

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Blackwood's Magazine for October.

FROM INDIA.

"The blood of thy brother crieth to me from the ground."

Oh, sons of women have ye heard it told,
That savage, dismal miserable tale,
And sleeping soft thereafter, heard no wail
Through your safe slumbers echoing manifold?

That wail! oh Heaven! What English word
can say

How the blood cries from the unholy ground!
Heard ye the sound?

Shreaking and sobbing through this summer
day,

Such agony of horrors and of fear—
Oh sons of women, rise and hear!—

As centuries calm have hushed from man's af-
frighted ear.

Honor and fame, the triumph of our race,
Ye trumpet tongues of war, sound forth the
call!

Oh tender Heaven, oh friends, if this
were all,

And hopeful farewell griefs filled this woe's
place!

Then might we speak and weep, and yet be
calm,

God keep those sons of hope, those heirs of
fame,

God bless each dearest name!

Our very tears would echo like a psalm,
Oh mother-land, deep groaning from afar

To where thy slaughtered children are,
This dismal fight of fiends, this carnage is
not war!

Wider than war, more deadly far than death!
Oh warriors, soldiers, captains, men of
might!

Though yours be still the guidance of the
fight,

The quarrel is of all who draw their breath
From life of women! Oh ye mothers' sons!

Rise up and hear the intolerable cry
Renewing this purest sky—

Death-groans of all those tortured tender ones,
Fainting mid horrors worse than fire or knife.

He who stands calm, I swear, and sees this
strife,

Never loved women yet in all his barren life?

Oh tender blood, loud crying from that shore!
Oh untold agony, too great for speech!

Oh perfect death, which no more harm can
reach!

Thank God that never, never more
The insulted life can throb within those
veins;

Thank God that no one lives to tell the
tale

That nothing but a wail
Of this, which is unspeakable, remains!

Oh women slain! Over each tender head,
While men vow vengeance dread,

This comfort sore we take—thank heaven that
ye are dead!

But if in God's dark maze of providence
Such hour of darkness should appear again,
Oh men, if ye be men!

Kiss them and kill them in their innocence!
Was there not one among your hero band
Who in the blaze of loud explosion, gave
A young life, true and brave,

To snatch fell weapons from the murderer's
hand?

And dare ye less to save
That sacred nucleus of your race, wherein
As in a shrine your honor make abode?

Oh fathers, husbands, brothers, think no sin!
But out of horror, out of agony,
With your swift tender bullets tenderly
Dismiss them to the keeping of their God!

Oh Mother-land, arise! Oh mother's sons!

This quarrel bears no prelude of weak words,
Speak in the flashing of a million swords,
Speak in the thunder of avenging guns!

Speak as loud nature speaks in storm and
flame!

Quick as the sudden breath we draw,
Oh justice and the law!

Strike as the lightning, swift and sure of aim!
By every tortured soul, and heart that bled,
By every martyr head.

Oh justice, born of Heaven, think on the in-
sulted dead!

THE ONLY SON.

A VILLAGE TALE.

ONE fine summer morning, as I was riding
with a friend through a handsome village in the
central part of New York, and admiring the
beauties he pointed out to me with all the pride
and precision of the 'oldest inhabitant,' my at-
tention was attracted by an aged couple, dressed
in deep mourning, who were walking slowly
down a shaded avenue, in front of one of the
most beautiful residences in the place.

The feeble steps of the old lady, who leaned
heavily upon the arm of her companion, and the
expression of deep and lasting sorrow which
possessed her thin and pallid features, contrasted
with the firm tread, and stern, solemn aspect
of the old man, awoke my curiosity, and I
inquired if there was not some domestic his-

tory of interest connected with this venerable
couple.

'There is, indeed,' replied my friend. 'You
recall to my mind one of the most singular in-
cidents—the most startling tragedy, in short
—which our goodly village ever witness-
ed.'

'That old and sorrow-stricken couple,' pur-
sued my friend, 'may be seen, twice or three
times a week—oftener, when the weather is
fine—walking down the avenue in just such
a manner—never any faster—never any slower.'

You see them now getting into the carriage,
which has just rolled up to the gate. They will
ride a mile, when the carriage will stop, and
they will walk through another gate, which is
of iron, hanging between posts of iron, all black
as ebony. They will enter a green field, where
the birds sing sweetly these fine mornings; a
lonely field, however, where there are no dwell-
ings above ground, yet where there are a great
many inhabitants—the rich and poor intermin-
gled, and resting on the same level, about four
feet beneath the sod!

This aged couple are going to visit the grave
of their only child.

He was a son. I will tell you his history if
you will listen.

This old man was once the most enterprising,
the boldest and most resolute man in the vicinity.
His name is Colonel H——. You
have heard of him, for he distinguished himself
in the last war. People used to say he was
made of iron. Yet he has one of the most up-
right, generous hearts in the world.

The old lady I remember as a lady of great
beauty, not more than twenty years ago, when
she was about forty. Besides, she was quite as
celebrated for her gentleness and benevolence,
as was the Colonel for his iron will. She had
a soft, affectionate heart, which shone beneficent-
ly on all, until its warmth was concentrated in
an only child.

He was a wild, handsome, passionate boy, ge-
nerous at times, but oftener tyrannical and will-
ful. We were schoolmates, and we always
played together until he was sent away to an
academy, when our intimacy ceased. I saw him
rarely afterwards, until, having been expelled
from college for striking a professor, in a fit of
passion, he returned to his father's house.

Morgan, in his childhood, had been indulged
and caressed by his fond mother, and by his father
treated with undue severity. The Colonel
loved his boy, but he believed in the necessity
of discipline, to curb his passions, while Mrs.
H., weeping over the father's stern treatment
of her darling, endeavored to make up for it in
indulgence. Then the boy grew up to fear his
father, and to feel a contempt for the authority
of his mother.

Well, on Morgan's return from college in
disgrace, he was so changed that you would
hardly have known him; not so much in personal
appearance, for he was still handsome, but in his
manners. All I need say is, he had
earned the reputation of being the most
reckless and dissipated fellow in college.

Col. H. was terribly enraged at the disgrace
his wild son had brought upon himself and family.
He treated him with greater severity
than ever, refusing to gratify his love of pleasure
by furnishing him with funds, and subjecting
him to the most rigid discipline. The result
was, father and son had a terrible quarrel,
in which the latter, biding his time, proved
himself to have imitated his iron will, if not his
nobleness of character.

That very day, Morgan left his father's house
and took up his residence at the hotel, to the
greatest distress of Mrs. H., who, from that
time, never saw a happy day. These events
occurred twelve years ago.

I don't know that the young man ever entered
the house but once afterwards, except to see
his mother in the absence of the Colonel, and to
obtain the funds she used to spare for him out
of her own allowance.

Morgan wished to go abroad. But to travel
very extensively, required more money than
Mrs. H. had at her command, and all her efforts
to induce the Colonel to grant a supply for the
purpose, were in vain. She might as well
have asked the sea to deliver up its riches. En-
raged at the ill success of her application, Morgan
determined to see his father himself, and by
some means procure the amount he was so des-
perately resolved to have.

Learning, one day, that the Colonel had re-
ceived a large sum of money, from the sale of
some land, Morgan thought it a fine opportu-
nity to make a descent on the paternal purse, and
accordingly called on the old gentleman before
he had had time to use the money, or deposit it
in the bank.

A domestic in the family, who admitted Morgan,
relates that the Colonel was in his study,
and that there was a bundle of bills on his desk
when the young man entered.

The Colonel's countenance never changed as
he looked up, and saw his son standing before
him; and when he spoke, his words came forth
cold and hard, as if his throat had been of
marble.

'What is your business, sir?'

Morgan returned his father's stern look with
an unflinching gaze, as he replied,

'I come to profer a claim.'

At the word claim, the Colonel sneered, but
said nothing.

'I desire to travel,' pursued Morgan, as if he
had been talking to an equal. 'It can be no
advantage to you to keep me within sight of
your door, which is shut against me, and within
the odor of your gardens and orchards, which I
cannot enjoy. You will not refuse, then, I
hope, to supply me with funds, and will enable
me to see something of the world, and to estab-
lish myself abroad.'

'If this is all your business,' said the Colonel
in a deeper tone, 'the sooner you go the bet-
ter,' and taking the bundle of bills, he locked it
up in his desk with a firm hand. 'I thought
you had more judgment than to come to me on
such a fool's errand. So, what you knew it was
impossible to obtain by pleading, you hoped to
draw from me by the impudence of a claim! Go,
I say, boy! not a dollar of my money shall
pass into your hands, until you have submitted
to my authority, which you have so lately des-
pised.'

Morgan's eyes flashed fire. The domestic,
who watched him from the door, declared she
thought, from the grinding of his teeth, and the
clenching of his fists, that he was going to strike
his father.

Without giving way to his passion, however,
the young man turned upon his heel, passed out
of the door, and never stopped to speak to his
distressed mother, mounted his horse, and rode
off to the hotel.

Mrs. H. flew to her husband, and clasping her
hands in agony, prayed that he would call the
young man back, speak to him no longer in a
stern and chilling tone, but kindly and fatherly,
and effect a reconciliation.

'My God!' murmured the Colonel, passion-
ately; 'am I to be trampled upon by my own
son? Am I to stoop, and he to triumph? When
he comes to me with an air of independence,
which is insupportable, am I to bend to
him and beg?'

'No! no!' sobbed the wretched woman; not
that. But speak to him kindly. Use persua-
sion—gentleness—'

'With a son! persuasion! You wrong my
patience,' exclaimed the colonel, in a husky
voice. 'Leave me.'

No more words passed between the parents
of the unhappy youth; but during the remain-
der of the day, the mother was keenly distress-
ed, and the stern father was ill at ease.

The latter passed a sleepless night. He paced
the floor until late, with his brow contracted and
his lips compressed; then retired, and lay for
two hours, meditating on some subject which
excited his brain. Mrs. H. who was likewise
awake, knew too well what the subject was.

Considerably past midnight the colonel
arose.

'Is anything the matter?' asked his
wife.

'I don't know, replied the colonel. I thought
I heard a sound in the lower part of the house,
in the direction of the study. It may be only
a cat that has got in there; but I will go and
see.'

'I heard something myself,' said Mrs. H.
'But I thought it was outside.'

The colonel had heard more, or understood
better than his wife. At all events he had no
suspicion of cats—his allusion to them having
been made merely to avoid alarming her. He
remembered that there was a sum of money
in his desk, and probably suspected a robbery.

Going noiselessly down stairs, and opening
the door of the study with a steady hand, he
heard the same noise, much louder than before.
He stepped cautiously into the room. It was
a starlight night; and turning his eyes to the
window, from which the noise appeared to
proceed, he discovered a dim shadow moving
in the curtain.

At that moment the noise ceased. The co-
lonel stood motionless in the corner of the
room, until it recommenced, when reaching a
heavy sword which hung against the wall he
slowly drew it from the scabbard.

The colonel then stationed himself near the
window; but no sooner had he done so, then
the grating noise ceased again. After a short
silence he heard another sound like the break-
ing of glass; and immediately after, the curtain
was moved aside by an invisible hand.

The darkness the loneliness of the chamber,
and the mystery of the dim shadow on the cur-
tain, would have shaken the nerves of any man
of less coolness and courage than the colonel.
Determined to take the robber dead or alive,
he calmly waited for him to enter the room.—
But presently to his dismay, he heard foot-
steps coming down stairs. Some domestic or out-
door laborer, had evidently heard the sounds,
and was coming to learn their origin. Per-
ceiving that this must frighten the robber, the
colonel was revolving in his mind what he
should do to effect his object, when the hand
that had moved the curtain became visible. It
was groping along the window frame for the
spring. Rapid as the lightning yet noiselessly
and unseen, the old broadsword swept over the
colonel's head, and struck deep into the wood-
work of the window. There was a stifled cry—
a heavy fall—and the curtain swept back to its
place.

Rushing to the window, the colonel threw it
open, and looked out. He could see nothing

however, owing to the darkness; and shutting
it again, he hastened to procure a light.

As he burst into the hall, a laborer, by the
name of Jones, who slept in the house, appear-
ed at the foot of the stairs.

'Good God! Colonel, is that you?' cried
Jones, who appeared agitated with terror. 'What
is the matter?'

'Give me the light,' said Col. H.—

He extended his hand. As the light shone
upon it, Jones who must have been terribly
frightened, saw that it was covered with blood.
Starting back, he dropped the lamp, which was
broken to pieces on the floor.

The Colonel cursed his weak nerves, and has-
tened up stairs for the lamp in his chamber.—
Mrs. H.—hearing strange sounds, and alarmed
by the protracted absence of her husband, had
already risen and struck a light. As the colo-
nel took it from her hand, she saw blood on his
arm, and uttered a cry of horror.

'It is nothing,' said the colonel. 'A robber
was climbing in at the window, and I have
scratched him.'

He entered the study, followed by Jones,
who shuddered at the scene which met his eyes.
There was blood on the curtain, on the window,
on the colonel's chair, which stood near it, and
on the ceiling. Across the desk where the co-
lonel had placed it, lay the broad sword stained
with blood.

Something on the carpet, under the window
attracted the eye of Jones. He stopped to pick
it up, and started back with a suppressed cry,
It was a human hand!

The colonel picked it up, and held it by the
lifeless fingers. It was still warm, and drip-
ping blood. It had been cut off just at the
wrist.

Suddenly the colonel turned. Wrapping
the member in his handkerchief, he seized the
light, rushed up stairs.

'For heaven's sake,' he cried, with strange
agitation, tell me if you know this! It is no
time to stand upon ceremony. Look!

And totally regardless of the effect the horrid
sight might have upon his wife, the colonel in
his agitation, threw aside the folds of his hand-
kerchief, and revealed the hand.

Mrs. H.— started back with horror. But
in an instant, turning deadly pale, she bent
eagerly forward, gazed a moment at the hand,
and with a shriek fell lifeless to the floor.

The colonel rushed out, and met Jones on the
stairs.

'Raise no alarm,' he said, in a husky rapid
tone. Go and saddle my horse and bring him
to the door. Quick!

As soon as Jones had disappeared, the co-
lonel went out to see if he could discover traces
of the robber. There was nothing left but
blood, which had gushed out on the grass like
rain. The robber was gone.

Mounting his horse, and again charging
Jones to alarm no one, the colonel rode to
the hotel.

After thundering at the door some minutes,
he succeeded in bringing a waiter, who ad-
mitted him, staring in stupid wonder, to see
young Morgan's father arrive at such a time,
and with so gasty a face.

'Is Morgan H—— within?' demanded the
colonel.

'I think he is. I saw him here in the eve-
ning,' was the reply. 'Shall I go up and
see?'

'Show me to his room,' said the colonel
striding into the hall.

The waiter preceded him up stairs. Hearing
a suppressed groan, he looked around. The
colonel's hand was pressed upon his brow and
his eyes were fixed upon a dark spot on the
floor. It was a drop of blood!

'What is that?' asked the waiter.

'Go on! go on!' muttered the colonel, in
so savage and husky a voice, that it had about
the same effect as a sharp bayonet, in sending
the waiter forward.

They reached the door of Morgan's room.
The colonel wrung the door with his iron hand,
but the latch did not yield. Then with his fist
he thundered on the panel.

No sound came from within.

'He is not in,' suggested the waiter.

With a rapid movement, the colonel held
the lamp to the key-hole. The point of the key
was visible. The door was locked from the in-
side.

'Leave me,' commanded the colonel, turning
to the waiter.

Then placing his mouth near the door, he
said, 'Morgan! I am alone—let me in. It is
your father that speaks!'

At that moment, a sharp concussion, like the
report of a pistol, sounded within the room.
Then some heavy body fell to the floor.

The colonel staggered against the banister;
and the waiter who was watching from below,
ran up, crying murder thinking he was shot.

'Hush!' said the colonel, in a calm voice,
standing erect as pale as death, before the
waiter. Go for an axe or a bar. The door
must be broken open.

In a few moments the lock was forced, and
the colonel, followed by the landlord and others,
rushed into the room. There was a human
body extended on the floor which was covered
with blood.

'Horror,' ejaculated the waiter. 'He has
cut off his right hand!'