

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From the London People's Journal.

## QUITE AN ACCIDENT.

The merchant and his daughter were now evidently impressed with an idea that the tall old gentleman was *somebody*. I think they fancied that I was somebody too, since a man who was rich enough to collect a library on the subject, and who talked easily of 'my house in town,' took so much notice of me.—The old gentleman, however, took no notice of them; but began to talk to the girl who had taken his fancy at first. He said he was sorry that he had just arrived at the end of his journey, for that he intended to attack her again on heretical opinions concerning Robinson Crusoe. She expressed regret that he was to leave us so soon, as his conversation had given her so much pleasure. She added that her grandfather had been a midshipman in one of Cook's vessels, and that he had in later years taken a great delight in collecting books of voyages, with which, and with tales of his personal adventures, her mind had been nourished in childhood.

'Ah! indeed! Well I thought you looked as if you were better acquainted with such things than women generally are. I dare say such reading is very good for a child. My boys always liked it; what the girls liked, I do not know so well.'

At this moment the coach stopped to change horses. A respectable looking manservant came up to the window next the old gentleman, and said—

'Will you like to get out now, my lord? I see the carriage coming up the hill; and I think my lady is in it.'

'I may as well do so, Jackson,' he replied. Jackson opened the door, and his master, after wishing us all good morning alighted.—He asked me if I would not get out too, as they were going to change horses, and there was one of the finest prospects in the country to be seen. I did so; and he then asked the young lady, with whom he had been, to alight and look at his favorite view. She gave him her hand, and seemed very glad to get out of the confined coach; and, not at all overcome by the knowledge that he was a nobleman. She was a thorough lady; was polite herself, and expected politeness from every well-bred person, gentle and simple.

That prospect! How well I remember it! It was a rich, extensive panorama of undulating country, the highest point of which seemed to be the hill on which we were. Hence the road wound down, rather suddenly. I thought, into a wide plain of grass-land where herds of fine cattle grazed. About a mile to the right of the road, at the bottom of the hill, was a deep sweep of wood, beyond which was a hill, crowned with a grey castle; its park seemed to stretch onward to the horizon. 'That is a very fine object,' said the young lady, pointing in the direction of the castle.—'Bosomed high in tufted trees,' added I.

'Surely that must be the celebrated B—Castle,' she said. 'I have seen pictures and drawings of it, from this point, I am sure.'

'Very likely,' said our companion, who had been pointing out various distant objects to us.—'Very likely; for that is B—Castle. The poor old thing has been shamefully caricatured sometimes, I can tell you. Now, I am obliged to wish you good morning,' he added, as a handsome open carriage, which had been coming slowly up the steep ascent, stopped beside us. There was a kind, noble-looking old lady in it, whom I gladly supposed to be his wife. I had fancied at first, that he might be an old bachelor. I liked him too well now, not to rejoice that he had a wife and children. Our fresh horses were put to, and having taken our last look of the beautiful prospect and our departing acquaintance, I handed the young lady, who was beginning to make some impression on my fancy, into the coach. Before I got in, I asked the guard if he knew the name of that old gentleman.

'I should think so, sir. That's lord B—and that lady in the carriage is his wife.—They're the right sort, sir. They're as good as they're great and rich. I come from this part myself, and I know that B—Castle yonder is a blessing to the whole county. There ain't any good thing for the public, or for the poor, all over the county, that his lordship don't have a hand in. There ain't a bit of nasty pride about him; he's got a real good English heart in his body, sir; and he behaves like a good fellow to the poor. He goes and talks to them about their affairs; and capital advice he gives 'em, too, as well as money. Lord bless you, sir, it's amazing what a deal lord B—knows about everything. I heard the gentlefolks say just what poor folks say about him.—there ain't a cleverer man to be found than lord B—, and I'm sure there ain't a better man on God's earth.'

'I'm not surprised to hear what you have just been told,' said my female friend, after I was seated. 'I never saw real benevolence and strong intellect more fairly balanced in a face. That is a man who is likely to do lasting good in the world.'

Just then I heard lord B—'s voice speaking to our coachman.

'I'll do as you like, Barnes. But that's an awkward pitch remember; and I'm sure those green horses of yours will not let mine peep before them. But we will go first if you like.'

'Thank you, my lord! I can hold the reins as well enough; never fear. If we was to go first, we should clothe you and my lady

with our dust; and your dust won't get up to us. Good mornin', my lord.'

But it turned out that lord B—was right. The fresh horses started after those in his carriage: they became unmanageable, overtook and passed the carriage, and rushed furiously down the steepest part of the road. I prevailed on every one inside to sit still, knowing the probable fatality of jumping from the vehicle. I had noticed a sharp turn in the road, about half way down the hill, and there I felt almost sure the coach would be overturned. I was right: a sudden jerk was felt in the midst of our career, and we were upset.

When I recovered from the first sensation of giddiness I scrambled out as well as I could, and saw the coachman and one of the outside passengers trying to keep the horses heads down, and prevent their kicking. The other outside passengers were not much hurt, but they all looked pale and agitated. I called upon the guard to come and help me to extricate the persons confined in the shattered vehicle. We got the latter out very easily; he was not much injured but he was terribly frightened, poor fellow. I confess that it was with considerable anxiety that I raised the insensible body of the young lady whose manners had pleased me so much. I saw that she was seriously hurt, and I carried her to a bank beside the road, and laid her down gently. I was glad that I had my case of instruments with me, and was not hurt myself, so that I could render professional assistance immediately if required. The other young lady had fainted also, but it was only with fright.

Lord B—'s carriage had now arrived at the scene of action; and he and his servants rendered every assistance to the bruised and wounded. No one seemed seriously hurt but the young lady I had placed on the bank.—When I had ascertained that, I returned to her, and found the kind lady B—supporting her head, and trying to revive her.

'I think her right arm is broken,' said she. 'Has she any friends with her?'

'I believe not. She seemed to be travelling alone. But I will ascertain,' and I rushed to the guard to inquire if any of the outside passengers belonged to the young lady with the grey shawl.

'No, sir. She was put under my charge by an old gentleman. I was to see her safe to No. 10, S—street, Liverpool. I hope there ain't anythin' serious the matter with her?'

'She has broken her arm, and must not go on to Liverpool to-night. Do you go on to-day?'

'Why, yes, sir, we must go on as soon as we can get a coach from D—, three miles off. But what had I best do about the young lady? Where is she?'

I pointed to the place where she lay, and where lord and lady B—were both bending over her, apparently in earnest conversation.

We approached them, and I explained in a moment the state of the case. Lord B—turned to the guard at once. 'Under your charge was she, Tom? And you, like a trustworthy fellow, come to look after her.—That's quite right. This will be the best plan, I think, Tom:—This gentleman (pointing to me) is a surgeon. She has broken her arm, poor thing, and we must get it set as soon as possible. Lady B— and I will take her at once to the castle, with this gentleman who will set the limb and attend to her till her friends send for her. You have got the address to which you were to send her?'

'Yes, my lord.'

'Very well. Take these cards. Give me one of yours,' said he, turning to me; 'and one of yours, my dear,' turning to his wife; and then he wrote a few words in pencil on each, to assure the persons who were expecting the unfortunate young lady, that lady B— and I would take every care of her until the arrival of her friends, and that it was believed that the accident was not serious. 'Take these two cards, Tom, and take them yourself to the house, and explain the nature of the accident, and then you will be free from all responsibility. Are you satisfied Tom?'

'I think I ought to be, and so ought her friends, my lord. I'm much obliged to you,' replied Tom.

'That is more than the lady's friends are likely to be to Barnes. I wish he had taken my advice. However, there will be time enough to talk about that another time; and you are wanted there I see. Good-morning, Tom. We will take care of the lady up at the castle.'

In a few minutes the stalwart old man lifted the still insensible girl into the carriage himself, and desiring his wife and me to follow, he saw us all seated, and then went back to the broken coach, and, having offered beds at the castle to any persons who might be unable to proceed, and finding that all wished to reach Liverpool as fast as possible, he returned to his carriage, and we drove off at a brisk pace to that pride of the neighborhood.

I had little difficulty in reducing the fracture; and, on the following morning, my patient was well enough to give some account of herself, and to understand what had been done for her. She was in much distress of mind; and requested me to write to her uncle a clergyman, in London, to inform him of the accident, and of her present position. I did so, but I could gather little from it, other than the fact that she had no nearer relatives to interest themselves about her except a young brother, and she urged her uncle to keep him in ignorance of the misfortune that had befallen her. She inquired of me whether the guard of the coach would be likely to inform the persons who expected her at Liv-

erpool of the accident. I told her what lord B— had done.

She expressed her gratitude for his kindness, and that of his gentle wife; but said nothing about the anxiety which her friends in Liverpool would be likely to feel on her account.

'They will be very uneasy in Liverpool about you,' I ventured to say. She smiled faintly.

'Oh, dear, no! They will be sorry, I dare say, because I hear they are kind people; but I am quite a stranger to them, and they have no personal interest in my safety, beyond the fact that my non-arrival may inconvenience them.' After a pause she added, 'I should be obliged if you will write another letter for me.' The purport of this letter was to inform this family in Liverpool, to which she was on her way, as a governess, that at present she could not fulfil her engagement, owing to the accident which had happened to her. She hoped they would not think of inconveniencing themselves by waiting for her recovery, which would necessarily be protracted. I saw a sorrowful expression in her face when I had finished this letter; and I began to fear there was

'A nearer one, still,  
And a dearer one,  
Yet, than them all,'

to whom she would wish to communicate this sad intelligence, and whom she would shrink from addressing through a third person. However, I stifled my incipient jealousy, and asked her smilingly why she looked so sorrowful.

'Do I look sorrowful?' she replied. I ought not to do so. God is very good, and you are all so kind to me. I dare say I shall get another situation when I am well; and I must bear this accident patiently.'

I was about to reply when lady B—, who had been reclining on a sofa so quietly that I thought she had been asleep, came forward, and removing the curtain on the other side of the bed, sat down; and taking my patient's hand, told her that she had heard her conversation, and the letters which she had dictated, and was now going to assume the right of a friend and an older person over her. From what she had just heard, and from what lord B— had reported of her behaviour in the coach she was anxious to engage her as a companion. Her youngest daughter had lately married, and she felt the want of a female companion—one whom lord B— approved and liked; and that if she would consent to remain at B— castle in that capacity, she would be conferring a favor on them both.

When her quiet, kind voice ceased, she stooped down and kissed the pale cheek of the poor girl, who flushed crimson for one moment and then burst into tears. I rose and left them together.

This upset of the Liverpool coach was one of the many evils in this life which are only good in disguise. By it I gained the best wife man ever had, and we both gained by its sincere and lasting friends (for they were far better than *patrons*) in the late lord and lady B—. This adventure of youth is very dear to my memory. It was the most important event in my life. Often, since when I have been reading narratives of travels, among distant beautiful, and unknown regions, in the library of B— Castle, when I have been there during a summer holiday, its cheerful owner has interrupted me with words to this effect—'Still at those travels! Do you intend to horrify Mrs D—, one of these days, by taking yourself off to a desert island, and living, like Robinson Crusoe, in a state of selfish indifference to others?' (Robinson Crusoe was always a standing joke between him and Mrs D—.) There was no chance of that for her husband, let me tell you, good reader. If Robinson himself had been married to her, he would have got back to Europe more quickly than he did, and with no desire of being parted from her again for all the beautiful islands in the world. Reader, if you are young, listen to the words of an old man, and profit by them: love worthily, and where you love, marry—if you can; if you cannot, remain single, but keep your heart open as a warm home to all good, true, and loving people.

From the London People's Journal.

## THE MISSION OF THE POET.

BY BURLINGTON E. WALE.

Wherever there is truth, beauty, and music, there is the home of the Poet; and wherever there is sorrow, and suffering, and gloom,—wherever human hearts are breaking, and bitter tears are flowing, and the young and the lovely are drooping,—these are the spots which he should make bright by his genius and gladden with his melodies. There let him hover like Nature's holy almoner, and pour gentle droppings of oil and balm into the wounded breast; there let him "babble of green fields and wild flowers and sunny water brooks;" let him lead forth the lonely heart amid the stupendous glories and sublime cadences of creation. When the tempest winds are dying away in far-off whispers o'er the summer sea, and the unnumbered laughter of the waves is ringing sonorously amid the cavernous rocks; there, even to the most wretched—the lone misanthrope, the degraded sensualist, the famished seamstress, the form-washed shirt-maker, he may whisper of hope and heaven, and bright anticipations of that Holy land where life entails no sorrow, and where the arithmetic of misery is satisfied for ever.

Nature is ever kind to her erring and sorrowing children. From her orb'd breasts

flows ever the milk of love and kindness; and through the Poet, who is her Hierophant, she seems to whisper melodiously,—'Think not, child of misfortune, son of toil and sorrow, breather of mephitic air and subterranean dens where the very beasts would perish; think not, thou spirit-broken milliner, that the blessings of my bounty and the treasures of my love are excluded from thee: look round upon the green earth, it is my exponent; it is wondrous and beautiful: its beauties and its treasures are for thee. If thou art weary, my child, kiss my lips and sink down to thy hallowed slumbers. Lo! I have given thee the red earth for a pillow, the sentinel stars to watch over thy repose, and the jewelled firmament for a canopy to thy silent couch, which, when thou wakest from thy slumbers, shall part and admit thee into that silent land over whose brightness sin flings no shadow, and amid whose melodious sorrow never wakes a sigh.'

Thus speaks Nature through the lips of her high priest, and it is for him to convey the words of love and gentleness to the homes of sorrow, sickness, and sin.

While man is man, and there are sufferings to endure and wrongs to be redressed, and sympathies to be appealed to, and passions to soothe, there will always be abundant material for the Poet wherewith to work out his own high mission.

All honour to the world's workmen! the pioneers of human progress. Their thoughts become the conscience of nations; their songs the watchwords of the peoples. Glorious prophets of the future, it is theirs to ascend the Pisgah of humanity; and, while the multitudes are shrouded in darkness in the valleys below, and toiling through a wilderness of thorns and blood, to point them onwards to the world's millennial Canaan; to catch the far echo of that jubilant song, the burden of which is, "Love to God and goodwill to man;" and to cheer the toiling millions with bright hopes of that far-off land where the stripes and passions are hushed, and the voices of mammon, and covetousness, and oppression, and wrong, are for ever silent.

Toiling on with unresting energies for the good of their fellows, they have, too often, like Moses, died alone, unsoothed, unseen, and no man has known of their sepulchre.

Yet it is pleasant, after tracing them through the tempest and the turmoil of their labour and their fame, to track them home, and see them sleeping in their calm and statuesque repose, as the dim, religious light of another world struggles through the gloom and falls upon their stony and passionless forms. They are, indeed, lost to us in the body; but in the pure ideal of mind, the poetry of the spiritual, they are with us still.

They are dead, as we say of things that die unheeded; but their quiet ashes vitalise a world, and their meteor thoughts live lustreously down the night of ages, like lightnings flashing through a Dædal gloom. How sonorously do their holy songs roll forth! They, being dead, yet speak; and, while all of them that Time can wither sleeps and perishes beneath the dust we tread, their thoughts live, and act eternally upon the spirit of their race. Their ideas are ever in advance of the marching ages. As the nations emerge slowly and majestically from the darkness of the past, the Poet is ever in the van, pointing with his shadowy finger to that glorious future of amity and brotherhood where human hope has dared to plant its standard, and onward to which the nations are ever advancing till the goal is won.

To nations maddened by despair and goaded by tyranny, the Poet sings of hope and liberty, and the world's bright hereafter. He imparts a prophetic potency to the dying patriot's curse, and lends a sanctity and an energy to the fearful invocation of the oppressed and the suffering.

Poets have ever been the enemies of oppressors and the friends of the people. For them, indeed, in return, despotism has prepared its fetters, its dungeons, and its scaffolds. But their thoughts—the melodies which they poured forth in their gloomy prison-houses, while the ebbing life blood was bubbling over their parched lips—enter into the spirit of their race, animate the hearts, enkindle the hopes, and giantise the energies of humanity. The song indited in a dungeon—whispered, perchance, from dying lips, gathering strength and magnitude as it swells down the vaulted avenues of time, becomes at length the agent for arousing the nations to a consciousness of their own rights and energies, imparting to them the strength of a Titan and the holiness of a god. It sends them forth into the hot, embittered battle-plain of life, to combat with superstition, tyranny, and wrong, and to inaugurate the millennium of brotherhood and love.

He was a wise man who said, "Give me the making of a people's songs, and I care not who makes their laws." The Poet, whether he write an epic or indite a song, is greater than the legislator or the conqueror; and exerts a more holy, elevating, and lasting influence upon the destinies of his race. His mission is not to warble away his soul in song, but to imbue the nations with a love for liberty, and energy and determination—to rouse man to a consciousness of his own dignity, and to hand down a glorious heritage of imperishable principles for the guidance of all future generations.

It may indeed be his hard fate to waste his energies upon an age which understands him not; and then with shattered nerves and sinews all unstrung, he may wrap his cold shroud around him, and lay down in the sepulchre, and sleep the sleep of death! This is sometimes the lot of those who have deserved well of their kind; and if they win the crown, it is