

LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines.

From the London People's Journal.

THE LAY OF ONE FORGOTTEN.

BY CHARLES H. HITCHINGS.

SLEEP soft upon your silken beds,
Close curtained velvets wrap ye round,
In chambers fast from echoing treads,
And hushed from every wakeful sound;
Light joys flit through your favored dreams,
Indulge each blissful fancy there.
Where every fond illusion seems
As real as pain!—O, sisters fair,
Gentle, and good, and happy be—
But sometimes waste a thought on me!

The world is very cold and bleak,
While Pleasure crowns our happiest lot;
But ah! to bear the crimson cheek,
The aching heart—and be forgot!
Name never more my former name—
Ye could not breathe it and be gay,
Remembering how the hand of Shame
Tore from your love that one away.
Happy, and good, and tearless be—
But sometimes waste a thought on me!

Think of me, as you think of those
From you the unrestful wave divides—
Upon whose separate fortunes close,
The ungenial ocean's severing tides—
Dear to the Memory's pensive hour
For gentle words and pressures past—
Dearest because a transient flower,
Whose short-lived sweetness did not last.
When in your hearts old times shall be,
Sweet sisters, sometimes think on me!

Or as the dead—(a tenderer thought
Nearer and dearer)—if ye will—
As one, whose young departure brought
A void to Home, her place to fill—
Whose faded form and altered face
From out the mind ye leave to pass,
Remembering but its earlier grace,
And all the gentle thing it was.
When in your hearts the dead shall be,
O, sisters, sometimes think on me!

No need to ask these aims of love,
Could I but lay this bosom bare,
And to your hard compassion prove
Each aching memory cloistered there:
The sweet affection turned to gall—
The trustful hope—a ruin now—
And where the heart had garnered all—
O, sisters, of the stainless brow,
Pray that it ever stainless be—
But sometimes waste a thought on me!

From Hogg's Instructor.

YES AND NO.

NEAR the town of Hennebon, in the department of Morbihan, stands an old fashioned house, in a saloon of which, one morning a few years back, two old gentlemen had been for some time in earnest conversation. At length they both rose.

'Then we may consider the matter settled, Colonel,' said one of them.

'Of course, Monsieur Juvigny—of course it is settled.'

'I am very sensible of the honor you have done me, Colonel Kermeray.'

'And I too,' said the colonel, whose words flowed so fast that they were often far from expressing his meaning; 'I shall go and tell my son. Really I am a happy man.'

'And I shall immediately consult my daughter.'

'Consult her! that's a curious word. But never mind. Adieu!'

'Farewell. My compliments to Monsieur Victor.'

Five minutes after the Colonel had left, Mademoiselle Juvigny entered the room. She was a handsome girl, with sparkling eyes and a little pouting mouth, charming to behold. Moreover, she had as much good sense and as little caprice, as the only child of a widower, who had done all he could to spoil her, could possibly possess. But, as might be expected, she was accustomed to have her own way, and it was therefore with no little embarrassment that her father, who was a timid man, and feared anything like an argument, approached a business so materially affecting her as that which he had in hand.

'Colonel Kermeray has been here, my Louise,' said he.

'Yes, papa. I saw the mark of his wooden leg in the gravel.'

'Guess what he has proposed, my child.'

'Oh! I have no idea, said Louise, carelessly.'

'Hum! I must prepare her for it a little,' said Monsieur Juvigny to himself.

'My love, I am getting old,' continued he aloud.

'So are we all,' said his daughter.

'Louise, my love, I cannot expect to be much longer with you.'

'Oh do not talk of such things, my dearest papa,' cried the affectionate girl, throwing her arms fondly round her father's neck.

'And it would be a great comfort for me to see you happily settled,' continued he, gently kissing her.

'Oh!' said Louise, looking very grave.

'Life is so uncertain.'

'Tell me then at once, papa—Colonel Kermeray has proposed his son to you for a son-in-law?'

'Precisely so,' said Monsieur Juvigny.

'And what did you reply?'

'I said I would consult you. And I hope you—'

'Young Monsieur Kermeray is that monster that I have seen going about with a great gun?'

'Yes, but he is not a monster.'

'That bear, who thinks of nothing but shooting and hunting, horses and dogs?'

'Yes; but he is very far from being a bear.'

'That clumsy fellow, with thick-soled shoes full of huge nails?'

'Yes; but he is by no means a clumsy fellow.'

'Well, papa, I will think about it.'

Monsieur Juvigny expatiated at some length on the advantages of the match, but he could obtain no more favorable answer, so at length he set out for a walk, by no means sure that the affair was so completely settled as he and his friend had thought.

Meanwhile the Colonel had reached his own house, a picturesque chateau, with high roof, tall chimnies, and numerous turrets. He found his son before the door, cleaning a gun.

'Victor, my boy, here am I,' said he.

'Good morning, my dear father.'

'That's it. Do you know what's going to happen?'

'Not I; how should I?'

'Why then, you're going to be married, my lad.'

'To be married, father? Not I.'

'I say you are though, and that very soon too.'

'There is some mistake; I have no such intention.'

'But I have, and there is no mistake whatever.'

'Are you serious, sir?'

'Yes.'

'Well then, I say, I won't be married, and that's all.'

'Won't be married, eh!' cried the old colonel, thumping his wooden leg into the ground. 'What do I hear? I say you shall sir!'

'We shall see,' said Victor.

'Shall we, you rascal? No we shan't. You won't marry! You won't obey your father! You have a will of your own! Well, we shall see. I have settled it, do you hear? Mademoiselle Juvigny will be my daughter-in-law, and you will be Monsieur Juvigny's son-in-law before a month is over. Rank rebellion! Get out of my sight! Forward! March!'

'Mademoiselle Juvigny,' muttered the young man, as he took up his hat and left his angry parent's presence.

Victor was a handsome young man, glowing with health, not very brilliant, not very polished, but good natured and warm-hearted. He was much attached to his father, and generally did all he could to humor the old soldier, who was not a little imperious and absolute. But Victor was a Breton, and as stubborn as any of his countrymen when not properly managed. Once actually roused he seemed actually to part with his reason for a time, and to know no law but that of his own willfulness.

'Mademoiselle Juvigny,' he repeated, as he strode along at a great pace; 'well, she is very pretty, and I daresay will make an excellent wife for some one. She shan't be mine. I am resolved. Yet my father seems so too; let us go and consult old Briquebec.'

Briquebec was a sailor, and long retired from service. Of great natural shrewdness, and of much experience of the world, he was a valuable counsellor, and as, though he rarely offered advice, he was always ready to give it when asked, few days passed that Victor's words, 'let us go and consult old Briquebec,' were not repeated by some one or other. Add to this, that nobody feared to trust him with a secret, for his discretion was beyond all suspicion.

Victor found the ancient mariner seated in a sunny corner mending a net, and without any preface told him his case.

'Well,' said Briquebec, 'I hear.'

'Of course I am not going to be married in that way.'

'Why not?'

'Because I do not choose.'

'Ah, very good. Why should you?'

'I was sure you would say so, dear Briquebec.'

'Oh, Monsieur Victor, there can be but one opinion on the subject. To be sure Mademoiselle Juvigny is rich; but you don't care for her.'

'Not I.'

'Of course not. Certainly she is the most lovely girl in the country, all so taut and trim—lips like cherries, eyes like an angel's, a foot like a fairy's; but what of that. You won't have her.'

'No, nor any one else. I will not marry at all.'

'Quite right, have a will of your own. She will make somebody else happy. He'll be a lucky fellow.'

'Perhaps he will.'

'Why should you marry her to please your father? It would be much better to marry some ugly, ill-tempered old dowager to please yourself.'

'I will please myself,' said Victor.

The conversation continued for some time in a similar strain; at last the young man took leave of Briquebec, confirmed by him, as he thought, in his resolution. He had not been long gone, when Mademoiselle Juvigny passed at a short distance from the old sailor's cottage.

'Holloa, Mademoiselle!' cried he, as if he were hailing a vessel, 'won't you exchange news with a friend?'

'To be sure I will, Monsieur Briquebec. I wonder how I could think of going by without doing so; but I was meditating on something.'

'So I saw, and I believe I know what it is, Mademoiselle.'

'Oh, no, you do not indeed, Monsieur Briquebec.'

'Were you not thinking of your future husband?'

'Oh, that's easily guessed. We women are always thinking of our husbands, at least till we are married; that is, if what all the world asserts be true.'

'That is not what I meant. Monsieur Victor Kermeray has been here but a few minutes ago.'

'Has he indeed?' said Louise, slightly confused.

'Yes, and he told me your father and his intended you for each other.'

'Oh,' exclaimed the young lady, 'he said that, did he?'

'Yes, and what do you say to it? Any objections?'

'A great many, Monsieur Briquebec. Monsieur Victor is, I daresay, a very good young man, but—'

'But! Capital! Then it will end in nothing.'

'Do you think so?'

'Yes. He is as little pleased at the idea as you seem to be.'

'Indeed,' returned Louise quickly, and rather mortified.

'I cannot understand it, but such is the case.'

'Perhaps,' said Mademoiselle Juvigny, after a short pause, 'perhaps there is some one else.'

'Oh, I don't know that. But as you would not like him for a husband, it is all as it should be.'

Louise seemed to reflect, and remained a short time silent; then, as if she had come to some resolution, she bade Briquebec farewell and left him.

Half an hour after Monsieur Juvigny had the satisfaction of receiving his daughter's consent to the proposed match. 'It is settled after all,' said he to himself. As for Briquebec, as soon as Louise had left him, 'Two young fools,' muttered he, and set to work on his net again.

Time went quickly by. Every morning Victor went out to shoot, and every afternoon he returned with an empty bag. The reason was that he spent most of his time with Briquebec. Every evening his father took him, at first much against his will, to Monsieur Juvigny's, where he remained an hour or two in the company of his intended bride, and every night he went to bed with a more fixed resolution not to marry her. Yet she had made a deep impression on him; every day he felt more and more that she was a most charming person. In fact, if he had been left to himself he would have been desperately in love.

But the injudicious colonel, without being aware of it, did all in his power to defeat his own object.

'In a month you will be a married man, my boy. In three weeks your bachelor life is over, Victor. In a fortnight you will have a wife, you rogue. Only a week more, and then—'

All this naturally made the young man more obstinate. He persuaded himself that it would be foolish and contemptible to yield. He hated himself for his weakness in growing fond of Mademoiselle Juvigny's society; nay, so strange a creature is man, he even felt enraged at her for being so attractive. And then he would go to Briquebec, and talk about her by the hour.

But notwithstanding his determination, inexperienced in the world, not used to act for himself, and bending under the superior energy of his father, to whom he soon ceased to remonstrate, he took no steps to avert his fate. The day was rapidly approaching, the necessary formalities had all been gone through; every preparation, including the marriage dresses had been made, without any opposition on his part. In fact he had formed no plan, and had no idea how the thing was going to be prevented; only that it certainly should not take place he had made up his mind.

'After all, they cannot marry me against my will,' he would say to himself. 'One man can take a horse to the water, but twenty can't make him drink.'

As for Louise, nothing, she had quickly discovered that he was far from insensible to her charms, and satisfied on this point, she had scrutinized him no further; so that she little knew how inflexible he really was. Nor was this wonderful, for even the experienced Briquebec deceived himself on the subject.

The day came. The ceremony before the mayor (in France it is your mayor who is the high priest of Hymen) was to take place at noon. At nine o'clock the Colonel and Victor breakfasted, the former playing off many jokes suited to the occasion. At ten, he said to his son, 'Now my boy, go and dress.' The young man obeyed, and at eleven he reappeared as a bridegroom in all his glory. After surveying him with a proud eye, 'Come,' said the Colonel, 'forward, march!' and he moved off.

'Wait a moment,' said the young man. He had taken his resolution. 'Sir,' he continued as his father, pivoting on his wooden leg, turned and faced him, 'this affair is none of my making, so that whatever happens I cannot be to blame. However, I think it right to tell you beforehand, that if you force me to go before the mayor, you, and all concerned, will soon be sorry for it.'

'Eh, what?' cried the colonel. 'Why, you are not going to blow your brains out, are you?'

'I am not such a fool,' said Victor.

'I don't know that; but never mind; if that

is all you have to say, march!' returned his father, whose imagination suggested no other possible case that could raise regret.

They set out, the colonel dancing along gaily, with two steps of his living leg for one of the other. The pathways leading to Hennebon were crowded with people, in their holiday dresses, for the Kermerays and Juvignys were of too much note in the country for a marriage to take place between the families without creating some excitement. The men in their loose breeches tied at the knee, their long, wide doublets, and their enormous brimmed hats, under which their long hair floated on their shoulders; the women in their laced bodices and curious caps, respectfully saluted the father and the son as they passed, and then continued their way towards the beautiful church—the pride of Hennebon—there to await the bridal party on its return from the townhouse.

Monsieur Juvigny, with his daughter and a numerous escort, arrived a moment after the Kermerays. The mutual greetings were soon over. The colonel with some difficulty got the witnesses and friends of the young couple into their proper places. Then the mayor put on his spectacles and the formalities began.

All went on as usual, till, addressing the bridegroom, the civil functionary put the important question—

'Monsieur Victor Kermeray, do you take Mademoiselle Louise Juvigny to be your wife?'

The decisive moment had now come. 'No!' cried Victor in a loud clear voice; and after casting an involuntary glance at Louise, he moved to the door.

All the others remained motionless with astonishment, but the ready colonel seized his cane, aimed a heavy blow with it at his son's head as he passed him. The execution, however, was not equal to the design; the furious man missed his mark, lost his balance, and falling between two benches, broke his leg. But happily it was his wooden one.

The conclusion of the scene we leave to be imagined. Victor, unconscious of his father's attempt or of his accident, left the townhouse with a hurried step, and proceeded straight to Briquebec's cottage. That worthy was absent, having gone like everybody else to see the wedding. The man had therefore time to reflect on what he had just done, and he began to think he had not done wisely—soon, however, he began to fear he had not done well.

At length Briquebec returned. There was a flush on his brow, and his eye shot a fiery glance on the young man as he entered, but he nevertheless saluted him courteously and sat down opposite to him.

'You of course know what has happened, Monsieur Briquebec,' said Victor with a forced smile.

'Yes, of course everybody does.'

'Well, you know how it was. What else could I do?'

'Oh yes! what else could you do? You have broken your father's heart, and bowed down his old head with shame—but what else could you do?'

'Briquebec!—'

'You have affronted worthy Monsieur Juvigny, as no man ever affronted another before—but what else could you do? You have insulted the feelings of a young lady—(here the old sailor started to his feet)—a model of goodness and beauty, in a more cruel and cold-blooded way than even a *poulpiquet** or a korrigan could have invented—but what could you do? And then, not a bit ashamed of yourself, you come to anchor in an honest man's house, and to think he will disgrace it by giving you shelter—but what could you do?' cried the old man with increased passion; 'better that you had seen the hind of St. Nennoch† this day, than do what you have done!'

'Briquebec!' said Victor quickly, 'enough, enough! I was blind; I was mad! But now my eyes are opened; I would give the world to recall the last hour. My poor father! And Mademoiselle Juvigny! Miserable creature that I am! But there is no help; nothing remains for me but to expiate my fault. Tell them how I repent; tell her that now I feel I love her, but that I did not know it till too late.'

As he uttered these broken sentences the unhappy youth sprang towards the chimney, beside which a rifle stood; but the old sailor was before him. Seizing the piece with one hand, with the other he led Victor back to his chair.

'Sit down,' said he authoritatively. 'What good would it do suppose you killed yourself? Young man, I will say this much for you, that I believe you are more a fool than anything else. I cannot think your heart is so bad as it seems. Let me see what must be done. Hum! Well stay here till I return, and promise you will not attempt your life.'

The young man promised, and then turned his face to the wall in an agony of remorse and grief.

As for Briquebec, he left him, and went straight to colonel Kermeray's house. There he remained an hour. Next he betook himself to Monsieur Juvigny's. There he remained about two hours. Then he returned home.

'Monsieur Victor,' said he, arousing the young man, who seemed in a state of lethargy—

* Poulpiquets and Korrigans, malicious spirits in the legends of Brittany.

† According to a local superstition, the bride or bridegroom who sees the phantom hind of St. Nennoch on their wedding day will die during the night.