

# POETRY.

[FROM THE BALTIMORE EMERALD.]

WHEN I was fifteen years of age,  
I bore a fool's head on my shoulder;  
For I did think I was a man  
Of better parts than many older.  
I wore a watch-chain with an air;  
And spun my watch-chain with an air;  
Loving it with the fancy through the streets,  
To show myself to others there.

I thought I was the very best;  
That figured 'mongst the literati;  
Made puns and verses for the Press,  
And mottoes for my sister's party.  
And I did wear some pretty caps,  
For fashion's sake—for well I knew,  
That when a man's a man,  
He must do just as others do.

And then, to make the whole complete  
I made my heart a tennis-ball,  
It passed around from belle to belle,  
Until it was no heart at all!  
At church, or hall, or theatre,  
I was the very pink of neatness;  
My handkerchief was so perfumed,  
That ladies fainted with its sweetness.

But, oh! the dreams of folly's past,  
Beauty hath smiles—none for me;  
My wisdom's crown—just as I should be,  
And I am—just as I should be.  
Perchance, if some plain, modest girl,  
Would think me pleasing to her sight,  
Say "yes"—for better or for worse,  
Why, then, I'm sure, I think I might.

(From the Connecticut Mirror)

## THE SAILOR'S GRAVE.

"Sleep on—sleep on—the glittering depths  
Of Ocean's coral caves,  
Are thy bright urn—thy requiem  
The music of its waves."

Beneath the cold and joyless wave,  
Which flashes with a thousand dyes,  
In an unseen, unfathomed grave,  
The sailor's wasting body lies.  
The booming waves go sounding on,  
To meet the far-off rock-bound shore,  
And mingling in a thousand gale,  
With a deep, sullen, endless roar.

He sleeps within a nation's tomb,  
Unnumbered nation's wealth around,  
Where lustrous stones light up the gloom,  
And golden harps forever sound;  
The mermaids comb their amber hair  
Around the spot where he reposes,  
And hold their sportive revels there,  
When night around the ocean closes.

Far down the deep the sunbeams fly,  
And linger in its caves awhile,  
And light the coral grotto's sigh,  
Above a navy's ruined pile;  
The long green sea-weed floats around  
The corpse of many a nation's pride;  
The wealth of empires strews the ground,  
And o'er their relics monsters ride.

The stars shed down their pearly gleams,  
Into the chambers of the deep,  
And cast their ever flickering beams  
On him who lies in dreamless sleep,  
His hair like burning threads of gold,  
Gently around his forehead waves,  
And gems and pearls and wealth untold,  
The floor around his body paves.

Still lies the sailor's mouldering form,  
Shrouded in rubies for a pall;  
Above him rides the howling storm,  
Hoarse sounding like a demon's call,  
That heart which once with ardor burned,  
Has ceased its notes of joy to play,  
Those sightless eyes are now upturned,  
To where his soul has winged its way.

The springs of ocean rise and flow,  
Along a bed of scattered gems,  
And through the caves of ocean glow  
A host of wasted diadems;  
But what is all this pomp and play,  
To him whose living spirit fled?  
To him whose soul has passed away,  
Into the regions of the dead!

# VARIETY.

## THE MURDERER'S LAST NIGHT.

(Concluded from our last.)

It was now past the hour of ten o'clock; and it became my solemn duty to take heed, that the last few hours of the dying sinner passed not, without such comfort to his struggling soul as human help might hold out. After reading to him some passages of the gospel, the most apposite to his trying state, and some desultory and unconnected conversation—for the poor creature at times seemed to be unable, under his load of horror, to keep his ideas connected further than as they dwelt upon his own nearing and unavoidable execution—I prevailed upon him to join in prayer. He at this time appeared to be either so much exhausted, or laboring under so much lassitude from fear and want of rest, that I found it necessary to take his arm and turn him upon his knees by the palpitant side. The hour was an awful one. No sound was heard save an occasional ejaculation between a sigh and a smothered groan from the wretched felon. The candle burned dimly; and as I turned I saw, though I scarcely noticed it at the moment, a dim insect of the moth species, fluttering hurriedly round it, the sound of whose wings mournfully filled up the pauses of myself and my companion. When the nerves are strained to the utmost, by such trifling circumstances as we are affected. Here, (thought I), there has been no light, at such an hour, for many years; and yet here is one, whose office it seems to be to watch it! My spirit felt the necessity of some exertion; and with an energy, for which a few minutes before I had scarcely dared to hope, I poured out my soul in prayer. I besought mercy upon the blood-stained creature who was groveling beside me—I asked that repentance and peace might be vouchsafed him—I begged, for our Redeemer's sake, that his last moments might know that untasted rapture of sin forgiven, and a cleansed soul, which faith alone can bring to fallen man—I conjured him to help and aid me to call upon the name of Christ; and I bade him put off life and forget it, and in the name of the most alone—I interceded that his last agony might be soothed, and that the leave taking of body and soul might be in quietness and peace. But he shook and shivered, and nature clung to the miserable straw of existence, which yet floated upon the wide and dismal current of oblivion, and he groaned heavily and muttered, "No! no! no!" as if the very idea of death was unbearable, even for a moment; and to die, even to him that must, were a thing impossible, and not to be thought of or named.

And as I wrestled with the thought that had dominion over him, he buried his shrunk and convulsed features in the covering of his miserable pallet; while his fingers twisted and writhed about, like so many scathed snakes, and his low sick moans, made the very dungeon darker. When I lifted him from his kneeling position, he obeyed my movement like a tired child, and again sat on the low pallet, in a state of motionless and unresisting torpor. The damp sweat stood on my own forehead, though not so cold as on his, and I poured myself out a small portion of wine to ward off the exhaustion, which I began to feel unusually strong upon me. I prevailed upon my poor wretch to swallow a little with me; and, as I broke a bit of bread, I thought and spoke to him, of that last repast of him, who came to call sinners to repentance; and methought his eye grew light. The sinking frame, exhausted, and worn down by anxiety, confinement, and the poor allowance of a felon's gale, drew a short respite from the cordial; and he listened to my words with something of self-collectedness—albeit slight tremblings might still be seen to run along his nerves at intervals, and his features collapsed, ever and anon, into that momentary vacuity of wildness, which the touch of despair never fails to give. I endeavored to improve the occasion,

I exhorted him for his soul's sake, and the relief of that which needed it too much; to make a full and unreserved confession, not only to God, who needed it not, but to man who did. I besought him for the good of all, and as he valued his soul's health, to detail the particulars of his crime, but his eyes fell. The dark enemy, who takes delight to leave in the heart just hope enough to keep despair alive, tongue-tied him; and he would not even now—at the eleventh hour—give up the vain imagination, that the case of his companion might yet be confounded with his, to the escape of both, and vain it was. It had not been felt advisable so far to make him acquainted with the truth, that this had already been sifted and decided;—and I judged this to be the time. Again and again I urged confession upon him. I put it to him that this act of justice might now be done for its own sake, and for that of the cleansing from spot of his stained spirit. I told him, finally, that it could no longer prejudice him in this world, where his fate was written and sealed, for that his companion was REPRIEVED. I knew not what I did.—Whether the tone of my voice, untutored in such business, had raised a momentary hope, I know not—but the revelation was dreadful. He started with a vacant look of sudden horror—a look which those who never saw cannot conceive, and which—(the remembrance is enough)—I hope never to see again—and twisting around, rolled upon his pallet with a stifled moan that seemed tearing him in pieces. As he lay, moaning and writhing backwards and forwards, the convulsions of his legs, the twisting of his fingers, and the shiverings that ran through his frame were terrible.

To attempt to rouse him seemed only to increase their violence—as if the very sound of the human voice was under his dreadful circumstances intolerable, as renewing the sense of reality to a reason already clouded, and upon the verge of temporary delirium. He was the picture of despair. As he turned his head to one side, I saw wine, few, but very few hot tears had been forced from his glassy and blood-shot eyes; and in his writhings, he had scratched one cheek against his iron bedstead, the red discoloration of which contrasted sadly with the deathly paleness of his face, which visage now shewed: during his struggles, one shoe had come off, and lay unheeded on the damp stone floor. The demon was triumphant within him; and when he groaned, the sound seemed scarcely that of a human being, so much had horror changed it. I knelt over him—but in vain. He heard nothing—he felt nothing—he knew nothing; but that extremity of prostration to which a moment's respite would be "Dives" drop of water—and yet in such circumstances, anything but a miracle. He could not bear, for a moment, to think upon his own death—a moment's respite would have added new strength to the agony—he might be dead; but could not "die,"—and in the storm of my agitation and pity, I prayed to the Almighty to relieve him at once from sufferings which seemed too horrible even to be contemplated.

How long this tempest of despair continued, I do not know. All that I can recall is, that after almost losing my own recollection under the agitation of the scene, I suddenly perceived that his moans were less loud and continuous, and that I ventured to look at him, which I had not done for some space. Nature had become exhausted, and he was sinking gradually into a stupor, which seemed something between sleep and fainting. This relief did not continue long—and as soon as I saw him begin to revive again to a sense of his situation, I made a strong effort, and lifting him up, seated him again on the pallet, and pouring out a small quantity of wine, gave him to drink, not without a forlorn hope that even wine might be permitted to afford him some little strength to bear what remained of his misery, and to collect his ideas for his last hour. After a long pause of returning recollection, the poor creature got down a little of the cordial, and as I sat by him and supported him, I began to hope that his spirits calmed. He held the glass and sipped occasionally, and appeared in some sort to listen, and to answer to the words of consolation I felt collected enough to offer. At this moment the low and distinct sound of a clock was heard, distinctly striking one. The ear of despair is quick—and as he heard it, he shuddered, and in spite of a strong effort to suppress his emotion, the glass had nearly fallen from his hand. A severe nervous restlessness now rapidly grew upon him, and he eagerly drank up one of the remaining drops, which I supplied him. His fate was now evidently brought one degree nearer to him. He kept his gaze intently and unceasingly turned to the window of the dungeon. His muttered replies were incoherent or unintelligible, and his sunk and weakened eye strained painfully on the grated window, as if he momentarily expected to see the first streak of the dawn of that morning, which to him was to be night. His nervous agitation gradually became horrible, and his motions stronger. He seemed not to have resolution enough to rise from his seat and go to the window, and yet to have an overpowering wish or impulse to do so. The lowest sound startled him—but with this terrible irritation, his muscular power, before debilitated, seemed to revive, and his action, which was drooping and languid, became quick and angular. I began to be seized with an undefined sense of fear and alarm. In vain I combated it; it grew upon me; and I had almost risen from my seat to try to make myself heard, and obtain if possible, assistance. The loneliness of the goal, however, rendered this, even if attempted, almost desperate—the sense of duty, and of dread of ridicule, came as a new and crushing weight upon me. I was a miserable criminal, whose state was becoming every minute more dreadful and extraordinary.

\* \* \* Let us not scorn or distrust our obscurest misgivings, for we are strangely constituted; and though the evidence for such conclusions often be in a manner unknown to ourselves, they are not the less veritable and just. Exhausted by the wearing excitement and anxiety of my situation, I had for a moment sunk into that confused absence of mind with which those who have been in similar circumstances cannot be unacquainted, when my miserable companion, with a convulsive shudder, grasped my arm suddenly. I was for a few seconds quiescent, and strongly bade him to move, and when a low, indistinct sound caught my ear. It was the rumbling of a cart, mingled with two or three suppressed voices; and the cart appeared to be leaving the gate of the dismal building in which we were. It rolled slowly and heavily as if cumbrously laden, under the paved gateway; and after a few minutes, all was silent. The agonized wretch understood its import better than I did. 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