

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Edinburgh Instructor.

THE GLOVE.

FROM SCHILLER.

Behold the arena cleared; King Francis sits prepared To see the lion-fight; His statesmen and courtiers are there to see, And all around in the balcony Is a circle of ladies bright. The king he beckons, and lo! A door wide open they throw; And the lion from his rest has risen, And with heavy strides comes forth from his prison; And he started around, But uttered no sound, And yawn'd, and yawn'd, And shook his mane, And stretched his limbs, And lay down again. Now beckons the king, And the wardens swing Wide open another door With a savage spring, A tiger leap'd out, And he saw the lion As he look'd about, And rent the heaven with his roar, And he lash'd the rail With his heavy tail; Then slyly, slowly, he paced the ground The lion around, And round her old's his bristly tongue, And beside his foe, With an angry growl and a murmur low His tawny body he flung. The king he beckon'd once more; They open'd the door Of a double cell, and two leopards gay, With a warlike bound, Sprang to the tiger where he lay By his foe on the sandal ground. His claws he fixed in their spotted hides, But the lion jumped up with a warning roar, And the beasts drew back, and their battle was o'er, And, hot from the strife Of death and life, They crouched on their wounded sides. There fell from the balcony then and there A glove from the hand of a lady fair, Midway between The angry lion and tiger keen. Then said the Lady Conigond, To the Knight Delorges, jokingly, 'If thy love, sir knight, be as true and fond As every hour thou swearest to me, Go fetch my glove from the wild beasts den. Swiftly ran Delorges then; Over the barrier dire he pass'd, And fast and fearlessly making his way To where on the ground untouched it lay, He lifted the glove, and held it fast. Knights and ladies there assembled, Looking downward fear'd, and trembled; Safely back he bore the glove! Every mouth speaks out his praises, But his mistress there above— 'Tis no glance of scorn she raises On the knight that sought her love. He bowed before the lady fair— 'For, your thanks I have no care Nor claim,' and so he left her there.

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DIARY OF A CLERGYMAN.

BLIND SARAH.

Christian pastors have excellent opportunities for watching the effects of the gospel on the poor and the afflicted. They are welcome in the cottages of poverty and at the bedside of sickness. What they say is listened to with gratitude, and treasured in memory. When sickness prostrates the body, or death threatens to rend the veil which separates the mysteries of the purely spiritual world from the every day characteristics of the present scene, men are not hardy enough, generally speaking, to resist appeal to conscience, or to plead those miserable subterfuges in which they too frequently take refuge in the time of health. It is, indeed, matter of regret that persons living in a land so highly privileged as ours should perseveringly resist the introduction of light, and systematically cherish the opposing darkness, while prosperity illumines their path, and the colour of health blooms on their cheek. It would be better for them to recognise the worth of Christianity, to embrace its sublime doctrines, and attend to its generous precepts, previous to the disturbing influence of affliction, or the distracting apprehension of an early summons to the bar of God. They would then find that Christianity is a Divine companion, pouring light upon the dark passages of life, and cheering the spirit in its journey to a land where pains are unfelt, tears unknown, and death only an historical spectre. As it is, the procrustean habit proves an additional weight to the burden which is felt when men must lie down and think. Think! Ay, that thinking faculty is the glory and terror of man, his good angel or his demon, his heaven or his hell! And it is surprising—to those who have not witnessed such cases, incredible—

how upon the sick bed, or that which is believed to be the death bed, some men will think! Persons to whom we had never given credit for any measure of intelligence beyond the ordinary discrimination between matters of palpable difference in the ordinary affairs of life, when the dim rushlight is burning in their chamber of sickness, and the probability of death hovering before them, will think with a force and clearness distressing to themselves and most suggestive to the visitor. Of course I do not refer to those humbling confessions which are offered as a tribute to trust, or extorted by the inquisitor, pain; but to those views of the world and of futurity which spring up before the minds of the afflicted in their calmer moments, when they seem to be in the act of balancing conduct and consequences against each other. If the sufferer has been surrounded in early life by religious influences which he then disregarded, or has had some truth pressed upon his attention which he was at the time reluctant to examine, the force with which the memory of this criminal indifference rushes upon his mind, is like opening a new window in a house with which he supposed himself familiar, and letting in light upon objects of whose presence he was not previously aware. I told you all this before, the visitor may be supposed to say to the awakened thinker; I told you all this before, and assured you that sooner or later you would view these important matters in a very different light from that in which you were accustomed to regard them; and now, instead of upbraiding you with past neglects (a needless task on my part, as your own aroused sensibilities do it to far better purpose than I could), I thank God, who has not allowed you to go down to the grave totally insensible to the realities of existence, the condition of your soul, and the character of that God with whom you have to do. The testimony borne to the power of the gospel under such circumstances is very great. 'I never felt as I do now; I never saw things in this light before; O that I had my life to live over again!' If it please God to restore me to health, what a different life shall I live! How fearfully have I neglected my Sabbaths! Is it possible that I can be pardoned? are statements and exclamations often heard by Christian pastors and other religious visitors in the sick chamber; and were it not that they were permitted to repeat the assurance of the Great Redeemer, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no ways cast out,' and to fix attention on the doctrine of atonement by sacrifice, these confessions and exclamations would be awful in the extreme. Man cannot help his suffering brother then! The rich may relieve the wants of the poor, he that hath two coats may impart to him that hath none, and the intelligent may beneficially counsel the ignorant, when all the parties are in possession of health, or when the question relates only to this present world; but when it assumes this absorbing shape—'What shall I do to be saved?' or, 'How can God be just, and justify the sinner?'—man's material wealth is lighter than vanity, and his wisdom foolishness; he must then have recourse to heavenly treasures he must then quote from a divine book. The gospel of the grace of God amply and only meets the case. Men may turn their back on the soft effulgence of Christianity in the day of prosperity, and walk in a light of their own choosing; but the self-made lamp has no ray capable of piercing eternity, and the cold breath of death invariably extinguishes it at the very moment when the traveller feels his greatest need of its assistance! How often are we reminded of that passage of the great Book, 'Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.'

There are, however, other kinds of affliction besides those of a sick bed, amidst which the testimony borne to the gospel is expressed in the language of calm gratitude, from week to week, and from year to year—a sort of living and acted commentary upon the divinity of its truths. The knowledge of such cases is a real relief to the mind of the true minister when oppressed by the stupidity and stubbornness of the multitude, who admit everything, but believe nothing, who assent to all one says, but live as if no voice of friendly warning from God or man had ever fallen upon their ears. Poor blind Sarah! Thou hast often afforded such relief to my spirit. Poor blind Sarah! it were well for many who say 'We see,' if their vision were as clear as thine. And who is blind Sarah? Come with me, 'proud rational,' who has discovered that the Bible is a cunningly devised fable, that all preachers of the gospel are impostors, and all professing Christians canting hypocrites—come with me and see poor Sarah, and judge for yourself whether this fable has not been a blessed thing to her. All the legions of angels in your rationalistic heaven could not sing so sweet a song in the ear of Sarah as does the voice of that old book, which her little niece reads to her daily, and many portions of which she repeated to herself, for she has treasured in memory most of the psalms of the royal poet, many of the sublime gushings of Isaiah, and almost the entire New Testament; and what is more, her temper, conversation, and conduct are daily witnessed that her religion is a gracious power. Come, you need not hesitate. Sarah will neither cant nor preach—things, however, which should not alarm you, who are so strongly fortified by the power of reason! We proceeded for half a mile along the turnpike road

and then turn a short distance to the right between two hedges, climbing a broken pathway, where a muddy stream gurgles in winter and where a colony of frogs enjoy themselves on dewy summer evening. At the top of this little eminence stands Sarah's cottage. I am always sad when I pass this way, at the thought that Sarah cannot see the fertile landscape and beautiful view surrounding her humble dwelling, especially as her love of flowers amounts almost to a passion; referring to which one day she expressed her fears to me that she was guilty of idolatry, a remark which forcibly illustrates one principle which you must admire—conscientiousness.

God supplies the absence or deficiency of one sense by increasing the power of another. Blind persons are generally acute in the sense of hearing, or that of feeling, or both. I once knew a deaf woman who saw objects distinctly at a surprising distance, and a person deprived both of sight and hearing has been known to distinguish colours by the power of feeling. These things are very remarkable. They seem to indicate a tendency to what may be called the equilibrium of the senses in the animal economy. Whether the operations of intelligence have anything to do with this phenomenon, I presume not to say; but I think it highly probable. Sarah's sense of hearing is very quick. After one or two visits she discovers by the step the person who calls. I have sometimes tried to deceive her by making my foot fall lighter or heavier than usual, but without effect. The invariable recognition and welcome were, 'Come in, sir, I am glad you have called.' These were her words when last I saw her; and it is not likely I shall ever see her again until we reach that world where both she and I will see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Many miles separate us now. Sarah is no traveller, and my duties seldom call me to the part of the kingdom where she resides. Yet I have no doubt that even now she would remember both my voice and step, and repeat the outlives of many a sermon, long since forgotten by the preacher. The last conversation I had with her follows.

'I was thinking of you, Sarah, whilst crossing Farmer Dickson's meadow this evening. Really it is beautiful. The flowers bloom exquisitely. How I wish you had seen them!'

'I am much obliged to you, sir, for thinking of me at all, and for your kindly meant wish, but I could not have that wish myself. But you love flowers?'

'Too much, I fear, but you have taught me not to wish to see them, and I have long found it better to attend to what my minister says, as far as I can, than to disregard it. And I think you would be offended with one of the feeblest of your flock for that.'

'The feeblest of the flock are generally the strongest, Sarah; those who fancy themselves powerful are often weak; and that fancy of theirs is the symptom of their weakness, as the indication of some diseases are feelings of unusual health; but how I have taught you not to wish to see flowers, I do not exactly understand.'

'In your sermon on the text, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," you say that man's wants and wishes seldom harmonised; that if we understood our wants better, it is probable that our prayers would be different from what they are; and that we should be careful in the expression of our wishes, because in reality they are nothing more or less than prayers; and, besides, you added, they are generally uttered with far greater earnestness than our petitions at the throne of grace. I have never since that time wished to see, because I feel that I could not make this a petition to God. Had sight been good for me, I am certain I should not have been deprived of it. I am, or I desire to be, contented. As to flowers, you see I have a few in the window. I can smell their sweet perfume, and I know when they need watering or dressing as well as if I saw. I can hear the hums, the prayers, and the sermon on Sunday, which is always a high day with me. The only thing that pains is when my poor mother is unable to speak, to tell me her wants. I feel about her bed, and do all I can to make her easy in her long illness; but sometimes she is unable to say what she wants, and I then fear there is something I might do for her which I did not, from not knowing it. My brother, you know, sir, is a day labourer, and has to provide for his wife and children, and he is unable to come here often. His wife comes as often as possible, for Mary is very kind-hearted, and she sometimes leaves little Nelly, who reads to me—you know she learned to read in the Sunday School—when I can hear her; and upon the whole, I am very comfortable, and desire to be thankful.'

'Ah, sir, I daresay. But you know I have to live by faith, in man as well as in God, and if we receive the testimony of man, the testimony of God is greater.' I believe that you saw the flowers in the meadow. I have to take your word for it. And so I think I may surely take God's word for what he has said. To me, at least, these things are not delusions, but blessed realities. And though I never saw any flowers, yet if the gentleman you speak of were to tell me there are none, I could not believe him, because I have felt them. And I am sure, too, the gospel is true, for I have felt it.'

'Happy Sarah! you remind me of a passage in Scripture. What is that, sir?'

'I know thy poverty, but thou art rich. And now farewell. Peace be with you!'

'And with thy spirit,' said Sarah; and that the wish was a heart prayer, I am fully satisfied.

ADVENTURES OF A YORKSHIRE GROOM.

LETTERS from Parma, of the 9th instant, announce that the resolution has been taken at Vienna to deprive the Duke of Parma of the administration of his states, and to put in a regency of which Ward is to be the head. The elevation of Ward affords not only a singular instance of the mutability of human affairs, but of the tendency of the Anglo Saxon race, when transplanted to foreign countries, to emerge to eminence, and surpass others by the homely but rare qualities of common sense and untalented energy. Ward was a Yorkshire groom. The Duke of Lucca, when on a visit to this country, perceiving the lad's merit, took him into his service, and promoted him, through the several degrees of command in his stable, to be the head groom of the ducal stud. Upon Ward's arrival in Italy with his master, it was soon found that the intelligence which he displayed in the management of the stables was applicable to a variety of other departments. In fact the duke had such a high opinion of Ward's wisdom, that he very rarely omitted to consult him upon any question that he was perplexed to decide. As Louis XII. used to answer those who applied to him on any business, by referring them to the Cardinal d'Amboise, with the words: 'Ask George,' so Charles of Lucca cut short all applications with 'Go to Ward.' He now became the fétotum of the prince, won, in the disturbances which preceded the revolutionary year of 1848, a diplomatic dignity, and was despatched to Florence upon a confidential mission of the highest importance. He was deputed to deliver to the Grand Duke the act of abdication of the Duke of Lucca. Soon after, in 1849, when the Duke of Lucca resigned his other states to his son, Ward became the head counsellor of his prince. Ward was on one occasion despatched to Vienna in a diplomatic capacity. Schwarzenberg was astonished at his capacity; in fact, the *débutant* Yorkshire stable boy was the only one of the diplomatic body that could make head against the impetuous counsels, or rather dictates, of Schwarzenberg; and this was found highly useful by other members of the diplomatic body. An English gentleman, supping one night at the Russian ambassador's, complimented him upon his excellent ham. 'There's a member of our diplomatic corps here,' replied Meyendorff, who supplies us all with hams from Yorkshire, of which county he is a native.' Ward visited England. The broad dialect and homely phrase betraying his origin through the profusion of orders of all countries sparkling on his breast, he rarely ventured to appear at evening soirees. Lord Palmerston declared he was one of the most remarkable men he had ever met with. Ward, through all his vicissitudes, has preserved an honest pride in his native country. He does not conceal his humble origin. The portraits of his parents, in their home span clothes, appear in his splendid saloon of the prime minister of Parma.

From Punch's Pocket Book for 1853. THE FATAL QUESTION.

A TALE OF THE BALUSTRADES.

(Being the specimen of a Novel in Three Volumes, wanting a Publisher.)

It was a dull afternoon in August, when a stranger might be seen, leaning with his chin supported by the top of his thumb, over one of the balustrades of the bridge of Waterloo. There was a slight wind which kept whispering in the stranger's ear, but what the wind seemed to say, or what the stranger mentally replied, must remain forever a mystery. The stranger wore an alpaca coat, of a greyish hue, which had seen better days and better buttons. His hat, which was a wide awake, contrasted curiously with his sleepy aspect, and a pawnbroker's ticket protruding from the pocket of his waistcoat told a sad story of a watch once going—but now gone—perhaps forever. In a few minutes the stranger was joined by one in whose coat age had sown a quantity of seeds, and his collar was secured by a fastening, the existence of which seemed to hang upon a thread of the very slenderest texture. Spooner, for such was the name of him who wore the wide awake, gave a faint groan when he recognised Tomkins, for so was he called, whose presence we have last spoken of. 'Well,' muttered Spooner through his teeth, which were decayed like his hopes, 'how long is the canker to play upon my heart's blighted blossoms?'—'Tell me rather,' moaned Tomkins with a wild glance at a passing omnibus, 'tell me rather when I shall draw out the enamoured dart that has for moat