

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

GOOD HEART AND WILLING HAND.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

IN storms or shine two friends of mine
Go forth to work or play,
And when they visit poor men's homes,
They bless them by the way,
'Tis willing hand! 'tis cheerful heart!
The two best friends I know,
Around the earth comes joy and mirth
Where'er their faces glow.
Come shine—'tis bright! come dark! 'tis light!
Come cold—'tis warm e'er long!
So heavily fall the hammer stroke!
Merrily sound the song!

Who falls may stand, if good Right Hand
Is first not second best;
Who weeps may sing, if Kindly Heart
Has lodging in his breast,
The humblest board has dainties poured,
When they sit down to dine;
The crust they eat is honey sweet,
The water good as wine,
They fill the purse with honest gold,
They lead no creature wrong;
So heavily fall the hammer stroke!
Merrily sound the song!

Without these twain, the poor complain
Of evils hard to bear,
But with them Poverty grows rich,
And finds a loaf to spare!
Their looks are fire their words inspire—
Their deeds give courage high;
About their knees their children run,
Or climb they know not why,
Who sails, or rides, or walks with them,
Ne'er finds the journey long;—
So heavily falls the hammer stroke!
Merrily sound the song.

THE KING'S WITNESS.

ON the fourth evening subsequent to this conversation, Richard Hayward, who had been several hours absent, hastily re-entered his shop, and after asking a few unimportant questions, dispatched the boy who had been left in charge of it for a pint of brandy. The boy soon returned with the liquor, the shutters of the stall were then put up, and the lad went home. 'He is still asleep, I suppose,' muttered Hayward, as, after lighting a candle, he stole softly up a flight of stairs, and peered into a back room where Armstrong lay couched upon a bag of straw. 'Ay, he is, indeed, and quite fast too. Last night's tramp, profitless as it was, must have been a tiring one. I will call him presently,' he added, as he returned to the small sitting-room; 'it's not eight yet, and there's consequently two good hours before us. Yes,' continued Hayward, still muttering to himself, 'that will be best: I cannot wait longer—poorer, poorer every day. No matter: it will go hard with me if I do not rid myself of that curse, at all events. He goes home from the hall alone by the copse, usually about ten o'clock—seldom later. The reward will certainly be much larger than if it were Gordon; much, there can be no doubt. I had indeed wished—but after all, the reward, the reward is the chief thing! Escape from misery, destitution, cold, hunger, rags; and Gordon never injured me, except in the matter of the girl, and that's not much; never liked that detested ruffian up stairs—oh! here he comes,' he added, suddenly restraining himself as a heavy step descended the stairs. 'Well, it must be now or never.'

Hayward greeted his friend and guest with gleeful good humour.

'I think, do you know, Armstrong,' he began, 'I should like to accompany you to-night, just for the fun and frolic of the thing.' Perhaps I might bring you good luck.'

'I wish you could, for I am confoundedly out of the article myself. But you are not, I suppose, serious?'

'I am, indeed: that is, if you have no objection.'

'Not the least; why should I? Here's fortune, then,' he added, tossing off the brandy which Hayward proffered. 'I say,' he resumed, after wiping his lips with the back of his hand, 'you haven't heard any more about a warrant being out against me, have you?'

'I'll tell you all about it by-and-by; don't make yourself uneasy; things will come out straight enough one of these days, I dare say, warped and crooked as they seem just now. But come, wet the other eye; it won't hurt you. And now I think of it, I'll just put the rest into this wicker-bottle; we shall want it this cold night. Let me see! where was it you said you hid the gun last night?—near the copse, wasn't it?'

'Yes. I thought I saw a couple of keepers waiting for me further on; and so took that precaution against mischief.'

The two men soon afterwards went out together, and walked smartly on to a distance of about five miles. They halted by a half-ruined, tenanted cow-shed, where, beneath a heap of furze, Armstrong had concealed his gun. It was soon in his hand, and carefully loaded and primed.

'Let's rest a while on this piece of timber, said Hayward, himself setting the example. 'I'm half out of breath; and here, have another pull at the brandy.'

Armstrong readily complied with the last invitation, and the bottle being handed to him, took a good draught. He afterwards recalled to mind that Hayward did not drink.

'You were asking a while since about that warrant,' presently remarked Hayward in a careless tone. 'Well, it is unfortunate too true. Robert Gordon has sworn he has seen you skulking near the spot where the deer was shot and carried off, about ten minutes only before it happened—'

'The devil fly away with Gordon! fiercely broke in Armstrong.

'Ay, so say I,' returned his companion, 'though I don't suppose—take another pull, there's plenty—though I don't suppose he will fly away with the informing viper: unless, indeed, you or I were to furnish the young gentleman with a leaden ticket of leave.'

'What are you driving at, Richard Hayward?' demanded Armstrong? 'Do you want to set me mad?'

'Mad? nonsense! I was merely thinking—what's that?'

'What's what? where?' cried Armstrong, staring round.

'I thought I saw some one coming this way; but it's a false alarm: here's a slight drain left—sip it up, man, I've had plenty to-day myself. As I was saying,' resumed Hayward, after receiving back the now empty wicker bottle and throwing it away, 'as I was saying, Master Robert Gordon is a surprisingly lucky fellow. I met him this afternoon in town—he'd just been and settled your business before the magistrates, and he said the warrant was out; but he has, I am glad to find, no notion you are hiding with me, for he asked me if I had lately seen that rascally goal-bird—meaning you, of course.'

'Damnation!'

'Yes, he's uncommon smart and bounceable just now, to be sure; he had his little boy with him too—a pretty child, to my fancy—and very, in my opinion, like his mother.'

'Don't, Richard Hayward, don't!' gasped Armstrong; 'you'll set me furious—distracted—mad!'

'Hark!' interrupted Hayward. 'Yonder is a man, and coming this way.'

The two men instantly cowered down behind the cow-shed. After a minute or two Hayward rose stealthily, and looked about.

'I can see him by the style yonder,' he whispered. 'It strikes me, Armstrong,' he added in a changed and ominous tone; 'it strikes me that it is—but I'll creep forward and ascertain.'

He did so, and returned after about five minutes' absence. Armstrong afterwards said that, inflamed and bewildered as he himself was with drink and rage, the death-white face and fiery eyes of Hayward, when he re-appeared, quite startled him.

'It's he,' he said, in a fierce, hurried whisper; 'he, your deadly enemy and mine; he who robbed you of Letty Osborne, of your good name, of your house and home, and means of life; who hunted you to jail, and is even now armed with a fresh warrant in search of you—he, Robert Gordon!'

'Again! now after me, do you say?' said Armstrong, in a voice choked with passion.

'Yes—yes, I tell you: he expected to find the constables here, for I heard him say to himself aloud, "Where the deuce can they be stopping?" Now—now is your time to clear all scores at a blow; in a few minutes he will be beyond our reach—now! You won't?' continued the devilish tempter, seeing his victim still hesitate; 'then what I overheard Gordon say to his wife to-day in reply to her fear that there might be danger in apprehending you, is true; that you were a mere bullying coward, and courageous only with your brutal fists against persons not so strong as yourself.'

A suppressed shriek of rage partially burst from Armstrong; and yielding to Hayward's impulse, he strode swiftly and violently forwards.

A few minutes brought them within a few yards of the figure of a man who, with his back towards them, was slowly walking in the direction of Mowbray-park.

'Now,' said Hayward, pointing through an open space in some intervening bushes, 'now—a moment's resolution' and you are avenged; unless, indeed, as he told his pretty Letty, you are a paltry coward.'

As the word passed the villain's lips, Armstrong's gun was suddenly raised, pointed, the contents blazed forth, and the foul murder was accomplished! Armstrong remained spell-bound, rooted to the spot, gazing with a frenzied stare upon his work. Not so Hayward, who stepped briskly to where the stranger had fallen, saw that he was quite dead—the charge had entered the back of his neck; stooped down and took a purse from one of the pockets, and returned to Armstrong.

'We have made a terrible mistake,' he whispered: 'instead of Robert Gordon, you have shot Henry Mowbray, Sir Gerald's youngest and favourite son.' A groan of uttermost despair broke in upon his speech, but he heeded it not, save by a disdainful smile and coolly pro-

ceeded, 'There will be a hot pursuit, we may be sure, at daybreak. But come, take this purse—I have only abstracted a couple of pieces for present necessities—and follow me. I know where you may securely hide for twenty years, if it were needful to do so.'

The consternation and outcry throughout the neighbourhood on the discovery of the body of the unfortunate young gentleman—who was a favourite with all classes of people—was of course tremendous; but spite of the unwearied and zealous exertions of both constabulary and people, aided by officers from Bow-street, day after day, and week after week, were passing, without the slightest clue to the perpetrators of the dreadful deed being discovered. At length a government reward of three hundred guineas was proclaimed for the discovery of the assassin or assassins, and receivable, together with the king's free pardon, by any accomplice save he who actually fired the fatal shot. To this temptation Sir Gerald Mowbray offered an additional two hundred out of his own pocket.

A considerable crowd had collected round the place in Carlisle where the royal proclamation and Sir Gerald's broad-sheet were about to be posted, and amongst them was Richard Hayward. He perused both bills minutely, and several times over. Then, as if perfectly satisfied, he walked away, and presented himself at the residence of the mayor. That gentleman was at home, and he at once desired Hayward to be shown in.

'I have seen,' said Hayward, 'two posters offering rewards for the discovery of the assassin or assassins of Henry Mowbray. They are I conclude genuine?'

'Certainly, they are.'

'Then I claim the reward and pardon! I was an accomplice in the act, but George Armstrong actually committed it. I will tell your officers where to find him.'

The disgust, astonishment and indignation excited by the ruffian's coolness and audacity were of course extreme. No time was, however, lost in acting upon the information thus obtained; and three hours later both Armstrong and Hayward were separately lodged in Carlisle jail.

Armstrong had not been informed of Hayward's deadly treachery; and when brought the next day before the magistrates, steadily persisted in denying the guilt imputed to him. A small quantity of gold found upon him, and a green silk purse, which was believed to have belonged to the deceased, although no one would swear positively to that fact, was the only evidence against him; and it was plain, from the gradual quickening of his restless eyes, that as the insufficiency of the slight circumstantial testimony against him became apparent, renewed hope of escape and life were creeping back to his heart, when the presiding magistrate directed the witness Richard Hayward to be brought in.

'The witness!' screamed the prisoner; 'the witness! no—no—no, that is utterly impossible! However impossible he might strive to deem it, his face not the less instantly became livid with terror, and huge beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.'

Richard Hayward entered, was duly sworn, and then gave in detail the chief particulars as I have narrated them. The horror and consternation of the prisoner during this examination may be conceived, but not depicted, in words, at least. Ultimately the violence of his emotions subsided; the expression of a calm despair settled upon him, and it should seem that he even drew consolation from a comparison of his own almost innocence when contrasted with the atrocious guilt of the 'King's Witness.'

As soon as Hayward's evidence was concluded, the prisoner, after the usual caution had been given, was asked if he had any observation to make.

'Yes,' replied Armstrong in a steady voice, I have. All that you have heard is true, but it is not all the truth. He then clearly, and with much graphic force, related how he had been urged, tempted, deceived into the crime with which he was charged, by Hayward. The magistrates gazed at each other in dumb consternation, almost doubting the evidence of their ears.

'What do you say to this?' exclaimed the mayor, addressing Hayward. 'If it be true, you are a thousand times guiltier than the prisoner.'

'That may be so; still, as I was not the actual murderer, it is quite certain,' replied Hayward, with unflinching effrontery, 'that the king's word is pledged both to award me a free pardon and three hundred guineas. As one of the conditions is, I understand, that there shall be on my part a full and candid revelation of all the facts of the case, I at once admit that what the prisoner has stated with regard to my agency in this matter is strictly accurate—perfectly so!'

There was another pause of wonder, dismay and horror.

'And what,' cried one of the magistrates, as soon as he could find words, 'what could have induced you to urge this wretched man to the commission of murder?'

'There were several reasons,' replied Hayward, with unruffled composure. 'In the first place I hated him, with a just and deadly ha-

tred, all the more deadly, suffocating, so to speak, that I was obliged to conceal it for months beneath a mask of smiles and courtesies. He treated me brutally, savagely, before five hundred deriding spectators. Then, I am poor—miserably poor and necessitous, with a keen taste for enjoyments beyond my reach; and having heedfully noted the tendency of Armstrong's passions, it occurred to me that I might, without much risk, entitle myself to a heavy reward.'

It is needless to dwell further upon the details of this terrible audience. Both the men were re-committed to jail, and the crown lawyers were advised with as to the necessity, under the circumstances, of conferring impunity and reward upon so atrocious a ruffian. They answered that there was, unfortunately, no help for it; and in the end Armstrong was convicted on the approver's evidence, and duly executed. Hayward obtained the government reward, but not that which Sir Gerald Mowbray had promised, the baronet very naturally refusing to pay, unless compelled by an action at law; which, I hardly need say, was never brought. Hayward was escorted to some distance from Carlisle by soldiers, in order to protect him from the fury of the mob: he then made for London, where he at once disappeared, and till about two years afterwards nothing was heard of him.

As nearly as may be to the expiration of that period, a ragged, wretched man was arraigned at the bar of the Old Bailey, London, under the name of William Edwards, for stealing a gentleman's great-coat from the passage of a dwelling-house in Queen-square. There were mitigating circumstances in the case. The prisoner had been previously unknown to the then metropolitan police, and it appeared that the theft had been committed under pressure of extreme want: he had only pawned the coat for two shillings, although twenty times that amount would have been readily lent on it, and had, moreover, the next day forwarded the pawnbroker's ticket or duplicate to the proprietor of the coat by post. Under these circumstances, the judge, although the extreme legal punishment was death, was about to pass a sentence of imprisonment only, when a country-looking person, who had been for some time intently watching the prisoner, handed a paper to his lordship. The judge glanced at it, seemed startled, and said, hastily addressing the countryman, 'Are you sure of this?'

'I am,' replied Robert Gordon, who, by one of those strange coincidences which sometimes occur, chanced to be present in court; 'that man is Richard Hayward of Carlisle.'

The judge looked at the prisoner, but before he could utter the question which was upon his lips, the convict anticipated it. 'The bolt has fallen then,' said Richard Hayward, for it was indeed he. 'I knew it would not be long delayed. I am Richard Hayward of Carlisle.—Your lordship's sentence will, I know be the gallows. Only last night I saw myself upon it with five others; and right in front of the crowd—I saw them as distinctly as I do your lordship on the bench—stood Henry Mowbray and George Armstrong, their right hands raised and sternly pointing upwards. I knew that I was doomed, and my hour is, I now perceive, come. It is well; for I am weary of existence: the money I obtained was accursed, doubtless, for my sake. It soon vanished and since that I have led a life of wretchedness, bitterness, shame and despair! Yet let me say, that amidst all the abject misery I have endured, I never disgraced myself by theft, till, in a moment of madness, I committed the act of which I was a few minutes justly convicted. I have no more to say.'

He was sentenced to death, nominally for the theft in Queen-square, really for the murder in Cumberland; and, oddly enough, precisely five perished with him. This prophecy may however, have been suggested by the convict's knowledge—his being almost the last case of the sessions—of the number of prisoners under capital condemnation. A rambling, incoherent narrative, of which I have slightly availed myself, of some parts of this history, was written him between the days of sentence and execution. It was afterwards published in the county paper, and appears to have induced a belief in many persons that his brain had been all along affected, possibly by the blows he received in the fight with Armstrong.

It is quite clear, then, that Sir Robert Peel's apparent belief that he was the first secretary of state reluctantly compelled to reward the contriver of a murder for betraying the instrument he had employed to commit it, is an erroneous one. In the Irish case there were, I believe, two men hanged, and the king's witness, if I remember right, got safe off to America.

SCRAPS.

CHEAP ORNAMENT.—When Dr Franklin was in Paris, his daughter, Mrs Bache, wrote to him for a supply of feathers and thread lace. The Doctor declined in the following characteristic note:—'If you wear your cambric ruffles as I do, and take care not to mend the holes, they will come in time to be lace; and feathers, my dear girl, may be had in America from every Turkey's tail.'

A TEST FOR FRIENDSHIP.—Those who would live together as friends and equals must not be constantly criticising each other.