the sick blacksmith's; and, in the double communicativeness of ale and dog-tage, could not resist informing his companion of the transaction.

'Ah master Jasper,' he said, 'thou did'st wrong in jilting old Reynold's daughter. There's not a prettier girl, nor a better one in all Hazlewood, let the other be who she will; nor such a rich one neither. Only think, master Jasper, £800!—that aint to be got every day—and every farthing of that she'll have.'

'Eight hundred pounds!' repeated Carew, lifting his eyebrows and compressing his lips.

'As sure as you and I stand here,' replied the other; 'I saw it with my own eyes counted out in hard bright gold, man. Why, I was the witness!'

'What witness?—witness of what?' interrupted Jasper.

'Why, witness that Job Cummings, the butcher, has paid John Reynolds £800, principal and interest, of monies lent him by the said John Reynolds,' exclaimed the old man, with official importance.

'The deuce he has?' answered the other, astonished.

'Why, it was always said you know,' continued Hatty, 'that our smith was a warm man; but I never knew he was so well off as this comes to.'

'Nor I,' said Mr Carew, laconically. 'I wonder they're not afraid of having so much money in the house, he suggested presently.'

'Oh, they won't keep it there long, you may be sure,' replied the shepherd. 'I reckon young May will take it to the bank to-morrow, as it is market day.'

'Aye, but to night,' argued Jasper: 'that's a lone house, and they say Reynolds has not so much strength as a woman.'

'Not so much as a child,' repeated old Hatty, lugubriously, 'he's most gone, neighbor, most gone, and two or three months ago he was the strongest man in the village.'

'Well, I hope you put the money in a secure place, Hatty,' rejoined Jasper, who had paid but little attention to the latter part of the old man's exclamation.

'Ah, leave that to me,' said the old man chuckling; 'we took care to hide it in such a place as no thief would think of looking for it.'

The gipsy's eye glistened and grew larger as he rejoined, 'to be sure you did, old fellow. You hav'n't lived all these years, and learnt nothing.'