

POETRY.

Selected.

THE INDIAN GIRL'S LAMENT.

From Poems by William Cullen Bryant, an American Poet.

An Indian girl was sitting where Her lover, slain in battle, slept; Her maiden veil, her own black hair, Came down o'er eyes that wept; And wildly in her woodland tongue, This sad and simple lay she sung:— "I've pulled away the shrubs that grew Too close above thy sleeping head, And broke the forest boughs that threw Their shadows o'er thy bed, That, shining from the sweet south-west, The sunbeams might rejoice thy rest, "It was a weary, weary road That led thee to the pleasant coast, Where thou, in his serene abode, Hast met thy father's ghost; Where everlasting autumn lies On yellow woods and sunny skies. "Twas I the brooded moosein made, That shod thee for that distant land; 'Twas I thy bow and arrows laid Beside thy mail, cold hand— Thy bow in many a battle bent, Thy arrows never vainly sent. "With wampum belts I crossed thy breast And wrapped thee in thy bison's hide, And laid the food that pleased thee best In plenty by thy side And deck'd thee bravely as became A warrior of illustrious name. "Thou'rt happy now, for thou hast passed The long dark journey of the grave, And in the land of light, at last, Hast joined the good and brave— And the flushed and balmy air, The bravest and the loveliest there. "Yet oft thine own dear Indian maid, Even there, thy thoughts will earthward stray— To her who sits where thou wert laid, And weeps the hours away, Yet almost can her grief forget To think that thou dost love her yet. "And thou, by one of those still lakes, That in a shining clustre lie, On which the south wind scarcely breaks The image of the sky, A bower for thee and me hast made Beneath the many-coloured shade. "And thou dost wait to watch and meet My spirit sent to join the blest, And, wondering what detains my feet From the bright land of rest, Dost seem, in every sound, to hear The rustling of my footsteps near."

VARIETIES.

STORY OF MRS. MACFARLANE.

"Let them say I am romantic—so is every one said to be, that either admires a fine thing or does one. On my conscience, as the world goes, 'tis hardly worth any body's while to do one for the honour of it. Glory, the only pay of generous actions, is now as ill paid as other great debts; and neither Mrs. Macfarlane, for immolating her lover, nor you for constancy to your Lord, must ever hope to be compared to Lucretia or Portia."—Pope, to Lady M. W. Montague.

It was formerly the fashion in Scotland for every father of a family to take all the people under his care along with him to church, leaving the house locked up till his return. No servant was left to cook the dinner, for it was then judged improper to take a dinner which required cooking. Neither, except in the case of a mere suckling, was it considered necessary to leave any of the children; every brat about the house was taken to church also; if they did not understand what was said by the minister, they at least did not prevent the attendance of those who did; and moreover—and this was always a great consideration—they were out of harm's way. One Sunday in autumn 1719, Sir John Swinton of Swinton, in Berwickshire, was obliged to omit his little daughter Margaret from the flock which usually followed him to church. The child was indisposed with some trifling ailment, which, however, only rendered it necessary that she should keep her room. It was not considered requisite that a servant should be left behind to take charge of her, for she was too sagacious a child to require any such guardianship; and Sir John and Lady Swinton naturally grudged with the scruples of the age, that the devotions of any adult member of their household should be prevented on such an account. The child, then, was left by herself in one of the upper bed-rooms of the old baronial mansion of Swinton, no other measure being taken for her protection than that of locking the outer door.

For a girl of ten years of age, Margaret Swinton was possessed of much good sense and solidity of character. She heard herself doomed to a solitary confinement of six hours without shrinking; or thought, at least, that she would have no difficulty in beguiling the time by means of her new book—the Pilgrim's Progress. So long as the steps and voices of her kindred were heard about the house, she felt quite at ease. But, in reality, the trial was too severe for the nerves of a child of her tender age. When she heard the outer door locked by the last person that left the house, she felt the sound as a knell. The shot of the bolt echoed through the long passages of the empty house with a supernatural loudness; and, next moment after, succeeded that perceptible audible quiet, the train-like voice of an untenantanted mansion, which, like the hum of the vacant shell, seems still as if it were charged with sounds of life. There was no serious occasion for fear, seeing that nothing like real danger could be apprehended; nor was this the proper time for the appearance of supernatural beings; yet the very loneliness of her situation, and the speaking stillness of all around her, insensibly overspread her mind with that vague negative sensation which is described by the above word *terribles*. From her win-

dow nothing was visible but the cold blue sky, which was not enlivened by even the occasional transit of a cloud. By and by the desolating wind of autumn began to break upon the moody silence of the hour. It rose in low melancholy gusts, and, whistling monotonously through every chink, spoke to the mind of this little child, of withering woods, and the lengthened excursions of hosts of leaves, hurried on from the scene of their summer pride into the dens and hollows where they were to decay. The sound gradually became more fitful and impetuous; and at last appeared to her imagination as if it were the voice of an enemy who was running round and round the house, in quest of admission—now and then going away as if disappointed and foiled, and anon returning to the attack, and breathing his rage and vexation in at every aperture. She soon found her mind possessed by a numerous train of fantastic fancies and fearful associations, drawn from the store of nursery legends and ballads, which she was in the habit of hearing, night after night, at the fire-side in the hall, and which were infinitely more dreadful than the refined superstitions of modern children. She thought of the black bull of Norway, which went about the world destroying whatever of human life came within its reach; of the weary well at the World's End, which formed the entrance into new regions, from whence no traveller ever returned; and of the fairies or good neighbours, a small green-coated race of supernatural creatures, who often came to the dwellings of mortals, and did them many good and evil turns. She had been told of persons yet alive, who, in their childhood, had been led away by these fays into the woods, and fed for weeks with wild berries and the milk of nuts, till at length, by the *po'oufu* preaching of some great country divine, they were reclaimed to their parents, being in such cases generally found sitting under a tree near their own homes. She had heard of a queen of these people—the Queen of Elfinland—who occasionally took a fancy for fair young maidens, and endeavoured to wile them into her service; and the thought occurred to her, that, as the fairies could enter through the smallest aperture, the house might be full of them at this moment.

For several hours the poor child suffered under these varied apprehensions, till at last she became in some measure desperate, and resolved at least to remove to another part of the house. The parlour below stairs commanded from its window a view of the avenue by which the house was approached; and she conceived that, by planting herself in the embrasure of one of those windows, she would be at the very border of the eerie region within doors, and as near as possible to the scene without, the familiarity of which was in itself calculated to dispel her fears. From that point, also, she would catch the first glimpse of the family returning from church, after which she would no longer be in solitude. Trying, therefore, to think of a merry border tune, she opened her own door, walked along the passage—making as much noise as she could—and tramped sturdily and distinctly down stairs. The room of which she intended to take possession was at the end of a long passage leading from the back to the front of the house. This she traversed slowly—not without fear of being caught from behind by some unimaginable creature of horror; an idea which, on her reaching the chamber door, so far operated upon her, that, yielding to her imaginary terrors, and yet relying for safety upon getting into the parlour, she in the same moment uttered a slight scream, and burst half joyfully into the room. Both of these actions scarcely took up more than the space of a single moment, and in another instant she had the door closed and bolted behind her. But what was her astonishment, her terror, and her awe, when, on glancing round the room, she saw distinctly before her, and relieved against the light of the window, the figure of a lady, in splendid apparel, supernaturally tall, and upon whose countenance was depicted a surprise not less than her own! The girl stood fixed to the spot, her breath suspended, and her eyes wide open surveying the glorious apparition, whose beauty and fine attire, unlike aught earthly she had ever seen, made her believe it to be an enchanted queen—an imaginary being, of which the idea was suggested to her by one of the nursery tales already alluded to. Fortunately, the associations connected with this personage were rather of a pathetic than an alarming character; and though she still trembled at the idea of being in the presence of a supernatural object, yet, as it was essentially beautiful and pleasing, and supposed to be rather in a condition of suffering than in the capacity of an injurer, Margaret Swinton did not experience the extremity of terror, but stood for a few seconds in innocent surprise, till at length the vision completely assured her of its gentle and pacific character, by smiling upon her, and, in a tone of the most winning sweetness, bidding her approach. She then went forward, with timid and slow steps, and becoming convinced that her enchanted queen was neither more nor less than a real lady of this world, soon ceased to regard her with any other sentiment than that of admiration. The lady took her hand, and addressed her by name—at first asking a few unimportant questions, and concluding by telling her that she might speak to her mother of what she had seen, but by no means to say a word upon the subject to any other person, and that under pain of her mother's certain and severe displeasure. Margaret promised to obey this injunction, and was then desired by the lady to go to the window, to see if the family were yet returning from church. She did so, and found that they

were not as yet in sight; when, turning round to give that information to the stranger, she found the room empty, and the lady gone. Her fears then returned in full force, and she would certainly have fainted, if she had not been all at once relieved by the appearance of the family at the head of the avenue, along which the dogs—as regular church goers as their master—ran barking towards the house, gratifying her with that she afterwards declared to have been the most welcome sounds that ever saluted her ear.

Miss Swinton, being found out of her own room, was sharply reprimanded by her mother, and taken up stairs to be again confined to the sick chamber. But before being left there, she found an opportunity of whispering into her mother's ear that she had seen a lady in the low parlour.—Lady Swinton was arrested by the words, and, immediately dismissing the servant, asked Margaret, in a kindly and confidential tone, what she meant. The child repeated that in the low parlour she had seen a beautiful lady—an enchanted queen—who had afterwards vanished, but not before having exacted from her a promise, that she would say nothing of what she had seen, except to her mother. "Margaret," said Lady Swinton, "I see you have been a very good girl; and, since you are so prudent, I will let you know a little more about this enchanted queen, though her whole story cannot properly be disclosed to you at present." She then conducted Margaret back to the parlour, pushed aside a sliding panel, and entered a secret chamber, in which the child again saw the tall and beautiful woman, who was now sitting at a table with a large prayer-book open before her. Lady Swinton informed the stranger that, as Margaret had kept her secret so far, according to her desire, she brought her to learn more of it. "My dear," said her ladyship, "this lady is unfortunate—her life is sought by certain men; and if you were to tell any of your companions that you have seen her, it might, perhaps, be the cause of bringing her to a violent death. You could not wish that the enchanted queen should suffer from so silly an error on your part." Margaret protested, with tears, that she would speak to none of what she had seen; and, after some further conversation, she and her mother retired.

Margaret Swinton never again saw this apparition; but some years afterwards, when she had grown up, and all fears respecting the unfortunate lady were at an end, she learned the particulars of her story. She was the Mrs Macfarlane, alluded to in the motto to this paper; a person whose fatal history made a noise at the time over all Britain, and interested alike the intelligent and the ignorant, the noble and the mean.

Mrs Macfarlane, the strange lady described at the end of the preceding part of this tale, was the only daughter of a gentleman of Roxburghshire, who had perished in the insurrection of 1715. An attempt was made by his surviving friends to save the estate from forfeiture, so that it might have been enjoyed by his orphan daughter, then just emerged into womanhood. But almost all hope of that consummation was soon closed, and, in the meantime, the unfortunate young lady remained in a destitute situation. The only arrangement that could be devised by the generosity of her friends was to permit her to reside periodically for a certain time in each of their houses—a mode of subsistence from which her spirit recoiled, but to which, for a little while, she was obliged to submit. It was while experiencing all the bitter pangs of a dependent situation, encountered for the first time, and altogether unexpectedly, that Mr. Macfarlane, a respectable and elderly law agent who had been employed by her father, came forward and made an offer of his hand.—Glad to escape from the immediate pain of dependency, even at the hazard of permanent unhappiness, she accepted the proposal, although her relations did every thing they could to dissuade her from a match so much beneath her rank. The proud spirit of Elizabeth Ker swelled almost to bursting, when she entered the dwelling of her low-born husband; and the humble marriage feast which was there placed before her, seemed in her eyes as the first wages of her degradation. But her own reflections might have been endured, and in time subdued, if they had not been kept awake by the ungenerous treatment which she received from all her former friends. The pride of caste was at this period unbroken in Scotland, and it rigorously demanded the exclusion of "the doer's wife" from all the circles in which she had previously moved. The stars made a conspiracy to banish the sun. If Mrs Macfarlane had been educated properly, she would have been able to repel scorn with scorn, and, in these tergiversations of the narrow spirited great, would have only seen their degradation, not her own. But under her deceased mother, a scion of a better house than even her father's, she had grown up in the full participation of all the ridiculous notions as to caste, and of course was herself deeply sensible of the advantages she had forfeited. Rendered irritable in the highest degree by consciousness of her own loss, she received every slight thrown upon her by society into her innermost heart, where it festered and fed upon her very vitals. She found that she had fallen, that the step was irremediable; and as, fictitious degradation, imposed by the forms of society, always in a short time becomes real, her character suffered a material deterioration. She took refuge from offended self love in a spirit of hatred and contempt for her fellow matrons, and began to entertain feelings from which, in earlier and happier years, she would have shrunk as from actual crime.

(To be concluded in our next)

ANTS.—Very erroneous opinions are prevalent with regard to the food of ants, which have often been supposed to consume corn, and to do great injury to plants by devouring their roots or stems. The truth is, that they are chiefly carnivorous insects, preying indiscriminately on all the softer parts of animals, and especially the viscera of other insects. These, indeed, they will often attack when alive, and overpower by dint of numbers, either devouring their victim on the spot, or dragging it a prisoner into the interior of the nest. If, however, the game should be too bulky to be easily transported, they make a plentiful meal, and exert, like the bee, a power of disgorging a portion, and of imparting it to their companions at home; and it appears that they are even able to retain at pleasure the nutritious juices unchanged for a considerable time. The rapidity with which they consume, and in fact anatomize the carcass of any small bird or quadruped that happens to fall in their way, is well known, and furnishes an easy method of obtaining natural skeletons of these animals, by placing their dead bodies in the vicinity of a populous ant-hill. In hot climates, where they multiply to an amazing extent, their voracity and boldness increase with their numbers. Bosman, in his description of Guinea, states that in one night they will devour a sheep, leaving it a fine skeleton, while a fowl is for them only the amusement of an hour. In these situations they will venture to attack ever living animals of considerable size. Rats and mice often become their victims. Their power of destruction keeping pace with their increase of numbers, it is hardly possible to assign limits to either; and the united hosts of this diminutive insect have often become formidable to man himself. A story is related by Prevost, in *Histoire Generale des Voyages*, of an Italian missionary, resident in Congo, who was awakened by his negroes in great alarm at the house being crowded by an immense army of ants, which poured in like a torrent, and before he could rise had already mounted upon his legs. They covered the floor and passages, forming a stratum of considerable depth. Nothing but fire was capable of arresting their progress. He states that cows have been known to be devoured in their stalls by these daring devastators.—*Encyc. Brit. new edit.*

ON PRESERVING CORN IN SHEAVES.

The simplest method, it appears to me, for securing the crop, after cutting it down, from being damaged by standing long in stocks on the ground, is that universally practised by the agriculturists in the woody parts of Sweden and Norway, and which never fails in completely protecting at least nine-tenths of the grain from growing in the sheaf, as well as the straw, from any serious injury. In those districts, every farmer provides as many 'sodes stor,' corn stakes, (i. e. stakes for drying the grain on,) as will be necessary for the quantity of his growing crop. They are generally made of the young white pines, eight feet long, about one and a half inch in diameter at the top, and four inches at the bottom. The upper end is pointed, to admit the sheaf passing easily down over it, and the lower end is likewise pointed, to facilitate its being fixed in the ground. When a field of grain is ready for the sickle, the stakes are conveyed to the spot, and, as the reapers proceed with their work, the stakes are put up in rows behind them, in the same manner, and at the same distance from each other, as is common in stooking the crop. A man, with the assistance of an iron crow, or spit, will set up five hundred of these in a day. The next operation is to put the sheaves on the stakes. This is performed by raising the first sheaf up to the top of the stake, and passing it, with the root-ends downwards, to the ground, the stake being kept as near as possible in the middle of the sheaf; the sheaf thus stands perpendicular, and round the stake. The second sheaf, is fixed on the stake in an inclined position, with the grain end sloping a little downwards, the stake passing through the sheaf at the band in a transverse manner, and in that position it is pressed down to the first sheaf, and thus forms a covering to it. All the other sheaves are threaded on the stake in a similar way as the sheaf last put on, keeping them all one above another, with the root-ends facing the southwest, to receive as much of the sunshine as possible, on account of the greater quantity of grassy substance which they contain at the other end. As each sheaf thus acts as a complete covering to the one beneath it, and as there is only one which can touch the ground, rain cannot, at any time, penetrate through them, and it is very rare that any single heads of grain on a stake are injured. I have witnessed these operations performed with as much expedition as actually attends the common way of setting the crop in the fields in stocks.—*Communication by Mr. George Stephens, Edinburgh, to the Agricultural Journal.*

ON THE TRAINING OF PLANK TIMBER.

—Divide all branches into leaders and feeders—leaders being the main or superior shoots which tend to become stems; feeders, the inferior branches. Should more than one leader appear from the time of planting the tree till it attain the required height of the plank, shorten all but the most promising one down to the condition of feeders, making the section immediately above a twig, preferring one which takes a lateral or horizontal direction. Cut off, close by the trunk, all shoots which rise at a very acute angle with the main stem. These nearly perpendicular branches generally originate from improper pruning, springing out where a large branch has been cut away. Reserve all

splintered, twisted, or diseased branches. Do not cut away any of the lower branches (feeders) till they become sickly or dead. By pruning these prematurely, you destroy the fine balance of nature, and throw too much vigour into the top, which, in consequence puts forth a number of leaders. After the tree has acquired a sufficient height of hole for plank, say from twenty to sixty feet, it will then be proper in order to have timber as clean as possible, and regularly flexible, to top off all the branches on the stem as far as the required height. We consider the spring as the least dangerous time for pruning. The perfection of naval forest economy would consist in superadding a top, of which every branch is a valuable bend or knee. In pruning and educating for plank timber, the whole art consists in training the tree as much as possible, and with as little loss of branch as possible, to one leader and numerous feeders, and to the regular cone figure which the pine tribe naturally assumes. This can be best and most easily performed by timely attention, checking every over-luxuriant, overshadowing branch and wayward shoot, on its first appearance; so that none of the feeders which spring forth at first may be smothered till they in turn become lowermost; and by the influence of rather close plantation, which of itself will perform, in a natural manner, all that we have been teaching by art, and will perform it well. This closeness, must, however, be very guardedly employed, and timeously prevented from proceeding too far, otherwise the complete ruin of the forest, by premature decay or winds, may ensue, especially when it consists of pines. Of course all kinds of pines require no other attention than this, (well-timed thinning), and to have their sickly, moss-covered over branches swept clean down.—*Matthew on Naval Timber.*

BON MOT.—The late Dr. Barclay was a wit and a scholar, as well as a very great physiologist. When a happy illustration, or even a point of pretty broad humour, occurred to his mind, he hesitated not to apply it to the subject in hand; and in this way he frequently roused and riveted attention, when more abstract reasoning might have failed of its aim. On one occasion he happened to dine in a large party, composed chiefly of medical men.—As the wine cup circulated, the conversation accidentally took a professional turn, and, from the excitement of the moment, or some other cause, two of the youngest individuals present were the most forward in delivering their opinions. Sir James Macintosh, once told a political opponent, that so far from following his example of using hard words and soft arguments, he would pass, if possible, into the opposite extreme, and use soft words and hard arguments. But our unflinched M. D.'s disregarded the above salutary maxim, and made up in loudness what they wanted in learning. At length, one of them said something so emphatic—we mean as to manner—that a pointer dog started from his lair beneath the table, and bow-wow-wowed so fiercely that he fairly took the lead in the discussion. Dr. Barclay eyed the hairy dialectician, and thinking it high time to close the debate, gave the animal a hearty push with his foot and, exclaimed, in good broad Scotch,—"Lie still, ye brute; for I am sure ye ken just as little about it as any o' them." We need hardly add, that this sally was followed by a hearty burst of laughter, in which even the disputants good-naturedly joined.

MICHAEL ANGELO.—Michael Angelo's seal represented three rings enclosed one within the other, as expressive of the union which he had made in his mind of the three arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Michael Angelo lived to a very great, yet healthy, old age. In the beginning of the 18th century, the Senator Buonarroti caused the vault to be opened at Florence in which his body was deposited. It was found perfect; and the dress of green velvet, and even the cap and slippers in which he was buried, were entire. He appeared to have been a small, well set man, with a countenance of great severity.

PSALMODY.—It was in the course of the sixteenth century that the psalmody of England, and the other protestant countries, was brought to the state in which it now remains, and in which it is desirable that it should continue to remain. For this psalmody we are indebted to the Reformers of Germany, especially Luther, who was himself an enthusiastic lover of music, and is believed to have composed some of the finest tunes, particularly the Hundredth Psalm, and the hymn on the last Judgment, which Braham sings with such tremendous power at our great performances of sacred music.—*Metropolitan.*

DISTILLATION FROM MILK.—The possibility of obtaining ardent spirits from milk has been disputed by many chemists, but the experiments of Oseretshouesky of Petersburg, have proved that it is possible. The result of his experiments is, that milk does not undergo the vinous fermentation, if the butter and cheese are taken from it—either must remain; and that whey, although it contains the whole of the sugar of milk, does not enter into the vinous fermentation, even although yeast be added.

TO RESTORE FROSTED POTATOES.—This is partially done by steeping potatoes, or any other frosted vegetable, in cold water till thawed. A better and more effectual method has been discovered by a Cumberland gentleman; This remedy is simply to allow the potatoes to remain in the pits after a severe frost, till the mild weather has set in for some weeks and allowed them to recover gradually. If once exposed to the atmospheric air, no art will recover frosted potatoes.