THE LIFE AND WORKS OF
JAMES EASSON
THE DUNDEE PEOPLE'S POET

By

ANTHONY FAULKES

THORISDAL
DUNDEE
2016

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF
JAMES EASSON
THE DUNDEE PEOPLE'S POET

BY

ANTHONY FAULKES

THORISDAL
DUNDEE
2016

Published by Thorisdal
210 Broughty Ferry Road
Dundee DD4 6LD
anthony.faulkes@talktalk.net

ISBN: 9780952745525

Printed by CMP (UK) Ltd

PREFACE

Most of the contents of this compilation are based on books, documents and archives in the Local History Centre in Dundee Central Library, and I am grateful to the staff there for their help in locating items relating to the life and works of James Easson. The runs of the *People's Journal* that are available in the Dundee Central Library, however, are unfortunately neither well conserved nor complete: some issues are missing, there are pages missing, some of them having been torn out, and many short items have been cut out with scissors. In most cases I have been able to supplement the Dundee holdings from the online British Newspaper Archive, though in fact only one number containing an article by James Easson that was missing in the Dundee archive was found to be available in the BNA, 'The Loveliness of Truth' (April 30, 1864). But I was able to search paper copies of the issues from 1862 and 1865 in the British Library holdings that had not then been added to the BNA. (1865 has since been added to the BNA, but 1862 is still lacking.) The only contribution by James Easson that was found there that was not extant in the Dundee archive was the poem 'Goodness Triumphant' (February 25, 1865).

The texts that are edited here have been transcribed literally, with liberties only being taken with the spaces before punctuation marks, which were at that time frequently inserted by compositors in places where they are no longer customary. Only obvious printer's errors have been corrected, and then always marked in a footnote. Words and letters apparently accidentally omitted are supplied in square brackets where necessary.

It is hoped that all the extant works of and information available about James Easson have been collected here in a form that will enable readers to form as accurate a picture of the man as possible and a just estimate of his writing skills in prose and verse.

Dr Anthony Faulkes
Emeritus Professor
The University of Birmingham
February, 2016

CONTENTS

I: Life of James Easson

Near the south-west corner of the Eastern Necropolis in Dundee there is a memorial stone inscribed as follows:

> JAMES EASSON
>
> BORN 25TH DECEMBER 1833,
> DIED 5TH JUNE 1865.
>
> ERECTED BY THE PROPRIETORS OF
> "THE PEOPLE'S JOURNAL"
> IN MEMORY OF A WORKING MAN WHO HAD RARE
> LITERARY GIFTS AND WHOSE WRITINGS
> ARE HIS BEST MEMORIAL.

James Easson's Death Certificate states that he was a painter, illegitimate, single, son of seaman James Mullins and Betsy Easson, deceased, and died in the Royal Lunatic Asylum, Dundee, after three weeks of paralysis (Statutory Deaths 282/01 06361). The 1851 Census return (Census 1851 282/00 087/00 0361) says that at that time he was a painter, single, born in Dundee, now residing at no. 13, West Wynd, Dundee, with his grandmother Betty Easson, aged 58, widow, born in Longforgan, Perthshire, head of the family, which had no other members at that address. She is likely to have been the Betty Forbes who was married to a James Easson in Longforgan in February 1808 at the age of 15.† According to a letter to the *People's Journal* signed D. T. (June 24, 1865; reprinted below), his father died before James was born, and his mother died when he was two years old. There were at least two other families living at the same address in Dundee in 1851, whose heads were weavers. The Eassons therefore probably lived in a tenement block.

In the *People's Journal* in the issue of June 10, 1865, the following notice was printed:

> DEATH OF MR JAMES EASSON.
>
> We regret to record the death of Mr James Easson, long and favourably known to our numerous readers for his letters, poems, and sketches which appeared from time to time in the columns of the *Journal*. The melancholy event took place on Monday afternoon in the Dundee Asylum, in the presence of his only surviving relative, his grandmother, who has watched over him with all a mother's love and care. He was subject to fits of mental derangement, and about four weeks ago, while suffering from a severe attack, was removed to the Asylum, where paralysis of the entire system supervened.‡ In his lucid hours he appeared to be quite aware of his condition, and in a prayerful state of mind. In his last hours, however, he did not recognise

† 0.P.R. Marriages 377/00 0030 0289 Longforgan; "Scotland, Marriages, 1561–1910," database, FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:XY3X-DT5 : accessed 31 August 2015), James Easson and Betty Forbes, 07 Feb 1808; Longforgan,Perth,Scotland; FHL microfilm 1,040,128. It may have been the same James Easson that was a weaver born in Forgan in about 1779, who died of fever in 1826 (Friends of Dundee Archives – Howff Graveyard of Dundee, Surname Range – Eddie – Eingland, p. 15).

‡ It would seem likely that Easson's condition was largely due to strokes.

the presence of any one, and appeared quite unconscious. Mr Easson was a house-painter, but devoted his leisure hours to literary pursuits. He published two collections of poems, which exhibit purity of feeling, felicity of expression, and no mean poetic fancy.† He was a thorough and most hearty lover of and sympathiser with the people. The blind, deaf, and dumb, the widows and orphans of his order touched his heart far too deeply, keenly, and strongly for the fine strung feelings of his nature. He often brooded for nights together over the condition and sufferings of the poor. He was of a studious, timid, and retiring disposition, and scarcely cultivated the acquaintance of any one. He entertained many peculiar and eccentric notions, but withall—as Dr Rory, of the Lunatic Asylum, said of him—he was evidently a man of pure mind and good taste. His end, under the circumstances, and at the age of 31, will be much lamented by many, who, while not knowing him personally, have been struck by the singular gracefulness and felicity of his writings, which were all the more remarkable as the productions of a self-educated working man.

His connection with the *Journal* as an occasional contributor began in 1858, and continued at intervals until within a short period of his death. To thousands of our readers the titles of his contributions to our columns will bring pleasing recollections. The following is a list of a few of them:—"Transcripts from Memory" (a series); "Kindness Avenged, an Incident in the Wreck of the Royal Charter" New Year's Tale for 1860; "George's Chapel—The Monthly Evening Lecture" (a literary portrait of the Rev. George Gilfillan); "Lindsay Street Chapel;" "Cheery Blinks in a Dark Winter's Day;" "Six o'clock in the Scouringburn," &c. Besides these prose sketches, Mr Easson contributed numerous poetical pieces to the *Journal*, all of which were remarkable for their literary finish, as well as for depth and earnestness of sentiment.

The following verses were composed by Mr Easson a few weeks ago, and forwarded to us for publication. They derive a mournful interest from the fact that they were among the last of his poetical musings:—

LIFE'S VANITY.

Jerusalem's royal sage, in pensive mood,
Viewed all his kingly works spread wide around;
Seeking, though vainly, to find out that good
Which in this passing world is never found:
Then to his wearied soul with heartfelt sigh,
He cried, " 'Tis all in vain that time speeds by!"

"I've gat me joys no king on earth e'er knew,
Orchards and lawns and the delights of men;
The sweetest fruits are mine that ever grew,
Palaces, towers, fair maids, and serving men:
Though kings' royal daughters court mine arms' embrace,
My soul lacks something yet—poor comfort this!

† Although the editor speaks of two collections of poems by James Easson, only one is known: *Select Miscellany of Poetical Pieces*. Dundee 1856. It may be that by 'two collections' he is referring to the two divisions of the *Poetical Pieces* into 'Sacred Pieces' and 'Secular Pieces'. See the list of contents of this volume below.

"All sorts of music fill my wearied ears—
  Its liquid sweets resemble discord's jar;
Something I need, but ah! my spirit fears
  Pleasure and soul must still remain at war:
The things once gained that taxed my aching brain,
Prove shadows each—still I must scheme again!

"Thus, music fails me—mirth becomes a load;
  Friends fail and grieve me, lovers prove untrue;
My very wives have wiled my heart from God;
  Sorrow and tears are mine—what must I do?
My sinking spirit 'neath this barren strife,
Tired of its labours, fain would part with life!"

Mistaken Solomon! had he but known
  That chance and circumstance are God's decree;
How but for changes we were all alone,
  And that this present world itself must flee;
For whence that spirit voice which haunts his ear—
"Poor Soul! say wouldst thou live for ever here?"

Now for the lesson—Let us prize that task
  Which God has given us through His sovereign love;
Nor leave to miss our parts profanely ask—
  They but prepare us for the rest above.
When with our vices we have bravely striven,
Happy the mansions we will fill in Heaven!

In the two issues of the People's Journal following the editor's announcement of his death, these letters that had been submitted by readers were printed:

THE LATE JAMES EASSON.

SIR,—It was with painful feelings that I read in last Saturday's *Journal* your brief notice of the death of Mr James Easson. Although having had no personal acquaintance with him, his thin, sharp, slightly stooping, dreamy-like figure was not unfamiliar to me; but it was in the columns of the *Journal* that I learned to love and admire him. His productions were always fresh, spirited, honest, sincere, poetic, and Christian. I am altogether inadequate to the task of penning anything like a comprehensive estimate of his merits, which were neither few nor mean. Now that he is no more, there is something peculiarly, painfully interesting in his history—a history which, in many respects, appears familiar to us. We feel that we have read the same sad story of a life like his before. The poor, aspiring, earnest student, toiling and struggling for an indefinable something. In our mind's eye a scantily furnished apartment in some lowly tenement rises up, where sits the lone student intently poring over the pages of some book, which so rivets his attention as to make him forget his care, to deny his wearied frame that balmy rest it needs so much, and to banish all weariness and sleep from his eyes. Or sitting, with pen in hand, now hurriedly, anon hesitatingly, striving to commit to paper the ideas and emotions which, clamorous for freedom, are floating in his pregnant brain. We cannot think of such heroic spirits, of

whom our beloved country has produced not a few, without feeling respect and reverence for their memories; and more especially when those memories are illustrated with the gem of virtue. There is something grand, yea sublime! in the contemplation of one struggling against fortune and difficulties, all, to the common eye, insurmountable and damaging, "going down to the grave" with character unsullied and virtue untainted; and more than this, leaving behind them a name and a fame, in the narrow circle in which they moved, which will be honoured by all who knew him.

THOMAS SCOLLAY.

IN MEMORY OF JAMES EASSON.

Stilled now for ever is the heart
That kindly beat—the head that thought;
And closed in death the poet's eye,
And cold and stiff the hand that wrote.

Though toil and trouble was thy lot,
And poor and humble thy estate,
'Twas true of thee, as 'tis of all—
The good alone are truly great.

Now upward borne on wings of hope,
Singing as doth the lark on high:
Now downward in the depths of thought—
Nor sun nor stars in all thy sky.

For such is life; and thou did'st learn
The lesson life was given to teach—
That there are other worlds than one:
An endless life we ought to reach.

We grieve not as if hope were lost,
Nor murmer 'gainst the powers above;
For thou didst know, and we believe
With thee, the truth that God is Love.

May the reward of those who toiled
In faith and hope, and who have striven
To bless their fellows, be the crown
Unto thee from the Master given.

And let us who are left behind
Toil on in hope of future bliss;
We miss the lesson of thy life,
If knowing it we learn not this.

T. S.

SIR,—Glancing over a late number of your paper, I was struck by a notice of the early death of Mr James Easson, the people's poet. Ever since that notice appeared, I have looked for a letter from some of your correspondents, or regular contributors, making the proposal I am now about to make, but as no such letter has appeared, and I believe it best to strike the iron while it is hot, I would propose that we, the readers of your wide spread

paper who have been both pleased and edified by the literary productions of Mr Easson's brain, open a subscription for funds to raise a suitable monument to his memory. Never let it be said to the everlasting disgrace of the men of Dundee and the readers of your valuable journal that they allowed their poet to sink in oblivion without a line or a stone to mark where his weary bones rest. I would propose a list to be opened at once, and if the editor of the *People's Journal* will take charge of the subscriptions, my mite will not be last, and, judging from the liberal response to a late appeal, I do not think it will be long a slur on the lads and stoory lasses of Dundee, of whom their poet loved so well to write and sing, that he lies himself unmarked, unhonoured, or unsung. Hoping you will excuse me trespassing so far on your valuable space by inserting the above you will confer a favour on

AN ADMIRER OF MR EASSON.

[For the information of our correspondent, we may state that the proprietors of the *People's Journal* last week ordered a neat tombstone, with an appropriate inscription, to be erected to the memory of James Easson. It is now being cut by Messrs Sturrock & Shirreff, and will be placed at the head of his grave in the Eastern Necropolis within a few weeks.]

(JUNE 17, 1865)

THE LATE MR JAMES EASSON.
A SUGGESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PEOPLE'S JOURNAL.

SIR,—The friends and admirers of the late Mr Easson are, I think, much indebted to your correspondents "Thos. Scollay," and "An admirer of Mr Easson," for the manner they have borne testimony to his genius and worth.

Although personally unacquainted with the poet, I was an ardent admirer of his talents, and always esteemed it a rare treat to read anything that had been penned by him. He evidently possessed many qualities which, had he been placed in more favourable circumstances, would have enabled him to attain a prominent position in the literary world; but as it is, what he has succeeded in doing will be long cherished and remembered by many who now regret his early death. From enquiries I lately made, I have learned a few facts regarding him, which perhaps will not be uninteresting to your readers. His father—a seafaring man—was drowned before the poet was born; and when only two years of age his mother was cut off by a malignant fever. He was thus thrown upon the care of a grandmother, who, although in very poor circumstances, struggled hard and made many sacrifices to enable him to learn a trade. It is but just to the memory of the poet to say that he did his utmost to requite her kindness. He was for many years her best support; and now that he has gone she is left alone to struggle with the world as best she may.

The kind-hearted and praiseworthy liberality of the proprietors of the *Journal* has made it unnecessary to carry out the generous suggestion of "An Admirer of Mr Easson;" but when I tell your readers that this old woman, now verging upon seventy years of age,† is under the necessity of carrying and sewing sacks for a scanty livelihood, I trust they will see that there is still a way left us to show the respect and esteem in which the rare talents of her grandson were held. It will be a shame upon us working men if we will not do something that will at least tend to lighten the burden of this aged woman. There are few of the readers of this *Journal* but have from time to time been edified by the productions of Mr Easson's pen; and if each of those 80,000 readers were but to subscribe one penny,

† She was actually 72 in 1865.

a sum of upwards of £300 would be produced, which would be sufficient to maintain her in comfort and independence for the remainder of her days.

I would therefore earnestly appeal to those of your readers who admire virtue and talent, in however lowly a garb, to stretch forth a hand and endeavour to make the latter days of our poet's grandmother unfelt by penury and toil. And if you, Mr Editor, would kindly undertake to receive any sums for this purpose, I have no doubt, from the already well-known liberality of your readers, that a goodly sum would soon be placed in your hands.—Yours truly, D. T.

[A much less sum than £300 would amply provide for the remaining days of Mrs Easson—a very worthy and deserving woman, whose life has been wrapped up in that of her gifted grandson, and who, now that she has lost him, feels lonely indeed. We shall be glad to receive whatever contributions may be sent us on her behalf.—Ed. *P. J.*]

Sir,—Among the number of deaths which have lately taken place none has so much affected me as that of Mr James Easson. I knew him not, though I have frequently wished that I had. I have always been an admirer of his literary contributions to your ably-conducted journal; and on seeing, from time to time, his familiar household name subscribed to his essays or poems, felt always assured of an intellectual feast of no common quality. His writings, whether in poetry or prose, were truly sweet and beautiful—a deep, rich poetical charm resting on all his thoughts—a fine, light, airy fancy glancing among his equal, elegant, and carefully-pointed sentences—a sharp, subtle, and even philosophical turn of thought now and then charging their current—and a quiet, deep, tender, loving, spirit stealing through the whole. But his sweet and cunning pen has dropped for ever, no longer to burn along the raptured page; and his tender, kindly-beating, troubled heart lies stilled in a dark unfathomable grave, where

"The cock's shrill clarion, and the early horn,
No more shall rouse them from their narrow bed."

Yet, as we sometimes think, what a sweet interest hangs over his truly poetic and premature death! How melancholy, grand, yet strange, for a poet departing this earth in such heavenly summer days as these—days bathed in light and sun, which surely cannot die—days which shed a strange glory and mystery around a summer cemetery. How frequently have we to apply the lines, and keenly feel their painful truth:—

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

—Most respectfully, R. O. H.
Dundee.

"R. B. B." pays a graceful tribute to the memory of the late James Easson. He says—No one who has read any of the varied productions of his fertile brain but must have been peculiarly struck with the originality, the naturalness, the gracefulness, and the simplicity of his style. His writings were always characterised with truthfulness and vigour, combined with lofty and elevated ideas, and at the same time accompanied with a sweet poetic diction, filling you with admiration and love. Gifted naturally with a sensitive heart, whose sympathy was constantly for that class to which he belonged—a heart which, alas! for himself felt too acutely the sorrows and sufferings of the poor. Those who have enjoyed and appreciated the fruit of his labours, and think of his brief and blameless life, cannot but drop the silent tear of

heartfelt regret over the memory of departed worth, and fervently wish that, not only in our workshops but among all classes, it were well for the world that many more were like him.

(June 24, 1865)

The following is apparently the last mention of James Easson in The *People's Journal*; as far as is known the suggestion made in it was never acted upon. Only now has a reprinting of Easson's collected works been undertaken.

THE LATE JAMES EASSON.

A correspondent, who sends us 1s for behoof of Mrs Easson, suggests that the productions, poetical and otherwise, of the late Mr Easson, should be collected—a certain number of readers of the *People's Journal* ensuring by a previous subscription the circulation of as many numbers as would at least cover the expenses of a pretty large edition. If this was done a fund might ultimately be created which would help to smooth the declining years of the best earthly friend of him who so earnestly sought to smooth and guide others along the pathway of life, and it would also have this strong recommendation that it would not be in any way alimentary, but would seem what it really would be, viz., a just recompense to her for the labours of her deceased grandson, while those who purchased the volume, be it large or small, would have a tangible value for their outlay.

(August 26, 1865)

James Easson's brief life was not a very eventful one.† Orphaned at the age of two, and without brothers or sisters, he was brought up by his widowed grandmother, perhaps to begin with in Longforgan or Forgan; but at any rate by 1851, when he was 18, the pair were living in Dundee. He attended an elementary school, and one of his poems, the last of his *Poetical Pieces*, contains reminiscences of his school life, as do also the first and fourth of his 'Transcripts from Memory'. It is mentioned in his fourth 'Transcript from Memory', printed in the *People's Journal* for April 21, 1860, that towards the end of his school days an elderly woman neighbour encouraged him to read books, especially poetry. After leaving school he was apprenticed and worked as a house painter until he became too ill to work.‡ He must have been to Edinburgh to hear Dr Guthrie preach (see *People's Journal* for October 1, 1859, where he refers to a number of sermons preached there by Dr Guthrie), and a number of his short stories are set in Edinburgh, so he must have been there, either for a few weeks or on several occasions, but there is no evidence that he ever travelled more widely.§ He spent much of his spare time attending sermons and lectures given by ministers of various churches or chapels in Dundee, including the Rev. George Gilfillan, a Free Church minister who was a widely known theologian and a very

† Actually, the average life expectancy of men in Dundee in 1866 was 33; the age at which James Easson died was six months short of 32. By the standards of the time, his life was not especially brief.

‡ His experiences as apprentice and journeyman painter are reflected in 'The Painters' Prize Letter' (the *People's Journal* for January 23, 1864).

§ He may have been sent to Edinburgh for a few days on one or more occasions to do painting work there. See the *People's Journal* for January 23, 1864: 'The Painters' Prize Letter'. Also 'Bonnie Roslin Castle' (May 25, 1861).

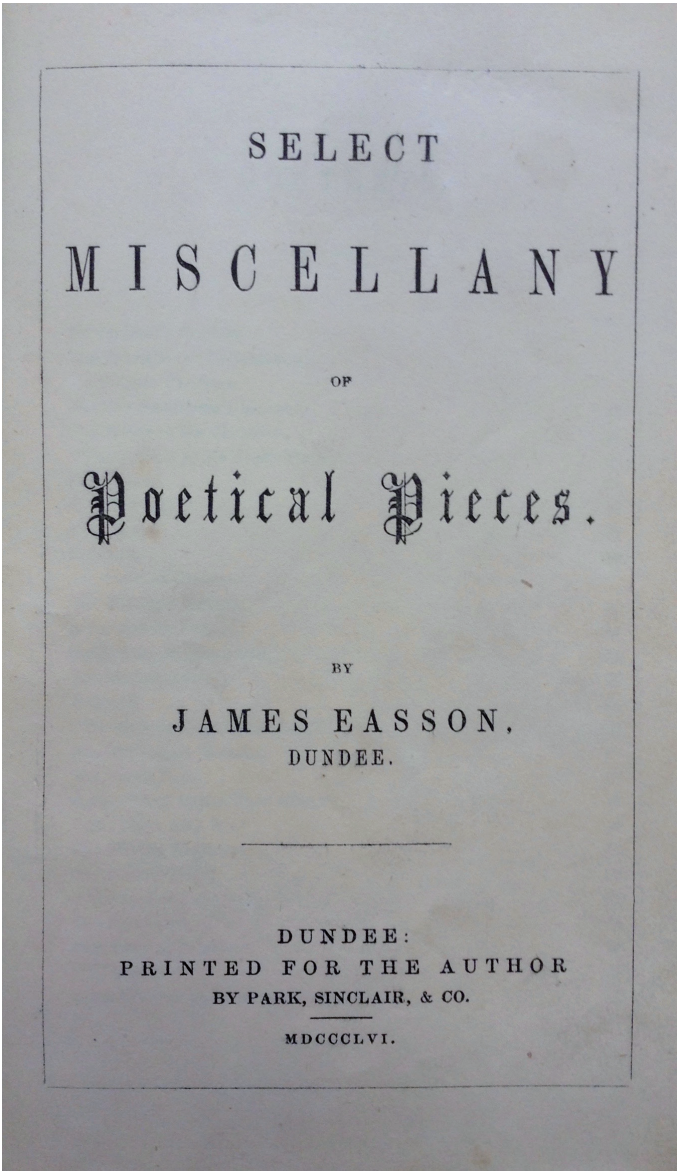
popular preacher. He was a man of very liberal views and spoke or wrote frequently on non-theological topics including the death penalty. He was also a poet himself, and a noted encourager of working class poets. He seems to have befriended Easson, and wrote an introduction for the latter's *Select Miscellany of Poetical Pieces*. Easson wrote one of his 'Sketches' about Gilfillan, 'George's Chapel—The Monthly Evening Lecture' (printed in the *People's Journal* for June 2, 1860). Otherwise Easson spent his available time reading widely—it can perhaps be seen from various of his poems that he had read some Milton and Wordsworth, as well as Scott, and in his prose there are echoes of Shakespeare, as well, of course, as of the Bible and Prayer Book—and writing poems, short stories and essays on various topics. From these writings he appears as a very serious and religious person—only occasionally in some of his stories is there anything really humorous in his writing,† which rather tends to moralising and sentimentality. He was clearly a very lonely and withdrawn person, with few friends.

Since apart from the bare facts available from public records referred to above, one can only find out more about the man himself from his surviving writings, all of those that are still extant are reprinted below, comprising all his known poetry as well as his prose contributions to the *People's Journal*. Several of the sketches and some of his fictional stories may also contain autobiographical elements.

† E.g. 'Pompey's Breakfast' (December 4, 1858), 'Done Brown' (February 19, 1859), 'Random Writings' (December 8 and 15, 1860), 'A Sang to Tammas Bodkin' (June 15, 1861).

II: Works of James Easson. A: *Select Miscellany.*

James Easson's only publication in book form was his *Select Miscellany of Poetical Pieces*, printed for the author in Dundee by Park, Sinclair & Co., Dundee 1856, two years before his first contribution to the *People's Journal*. Here we print a facsimile of the title page and a transcripion of the list of contents, and the twenty-five poems that the volume contains. The Preface by Mr Gilfillan is omitted.



SELECT

MISCELLANY

OF

Poetical Pieces.

BY

JAMES EASSON,
DUNDEE.

DUNDEE:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
BY PARK, SINCLAIR, & CO.

MDCCCLVI.

CONTENTS.

† On Mr Gilfillan see the end of Part I above.

Poetical Miscellany.

THE TRIUMPHS OF PHILANTHOPY,

A POEM.

How noble he whose bosom glows with love
To all mankind, and pities every woe;
Within whose breast dwells Mercy, gentle dove,
And who would send it forth on all below;
Were it not this—that Penury's sharp knife
Severs those pinions that so love to bring
Back the heart-weary to a gladdened life,
And caused to bud the leaves of Hope's green spring.

But who shall say—Oh, sentiment divine!
That when that power—the power which Pity wields—
Unites with thee, and all the means are thine,
That thy blest exercise no pleasure yields:
Or who may tell the quiet modest joy
Which fills the mind where thou has found a place!
For each sensation sweet, without alloy,
O'erflows that bosom and illumes the face.
Yes! kind philanthropy—thou feeling pure—
Thou attribute of every single heart—
No spiteful words thy simple bent allure,
To turn aside from thy own heavenly part.

Is there a mouth to feed, a head exposed
To all the tempests of a changing sky—
Then is thy merit and thy love disclosed,
While thou and Pity standest anxious by.
Is there a wretch who long has listless been
To heaven, to duty and affection true—
Then thou with tender tear art quickly seen
Calling him back to his repentant vow;
Then thou with consolation and with solace kind
Soothes o'er his soul, thy love has taught to feel;
Telling his happy and contented mind
Its dormant beauties fully to reveal.

'Tis also thee who all the flinty face
Of this harsh world does soften to a smile;
That knits Man to his fellows, and who them
Of all their differences can soon beguile.
"Forget, forgive—live still, and still forbear
With many a fault and folly of thy friend;
Nor his beloved idols rudely tear,
But bear him patiently unto the end."

These are thy precepts, Oh! thou lovely thing,
That kindlest heaven and makes it glow on earth,
Who reconcil'st deep foes, and them can bring
Together—children of one common hearth.

Where'er thou seest one lonely spark of good
Still shining forth in him who has been cast
Out by the world as one who did intrude,
Thou still wilt tend him, even unto the last.

And Oh! how blessed when that ember lives,
Blown by thyself into an holy flame,
Fitted to shine with seraphs, and which gives
An holy lustre to thine own blest name.
Or if, again, thou seest the child of want,
Naked in body and as nude in mind,
Thou first will stay his hunger, then will grant
No fit encouragement to stay behind. Stay,
Till in good time that sickly, puny thing,
Lifts up its voice in praise of heaven and thee;
And while it lives may still go on to sing,
Blessing the hour it first thy face did see.

Thy love, too, makes thee far away to roam,
O'er the trackless oceans of the briny wave;
Leaving thy dear and well-beloved home
To rescue men from error's dreary grave.
Thou tread'st the sands of Afric's burning clime,
And seek'st the good of that ill-fated coast;
Thou brav'st the terrors of the frightful crime
Of savage isles, in superstition lost.
To that dear nation whose sad tale does fill
The holy volume with its mournful doom,
By deep compassion mov'd thou labourest still
To chase away the dark o'erhanging gloom.

'Tis thou who buildest ships and mak'st them go
To eastern shores afar, and homewards bring
The generous fruits of oriental lands,
To soothe affliction's sharp insidious sting.

When war o'erwhelms the earth with anguish dire,
And weeping mothers, wives, and children young
Fills all our land with desolation's fire,
An heavy duty to thy hand is hung.
The sorrowing one, whose only pleasure here
Was to behold the lithe and supple form
Of a lov'd son—who in the mad career
Of fight had fallen in the fatal storm—

This, this is one to which with special tear
Thou show'st the most peculiar regard;
And with her weeps for him she held so dear
Or mourns o'er this her fortune stern and hard.
Then there's the wife, left all alone to weep,
Disconsolate and heedless now of all beside,
Save when she thinks of those who around do creep,
And wond'ring ask what evil can betide.
Ah! poor dear innocents, 'tis sad, indeed,
The lot which now has come to be your own;
Since to the death your father dear did bleed,
And far away his warrior soul has flown!
But Oh! weep not—an angel hovers by,
Glorious in beauty, lovely in Mercy's dress;
Look up, dear babes, and mothers cease to weep,
And you his grandeur will at once confess.
Listen!—'tis He who speaks; Oh! heavenly sound!
It falls like raindrops on the parched earth—
"A father of the fatherless in God is found;
Then lift your voices high in sacred mirth;
I take the widow in my special care,
All her dear babes with blessed meat supply;
And none who with unholy touch would dare
To harm you, 'scapes my avenging eye."

Thus comforted, the sad and mourning group
Lift up their eyes, or swimming full of tears,
To bless the God-sent messenger who thus did stoop
And soothe such lowly sorrows as are theirs.
They dry those tears, they hope 'gainst hope, and take
The holy consolations which religion gives;
And tears and mourning straightway they forsake,
While growing confidence within them lives.

Yet these are but the little acts of thy kind hand,
Done while the noisy world does heedless pass;
That busy, busy world, which scarce can stand
To note the turnings of Time's great hour glass;
These are but like paltry petty sounds
Of players' thunder on the mimic stage,
To those loud rending bolts whose dread rebounds
Speak forth the language of heaven's angry rage.

Seest thou yon high gigantic pile, which stands
Full on the view as forth you take your way?
That pile's a monument raised by the hand
Of kind Philanthropy for aye to stay.

It tells of deeds and pure desires which glow,
And lights the world with lustre not its own;
But which is shed from heaven on men below,
To lighten minds in misery's depths that groan.
There touching cries for help an answer find
From those who long have well accustomed been
To sooth affliction, and with care to bind
The bruised body—frail and weak machine.

But, passing on, such temples many grow;
And, though they be not for the sick and sore,
They still are thy kind work, and serve to shew
That for thine entrance stands an open door.
There also are the Seminaries, fitly fram'd
To cope with vagrancy and youthful crime;
Raised up by men whose whose acts were justly nam'd
To shine through ages of invidious time;
HOWARD and POUNDS—the rich man and the poor,
Who each did *what he could* to help mankind.
HOWARD—who spent his means to make it sure
That Mercy's car should never lag behind;
POUNDS, the poor humble cobbler—he who taught
The little children while his trade he plied;
To such as these shall selfish men give nought
Of generous thought;—shall due praise be denied?
No! let humanity explain with common voice,
And send a meed of gratitude to heaven,
For pure Philanthropy is of His gifts most choice,
And He that gift sponaneously has given.

But Oh! the limits of a little page like this
Were far too stinted—much, too much confin'd—
To tell the swelling endless sea of bliss
Which flows to misery's cup with joy combin'd.
O'er the whole world extends its gracious reign,
It rules supreme in more or less degree,
Nor is it sullied by a single stain,
Neither can guilt with it confounded be.

Alas! we know, indeed, that many a man
Whose acts of charity stand forth to view,
Acts generous and grand at first to scan,
Are nought save blots of an ungenial dew.

Oh, British Isles! ye who have long been known
As generous samples to the wond'ring world;
'Midst thee Philanthropy has rear'd her throne,
From that proud seat may she no more be hurl'd.

'Tis a bright starry gem from heaven's own crown,
Dropp'd here to be a pledge of bliss to come,
For those who could depise the world's cold frown,
And bear for conscience' sake in meekness dumb;
For does not earth, from end to end remote,
Resound with honour to that blessed name?
Man's noblest deeds which ne'er may be forgot,
Is mix'd with its most bright and lasting fame.

The grandest strains of glorious gory war,
Where heroes fall in fierce and bloody strife,
In which men's lives but dross and stubble are,
And where the agonies of death is rife;
Of brilliant armies led to battle on,
Of hard-won victories where thousands die,
How men of valour and for pride alone
Expir'd, with none to hear their latest cry,—
These, well I know, are counted splendid themes
For song of victors, sung with fiery glee.
But oh! kind heaven, none such my muse inspires,
Methinks they fit not creatures made like Thee,
No! give me the tender plaintive strain
Which makes the heart to thrill and gush with love;
Which draws the bright warm tears like summer rain,
And lifts the soul to nobler things above!

Oh Beauty! when thou sitt'st on a maiden's cheek,
Well do I love to bathe thee in a rosy shower
Of softening tears—and often would I seek
To raise thy heart by kindness' gentle power.

Would that the rich were all inspired with zeal,
Such as would cause them bless their greater wealth—
That it enabled them to act, and feel
That Charity builds up the spirit's health;
Also to shun broad ostentation, and to shew
That real deeds of love may bear such fruit
As will in time a golden treasure grow,
Sprung from a blest and heaven-implanted root.
And even the poor hard labouring sons of toil
May take a part in this most holy task;
For Charity's a commonwealth of fruitfil soil;
In gratitude's mild sun all men may bask.
And Oh, my soul! were rich and poor but knit
In one bright bond of brotherhood like this,
To banish all their differences and down to sit,
The common object then they could not miss.

Soon would the dreary wail of sadness cease,
And songs of joy usurp the vacant room;
The smiles of gladness quickly would increase
And morn's bright radiance chase night's cheerless gloom.

But high we hope that glorious brilliant day
May dawn with bright effulgence on the world,
That man to man a brother's part will play,
And blest affection's banner be unfurled;
Then surely kindest angels shall look down,
And music's self impregnate all the air;
That swelling anthems all discord shall drown,
Before the wondering world be yet aware.
Then, as at Christ's most blest and holy birth,
This shall they sing, in numbers loud again,
"Glory to God, good-will to men on earth,"
And endless be the clear celestial strain.

Sacred Pieces.

JESUS IN BETHLEHEM'S MANGER.

Jesus in Bethlem's manger was born,
A ransom for sinners, their scoff and their scorn;
All mild in his manners and gentle was he,
The meek lowly Jesus of sweet Galilee.

He came, and dark hatred laid bare its stromg arm,
It sought hard to crush him and work him deep harm;
The rich were his foes and they caus'd him to flee,
The kind gentle Jesus of sweet Galilee.

But the poor and the needy believed on his name,
And quick from all quarters to hear him they came;
They call'd him "good master" when him they did see,
And some followed Jesus of sweet Galilee.

He was tempted of Satan and grieved of men,
But his heavenly spirit revil'd not again;
A life of derisions appointed to me,
Said the patientful Saviour of sweet Galilee.

For full thirty years was he tempted and grieved,
And often his bosom was deeply deceived;
When he said—"Leave your lands and possessions for me,"
They all fled from Jesus of sweet Galilee.

Ah me! how he wept o'er Jerusalem's doom,
That her children had come not while yet there was room,
"As an hen to her chickens I called to thee,
But ye came not," wept Jesus of sweet Galilee.

On that night when they met in the "large upper room,"
His spirit was fill'd with a sorrowful gloom;
But resign'dly he told them betray'd he should be,
In the dark sombre garden of Gethsemane.

'Twas so; for while earnest he wrestled and pray'd,
By minions of treach'ry he harshly was stay'd;
When they met him with staves, Oh! 'twas piteous to see,
The unmurmuring Jesus of sweet Galilee.

To fill to the brim this his sad cup of woe,
He was forc'd into Pilate's harsh presence to go;
Where with common consenting they then did agree
To crucify Jesus of sweet Galilee.

They crown'd him with thorns, and jeer'd at his pain,
And tauntingly offer'd him freedom again;
Then they led him away to be nail'd to the tree,
Where he died as our Saviour on Mount Calvary.

The sun then enshrouded his luminous ball,
And wrap't was the earth in a dark sable pall;
For that sight was too shameful for angels to see,
The death of the Saviour of sweet Galilee.

Severe was his labour, but rich the reward,
Which coming in glory no spite shall retard,
Blest Lord! when eternity's praise sounds to thee,
What, *then*, all thou suffered on Mount Calvary!

THE HOPES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

First there's the hope of life beyond the grave,
Which God unto his own of old time gave;
Next, there's the Advent of His blessed Son,
Who o'er death and the tomb high conquest won;
Then, last of all, an endless state of bliss,
Whose joys we never even can guess in this.

"THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE."

REV. XXI. 25.

No night, no clouds, nor shadow shall there be,
In holy, happy, and untainted heaven;
Nor shall a sigh be heard to rise round Thee
For higher bliss, since sins are there forgiven:
No weary nights of wistfulness and doubt,
Or dreary days of anxious thought and care;
And no good spirits shall be kept without,
To cankering griefs a prey, or dark despair.

No night, no sin or sorrow there shall come,
Nor aught of evil, such as here does hide.
The blessed spirits who have gain'd their home,
Free from all terrors, safely may abide
In those bright realms of joy and rapturous song,
Christ, and the brethren of an elder day,
Shall walk in blest communion them among,
And God himself shall be their lighting ray.
There shall they muse o'er sights and scenes of earth,
Where sin and Satan tempted but in vain;
There they shall bless their second holy birth,
And praise the hour when they were born again.

All fears of enemies and spiteful foes,
Who might their heavenly occupations mar
Shall then be hush'd; and rising thoughts of those
Disposed to injure them, be kept afar.

But written in the everlasting book of life,
Their names shall shine long endless ages through,
And their high conquests over fleshly strife,
Each age to memory shall but renew.

City of God! along thy sacred streets,
Paved with gold, and bright with light divine,
May I thus triumph; and with martyrs meet
To swell the strains of melody sublime.

CONSCIENCE.

What is conscience?—It is but
The spark of light divine,
Which nothing from our minds can shut
Or hinder there to shine,
'Tis that which did we only heed
Its warning timely given,
Might stop each base and wicked deed,
And send our souls to heaven.

We plan an action that is bad,
We feel a deep remorse,
Then 'tis the prudent plan at once
That notion to divorce:
For if we still will so persist
In what we know is ill,
We its sharp pangs cannot resist,
They wound us deeper still.

Again if acts of good we do,
And with God's laws do move,
Soul-soothing pleasures sweet and new,
Its rich rewards will prove.
'Twill spread our face with smiles of joy,
And all our minds with ease,
To know our doings have been right,
And with His law agrees.

No torment like a conscience bad,
To punish and rebuke,
'Tis never-ending, dark, and sad,
And tells in every look.
But no delight like one unstain'd,
Unsullied, bright, and pure;
With it a heaven we have obtained
Of blessing sweet and sure.

JESUS WEPT.

Blessed, blessed words,
More joy their sound affords
Than holy angel's chords—
"Jesus wept!"

This world no sweets unfold,
Its grandeurs all are cold;
Still, still let me behold—
"Jesus wept!"

Oh! what a matchless star,
Shines "Jesus" self afar;
But these much brighter are—
"Jesus wept!"

Exult, exult, my heart,
A glorious heir thou art;
And this thy noble part—
"Jesus wept!"

Come death or sorrow great,
I can afford to wait,
Such peace these words create—
"Jesus wept!"

When Jordan's waves I stem,
I'll praise that purest gem,
In heaven's bright diadem—
"Jesus wept!"

PROVIDENCE.

God's Providence is over all,
  Then why should we despond?
There is a time to rise and fall,
  We cannot go beyond.
In even the smallest of his works
  Deep system reigns we see,
And there's a mighty power above,
  That watches you and me.

As day by day we leave our homes,
  To seek our needful toil,
His sovereign mercy with us comes,
  Through danger and turmoil.
And from the power of hurtful wiles,
  Securely kept are we;
But how comes this? did not the Lord
  Our constant guardian be?

How many interests daily clash,
While men with men compete;
How must these many interests dash,
Did He not make them meet.
Then there's the thousand hopes and fears,
Which span both land and sea,
They also are controll'd by Him,
Who watches you and me.
'Tis vain to say that human will
Can govern human ways;
This broad absurdity at once
The slightest chance displays.
So let us leave ourselves with Him,
Who makes all things agree,
Contented, knowing still that He
Is guarding you and me.

ETERNITY!

World without end!—an awful thought is this;
One boundless, endless, measureless abyss,
Which must be past, which must be known by all,
And spent in states firm fix'd beyond recall.
As distant ages, like the ceaseless roar
Of restless ocean, surge for evermore;
So months, and years, and centuries, shall each
Break like huge waves upon the eternal beach!
If passed in bliss amongst those sacred streams,
Which light eternal gladdens with its beams,
What angel pure with song of muse divine,
Might paint the raptures which might then be mine.

Eternity in bliss—the centre and desire
To which all hearts most warmly should aspire;
What price is there which e'er could be too high,
Were it a merchandise to give and buy?
Eternity in woe—Oh! darksome doom,
Might not the sinner hide within the tomb?
Ah no; for rest therein were not the mode
Prescribed by justice and approved of God.

Then, since no flinching, since no passing by,
That throne of justice we must face on high,
Let's rule our thoughts, words, and affections here,
That mercy lull high heaven's wrath-storm severe.
Then if those blessings shall be ours to taste,
Those endless ages we shall gladly waste;
For these blest rapture shall to us belong
To tune our harps and sing the angels' song!

Secular Pieces.

THE MIDNIGHT STREETS.

How solemn to walk through the midnight streets,
When the moon and the stars beam down;
When your brow with the mild breeze softly meets,
And its plaintive sighing your hearing greets,
As you pass through the slumbering town.

Smooth and serene, with a soothing flow,
Come the thoughts in your mind that rise;
And an holy calm your feelings know,
For you almost forget that you walk below,
As you gaze on the deep blue skies!

Have you never thought as you walk'd alone,
In the watches of the night,
How sweet it were to throw down the load
Which clings to you still in your clay abode,
And rush to those realms of light?

So steady and still rolls the lovely moon,
In her majesty far on high;
And so clear is its soft and genial noon,
That you gaze in a half unconscious swoon,
While the orb seems sweeping by.

But how vain is the dream of such a flight,
While you travel this vale of woe;
For now that fair moon is lost in night,
And a cloud has enshrouded his cheering light,
While in darkness you onward go.

But you come to a mansion rich and gay,
Where the harp and the organ sound;
Through the warm red curtains the bright lights play,
"There happiness dwells," to yourself you say,
For the laugh and the jest goes round.

Yet perhaps 'tis the laugh of a hollow heart,
And laugh'd o'er the drunken bowl;
Such sounds are often the offspring of art,
To drown the thought of some Judas' part
Weighing heavily on the soul!

Anon you pass by an humble roof,
Which courts not the public eye;
Its modest dwellers would keep aloof,
Having felt the tread of poverty's hoof,
As its iron car rolled by.

From the candle's dim and flickering flame,
You guess, and guess right in a breath,
One poor and unknown to the world by name.
Whose whole lifetime has been free from blame,
Lies stretched on his pallet of death!

But the watchman's slow and measured tread,
Breaks your reveries, solemn and deep;
And having gained your welcome bed,
Soft visions crowd round your weary head,
And people the regions of sleep.

A LAMENT FOR JUDAH.

Alas! for the days that are o'er and gone,
When the daughters of Judah sung
Of the beauty and pride of their dear native land,
With a harp that is now unstrung;
In the song of a God-favoured nation of men,
Who in valour and victory did shine,
And who now seek that glory and splendour again,
For the land of their lost Palestine.

Alas! for their hearts that are hardened and cold,
Against Him who was sent to their aid,
But who vainly aspire to be pardon'd and told,
That their woes and their sorrows are stayed.
And a tear for the ravage of strangers most sore,
Who hate and despise them so deep,
And have vow'd that as aliens to rest never more,
They shall constantly wander and weep.

But a sigh for the slow breaking morning of light,
Which tells of a future of joy,
When their harp shall be heard o'er the silence of night,
And glad anthems its chords shall employ.
And a prayer, that the light of believing may shine,
That the day-star of hope may arise,
And peace, with its mildest effulgence divine,
May with gladness illumine the skies.

SONG OF THE MORNING STAR.

From the dark caves of Ocean I'm rising,
O'er the bosom of Neptune I shine,
The world's slumbering millions apprising,
Their dreams they must quickly resign.
The bee and the bird of the morning,
Both greet my appearance afar;
And the wolf to his lair when returning,
Is afraid at the bright Morning Star.

How sweet in the grey of the dawning,
When the world is enshrouded in sleep,
To look from my dun colour'd awning,
On the peaceful repose of the deep.
As the lark high to heaven ascending,
Peals his hymn free from discord or jar,
With his song he a welcome is blending,
To his lover the bright Morning Star.

My beams are well known to the sailor,
Who o'er the wild billows does roam;
To the captive, despite of his jailor,
I whisper of friendship and home.
When despair in the poor and forsaken,
Hopes dreams and fair prospects would mar,
They feel that their trust is unshakem,
As they hail the young day dawning Star.

Bright but lonely my wan lamp is burning,
Though I'm shining my purest and best;
Like a call to the wanderer returning,
To safety, to friendship, and rest.
Oh! I love to speak peace to the fainting,
From my high rolling silvery car,
To do else I would ne'er be consenting,
While I twinkle a bright little Star.

On his rounds, too, the sentinel pacing,
Hails my coming his wanderings to cease;
And when weary the night's dangers facing,
He fears he will never know peace;—
And sighs for the dawn of the morning,
Which frees him from bondage and war;
Right anxious he ever is turning,
To bless me, the bright Morning Star.

Then I comfort the faithful believer,
When fighting 'gainst doubtings and gloom;
Who is told by the great Arch-deceiver,
There's nought beyond death and the tomb.
For I tell him, though mute be my teaching,
If he suffer both buffet and scar,
To a heavenly crown he'll be reaching,
Far above the bright Morning Star.

THE FACTORY GIRL.

In a thrifty dress of an homely guise,
All iron'd, smooth, and clean,
The factory girl, at the brief meal hour,
Is always to be seen.
And there is ever on her face,
That look which seems to say,
"Industry is the noblest plan,
By which to live you may."

Both snow and sleet her ceaseless feet,
Can brave without regret;
More sweet thinks she it thus should be,
Than sleep and wake in debt.
And she lightly warbles while she works,
The moments to beguile,
As quick they fly, like the rapid wheel
That merrily whirls the while.

Around and round the mighty arm
Of the engine sweeps its track;
But every turn still serves to bring,
The hour of respite back.
When the mighty bell on the lofty roof,
Calls out with clamorous din,
"To your homes now go all ye below,
Who closely weave and spin."

Then home she goes to that much lov'd hearth,
And there sinks down to rest;
When a well won meal rewards her toil,
Of all rewards the best.
Then when the happy board is swept,
Some reading forth she'll bring;
Or haply with her brothers young,
She tunes her voice to sing.

Year after year this is the mode,
In which she spends her days;
An endless scene of activeness,
Her hist'ry's page displays.
And though her lot may be obscure,
The less of care has she;
So may her happiness increase,
And toils unnotic'd be.

ENGLAND.

England, ruler of the Ocean,
Isle of peace serene;
Torn by no unblest commotion,
Sway'd by a loved Queen.
Still my fancy turns to thee,
Land of purest liberty.

Brave thy sons, admir'd thy daughters,
Virtuous, fair, and good;
Friend or stranger little matters,
Kindly is their mood.
In that land where all are free,
Blest with purest liberty.

Art and science in thy borders,
Find an happy home;
Fixed by the high recorders,
Never more to roam.
But assured they find in thee,
Confidence and liberty.

Oh! may peace and pure religion,
Still with thee remain;
And within thy favoured region,
Justice ever reign.
Join'd to mercy and to thee,
Land of light and liberty.

"NO MORE IN FANCY ROAMING."

No more in fancy roaming,
My soul shall wander free;
Bright noon or dusky gloaming
Have fairer charms for me.
The mirth of town or city,
With all their splendours gay,
Can never match in beauty
The music of the spray.

Go, flaunt in gold and scarlet,
Ye foplings of the town;
And each well-bribed varlet,
Shall trumpet your renown.
The lily's simple glory
Can never fail to please;
And 'twere a bootless story
To match with flowers like these.

Contrast this little flower,
Of unpretending hue,
Which lives but one short hour,
With thy soft robe of blue.
You look all disconcerted,
And well you may, I ween;
You now are quite converted,
By Nature's artless sheen.

Ye elfin glades and mountains,
Ye lakes of smoothest glass,
Ye ceaseless flowing fountains,
No art can you surpass.
Give in, ye gorgeous beauties,
And hide in silken shades;
To serve were more your duties,
The blue-eyed rustic maids.

The bright, bright sunny country,
The taintless perfum'd air;
Oh! what a bold effrontery,
To place a rival there.
Away with all your paintings,
You but their faults disclose;
Nor, while weak art is fainting,
Its farther faults expose.

No more in fancy roaming,
My soul shall wander free;
Bright noon or dusky gloaming
Have fairer charms for me.
The mirth of town or city,
With all their splendours gay,
Can never match the beauty
Of music from the spray.

THE OLD BEGGAR WOMAN.

She stands where the busy and quick-moving throng
To their labour or pleasure are passing;
And she asks a small alms, with a faltering tongue,
Lest them she be rudely harassing.
She is failing and weak, you may know by her tone,
And her nervously trembling petition;
Oh! the heart must be cold and as hard as a stone
That regards not her piteous condition.

You may see by the eye which even now has not lost
All its fire and the beauty of morning,
And know by the frequent and deep heaving sigh,
Old memories her mind are adorning.
That the bright palmy days of her girlhood's noon,
Spent in joy where her fathers did flourish,
'Midst comforts and pleasures which vanish'd too soon,
Her fancy does tenderly nourish.

She thinks o'er the forms and the features of those,
In the cold graves who long have been sleeping;
And her mind lingers round them in saddest repose,
While often and long she is weeping.
Ah! had they but liv'd she had never known want,
Or the chill of an harsh world's refusal;
The thousand deep insults and heart-breaking taunts
Which gall in their after perusal.

But she, too, had children who all went away,
Neglecting her years fast declining;
This, this, more than all, is the saddest that stay,
Of the thoughts which in grief are refining.
Some dwell o'er the ocean in far foreign lands,
Where plenty their days now illumine;
Ne'er thinking their mother at stranger's hard hands
Seeks an alms as a poor beggar woman.

But she'll not long survive in this comfortless mood,
Soon death will in pity relieve her;
Then she'll find, in the land of the pure and the good,
That heaven at least did not deceive her.
Yet while she still lives—or wherever you find
One who in the same misery does languish,
Grudge not a small help, and 'twill† comfort your mind,
To think you have lessen'd her anguish.

THE DUMB BOY.

The dumb boy stands by his father's gate,
And he gazes in deep delight
On the bright sunny skies, like an awning great,
Stretched out to his joyful sight.
And he seems to say, by his youthful glee,
"'Tis hard to be dumb, but 'tis sweet to be free."

† Printed 't'will'.

When the children meet in the village street,
And laugh in their childish joy,
He weeps all alone that he cannot greet
With an answer each sportive boy.
And this thought mars his all rising glee,
"Why is it they all can talk save me?"

When the light birds sing in the fresh green spring,
Their sweet little roundelays,
And the butterfly mounts on his gaudy wing,
In the bright, bright summer days;—
He inwardly wishes in jocund glee,
"Would that light little pinions were given to me."

Ah! poor little boy, it is very sad,
That your life's young morning song
Should thus be hush'd, when you feel so glad
To mix in the youthful throng;
But how may we tell, when we cannot see
That heaven has not seen it were good for thee.

Hear yon little child who romp'd so wild,
For he now has angry grown;
From his sweet little mouth which spoke so mild,
Most wicked words are thrown.
These words with his Father will never agree,
'Twere far better now if he were like thee.

And so it is still with upgrown men,
For they murmur and repine,
That they are not humour'd now and then
By Him who is divine.
But who has seen fit that they thus should be,
Though it in their blindness they cannot see.

SONG.

"AND CAN'ST THOU GIVE."

And can'st thou give thy hand away,
Nor with it give thy heart,
Since time will make the first decay,
Despite they deepest art.
Then O! when years of sorrow come,
And rob thy mind of rest,
Neglect shall mar thy future home,
Which else might well be blest.

While youth adorns thy blooming cheek,
And lights with joy thine eye;
When many thy fair hand shall seek,
Thy pride 'twill gratify.
But let not flattery's artful tale
Deceive thy guileless mind,
Else tears may over joy prevail,
When Fate has grown unkind.

Though in the morn of witching youth
Thou reign as Beauty's queen,
Yet after-days shall prove the truth
Of what those dreams have been.
And memory, when it sighing looks,
Far down the hazy past,
Will chide with sad and soft rebukes
Thy thoughtless vow at last.

"OH, COME WITH ME."

Oh, come with me, my dearest maid,
While the moonbeams light the sea,
And like silvery ringlets softly laid,
The rippling wavelets be;
And the lovely stars beam from above,
Inspiring the soul with the thoughts of love.

We'll whisper things of rapturous joy,
Which the heart best understands,
And thou wilt smile so soft and coy,
As we walk the silvery sands;
For nought save the lonely seaside shell
Shall list to the tales which thy lips will tell.

Around our paths shall the fairies flit,
Or float on their tiny wings,
While we, with our voices sweetly knit,
Some fav'rite ballad sings;
Till the echoes with music to us respond,
From the dusky vallies far beyond.

Then while with love your eyes shall glance,
And our inmost hearts shall thrill,
Bright days of the future shall lightly dance,
In our ravish'd visions still;
For should not the halcyon days of youth
Be spent with lovers in trust and truth?

Come then with me, my dearest maid,
While the moonbeams light the sea,
And like silvery ringlets softly laid,
The rippling wavelets be.
And the lone breeze, soft as the cooing dove,
Shall whisper the witching tones of love.

THE HEART'S EMOTIONS.

Who can speak the heart's emotions
As they heave and swell,
Or pourtray its sweet commotions
Faithfully and well?
Ever flowing, ever glowing,
Is that fountain deep,
Constant o'er the fancy throwing,
Charms to smile or weep.

Who can speak the heart's affections
As they fondly cling
To the grateful recollections
Memory loves to bring?
Softly blending—never ending
Is the lovely throng,
Filling both the lover's vision
And the poet's song.

Have you ever felt the pleasure
Rise within your heart,
When some dear but long-lost treasure
Vowed no more you'd part?
Now admiring—then desiring
Time would longer stay,
Till the moment for retiring
Call'd you both away.

Have you never felt a sadness
Forcing tender tears,
While you sat and inly pondered
Childhood's happy years?
Raptly viewing or pursuing
Youthful sports again,
Then to sigh for their renewing,
But to sigh in vain.

Felt you e'er the inclination
To befriend mankind,
By annulling every fashion
Which has prov'd unkind?

This thought cherish, let it flourish,
So the world shall feel
You a warm regard did nourish
For the common weal.

Should such grand but sweet emotions
Ever heave and swell,
In your breast with deep commotion,
Who your bliss may tell.
Ever growing and o'erflowing
Is this sacred spring,
And such things the Angels knowing
Causes them to sing.

THE BROKEN HEART.

How many hands have bravely toiled
The golden ore to gain!
How many bold endeavours foiled
Whose labours all were vain!
Ah! many a noble hearted one,
Who bravely bore his part,
By deep, though silent sorrow riven
Has known a broken heart.

I've seen the gay and lightsome one,
Whose laugh was joy to hear,
When in his private solitude,
Dash off the bitter tear.
And through the bustling busy throng
Much cheerfulness impart;
But who by night had felt the pang
Which makes a broken heart.

In passing through the bustling streets
His breast with hope beat high;
A grand career in future days
His fancy could descry.
'Twas vain—for disappointment drove
Him from the wealthy mart!
First to corroding gloom a prey,
And then a broken heart.

I've also seen the lovely maid
Adorned with every grace,
With every sweet perfection crowned
Where Love had found a place.

Oh! what a fount of innocence,
All free from any art,
A bright unsullied vestal pure,
A gladsome, happy heart.

The shadowy train of after years
Did slowly intervene;
With them a grievous change came o'er
"The spirit of her dream."
For he who vowed to love her still
Most basely did depart;
Accurs'd be he who thus betrayed
Her now poor broken heart.

The widowed one I too have seen
Lamenting o'er her lot,
Like Rachel whom no words could soothe,
Because her own were not.
For her—for all the afflicted band—
The Christian's tears do start;
Oh! may these tears by Him be seen
Who heals the broken heart!

A GLIMPSE OF FAIRYLAND.

Last night I dream'd a lovely dream,
Of pleasure, joy, and song,
Methought I roamed in ecstasy
The fairy bowers among.
I thought that witching music swelled
From many a golden lyre,
And airy minstrels softly sought
Rapt feelings to inspire.

Oh! there was such a melody
Deep lurking in their strings,
As even now those raptures raise
†No other music brings.
For while its breezy cadence rose
Upon the balmy air,
Soft visions seemed to fill the place
Which banished thought and care.

Enchanted temples, covered o'er
With blossoms rich and new,
Till in the distance they did fade
On my enraptured view.

† It seems that 'which' is elided here.

And shining spirits hovered by
With incense soft and sweet,
Who, with their melting, speaking eyes,
My wandering steps did greet.

Where silvery waters rolled away
With an entrancing sound,
Midst shady trees full many a group
Of happy ones I found.
But of that pure and guileless throng
None seemed to understand
That such as I had come into
Their magic fairyland.

Long was the time I stood to gaze
Upon their sinless joy;
But by and bye there touched my arm
A radiant cherub boy;
He led me with an airy hand
Into an arbour seat,
And from a pearly flask he poured
A nectar rich and sweet.

He held it to my eager lips,
And caused me drink it dry;
Then on that verdant rosy couch
Resistless made me lie;
When slowly—softly vanishing
This matchless vision fled,
And filled with deep regret I woke
Upon my morning bed.

There for a while I thought again
Those dreams to realise;
Alas! they seldom ever come,
While sunshine lights the skies;
But every night I sigh to feast
My ever wistful ears,
On that celestial melody,
That music of the spheres.

THE BLIND GIRL.

What poor one is this who moves slow by the wall,
Who is doubtful when walking, and threatens to fall;
Whose looks are so strange, and whose eyes are so dim,
And who gropes as if darkness were closing her in?—
'Tis the blind girl, alas! who goes sadly along,
An image of darkness the sunlight among.

No bright smile of gladness illumines her eye,
But from her lone bosom there rises a sigh;
'Tis not of repining that others are blest
With that which awanting would prove her unrest;
But sadly she ponders, and great is her fear,
That she burden the kind ones who love her so dear.

Or mayhap far concealed in the depths of her soul,
One quiet stream of sorrow all hidden does roll;
As lonesome she muses and sighs to behold
The faces of those who have soothed her of old;
And sure it is bitter that those whom we love,
We ne'er may behold till in heaven above.

Oh! cheer thee, poor trembler—thy dark, weary way
May not be alight with the brightness of day,
But take this assurance, that all will be kind,
For who could prove else to the helplessly blind?
That thou art not unpitied right well do I see,
For the soul of the Christian is weeping for thee.

Yet why do we mourn thee, or wherefore repine,
Since Heaven has been pleased that this fate should be thine?
From the dark scenes of vice and the grim sights of woe
Secure thou may'st wander, and safe may'st thou go,
And who knows but that He, with a balance so kind,
Is with visions celestial now filling thy mind.

At least when the wiles of this world do allure,
From their fell fascinations thou still art secure,
And perhaps through thy soul heavenly music does ring,
From the angel's sweet harps of the bright golden string,
If so—then how little thy loss here has been,
When rapt sights of glory thy spirit has seen.

FAIR LAND OF PALESTINE.

Fair land of Palestine! where is the glory
  Which caused thy children to love thee of old!
Where are the minstrels who joyed in thy story?
  Say, is their zeal for thine temples grown cold!

Hated and banish'd, curs'd and despised,
  Driven from their place 'mong the children of men,
Weeping, forsaken, and basely enticed
  To barter their birthright and hope not again.

Deeply enslaved in the land of the stranger,
  Still is their shrine in thy ruins so drear;
Their comfort in sorrow, their beacon in danger,
  'Tis this of all others can banish their fear.

Bright in their memory the palm tree and aloe
Are blooming alone on the landscape afar,
And there they are shedding a soft soothing halo,
To lighten their darkness with Hope's beaming star.

Ye daughters of Sion,—though yet the false crescent
Still gleams o'er the waters of sweet Galilee,—
Be assured that your future more bright than the present,
With gladness and triumph illumin'd shall be.

Through thy desolate places the lone breeze is sighing,
And it bears a low whisper to hope on its wing;
So, even while the fires of your altars are dying,
Glad songs of deliverance the wild winds do bring.

And He who of old led thy doubting ones over,
All safe and secure from the dark rolling wave,
Will cause His protection above thee to hover,
Even thus by his might He thy memory shall save.

Fair land of Palestine, then shall thy glory
Be seen by the children who loved thee of old;
And then shall the minstrels who joyed in thy story,
Proclaim that their daily prayer never grew cold.

"I FORGOT."

"Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him.'—GENESIS xl. 23.

I've often thought would men take heed
To view their poorer neighbours' need,
How happier far this world might be,
And much less misery we might see.
For not a day can o'er us pass,
But in some special state or class
This poor excuse they have to quote—
"I could not help it—I forgot.'

Dost hear that thoughtful student pale
His vanished prospects sore bewail?
For many a day it's been his aim
To scale the heights of glorius Fame;
But he has found it to be truth
That vanity are fine words smooth;
Obscurity must be his lot,
Because his patron "has forgot."

I've heard of friends, when put to straits,
By stress of circumstance or debts,
Being, by some generous kindred soul,
Released from their stern jailor's thrall.

Thus loudly vowed each grateful one,
"Dear friend! I'll pay you when I can,"
But years passed by and they paid not,
Nor ever will, for "they forgot."

Mark yonder patient tradesman bland,
Who by the rich man now does stand;
He would present his "little bill,"
But "I forgot's" the answer still.
Yet there at home, perhaps, does dwell,
His sickly wife, and babe unwell;
Where life's bare needfuls they have not,
Because the rich man still "forgot."

See that base drunkard raise the knife
To strike his poor defenceless wife!
Her, who his troubled mind has soothed,
And his deep anguish'd pillow smoothed.
Oh! Father! what ingratitude;
Can he excuse this dreadful mood?
Aye—thus he'll screen his passion hot—
"I *could not* help it—*I forgot*,"

Away with all this sickening strain,
These wretched paltry falsehoods vain;
Will heaven o'erlook this deep neglect,
This want of duty or respect?
Will it blot out our heinous sin,
Or shall His justice take it in?
Will this avail a single jot,
"I could not help it—I forgot?"

LINES WRITTEN ON PARTING WITH A FRIEND.

A few short fleeting weeks and thou art gone,
Then I am left both friendless and alone;
No fit companion, then, with whom to spend
Those hours of leisure—sacred to a friend.
Oh, precious hours, how fast thou fled away!
Thy time was soothing, but it could not stay;
Still shall thy memory, as the pleasant shade
Of other days, hang verdant o'er my head.
To make thy joys pure as were Eden's flowers
Fair literature did ope her sinless bowers;
Then as we culled her buds so fresh and new,
Still lovelier blossoms opened to our view.
Were they to chaste and private converse lent?
Then these quiet hours delightfully were spent;

As forth came thoughts with pure and social flow,
Which none save mutual friends can ever know.
Next, on the Sabbath's holy day did we
To tread the hallowed fane at once agree;
Wherein Gilfillan's loud but earnest voice
Makes vice to tremble—virtue to rejoice.
There would intelligence, with brightening look,
Transfer each thought or generous rebuke,
Approving conscience or discerning sense
With equal justice justly would dispense.
Invidious business often would prevent
Our tasting pleasures such as were our bent;
The Royal Drama,† or the enlivening song,
Did to our friendship's pleasures ne'er belong.
To view the beauties of the mimic stage,
The swarthy Moor's unjust, ungenerous rage—
The sorrowing Dane—the avaricious Jew—
The sighing Romeo, and his Juliet true—
Deformed Richard in his highblown pride—
Imperial Cæsar born in state to ride—
And poor old Lear with streaming locks so white,
Shut out to all the hardships of the night;—
These higher pleasures mutually to share
Have not been ours, however grand and fair;
Yet, though they have not thus been ours to know,
Scarce less our friendship in its genial flow,
And must it end—and must those happy days,
Give place to times all impotent to please?
And shall these pleasures like a vision seem—
An airy sham—a vain delusive dream?
Spirit of friendship! banish far the thought
That these our better memories come to nought;
In future years, after our manhood's prime,
Much stern experience shall their worth refine.
Well I remember in my school-boy days,
When life was young, and spent in gleesome plays,
I thought too little of those golden hours,
And saw no end to childhood's flowery bowers.
Ah me! the restless years did roll away,
And I gave up my gladsome jocund play;
My young companions left their youthful friends,
With selfish worldlings now their voices blends.
But still does memory, with her silver tone,
Recall those accents—since so sacred grown,

† Presumably the Theatre Royal, Castle street, Dundee, first opened 1810.

Their smiling features, and familiar dress—
Mellowed by distance—loved not the less.
Oh, how my thrilling heart with warmest love
Flows out to them, and all my soul does move—
As William from a distance comes to see
His childhood's friends, who dwell in old Dundee;
Or sometimes David, when the Fates command,
Turns his good craft to seek his native land
Across the ocean—then I haste to clasp
His roughened hand—'tis still a friend's warm grasp.
My school friend Hope, that warm-hearted boy,
At class or playground he was still the joy;
On whom the master smiled a lenient smile,
And little Hope manœuvered all the while.
Ah, studious Edmund! What has been thy fate?
Thou youth who loved'st so well thy book and slate;
How thy bright eye didst glance when it was plann'd
That thou should'st seek thy sire in Spain's fair land.
Hours of the mighty past! days of my youth!
Friends of my childhood! images of truth!
May your soft memories never die away,
And your impressions never more decay!
Dear friend, forgive me! but the times of yore
Come with a force unknown to me before;
Yet these all prove, that friendship unalloyed,
By time laid dormant, never can be cloyed.
May I this hope, that since our joys began,
No blot has sullied all our friendship's span;
But ever pure and stainless to the last,
Worthy to mix and mingle with the past.
The past is gone, the future has to come—
Our fate and fortune, who can tell the sum?
Whether shall our destiny be weal or woe,
What mind can fathom, or what wisdom know:
Heaven only knows! and Him that ruleth all
Commands us, whether we shall stand or fall.
Yet while we guide our craft to virtue's side,
We cannot err, and Heaven will be our guide.
Permit me, then, with words select and few,
To point out what to seek, and what eschew—
The good to take, and all the evil fly,
What gives content but never brings a sigh.
To business first stretch forth a willing hand,
For labour done, real comforts can command;
Your tools apply, with patience persevere,
The day is yours, go on, and never fear;

Until the task's complete, let nothing reck,
Prevail therein and gain your self respect;
For independence is a lofty hill,
And scaled alone by stout determined will.
But if, perchance, in that your future sphere,
A friend you meet, devoted and sincere,
On him bestow that confidence and trust
Which made our friendship pleasant from the first:
To him devote that precious leisure hour,
That of our time agone was still the flower.
The peaceful pages of the Muses scan,
The mighty deeds, the genius great of man.
All vicious pleasure of the giddy town,
Or inclination for, put quickly down;
The gilded tavern with its parlour trim,
And tempting liquors foaming to the brim;
Its organs piping, and its song so sweet,
Its brawls and laughter—base deceptive cheat.
The low carousal and the tawdry show,
Let ne'er your face or footsteps even know,
But let your pleasures all exalted be,
Keeping your mind from each corruption free.
So now, dear friend, I bid a fond adieu,
And may our friendship lasting prove and true;
Launched on the stream of time, oh, may you steer
Calmly and safely on your life's career!

Two of the poems in the *Select Miscellany*, 'The Midnight Streets' and 'The Factory Girl', were reprinted with an introduction in Alan Reid, *The Bards of Angus and the Mearns*: *An Anthology of the Counties* (Paisley 1897), pp. 160–161. Another, 'The Blind Girl', was reprinted on a poetry sheet in the Lamb Collection in the Local History Centre in Dundee Central Library as 'A gift to the Members and Friends of the Dundee Wesleyan Band of Hope from James Scrymgeour, their Secretary, presented on the occasion of a Lecture delivered by him on "the Blind," in the Wesleyan Chapel, Tally Street, on the Evening of Tuesday the 3d March 1863.' The sheet also contains another poem, 'The Blind Mother', which is anonymous, but could well be also by James Easson:

THE BLIND MOTHER

Say shall I never see they face, my child?
My heart is full of feelings strange and wild;
A mother's hopes and heart-felt joys are mine;
My soul is filled with gushings half divine;
And ever more, my child, am I alone,
Since thy young heart doth echo to my own.

But shall I never see thee? Can it be
That all may gaze, my precious boy, on thee,
And yet the heart that loves thee best forego
The dearest pleasure other mothers know?
This—this is anguish—agony refined!
O God! forgive me! Baby, I am blind!

Yes, yes! I never—never knew before
The depth of my affliction. O for power,
For one short thrilling moment, child, to gaze
On thy sweet, tiny face, which others praise;
And yet I must not murmur; God is kind:
But this is darkness! Now I feel I'm blind!

Nay, do not start, my child, it was a tear
That hit thy brow! Thy mother, boy, is here;
And though I may not see thee, yet I feel
Thy velvet cheek against my bosom steal,
And none can harm thee there; nor hand unkind
Shall touch my darling, even though I'm blind!

List—list! It is thy father's step I hear,
Now let me smooth my brow, press back the tear;
He shall not find me weeping, when so blest
With thee, my darling, cradled on my breast;
But could I only see thee! Yet God's will
Be done! Peace, throbbing heart—be still!

We are alone again; he never guessed
What yearning anguish filled thy mother's breast
When he did praise thy features, half defined—
He quite forgot that his young wife was blind;
And yet when his fond arm was round us thrown,
His lip half trembled as it met my own.

O! should he e'er repent him he hath wed
A being burdened with a woe so dread;
Should he grow tired of one so frail and weak,
My heart in that dark hour would joy to break;
Or should his lips grow cold—his hand unkind—
God help me, baby, then indeed I'm blind!

But shall I never see thee? Yes, my boy,
Some future hour my heart shall know that joy;
It may not be on earth, but in the skies
I yet shall gaze, my darling, in thine eyes;
So I will patient be, for God is kind—
For in yon heaven not one eye is blind.

A version of 'The Factory Girl' is also included in Easson's sketch 'Six o'clock in the Scouringburn' in the *People's Journal* for December 12, 1863, reprinted below.

Works of James Easson. B: Contributions to the Dundee *People's Journal*.

The *Dundee, Perth and Forfar People's Journal* (from January 30, 1858: *Dundee, Perth, Forfar, and Fife People's Journal*) was published weekly on Saturdays from 1858 to 1986.

In *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature,* Volume 2: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918), 2007, p. 314, we read:

> They [the *People's Journal*] also offered unexampled opportunities for publication by local writers who remained isolated from metropolitan literary circles, individuals such as James Easson, the Dundee housepainter, poet and contributor of essays as well as serial novels and stories to the *Journal*.

In fact, James Easson wrote no novels, so far as is known, though some of his stories are serialised in the *Journal* over two issues. 'Kindness Avenged' is the longest (January 7 and 14, 1860), a little over 5 columns, at 210 lines per column, abour 10 words per line. But he contributed nine short stories, ten poems,† and numerous 'sketches', essays and letters over the eight years from the time the first *People's Journal* was published in 1858 until his death in 1865.

i: Poems

LINES ON THE DEATH OF A NEGLECTED LOCAL ARTIST.

Oh chilly blast, subdue, subdue thy frost—
Course not so harsh o'er one untimely lost;
Oh, spare him now, fierce wind, and let him rest,
Since death has laid him low on earth's cold breast:
The false world fled him soon, as if in fear,
Then wind blow softly as his grave ye near!

And yet, rude wind, what recks your angry roar?
For ah, your howlings he can hear no more.
Dull is his ear, and, never as of old,
Can his poor limbs now feel the freezing cold!
Hoar frost may nip, and snow in flakes may fall,
But he, secure in death, defies them all.

Still, fancy's fingers on one tender string
To our remembrance later memories bring;
Days, when in dreamy and poetic mood,
He spoke of future joys in accents rude;
And sketched and coloured; aye, and sketched again,
Till sick and weary grew both heart and brain.

† Plus a further poem, 'Life's Vanity', printed posthumously in the *Journal*'s notice of his death (June 10, 1865; see p. 8 above), and the poem 'The Factory Girl' quoted in 'Six o'Clock in the Scouringburn' (December 12, 1863), and previously printed in *Select Miscellany*.

But vain ambition never filled his heart,
His noble spirit spurned each slavish art;
Content to labour on without an end,
Desiring but to please or serve a friend.
Thus many deemed him harsh, unsocial, rude—
For that strange soul's desires few understood.

Now down oblivion's dark and shadowy shore
His form has vanish'd to be seen no more.
'Neath this cold sod his heart has found relief,
While we are left to meditate in grief;
Nor shall we now a fitting grief refuse,—
His memory's sacred to the mourning muse!

JAMES EASSON.
(March 20, 1858)

LINES WRITTEN ON VISITING THE WESTERN CEMETERY.

Where are the lovely flowers, my friend, that scarce a month ago,
Shed balmy perfumes all around, and caused the earth to glow?
Where now the rose—that 'midst its leaves seemed still so fresh and green?
Come, tell me why they all have fled, as though they ne'er had been.

See, then, around their petals lie, all withered, dark, and sear,
Wide scattered now, and loose they blow, around the tombstones near.
And list!—how drear—how mournfully they rustle as they fly,
With not a tinge of freshness left, to tell their colours by.

What! these, my friend, the beauteous things so gentle, soft, and mild,
That nodded, bowed, and danced in light, as plays a lovely child?
That thing the rose—the violet this—oh, no—it cannot be—
My friend—these never were my flowers—or you but jest with me!

Why should I jest—when o'er the earth spreads sadness and decay?
When from the dreary vale of earth its beauties fleet away?
This is the rose, good friend of mine—and those the leaves so green,
That spread above your panting form its verdant, grateful screen!

Is't so?—then let me take this leaf, and keep it ever nigh,
That on it I may sometimes look—and looking learn to sigh—
As this thought swells—that though in youth much happiness I share,
I must be, some day, like the leaves that lie and wither there.—J. E.
(November 6, 1858)

THE SONG OF THE WANDERER.

A wanderer, poor and worn,
Sat resting 'neath a tree,
When the mellow light of the setting sun
Was a lovely thing to see;
And he sang of the strange things he had borne,
With a low, sweet melody.

O'er the dark green seas I've been,
Was the song this wanderer sung;
And many a land I've seen
Since the years when I was young:
I've passed o'er the mountains so bonnie and green,
And the deserts parched and long.

I have trod the orange groves;
I have seen the fountains dance;
I have mused on the spot that the poet loves,
Midst the flowery vales of France;
I have there heard the coo of the tender doves,
And the whispers of romance.

I have bowed my weary head
'Neath Ind's red, burning sun;
I've made my cold and snowy bed
Where the barking night-wolves run;
I have prayed to God that the night were o'er
Ere it was well begun.

But I have not found a bourne,
Where this lone and weary heart
Seeks fondly ever to return,
But never to depart.
No friend will deck the wanderer's urn
When death strikes home his dart.

J. EASSON.
(May 14, 1859)

STANZAS ON THE PORTRAIT OF A DEPARTED FRIEND.

He is not dead; for, see! he smiles
The pensive smile of yore;
This picture all my grief beguiles,
And bids me mourn no more.
The eye's mild glance, the cheek's pale hue—
Those lips that seem to move—
That brow and hair, those garments, too,
My vain complaints reprove.

And, yet, I've seen his early grave,
In summer days grow green!
The cold winds, too, I've heard them rave,
In winter bleak and keen;
So thou, poor glass, keep'st but the shade
Of that once well-known form;
Which, when dread want its blasts arranged,
Shrank fainting from the storm!

J. EASSON.
(June 4 1859)

THE SONG OF THE BROKEN BOUGH.

By James Easson.

I once was a strong and a stalwart bough,
As I stretched my green arms wide;
But the tempest has shattered my prowess now,
And shorn is my stubborn pride.
But I think of the days when a tender thing,
I sprang from my parent tree;
For I inly joyed as each opening spring,
Gave vigour and strength to me.

When the bright spring sun in the fragrant morn,
Made the fields and forests glad;
When blossoms the meadows and woods adorn,
And in green my limbs were clad;
Oh, I then gave vent to my wild, glad song,
As I dream't my youth's wild dream;
It was too, too delicious to linger long,
For this was its thrilling theme:—

"Far down in the valley of future years,
What a stately branch I'll rise!
And a shade to the weary my arm appears,
As I tour in the clear blue skies!
Then the old man will come with his eye-lids dim,
To gaze on that sturdy arm,
Till the days of his childhood appear to him.
And his poor old heart shall warm.

"At eve, when the quiet and dim moonlight,
Beams down like a hazy veil,
Here the eye of the virgin will sparkle bright,
As she lists to each tender tale;
And the widow will come with her memories sweet,
For beneath my friendly shade
With the man of her love she at first did meet,
And here were her first vows made.

"Thus I'll wave in my pride till both young and old,
Who have known me in days of yore,
Shall all have been gathered to death's dark fold,
And their names be known no more.
And the sun may rise in the silvery east,
And sink in the golden west;
But I'll rob decay of its wished for feast,
And I'll baulk time's iron test."

So thus, when a strong and stalwart bough,
Did my fancies wander wide;
But the tempest has scattered those fancies now,
And gone is my stubborn pride.
And I here depend, like a cursed thing,
To the trunk of my parent tree,
And I never may hope, for no coming spring
Brings beauty or strength to me.

(August 27, 1859)

A SANG TO TAMMAS BODKIN.†

Though gloomy Winter's ta'en the wing,
An' Summer days inspire to sing,
Though bird-sangs through the green woods ring,
Suggestin' hymn an' sonnet;
Far blyther soonds noo reach oor ear,
An' soonds we've likit weel to hear,
Since Bodkin, to his spouse sae dear,
Made present o' a bonnet.

But, keep me! what an awfu' fricht
Got Tibbie on the Queen's Birth-nicht,
Sin' syne I hinna sleepit richt,
For thinkin' aye upon it:
I mind, by mony a winsome wile,
She forth her Tammas did beguile,
An' he, to please her, took his tile
While she drew on her bonnet.

Then hoo the graceless rascal crew
Seized on the bonnet, splinder noo,
And it asinder soon did pu',
Syne left her to bemoan it;
An' not content wi' doin' that,
To clink aff Bodkin's bran new hat,
Sae canty on his had that sat,
An', shameless, trample on it!

But losh! when burnin' squeebs an' shot,
Blew baith the swallow tails to pot
O' Bodkin's dirt-flee coloured coat,
Weel micht he dad an' scone it!
I leuch till fairly like to spleet,
My very eyes wi' brine ran weet,
Sae rich reads that Queen's Birth-nicht treat,
As Bodkin's self has shown it.

† This poem seems to relate to the comical prose accounts by 'Tammas Bodkin' of the disasters befalling him and his wife Tibbie in the *Journal* for May 25, June 1 and June 8, 1861, 'Bodkin's Fortunes and Misfortunes', 'Bodkin Flits his Camp' and 'Bodkin terribly hum—bugged'.

Weel micht he look for the police,
An' vow that crimes do sure increase;
Such breaches o' the public peace
Do very weel atone it.
An' weel micht Tibbie shake wi' fear,
'Mang sic a wild uproarious steer,
'Twad made a stooter heart feel queer,
Nor scruple forth to groan it.

But glad are we that a' thae rugs,
Leave Tibbie strength to slay the bugs,
To flit her kettles, pans, an' jugs,
As though she ne'er had known it:
That Bodkin, rid o' a' his fears,
Still deftly plies the shining sheers,
An' houps to do in comin' years,
Nor feels ashamed to own it.

J. E.
(June 15, 1861)

BY THE RIVER.

Why dost thou swelter thus thou restless stream,
And dash thy foaming waters to and fro?
Far rather like a quiet lake, go sleep and dream,
Than bellow forth in ceaseless thunder so!
For, dost thou think these black defiant rocks
Regard thy loud and long continued rage;
Be not deceived—they flout at all thy shocks,
And will for many an age[.]

Rude stream! bethink thee—wer't not wiser far
Calmly to slumber 'neath the noontide sun,
Or faintly mirror back the evening star,
Reflecting its bright sparkles one by one,
Than, like a furious maniac, wroth and wild,
Distort with anger all thy peaceful waves?
Fie on thee, stream! back like a chastened child
Into thine ocean caves!

Poor puny stream! is this thy little spleen,
To spit upon my hand thy seething spray?
So, thou art but a bully after all, I ween,
Not worth one word—away!
* * * * *

Yet, soft—thy waves rise fast—hold, I repent!
Engulph me not, nor sweep me from the shore!
[I] did but speak in haste—do not resent,
For sure I am rebuked and humbled sore!

Nor weak, nor boastful art thou, mighty stream,
As my proud heart in sinful scorn would say,
But, like myself, a creature art of HIM,
Whose word all worlds obey!

JAS. EASSON.
(March 15, 1862)

NIGHT VISIONS.

Oh! visions of the night, strange things are ye,
Whether of gloom or glory ye partake,
Yet weird your happiest sights of gladness be—
Of human pride and pomp what sport ye make!
Through Vision's realms we ride as kings in state,
Or, famished beggars, beg for daily bread;
There we see friends we love or foes we hate—
The busy living, and the silent dead!

There fond ones speak, whose kindly words to hear
Make dead affections blossom as of old;
Beloved lips! whose feelings know no fear,
Through dreams' soft medium all their sweets unfold;
There, too, we secrets learn, which evermore
To mortal ears must die or live concealed—
Whilst warnings kind, in loving myst'ry veiled,
By dreams brought near us, are in peace revealed.

In dreams' sweet memory around us throng
Lands passing fair, and skies of azure blue;
Glimpses of beauty come, and scenes of song
Through Vision's magic glass dawn on our view!
Than Spain more lovely (though its vine-clad groves
Smile out with gladness to the radiant sun)
Are Vision's happy realms and happier loves,
Where joys grow fresher as the ages run.

In dreams yon prodigal of rueful mind
With sweet thoughts of his home is haunted still,
Determined, leaves his servile tasks behind,
And bends submissive to his father's will!
Yon once pure girl, who fell from Virtue's way,
A pleaséd mother sees in dreams restored;
Joyful, she wipes her darling's tears away—
Her sins all pardoned, and her faults ignored.

In dreams of old, men sacred scenes beheld—
Even God himself to mortal sight was given;
Enraptured Stephen Christ's blest face beheld,
And Jacob's ladder reached the gates of Heaven!

John the Inspired in Patmos' island lone
Saw New Jerusalem's streets bedight with gold—
Heard Doom's dread trumpet-blast with fury blown—
Felt earth up-shrivelling like a parched scroll!

In dreams roamed Joseph when the warning came,
Telling of Bethle'm and its manger poor;
From dreams he started, and the well-known name
Conducts him safely to the appointed door.
And "warned of God" full often men will dream,
Yet deem no chance of death or danger near;
Yet were it wise did we such dreams esteem,
And study visions with a wholesome fear!

J. EASSON.
(October 1, 1864)

SABBATH DAYS.

Bring back those happier times when Sabbath days
Seemed days of peace and Heaven-entrancèd rest!
Times when the dazzling sun subdued his rays,
And labouring mortals called its moments blest.
Now hands profane attack its sacred bounds,
And hireling scribes its triumphs bright defame;
Each ruthless spoiler Sabbath's charm disowns,
And showers dishonour on its hallowed name.

For what were Scotland, what were Scotland's sons,
If, robed in peace, no Sabbath morn arose?
Should silent Sabbaths speak no check to sin,
And its thrice-blessed hours bring no repose?
If, midst toil's sweltering, restless, stormy sea,
No calm soul-haven to our vision came—
If rest and worship should like phantoms flee,
And Sabbath and the week became the same?

If sweat and smoke and dust and deaf'ning din
Give place no more to rest and God's high praise—
Should Sabbath cease our best regards to win,
And sweet church bells no holiest feelings raise:
If man's torn soul, distracted and distrest,
Found no quiet resting-place but in the grave.—
Ah me! sad days were these—my heart opprest
Might sink and fail me 'neath ill's coming wave.

Look back, ye fathers, on your days of youth,
The Sabbath memories of your years of yore!
Haply a mother from the Word of Truth
Then graved God's impress on your young heart's core:

How, on the Sabbath-day your sires, now gone
To their deep slumber in the silent land,
Up to God's altar seldom went alone,
But brought their dear ones too with loving hand.

Wake, men of Scotland, from your sloth awake,
Slay the dark thief who steals your Sabbath hours!
This no less deadly will the danger make
That pelf, the robber, lurks in honied bowers.
Distrust those charmers whose deluding voice
Sings Pleasure summers best 'mong Sabbath fields;
And since they cannot in God's house rejoice,
Persuade their fellows such no profit yields.

Nor shall He sleep who from the trembling mount
Said, Hallow the Sabbath-day for me alone,
Lest, rend'ring up to me your lax account,
Prayers, sighs, and sacrifice may naught atone.
Yes, prize your Sabbath, ye who, wisdom-taught,
See danger brooding o'er poor Scotland's soil—
Blest Sabbath's moments are to all joy-fraught,
But doubly joyful to the sons of toil!

J. EASSON.
(January 14, 1865)

GOODNESS TRIUMPHANT.

I've sometimes felt it sweet to know
That heaven and goodness reign supreme!
That rebel though our passions grow,
And scorn each power that would redeem,
Goodness still sings—Grim vice must yield,
And God stand victor on the field!

Yet dire temptations oft will fall
Full heavy on the kind and pure,
Whose weak defence seems all too small—
Their sad defeat both deep and sure;
These, though they well might fret and ban,
Still quit them like the "perfect man."

Strange fate seems this for love and trust,
In hearts born faithful and sincere!
Saints who with water and one crust
Can bid the false go speak of fear!
Yet men still prize what's gross and mean,
While good ones live for the unseen.

But sweet to tell! though oft prest down,
Strong virtue's warfare's never lost;
'Midst spiteful taunts she dons the crown,
While hair-brain'd Folly pays the cost!
Thus Vice, though much against its will,
Promotes God's plan and purpose still!

And has this fight raged always so?
Has good with ill thus ever striven?
Must this grim strife still forward go,
Till Christ in might return from Heaven?
Yes, Vice must fight, and sometimes win,
Yet Virtue crush and conquer sin!

Then courage, Soul! there's hope for thee,
Still in the main thine aims were good;
Fight on! though few thy laurels be,
They'll tell—Here's one did what he could
His faults to curb, and force to yield,
Till God stood victor on the field!

J. EASSON.
(February 25, 1865)

DR GUTHRIE'S CHURCH ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

A Life Sketch.—By James Easson.

St John's Free Church in Edinburgh is a peculiar-looking edifice, standing opposite the entrance to the Established Church Assembly Hall, and within its walls preaches the Rev. Dr Guthrie, the most popular pulpit orator of the day. Every Sunday afternoon when he may be heard, that church is besieged by crowds of eager applicants for admission, who may have come, it may be, from every corner of the empire. They have been told that, to hear this wonderful preacher is a thing to think and speak about for a lifetime, and they have not been misinformed.

A ticket hangs on each side of the main gate when the doors open, and on each of these tickets is printed in large bold letters—"Strangers will find access to the church from the school-room below." If the reader is willing to take the hint which this conveys, he will do well to make his way into the said school-room when the clock of the Assembly Hall points to the 25 minutes from 2.

Here he will find a pretty large room filled with the usual furniture of a school—forms and such like—but they are all gathered into one place in the centre of the floor. At each end of this room there is a door, and over these are tickets similar to the ones at the gates outside, whereon is this information, "Entrance to the church," the one at the east side has this addition, "For Ladies only."

The place rapidly fills, and the heat grows most oppressive. By and bye it has filled up ere the bells begin to ring out the ordinary church-goers. The eager visitors crowd anxiously around the entrance[s], which admit them into the very handsome, elegant church overhead. There are whisperings, sharp and exciting, through their very anxiety. That anxiety is infectious; every one is pushing, and that well-dressed and miscellaneous throng are packed together in the narrow room as thickly as they can stand. It may be ten minutes since the time that the place was completely packed. There is a stifling heat, and a painful silence, which is not all silence. There is every now and then to be heard a deep-drawn sigh, such as all have heard amidst a crowd, an ill-suppressed, "Oh, dear, I wish I were out of this!" or, "Will they be lang noo in lettin' us up?" and the like. An elder in some centrical part of the room now and then warns the waiting visitors—"Now, gentlemen, please don't push the doors when they are opened," when away go the bells with a roll of harmony!

Vain was the elder's precaution, the bells being nearly ceased, the bolts are withdrawn, and, pushing, driving, scrambling, panting, and squeezing, the heated and wearied throng pour in one after the other, up the little stair, and hurry into the body of the church—the congregation, admitted individually by their membership cards at the front gate, being now engaged in singing the second verse of the opening psalm.

The vacant passages and divisions are in a very few minutes densely packed with the strangers, every available nook and corner being completely filled up.

Now the time for observation is come. While the sweetly harmonized choir is filling the lofty roof with a soft and beautiful music, we will survey the environings of the centre of all attention—the Rev. Dr Guthrie himself.

His church, like himself, is peculiar. If the writer of this sketch may be permitted to refer Dundee readers to a church of their own, we would say that the style of Dudhope Free Church, before it was last repaired, in some degree resembles that of the Doctor's. The pulpit is an

antique affair, entered from a platform at the back; the canopy, a riketty seeming structure, tapering to a point, and reminding one very much of Sir Walter Scott's Monument on the Mound. There are no pannels in the front of the pulpit—in fact it is more like the balcony of a drawing-room window, seeing it is but a railed enclosure, wide and roomy, wherein its remarkable occupant, when the spirit moves him, has space to move about and gesticulate. There is no precentor's desk; the choir is under the pulpit, within an enclosure fitted up for the purpose. The elegant wood-work and fittings are all painted wainscot, so also is the lofty Gothic roof with projecting beams, the ends turned into drops, all of which are nicely gilded, and give to the whole a very fine effect. The galleries are admirably set into the building, being neither too high nor too low; they are excellently adapted for displaying the fine and fashionble dresses of the ladies, who almost completely fill the room of the pews. In the east gable is a very beautiful stained-glass window, the colours of which heighten the effect of the whole very considerably. The gallery fronts are ornamented with a scroll, either of carving or of composition castings, and the whole is like the wood-work, painted in imitation of wainscot.

The psalm has ceased; now every eye is directed towards the Dr, who rises to pray. A tall, reverend, fatherly figure and aspect has he—he instinctively and instantaneously puts one in mind of those mild, yet earnest, God-fearing fathers of the Covenant, who, in days of dark persecutions, stood Bible in hand upon some bleak and misty mountain's side—preaching with kindling eye and trembling accent to a few good simple Highlanders, as simple as themselves, and as earnest. He rises to pray; he strokes back behind his ears the few grey hairs, and thus shows his fatherly and kindly face in all its calm, peaceful, benignity. As he reverently bends his venerable figure over the Bible, an eye-glass dangling from a black silk riband at his breast, sparkles in the light, and returns to his breast again as he once more stands erect. All is expectant silence while he begins to speak in words of solemn adoration. Slowly—in deep measured tones, gradually rising in volume with the earnestness of his heart, till he seems to gain the height of the lofty exercise in which he is engaged—then beautiful and soothing words flow from his lips—but never an old or hackneyed expression is heard. His prayer is somewhat lengthy, but, from its beginning to the close, everything is silence, and every ear is earnestly set to hear.

Next follows a treat in scripture reading, and one seldom matched. If it be a chapter in the Romans, then the enjoyment of the listener is complete. The thorough appreciation of the argument betrayed by the reverend speaker is most evident by the familiarity with which he goes about it. The flexibility of his voice, its exquisite modulation, so easy and so pleasant, all go to set the subject in some new and interesting light; and now leading the hearer to wonder what meaning he will manage to bring out of some other verse not hitherto understood by the generality of persons. But out of the most sapless seeming verse, this remarkable reader manages in every instance to bring as much, simply by his intelligent reading, as many another preacher would make appear in a whole afternoon's discourse.

Hereafter follows another psalm, gently and sweetly sung; which being ended, the Dr rises to give out his text and preach the sermon.

Generally, the text is short, consisting of a little but powerful sentence—seldom of a number of verses—"I live not for myself;" "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump;" "Quench not the Spirit," and such like. Erecting himself, and looking fixedly before him for just one moment, he with one bold sentence, unlodging some as bold a similitude, strikes upon and arrests the attention of the entire audience. In one instant, and by the abrupt thrilling tremor of his voice,

every contemporary sound is stricken into silence. Then louder and louder swells his tones as the full grandeur of the subject in hand is before him. Now he begins to fulfil the hearer's ideal of a true orator—his actions, looks, and smallest gestures speak a language of their own. Now he needs all the all the room of his capacious pulpit. His face—how expressive and winning, when he descants upon the joys of Paradise, the depth of redeeming love, the joy of the angels over returning sinners, the fulness and beauty of the Redeemer's offering and his example; but what strength of indignation in the clench of his hands and the stamp of his foot, as, recoiling back nearer to the seat, he begins to execrate the ingratitude so deep, and the wickedness so black, that prompted a woman to sell off the bed of her dying babe that very blanket which he had procured for her, and that to obtain accursed, damning drink? Or when he exults with a joy most intense, telling how the horny hand of toil shall find the handle of Heaven's gate more easy to turn than will the hand of the rich man, sparkling with jewels and gems. His Scripture quotations—how apt they are too—never a misquoted word in them all; the periods are all smoothly and fittingly turned; and the sermon, which has lasted for an hour, seems but the short work of a brief twenty minutes. It is with a kind of deep regret and sadness that at the end he stops short, and a little abruptly brings the discourse to a close.

A psalm and a lengthy prayer, another psalm and a doxology, sung by the choir alone, brings the sweet and short-seeming service to an end.

The blessing pronounced, the audience slowly and quietly, seat after seat, rises up and retires—many to bless, but not one to regret, that he spent an hour and three-quarters, even standing, within "Dr Guthrie's Church on Sunday Afternoon."

(October 1, 1859)

TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY.

By James Easson,

Author of "Daguerreotypes of Dundee Life,"† Kindness Avenged," &c.

TRANSCRIPT FIRST.

Fresh Lessons from our "Collection."

In a corner of the most of houses there is a pile of old dusty volumes, into which few ever think it worth while to look; they repose there from year in to year out, and, except to be dusted, and put back for a while into their old place, they may truly be said to have been "laid on the shelf." Nevertheless, they are dear familiar friends; they have done their work in their day; for, upon inspection, we find among their number our first Bible, and our first "Course of Reading." Dog-eared and greasy are the leaves of the latter book, with blotches of ink on the outside, whilst on the fly-leaves and margins there are all sorts of caricatures, figures, and names, every one of which, to a stranger, would be as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on the Egyptian pyramids.

But in the twilight of a calm afternoon, what object more suggestive of pensive, pleasing thought than this same discarded "Collection," and the queer-looking illustrations therein contained? It assists in plunging us back into the shadowy past, and thus delights us with emotions very sweet and very wholesome. We gaze upon its faded covers and time-worn binding until, by a species of mental magic, we are launched upon the stream of fancy, and glide smoothly back again to the bright shores of early youth. At such times we behold faces and forms we once knew and loved—images long lost to us in the mist of years. Every figure, every name, every shape serves to waken up some tender and happy remembrance, beautiful

† I have not been able to find any item with this title anywhere in the *People's Journal*.

with the rosy effulgence of life's morning! The name upon which our eye first falls, may be that of one who, in those peaceful times, was our bosom friend;—where is he now? He sleeps, it may be, in the narrow house, and the long, rank grass, perhaps, conceals his honoured resting-place. The next name belongs to one who prosecuted his studies with a worthy ardour, was made an assistant-teacher in the school where he began to learn, and was at length rewarded with a Queen's scholarship. The third is the name of a youth who unwisely forsook his honest trade to become a lazy publican; and a fourth, alas! went off to sea, a lively and comely youth, and was drowned in the wild, remorseless waters while on his first voyage! All those well-known forms pass before our mind, and to each and all of them we give the tribute of a tear!

Turning to another page, we see the name of some whose ideal fills the mind with different thoughts—memories of a somewhat light and humorous complexion.

Accompanied with a portrait drawn in "strokes," we have the name of one who was the simpleton of the school; his lank frame standing, by way of pumishment, upon a couple of forms—a sight, to our memory, as vividly seen as though so many years had not attempted to fling their veil between us and the time it was first beheld. On the same page, too, and by means of the aforesaid "strokes"—strokes of art most artless—we have trees, houses, steam-boats, hills, and streams—all the objects and scenes then possessing our favour and attention, preserved to us on those familiar pages. In one corner we have a soldier, his head round as a bullet, with two dots for his eyes, an upright stroke for his nose, a cross stroke for his mouth, a triangular figure for his body, and two thick strokes for his legs! His hair is long, stiff, and straight, like a bunch of ramrods; his sword, and the arm that supports it, resembles a crank-handle; whilst, by the fact, that he is so† near to the edge of the leaf, he is like what our brave Volunteer Riflemen will require to be in the hour of danger—barely hidden in ambush, always to be found when looked for, and "armed" for the battle!

Fun, however, by the bye. The good old books teach a graver lesson than would at first appear. One thought they suggest above many others—it is, how careful should a schoolmaster be on every occasion, little knowing, as he does, what damage may very thoughtlessly be effected, both to his own fair fame, and to the minds of his pupils; and, on the one hand, what blessed results may flow from, and be enjoyed by each, through a guarded and a worthy system of training! Some teachers teach by force of fear; but the rule of love is best, both at the time when it is in operation, and also after the teaching has become a thing of the past. To prove this by the recital of a little of bygone experience, is our intention, and was so when we wrote at the head of our sketch—Fresh lessons from our old "Collection."

Our first schoolmaster, a good enough, and much respected person in the main, had a great liking for the "taws," a feeling in which we had with him no sympathy whatever. We were then very young; and when the master frowned we trembled; when he said "advance" we responded by shrinking back, fearful of the fire-hardened strap with its six "taes," so long and so galling. Truth to speak—the master was rather severe. Cool, erect, and unmoved, he would say to an offending juvenile, "Come up here, sir!" Then, the poor little fellow would slowly, with halting gait, draw near to the seat of the awful man, whose stern face and resolute tone of voice might have made a stouter heart than his to quake. One curt question as to why he had dared to do such and such,—to which generally no answer was returned—then the terrific order—"Hold up your hand, sir!" The little bit of pantomime that followed this mandate was half serious, half laughable; now thusting out his little palm, previously wetted with spittle, then quickly drawing it in again; this time catching the entire weight of the strap upon the very

† Printed 'no'.

tips of his poor red fingers. Those were incentives very questionable as a general rule; they served but to chill, with slavish fear and dread, the hearts of the scholars. It was like a bondage, from which every one of us felt glad to escape as soon as possible; and the oppressive prospect of pains and penalties ever looming in the distance, were as dark and frowning to us then, as disgrace and criminal confinement would be now, were we in hourly fear of their approach. Good reader, there certainly is a true poetry and a sweet purity that ever linger about the days of boyhood, but very little of it attaches to the interior of a week-day school, wherein the master teaches by force of fear, and works the "taws" with a will.

We cannot better illustrate this idea than just by describing another school, ruled over by a very different system of discipline—we mean the sweet Sabbath evening school, pregnant with so many sacred recollections, so many stirring and happy associations. To us this never-to-be-fogotten school was like a quiet, verdant retreat in the midst of a hard and sterile wilderness, with its genial air, its sweet psalm-lessons, and its little Bible verses to be learned by heart! There were its teachers, too, with their kinder, gentler tone and looks. No "taws" there; no dread, no harshness; only calm, generous emulation! All was, to the scholars true happiness, and towards the teachers true respect, true love! Yes; well do we remember how highly we preferred that happy Sabbath school—it and the other formed such a contrast! No imperious mandates there, such as "Come up here, sir!" At a smiling indication of the master's eye we bounded off to obey, well aware that a pleasant pat on the head, and an encouraging word were certain to reward our pains. How all of us loved those mild, good men—their faces and forms are now the most cherished ones upon the canvas of our memory!

We will close this sketch (one of a series) with a scene taken from those bright times; and briefly transcribe some of our thoughts and feelings as they shine even yet through the dimness of eighteen long years.

The time was a bright, peaceful Sabbath evening in the bloom of the summer; and the scene was the playground of that school wherein the forces of fear and love were severally brought into play. The school was dismissed, the children were all gone, save the writer of this sketch, then a boy. Solitary silence reigned now, where gleeful noises so lately abounded. The darkness was fast closing in, and the sun, shrouding himself in his mantle of burning crimson, was sinking slowly into his bed of the western hills, a couch draped with faint, hazy blue. How sweet, quiet, and refreshing was that sacred hour, since embalmed in our heart, and now pourtrayed for the first time! We felt, then, oppressed by a strange thought—a thought that had often oppressed our mind—it was,—what a pity that every day is not like the sweet Sabbath day, and every school-master kind and encouraging like our Sabbath school teacher. Reader, of the sympathetic soul, we own this was a child's thought; but it was natural and earnest, and it gushed forth from the heart as warmly as did the wishful tear from the eye of him who then thought it! Strange that the same Bible should be a harsh task book, when by a little kindly treatment every one of our most melting moments might be made to hover around it!

Reluctantly, at the call of duty, we have to lay down those dear old books, and with a deep sigh coming from the bottom of our heart, wish that we had those happy days to live over again! In the words of the song, we fondly ask—"Will they no come back again?" Echo answers—never! Well, well; we can at least keep that good old volume, pray the prayer of the holly tree—"Lord, keep thou my memory green," and ever and anon be taking—*A fresh lesson from our old "Collection*."

(February 11, 1860)

TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY.

By James Easson.

TRANSCRIPT SECOND—"THE POOPIT FIT."

Imagine, reader, that you wander over the wide plains, and through the deep green groves of Canada West; that you feel home-sick and weary, and that roaming there you have chanced to meet with a stranger of European aspect. How high your heart leaps with joy as this thought flashes across your mind—"Perhaps he is a Scotchman, and may have some feelings in common with myself!" Gladly you salute him with words of friendly greeting, and forthwith begin to converse. You go on to speak of many places and about many things, till at length your conversation chances to run upon the church of your fathers. But the stranger turns out to be an Englishman; he knows nothing of the "kirk," though he recalls with true feeling the memory of the aged curate of his native place, the beautiful prayers of the liturgy; of its old, but to him familiar chaunts, as they used to swell through the ancient chancel, and of the steady, golden voice of the organ. All this is very sweet and very beautiful; but he cannot talk to you of "puir auld Scotland," of her children, her homes, her pulpits, her ministers, or her "household words." Again, your yearning heart feels disappointed and charged with chagrin; so, you give vent to a tremulous sigh, and with a faltering "God speed," you part from your fellow sojourner, who soon pursues his onward way.

You also wander along till evening approaches, and the fiery Canadian sunset floods all the landscape with burning red—a radiance that causes the lakes to blaze like sheets of bright gold, whilst the woods look black and solemn. Then you see a log-house in the distance, thatched like a Scotch cottar house; a train of blueish reek ascends from it, and latterly your eye can discern a sonsy Scotch gudewife pottering about the door, her broad face florid with the ruddy light. The stalwart gudeman sits at the door-cheek of his log-cabin, and little pawky Johnny, seated on his knee, is pulling away at his father's beard, or trying vainly to untie his neckerchief. Betimes they notice you; they herald your approach with an earnest welcome, somewhat like this—"Losh, man, but ye are tired-like; ye've surely come a far road—sit doon an' rest ye—sae, sit doon here i' the arm-chair, an' mak' yersel' at hame!" When the conversation has advanced so far, the gudewife thinks of supper, and the gudeman suggests the propriety of having a little tea for "a dentis." It may be that you are no fellow-townsman of your host; but you are a Scotchman, so you speak of the latest news from the old country, and from that you ramble on till you speak to him of the old churches and the old ministers at home. By-and-bye the table is set, the gudewife's presence graces the homely board, and she also takes up the subject in hand. She laments that they are so far away from Scotland, for she would have "liket the bairns bapteezed at hame," where she was baptized, and where her "forbears" lived, died, and are buried. Then they talk of the baptisms of their brothers and sisters, and of the beloved pastors who administered the ordinance, and who are also left behind. These and such like memories are all recalled, and recollection lingers in fondest retrospect around them still.

Yes, and it were strange did any emotion, save that of affection, like the affection of those poor emigrants, attach to that familiar "poopit-fit." As parents, some think, at its mention, of sinless cherubs—upon whom the dew of morning scarce fell, when Death, like a thief, stole silently in, laid his frozen hand upon the young one's heart, and carried it away, smiling spitefully at their agony, and his own fell triumph; whilst others of us have there received those names which have since become as pleasant to our friends, as they are familiar to ourselves.

But the aspect of the "poopit-fit" has changed very much in our midst during the last eighteen years; and that change has not, we humbly think, been for the better. There is now

a straining after effect—an elegance over-much—our pulpits are now "ower braw." Where are now the fine old wives—the grannies—with their "soobacket mutches," with the black silk band; their reverend and kindly faces, looking up to the minister, with an attention so profoundly respectful? Poor old creatures, we don't see them now—our carved balustrades and summer-bright carpets have frightened them away! Where is the poor blind man who used to sit at the roadside on the week-days, and who was always so punctual at the "poopit-fit" ten minutes before the minister appeared, so that you often felt ashamed when you thought of your own lax attendance? He can't see the varnished wainscot and the carved railings, but he feels them; their sharp corners hurt his back, and he must have a lean. And the helpless cripple, too, where is he, and what has become of the "little wee lassie" who came along with him to carry his Bible, and pick up his staves when they fell down, and he fell asleep? And the "silly woman" who smirked and nodded to the people in the pews, and laughed outright in her own sleeve when the preacher's words grew "fast and furious?" Where are they now?—few can tell!

Reader, there was One whose order was, to bring in the halt, the blind, and the lame from the highways and byeways, that His house might be filled; but our carved benches, our costly gilding, our gorgeous stained glass, our new-fangled singing, and, worst of all, our new-fangled preaching, all have conspired to convey the notion to these poor ones, that our churches are not meant for them at all. The honest, hard-wrought widow, whose limbs are disabled by paralysis, and whose head shakes continually—she hears not in the kindly tones she once did, that blessed invitation, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Doubtless she does hear it; but it is uttered in that stiff, almost pragmatical manner, to her ears so cold and ungenial. Her dress, too, poor body, is not what it once was;—her bonnet, once black, is now brown with age and long service; her gown, once a "weel settin'" gown, has been out of fashion long ago. And do you imagine that she will come into your grand kirks, to sit before your dandy young lasses with their gumflowers, ribbons, and crinolines? Not exactly; she has a spark of pride left yet—and who has a better right? She thinks herself as good as any of them, for "she's seen the day." And perhaps she is as good as any of them, morally speaking; most certainly she is more earnest and sincere than many of them by a long chalk.

We will here give, as in the last transcript, a scene taken from our own history; it will embody an account of our first appearance in any church—an epoch of our fourth year in this world.

Clear and dazzling shone the summer sun on that genial Sabbath noon; it laughed down in its gladness upon us, led along as we then were by an aged relative, whose form, years ago, has mouldered in the dust. Yes, a beautiful noon it was as ever shone; the white, feathery clouds skimmed the deep, pure blue overhead; the western gale, warm and balmy, played about our then boyish face, as with easy gait we both sought the hallowed place. The bell sounded its familiar note; the green leaves on the young trees in the grave-yard fronting the church, glistened in the cheering beam, the long grass, gowans, and other wild flowers, stirred by the wind, emitted a half-breathed whisper over the quiet graves—a semi-stillness, scarce broken by the sedate and decorous people who also wended their way toward the "sacred fane."

When we entered, there was no one within; but by-and-bye the worshippers began to gather. First came the blind man, making, what we innocently thought, a most sacrilegious and impertinent din with his stick as he felt his way along the passage. Presently the

congregation began to thicken on all sides—we recognised many well-known faces, but they were every one of a cast so solemn that we were mightily puzzled to think what might be the cause of it. We turned to our aged relative intending to inquire, but a warning shake of the head was all the reply. Just then the cripple entered by an end door, and made a noise ten times more startling than his blind neighbour. He was attended by his little lassie—a fortunate circumstance; for, while he was slowly mounting the pulpit stair, his crutch fell from under his arm with a clatter, an incident with which we were, of course, nothing but amused. Next came the "silly woman," her psalm-book rolled carefully up in a clean white napkin, herself nodding to all and sundry. At length the congregation was complete. In came the "bethil" and the minister, whose name has since become a "household word" in Dundee.

To us the sermon seemed a dry affair; but then we were too young to know what was the meaning of the sounds we heard, so that the egg-and-dart moulding of the cornice, the round centre ornament of the ceiling, and the hangings of the pulpit, pleased us best. But we remember of the preacher's mild and pleasant features, of his impassionate gestures, and have still a vivid recollection of the profound silence that reigned in that sacred place from the beginnimg of the sermon till its close. And we well remember, too, of the many kindly pattings on the head that we got, and the many "sweeties" put into our hand for good behaviour, by good old creatures, also gone to the "land that is very far off."

Yes, we have seen many a church, heard many a preacher's voice, and joined in many a psalm,—but so quiet, mild, and still seems that first and far off time, that we often think we will never see such another. No more will we; at least, in the like circumstances, for those times are gone forever now—the minister's pleasant voice is hushed in death—the hands that first led us to church are now in the grave—and the fine old bodies, who used to reward our good conduct—they, together with the blind man, the cripple, and the silly woman, have each and all disappeared, and become lost to our sight!

Notwithstanding, in the eyes of Scotchmen the pulpit should be a shrine round which they should rally, for it is the best pillar or our national glory. The Englishman whom we mentioned in the opening of this transcript—his countrymen have fought and will fight for their homes and their altars. Will Scotchmen be behind in the evil hour? Never. But, calling to mind the tender and interesting ideas that cling to its locality, surely the weakest waifs among us will be at hand in the press of necessity, keeping jealous watch and ward around—'THE POOPIT-FIT!"

(March 3, 1860)

TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY.

THE GLORIES OF A WEEK IN SUMMER.

BY JAMES EASSON.

The season of spring is a tender and gentle season; its air is kindly, soft, and pure, like a sister's kiss. The season of autumn is radiant and lovely, like the blush of a ripe damsel in the bloom of her beauty. But commend us to the summer season, for its loveliness is queenly and superb—crowning all the rest. How calm and soft is then the blue heaven above us; how sparkling and crystalline the waters as they flow gently by; how delicate, fragrant, and refreshing the herbage under our feet; how cool the noon-day breeze; how grateful and welcome the silent shadows of the grove when the sun shines hotly down in the flood-tide of his glory!

Ay, give us the beautiful summer time, we like its glories best. Orient and gladsome are its mornings, delicious its noons, its afternoons warm, and its evenings cool, genial, and lovely.

Even in this smoke-enshrouded town, it is delightful on a sunny summer morning to abandon our narrow sleeping rooms and hie away to the yet untasted freshness of the Magdalen Green, to lie down upon its homely slopes, gaze upward to the glorious firmament above, and then down upon the stately waters of the Tay as they roll silently toward the sea! Look we southward? there in bright repose lie the smiling hills of Fife, with their still white cottages, deep green woods, ripening corn fields, and broad pasture lands. With such a scene to gaze upon as this one is, and having a mind congenial and at ease, we know not how any man could help being poetical, either muttering to himself the rich happiness of his own heart, or else enjoying with a deep relish such nectar drawn from lavish nature as others have distilled!

Prizing thus highly those sweet enjoyments, what happiness to escape from the thraldom of the town and spend a whole week in the bosom of those beautiful hills! To cross the glittering Tay, and be alone in the fragrant country, with the bird, the blossom, and the bee. To plunge into the dusk of the leafy wood—to be lost for a while among nets of tangled thicket—to go astray in a wilderness of moorland, its surface a-blaze with yellow whins, dandelions, gowans, and "butter cups." To assault a sweet-briar bush thick with blossoms, and, plucking off the leaves into our hands, bury our face in the mass and inhale the delicious savour! To dive again into the heart of the wood, to stride over prickly barriers of nettles, brambles, and thick bushes, till we come to, and fling ourselves at full length upon, a bed of soft yielding moss, and long fern leaves so bonnie and green! To scamper forth once more, never halting till we gain the top of a distant knowe,—and there, spread out before us, is a prospect of real enchantment! Bathed in steady effulgence, and stretching far away till lost in wavy mist, we survey the chequered landscape. Twenty miles, it may be, of luxuriant crops ripening for the sickle and the scythe; the sombre woods crowned with dark green; purple clover, thick and low; expanses of waving wheat, oats, and barley, just faintly tinged with yellow; moors, sterile and grey; braes, rocky and steep! From the knowe-top we can espy the laird's mansion, with its smooth lawn, and pebbly carriage drive; its white "harled wa" nearly overrun with honey-suckle, ivy, and virgin-gourd. Round the doorway twine red and white roses; in the flower plots, close to the wall, there are tall hollyhocks, supported by green flower-sticks. Yet more remote lies a well-stocked farm-steading, and the "cock's shrill clarion" rings clearly from afar. Down in the clover meadow, lately shorn, the cattle have been sent to feed, and they, too, set up their characteristic din, subdued by distance. Down we sit on that charming knowe, to gaze around in rapt contemplation, and fall into mellowy reveries of bright fancy. By-and-bye these dissolve, and our eye chances to alight again upon an adjacent hill; on its side there is a dense thicket of trees, and we think how retired, still, and lonely it looks; it seems our very ideal of a hermit's grove in the days of yore! How we should like to wander through its sombre shades, and be satisfied with its luxury of sweet solitude! And so we slowly descend the knowe on which we have sat, cross the intervening meadows, and enter amongst its shadows, where herbs and wild berries abound, in all the profusion of uncultured nature.

Warmed and inspired by such genial fancies, we will now, as formerly, produce, for the reader's enjoyment, another transcript from our own experience—a bright, brief time, which, having once beheld, has not been forgotten by us—for it shines even yet, through the shadows of distance, with all the beauty of early days.

Boyhood still gladdened our heart with its pure light—whilst season and scenery diffused their undying colours over the whole. The time was that of summer, the glories of which we are celebrating; and our temporary home was a comfortable farm-house among the hills of Fife. Those few days we spent in genial enjoyment of the landscape, the sparkling streamlet,

flowing river, and leafy plantation. In the morning we set forth over the braes, all brilliant with blooms—the western breeze blowing freshly and gentle, its low, plaintive wail filling our ear, and making the blue bells to nod and dance in the sunlight. At eventide we returned, coming down through the lone valleys, and along by the wave-washed margin of the Tay—its steep rocks thick clad with hawthorn bushes, fern, ivy, and brambles. How delightful those sweet and lonely hours! Far from any dwelling—not a human form or habitation to be seen, except on the opposite shore, where stood the farm-houses and cottages of the Carse, divided from us by that wide and stately stream. There to stray amongst the rattling pebbles, the crush and stir of our feet breaking harshly the quiet of the moment, till, by an abrupt stop——, we could realise all but perfect silence! Thus, in pensive wandering the shades of gloaming crept slowly around us, bringing with them the saddening reflection that another bright day was gone, that we must go away and leave those scenes to the dominion of darkness and solitude—yet happy to think that the morning sun, rising from the womb of ocean, would again crest with silver those wavelets then shining like gold, would illumine with splendour those cliffs then so gloomy and grey, and with his full glory irradiate the green hill-side, the moorland, and the glade!

Thus day by day sped on our sunny summer week, to whose glories we still look back with so much delight! And nothing is so fondly engaging as the reflection that life's sunniest moments are so brief and never-returning! Since in this barren world those seasons are so few, surely we might learn to relish them the more keenly and intensely when they do appear—storing up in our minds the remembrance of their fleeting brightness, so that in the dark days of sorrow and trouble we might think with comfort upon them, and hope for, at least, a faint renewal of their beauty. Ay, and it is most true that the more deeply and sincerely we relish those days when they are shining, the dearer, lovelier, and more refreshing will they be in after years, as they smile back to us across the swelling tide of time—seeming themselves to catch a tinge of sadness as they leave those ones behind, who in youth cherished and prized them most fondly!

What a delight—what a luxury do such retrospects afford us in our moments of pensive reflection! Reclining in our chair by night at the warm fireside—the gas-light burning brightly, the cold winter wind without uttering its desolate wail, and when the specks of snow hiss in the heart of the fire as they fall down the opening above it—then is the time, and there the place for conjuring up the memories of bygone days! Motionless, listless the body may be; but the mind, diving deep into the shady past, explores its dusky arbours, and reads over again its half-forgotten pages. Then our whole imagination glows with light and life—once more we are in the garden or the glade; all is lustrous and green; the sun dazzles our eyes; the blue hills tempt our feet to wander; the river, broad and sparkling, sweeps quietly onward; the gale fans us sweetly; the birds sing blithly and clear! It is the poetry of happy days—their sweetness without their toil and fatigue. We loll in the sunbeams then, but we feel not their parching heat; we roam over hill and plain, but we grow not weary; we pluck the scented briar, but feel not the prickly thorns that environ it around; its blossom falls not to pieces in our hand; and when we drink the cool nectar of the spring, we stoop not painfully to enjoy the draught! Nay, nay! there is no jar in the record of sweet memory when it spreads out its shining scroll! But, ah! how sad, how sad it is to awaken up at such times as these and find it all an illusion of the fancy! For all this must also come to an end—even memory must yield to the exigencies of times and seasons. The soul immortal is, oh! how often, harassed by the mutations of the passing hour—time, in petty spite, tantalises the heir of eternity! So, while we dream of bright enchantments, the solemn bell of midnight breaks the spell and warns us to seek true repose.

Soon the morning dawns, the vapours and cold grey sky of a winter month meet our eyes when we look without, instead of the gay sunshine and—*The Glories of a Week in Summer.*

(March 31, 1860)

TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY.

By James Easson.

TRANSCRIPT FOURTH.—OLD NEIGHBOURS.

To muse on pleasant times long since departed; to luxuriate in imagination, beneath a sun and skies whose glories have declined, is one of the purest and most inviting exercises of which the mind is capable. In our former transcript we pourtrayed, haply with some success, the glories of a week in summer, with its kindred reveries; for the reader's further enjoyment, we furnish another, with its congenial train of reflections.

Few tidings are more powerful to awaken kindly recollections in the feeling heart, than are the tidings of an old neighbour's death, especially if it be the death of one we have known nearly all our days. It is so even when it is but the death of an aged woman—some motherly, simple-hearted body—for, then, a damp of sadness falls upon the spirit, and we think that another old landmark has been removed—that a star of kindly omen, whose cheering beam shone on our morn of life, has just become lost to us in the darkness of death!—we loved well to see her as long as she lingered, and she hailed our approach with a smile of true regard. As that mute expressive smile yet illumined her features, we felt that we were far from being desolate in the world; but that, as long as she might live, we should never want a true sympathiser, or a faithful, steadfast friend!

For upwards of twenty years our intercourse may have lasted—a term embracing the progress of our life from childhood till now—one, moreover, during which she has remained, to our mind, as young, fresh, and happy as she looked at first. How strange, yet how sad, it is to think of the time when she used to lead us by the hand, a little child; how she was wont to sympathise with all our petty afflictions, listening with an ear of loving partiality to our stories of tiffs with the other children; bickerings, in which she ever held us to be right, and blamed the violence of the rest. Many a time did she soothe our sorrows with the salve of a welcome "bawbee"—related simple stories, often told, yet ever fresh and new; or, when music was the thing to please us, she would sing one of her old-fashioned ditties, whose sounds, unmusical as they perhaps were, still linger in our recollection, and seem now, like the echo of sweet silver bells, in the far, deep caves of memory! But she has long since gone; those who saw in her a mother have relinquished her hand; and she, amid the tears and blessings of her children and kin, has glided away down into the dark valley and shadow of death! We have seen the bitter day when she was covered from our sight, and a chill fell upon our heart as her form sank into the solitude of the narrow house. But she still lives in our ideal; her name, graven by the finger of love, and beautified by the hues of memory, will still remain, shining there a grateful memorial of her kindness and regard for us,—reminding us also of bright days that have been, but which will never return.

Such profound meditations as these have their own peculiar fruits—for in their midst one is often startled by strange surprises. Few persons there are who have not at such seasons been struck by the sudden dawn upon their minds of some once familiar face—a countenance that seems to start, as it were, from the dead—for, although it be one which once was well known, it has since grown strange; for it has long been swept from off the tablets of our memory. Yet it is a friendly and pleasing face, with an expression of gentleness about it—a pensive kindliness that beguiles the heart of its surprise, stirring up therein the cold ashes of a dead love! "Whose

face can it have been?" we inwardly enquire: but recollection affords us no reply. Yet, there it is—peering in upon our imagination more vividly and steadily than ever! Does it belong to any of our "ain fouk?" No. Is it the face of a friend who long ago used to visit our house, and who was wont to be especially kind to us in divers ways? No, not that either! Surely, then, it is the countenance of one who sat with us on Sundays in the same pew at——, suddenly, like a flash of lightning, its identity breaks upon us; it is the face of an old neighbour who died long ago, and who, till now, has lain buried in "the land of deep forgetfulness!" Instantly there beams in upon our minds an effusion of strange light, subdued and beautiful, thrilling the soul like a wail of low, sweet music; it hushes to sleep every stormy emotion, and, like a peaceful shade, breathes over our feelings the silence of repose! Mute, phantom-like, their images glide to and fro before our minds whom we cannot see now in life; father and mother—old neighbours, who one by one disappeared, we scarce can tell how, but none of whom will ever again fill the places they filled when we knew them so well and loved them so truly! Their memory is clean gone; seldom brought to mind, even by those who knew them best; their griefs and joys all forgotten; their pleasant features grown airy and ghostlike to even our recollection; their quiet virtues lost, until this long lone season of self-communion; their pious exercises, their ambitions, their trials and patience, swallowed up by, and hurried down, down the sweeping stream of time, never to be seen again, except when glittering for a moment on the surface, the eye of memory espies them floating afar on their way to complete oblivion!

Again, we take from our own experience another leaf; and, as formerly, lay it before the reader for his perusal and delectation.

It is to the kindness of an old neighbour that we owe our happy taste for reading—a taste which has, along with our writing, engaged for years the flower of our leisure time. It was towards the close of our school days, and although we certainly did read then, still it was with a forced and half-listless attention, of which we were little the better. A fine, intelligent old body, indeed, is this old neighbour; just such an one as we have described. She repeated to us some choice portions of the "Lady of the Lake;" she had beside her a diamond edition of the book, which she gave us to read, and thus the undying flame was kindled. Then there followed a host of others, all equally good and delightful to peruse. We conversed over the familliar characters of which we had read. She listened whilst we dilated upon their varied beauties and merits, with all the enthusiasm of boyhood! And all those pleasant impressions still remain with us, and so—for their sake, and for the sake of others equally delightful, we like that old neighbour still.

Not very long ago another old neighbour, whom we loved, faded from the way. He was a true-hearted, humorous, jovial man—a real Scotchman. Come fair, come foul, this old neighbour of ours had a frank welcome and a cheery joke for everybody; and never, if he could help it, did he send any one away with a sore heart. He was one of those fine, genial souls who originally belong to the country, and who seldom become cold and acerb, but radiate forth cheerfulness and homely happiness upon all around them. We ever liked that old neighbour; we like his memory still; yes, even now, when the sod of the valley enwraps his once warm and sympathetic heart. For he loved the flowers, and cultivated some in his little garden. He liked the birds, and kept a few. He once had a little dog, "Collie" he named it, and often he spake of it with the regard of a kind and feeling heart, alluding to it as a lost and loved companion. With this good-hearted old neighbour, many of our more pleasant and mirthful recollections are connected; and his memory we love to recall in our hours of solitude and meditation.

Sad and touching it is to gaze around us, and to mark the changes time has made upon the locality where we first saw the light. Pleasant views have been shut out; property has been altered, and has changed hands; new buildings have taken the place of old ones; piles of houses have been raised upon soil whereon, in our own recollection, flowers grew, and trees bore fruit. But on nothing has the finger of change fallen so heavily as upon the ones who knew us in boyhood. Some have removed to places remote; many are dead; and they who remain are one by one wearing hence, like their own neighbours of an elder day. May peace follow those who have gone to distant lands; repose to the ashes of the departed; health and happiness be the lot of those who yet remain—on whom we bestow the kindly and heart-endearing name of—OLD NEIGHBOURS!

(April 21, 1860)

TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY.

BY JAMES EASSON.

TRANSCRIPT FIFTH—WILL'S BRAES.

Deep in the souls of the poor there lies a living well of true and pure-heart poetry; an earnest, rich, refreshing appreciation of the lovely. the lonely, and the free in Nature. The soul of many a man in "life's low vale," like the "hart" of the sweet singer of Israel, pants for water-brooks, and, in earnest literality, longs to walk in green pastures, by the still waters. 'Tis true, there are many such who cannot express the rapture that overflows their hearts, when, in some isolated hour of happiness, they roam through the Eden spots of earth; but, when their feet are on the far mountains, when they wander through the pleasant, peaceful grove, when, in the midst of some broad and blooming landscape, they hear the bay of the hounds far away in the deep forest: when they muse by the river side, or explore the wild ravine,—whose hearts more than theirs overflow with rapturous joy?—whose feelings so struggle and strive for utterance?—whose souls more naturally, gratefully, and warmly turn heavenward—singing in admiration of His works, who doeth all things well?

Yes, reader—the rugged hillside, the tufted, thorny steep, the broomy lea, and the solemn woods, have their truest, heartiest, most ardent admirers among the humble poor! Why? Because there dwells the very essence of that sweet liberty in which they hourly revel—because their minds are unshackled by stiff forms of habit; because their imaginations are unfettered, and their whole round of bodily action, vigorous and unrestrained. Accustomed to freely abandon themselves to the wayward freaks of impulse, yet having all this freedom circumscribed by the boundaries of streets, lanes, and dwelling houses,—can it be marvelled at when their souls take fire at seeing the glorious country, as boundless as it is beautiful, as fragrant as it is far-stretching and bright? They plunge into a solitude at once novel and delicious; they cannot help but be wild and wanton. Who could blame them? Like the eagle which William Tell suffered to "soar away"—'tis liberty! Who could blame them? It is a pleasure with them as brief as it is brilliant; their season of rural riot soon draws to a close; soon the necessities of life drag them hence, impelling them back again into the old, weary round of toil and anxiety! Yet is not their love of Nature the less because it is thus tantalised—nay, it is only subdued and brought under for the moment, so to remain, until fresh opportunity bids it rise and rush forth again, to rejoice in free and gladsome enlargement.

Verily, all made substitutes for the glowing, dewy mead, grey mountain, and breezy moor, are but tame and barren apologies. Delightful is it for the poor, worn man of toil, when he happily lays by his implements of labour for even one day, and wanders in freedom among the

silent woods! Seldom, indeed, is it that such happy days come round for him, even though he be heart-sick and weary; but the portly citizen, his sleek wife, and beautiful daughters, they can take themselves at will to all those enjoyments, and have all the delicacies of the season served up to them, at their desire. What a pity that many a poor one, struggling with bodily weakness, and who feels that one month of the blooming country would repair in great part his oppressive infirmities, should be denied the simple remedy; but so it is—hundreds there are, aye hundreds in Dundee, who will heartily say amen to this remark, but who must needs be content to linger on, bearing their weary burdens of life along with them unhelped, and in view of an early decay.

Another personal reminiscence we now transcribe, for there was a time in Dundee when pleasures somewhat congenial could be enjoyed, and were not denied to any of the labouring ones who spent their lives in this locality.

Where splendid, palace-seeming structures now crown the steep rocks, to the west of the Magdalen Green, there in silence and solitary beauty, skirted by the sunny beach, lay Will's Braes, once the favourite resort of hundreds in this town. No man of genial memory, in looking back to the time when he was a boy, climbing up their rugged sides, basking at the roots of their shadowy trees, or gazing across the Tay upon the fair and verdant fields of Balmerino, but experiences a glow of fondness in his heart for those bright days, as well as a pang of regret for their vanished charms and unreturning pleasure. Vivid is the recollection we have of those sweet days; when, tired of the Green with its bright little gowans, and its green turf, we and our boy-companions scampered off to the Braes, where, seeking out some quiet, shady nook, we would gather together heaps of dandelions, we plucked off their coarse yellow flower, made frail chains with their long, pliant stalks, and laughted gleefully and loud, as we decorated ourselves with their fragile fetters. Next falling foul of a wild flower track, we ravished, in luxurious wantonness, all its blushing, dazzling charms! There we had blood-red poppies flaunting and silken; flaring yellow marigolds bright and golden; wild little pansies, with wee, sweet petals dancing and blinking in the sun, like fairies' soft blue eyes. And then we ran races on the beach; we laved our limbs in the limpid tide that rolled its clear waves on the shingles; we sailed tiny little crafts there, and saw them carried by the fleet current, far away from our sight! We watched the ships as slowly they intercepted the view of the lone farmsteads on the distant hills, and childishly wondered how they could go thousands of miles at a pace so lagging and slow. Sometimes we would bethink us of scaling the bare cliffs adjacent to the beach, a run for precedence would be made, but one of our juvenile party would stick fast when halfway up, holding on to the thorn roots, and becoming a fixture through fear, screaming lustily till some older companion ascended the steep, and rescued him from his perilous position. For, in those quieter days no hissing, screaming engine thundered near by, startling the ear and destroying all the repose of a calm, peaceful hour. No hateful ticket was there, with black letters on a white ground, to frighten the timid wanderer, and awe the adventurous and daring youths of the town. From the Magdalen Green to the village of Invergowrie was one long, refreshing promenade; and as we stood upon the beach on a bright summer's day, the limpid waters rippled up to and saluted us sportively, stretching away from the beach till they reached the lovely braes of Fife, and gently kissed their feet. How changed is the scene now! An invidious boundary wall puts a sudden stop to all our ramblings in the once well known haunt; across the beach lies an unsightly and barren mass of rubbish; the old red rocks have been torn and rifted asunder; pools of putrid water now lie where clear bright wavelets used to flow; there is foul green slime seen now, instead of fresh yellow sand; on the warm, smooth shingles the sun no longer sees children playing, nor is their merry laughter heard, making the rocks ring cheerily; and in the

dim gloaming no trim lads and lasses are seen wandering there. Vainly do they speak of the inexorable influence of change, and point us to the parks which the benevolent have laid out for our behoof and recreation. As we said before, they are but poor, tame apologies for such places as those of which we have been speaking. They raise no rich and glowing thoughts within the mind—for how could they, being no less flat and unchanging in their aspect than is the tenor of our everyday lives? But, perhaps, some warm-hearted native of Dundee, when reading this transcript in the wide wilderness of Australia, or among the sombre woods of America, will feel a thrill go through him, and a sigh may rise to his lips as he thinks of Will's Braes and the "days o' auld langsyne." The hazy, golden lustre of the past is ever thrown up more strongly when distance separates from the place where that past was spent, for such is the influence of the power and spirit of memory. And many who, living in the midst of their up-grown families will think of the days when some of those children were but boys and girls, whom they used often to lead along those braes, and who gambolled mirthfully among their rocks and dells. No man in Dundee, or out of it, who loved those wilds in youth, can think with coldness about them, associated as they are so closely, with the dearest, purest, and sweetest season of his life. Like a dream they seem to us now, and, like a dream, we can realise their delight no longer! Yet can we, when we roam near their locality, cast our recollection back through the gulph of intervening years—fancying, vainly, that we can even yet realise a tinge of their long lost sweetness. Vain effort, after all; no stretch of fancy will again make good the void that is left, or ever restore to us the original freshness and beauty of—WILL'S BRAES.

(May 5, 1860)

GEORGE'S CHAPEL—THE MONTHLY EVENING LECTURE.

A LIFE SKETCH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY."

George's Chapel, in Dundee, is a neat, plain edifice, situate in the heart of the town; within its walls preaches the Rev. George Gilfillan, the eminent clergyman and critic, and the foremost of the pulpit kings of Dundee.

As hundreds of our readers have never seen this chapel itself, we furnish a brief description. Outwardly, it is what we have called it, plain and neat. Its roof, which is flat and covered with lead, is surmounted by a cupola of glass, large, and of a circular form. The street-front has three large square-paned windows, with semi-circular tops; but the middle window, broader than the other two, is divided into three sections by a couple of stone pilasters—those are topped by a cornice, and above it there is a range of panes proportionate in length and shape to fill up the large half-circle.

Along the front of the building there extends a low wall with a cope stone; it is furnished with a plain iron railing, and at the southern extremity of this wall there is the entrance gate, conducting the visitor to the door, which, when open, admits the visitor into a wide, roomy lobby, from whence he is ushered into the body of the chapel itself.

The outside of this building is, however, no true criterion of its internal appearance. Upon entering, the stranger's attention is struck by the flood of light that falls down from the cupola, and through the beautiful dome below it. This dome is the architectural pride of the building—it occupies one-half of the ceiling, and all around its upper circle there is an array of tastefully modelled leaves, closely set together, producing a trim and artistic effect. Just below this circle of leaves there is a range of neat panels—so, what with the high cupola, and the light ornamental work of the dome itself, the whole has a very striking, handsome, and imposing appearance.

The inside of the dome and the panels of the ceiling are tinted, of a cheerful blue; the mouldings are of a light colour; the walls are painted in imitation of ashler; the pulpit and its platform, the pews, and gallery front, in imitation of wainscot; the fluted pillars that support the gallery, and those in the gallery that support the roof, are painted in imitation of marble; and the fine gas lustres, pendant from the ceiling, are furnished with elegant glass globes, the whole of which, when lighted, produce a very cheerful and brilliant effect.

It is on the evening of the monthly lecture that this handsome chapel and its popular minister are seen to the best advantage. In the winter season the chapel is densely crowded by eager, intelligent audiences, brought thither by the fame of the lecturer, and by his popular style of discourse. At those times there is an air of geniality and comfort pervading the house, which never is or ever can be seen except when every individual in the audience may be said to feel at home and free from all gloomy restraint. This is peculiarly the case in the present instance. Every one looks satisfied and at ease; and the large chapel is always half filled long before the hour hand points to half-past five o'clock.

By the time the half-hour arrives every possible inch of standing room is taken possession of, and soon the heat grows very intense. But not until the ten minutes from six does the heat get so oppressive as to induce an air of lassitude and weariness on the part of the waiting congregation. Those ten minutes wear away, and then the loud stroke of the bell, sounding from the Old Steeple adjacent, startles them anew; then a flutter of excitement is observable. This stir of expectation is kept up, and continues to increase until the entrance of the lecturer to open and conduct the service of the evening.

He arrives punctual to a minute: there is a movement amongst the persons nearest to the door, and then comes the church officer clearing a way through the thickly thronged passages. The commanding figure of the lecturer is next espied, who, after gaining the altitude of the pulpit, stands full in the eye of the entire assembly.

Not losing a moment, he opens the psalm-book, seeks out his favourite psalm, the number of which, for the sake of convenience, we presume to fix. Then, rising up with an air of easy dignity, he, in a voice, loud, manly and distinct, addresses the audience in these words—"Let us resume the public worship of God, by singing to his praise, part of the forty-fifth psalm!"

With his chest expanded, and his head thrown slightly back, he, in a bold and lofty tone, proceeds to read, or rather recite, the psalm mentioned—one which, considering what follows during the evening, is far indeed from being inapt—

"My heart brings forth a goodly thing;
  My words that I indite
Concern the King: my tongue's a pen
  Of one that swift doth write.
Thou fairer art than sons of men:
  Into thy lips is store
Of grace infused; God therefore thee
  Hath bless'd for evermore."

Then having spoken the psalm to the end, as is generally the case, he sinks back again into his seat, with ease and dignity.

Presently the precentor begins the tune, and immediately upwards of twelve or thirteen hundred voices are blended in one, producing a sound overwhelming in its volume, grand, heart-stirring, inspiring to hear.

There are few clergymen of great note whose psalm or Scripture reading does not possess some trait of originality or merit; and to this rule Mr Gilfillan, in his psalm-reading, is no exception. The Scripture-reading of Dr Guthrie is an intellectual treat; but his rendering of the metrical psalms is tame compared with that of this lecturer. There is a loftiness and a masterly fulness about his recitation of some of those psalms that fills the mind, and draws forth its admiration in almost every instance.

Whilst the psalm is being sung, it may not be inappropriate to give those of our readers who have never seen this lecturer and literary man, a general sketch of his personal appearance. We shall proceed to do so with equal brevity as with impartiality.

The Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee, is a man in the prime of his days and vigour of his manhood. His aspect, speech, and movements are such as send home to the mind of a stranger the conviction that, even as a mere clergyman, and by pure force of genius, entirely independent of any prestige of authorship, he had been certain to shine and secure for himself a place among the notables of the land. In person he is stout; his face is full and well-coloured; his eye is restless, searching, and keen; his air lofty, his mien dignified, and his whole appearance gentlemanly and distinguished. He wears a pair of light spectacles, which add to the air of peculiarity about him; and in his hand, or under his arm, he carries a massive stick, his constant companion, and which accompanies him in all his perambulations.

Such is a brief outline of the Rev. George Gilfillan, of Dundee, one of the foremost men in the Scottish pulpit, and a man whose views have been reviled and decried in dozens of books and newspapers. Spiteful, but feeble, critics have abused and ridiculed his style; and scarce a month passes without some shaft of covert or open malice being aimed at him—but each and all of them fall harmless, serving but to show in what directions his enemies lie. All in vain, most surely; the written slanders have hitherto been so much time and paper wasted; still he stands unscathed and unmoved; still, on the first Sabbath evening of every month, he raises his voice within the walls of George's chapel, where, by his earnest, eloquent, and poetic addresses, he delights the immense audiences that cluster around his pulpit.

The psalm having ceased, the lecturer rises to pray; then the audience, a mass of well-dressed persons, rise simultaneously to their feet, and the prayer proceeds. Because of its more sacred nature, we pass over this part of the service, and go on to record the doings that follow it; the next part being the singing of another psalm, after which, the lecturer rises up to deliver the evening's address.

Having named the part of scripture of which he happens to be treating, he reads the portion set apart for the night's consideration, and forthwith begins to rehearse the substance of the former lecture, the better to prepare the minds of his audience for what is about to follow.

The history of St Paul the Apostle, as contained in the Acts, is his present topic of study. St Paul, the converted, softened, and sanctified one, who formerly "breathed out slaughters against the Church," and who was "consenting" to the death of that Stephen whom they stoned to death for his steadfastness in the faith of Christianity. In former lectures he has described all the wondrous change in the Apostle—his former life and blood-thirsty character; then his conversion, distinguishing between the outward signs by which that conversion was signalised, and the spasmodic convulsions termed awakenings, whose presence are so palpably needless, and often "got up." He has spoken of all his weary and fatiguing travels, tracing stage by stage the Apostle's journeys from Damascus to Jerusalem, from that to Cesarea, and so on to Antioch, Iconium, and many other places, prior to his speech at Athens. Well, indeed, has he acquitted himself of the illustrations which the life of such a man requires—and it is

when dilating upon such a subject that he is seen at his best. Full of fire and enthusiasm—teeming with sympathy towards the pious Apostle amidst all his manifold trials, you can see his emotions rise and swell as he speaks about them, and has a fellow-feeling of the pangs with which he was riven, when the scared and sodden indifference of the multitudes would not be moved by even inspired speech. Carried away by such feelings, his face flushes up, his eyes sparkle, his breath comes thick and brief, his tones are indistinct, and often tremulous with the rising fervour of his soul; he is all life, all burning earnestness, all ardour and fire! Now, his eye is fixed upon some certain part of the house straight before him, it seems as if he were looking on the very scene he describes; he looks, for all the world, inspired, like the godly man whose trials and tribulations he is celebrating. Now, there is pin-fall silence! Now is genius in the arena, scouting from out the mind of every one present every paltry, petty care, fixing all attention upon its own action and purpose. Listen now, whilst he describes the mean-seeming saint, environed by the sneering, critical, cold-hearted philosophers of Ancient Athens: you can imagine you hear the saint speaking from the top of Mars'-hill, dealing forth sharp rebukes, accusing them of ignorance, conceit, and high-handed pride; expounding the firm grounds of his own belief, and exposing the shallowness of theirs. See, now, how the lecturer teems with indignation as he appears to hear the gibes, jeers, and scoffs that are flung at the earnest, fervent saint! Witness the gladness he evinces as upon the face of those who surround the Apostle he sees wonder succeed to mockery, alarm for their inward state, in the case of some, following abuse; and, finally, in the case of others, conviction springing up in the heart as they weigh the earnestness of the speaker more carefully, taken in connection with the searching keenness of his heart appeals, and the soundness of his arguments. In this state of rapt attention does the lecturer keep his audience hanging, as it were, on his lips; and, after such an effort of oratory comes to a climax, there is always an audible sigh of pleased satisfaction and approval, which it takes no less of attractive eloquence to renew than it did to produce it at first on the part of the intelligent assembly.

And so for months past has he been illustrating the career of the intrepid and unoffending saint and martyr. To-morrow evening the lecturer traces the noble St Paul to one of the most trying ordeals he was destined to go through, namely—when he was brought to the judgment-seat of Cæsar, at which tribunal Festus, the Roman Governor, hoped to see him condemned and his own malice gratified.

As the lecture is good, not less instructive are the remarks with which he finishes up the whole. Now, there is something to be heard that comes home to every one's likings. Perhaps he calls them to admire the moral heroism of this devoted Apostle so broadly and palpably displayed in the narrative just illustrated; or he execrates the character of a slanderer; or he exhibits the foolishness and contemptibleness of low cunning; or he recommends quietness and retirement under religious anxiety, and the carrying of all doubts to the Great Solver of perplexities, there to seek and, if possible, obtain light. The entire lessons of the lecture he very happily turns to the instruction and spiritual edification of his large body of hearers.

After the collection, the proceeds of which go to the assistance of a clothing society, library, or mission to the ignorant of the town, he concludes the whole by reading a few verses of a paraphrase, the singing of which by the audience is more swelling and rounded in volume of sound than even the psalm that preceded it.

The benediction closes a short and very impressive prayer, one always very solemn, embodying, as it does, the startling fact that ere another month has flown over the heads of some ones present, the thick, dark door of the narrow house may have separated them for ever

from the interests and concerns of this giddy, bustling world! With a kind of regret filling their hearts at the idea that another month must elapse before they can enjoy a like intellectual feast to the one they have been enjoying, the hearers disperse, and each one takes his way, to be lost amidst the throngs that crowd along the streets. It were needless to enlarge here upon the amount of actual ability it requires to even draw such an audience of persons together as assembles in George's Chapel on the evenings of Mr Gilfillan's monthly lectures; not to speak of the paramount degree of genius it demands, so to chain down and fascinate their attention in the way in which it is fixed down on these occasions. But it were a bald way of ending such a sketch as this, did we not offer some remarks on the general characteristics of his style and usual way of preaching who fills the pulpit on those evenings. The fact is, that nothing short of real ability can, or will, suit now-a-days, either in the pulpit or in the labours of the pen. There is a craving in the minds of the young of this generation for something original and new in the intellectual way. We have grown what may be termed *mental epicures;* mediocrity in any walk of mental labour, is a vomit to us, and it will not succeed. Nay, we have grown quite fastidious in respect of even our spiritual food; and lament over it as we may, plain, unvarnished pulpit deliverances, such as passed muster fifty years ago, will not suit us now at all. Besides, the public is very short of memory; and the man who cannot keep up the supply of that which profits and instructs pleasantly, will soon be forgotten, though he may have laboured ever so long, and ever so well, for the profit and satisfaction of the public. This test of long and profitable, as well as pleasant, instruction, Mr Gilfillan has sustained in a very singular degree. Never has his popularity shown the smallest sign of a decrease; never have his powers yielded under the pressure to which they have been, and are being, submitted; instead of this, his style has grown more attractive,—his admirers at home and abroad have inceased in numbers, and their admiration in strength. He has parted with much of the extra emphasis that once characterised his oratory. His sermons and forenoon lectures betray deeper and more profound thought and study. The effervescence of his earlier youth has greatly given place to a more manly, dignified, and sententious mode of speaking; and hence he is looked to on occasions of popular excitement, when his opinion is waited for, and duly recorded in the newspapers of the day. Doubtless, not a little of trouble have those opinions of his cost him, so that their utterance must often be to him a matter of grave and careful consideration. Here we think it right to enter a protest against the unjust and ungenerous impression that exists in the minds of many, to the effect that the bursts of indignation that often mark his preaching, when speaking of great national or domestic abuses, are the result of ill-controlled impulse. Some persons calling themselves critics having come to his church once or twice, for the purpose of just hearing what he has to say upon such subject, straightway leave the place at the sermon's end, to spread the notion that never is he at his best, save when using the labial scalping-knife, or when his words are tinctured with the gall of invective, and of severest satire. A vile, shallow, and cruelly superficial way of judging any man is this; and of no man is it less true than of George Gilfillan. The true secret of those outbursts of feeling comes out only on close and continuous observation; there are some subjects on which, for the life of him, he could not speak calmly, and upon which it is not at all desirable that he should. Speaking of the days of dark persecution, when the sons of Scotland were hunted upon the mountains like wolves; of the plottings of Popery, Puseyism, and Jesuitism—each of them seeking to strangle the liberty of the world; of threatened invasion, and the necessity of "fortifying our strongholds;" the prizing the good which the Reformation under Martin Luther has produced for us; of the dark results which an ascendancy over Europe by the Roman Catholic Church would bring about; these, and a hundred others, he could not, and should not, as an honest teacher, speak of with assumed and

cold-bloodied calmness. Nay, long may his word continue to be heard, warning us of coming storms and calamities—perils from enemies both at home and abroad. Britain in her hour of danger will need (God send she lack not) enough men like him to encourage her and forecast for her in those gloomy and disastrous days! Let men like Mr Gilfillan be encouraged and cherished; let not words of slander detract from the weight of his warnings when he proclaims the vicinity of dangers terrible and dark. Let us trust him with the more when he assimilates himself and his words to the outspoken nation to which he belongs; and be assured that we have in him a tried and honest countryman—hoping that, when the time to act in defence of our native land does come, none will neglect the warning they heard sounded boldly and aloud within the walls of George's Chapel, at—The Monthly Evening Lecture.

(June 2, 1860)

EDUCATIONAL PATRIOTISM AND PHILANTHROPY.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

In our recent private reflections on the present threatening aspect of European affairs the thought has been borne in upon our mind that, not the overweening ambition of Louis Napoleon, nor the plottings of Liberty's enemies throughout the world, alone constitute the grand causes of our dark political anxieties; but that our own laxity in, and indifference to, the discharge of certain bounden duties, more than anything else, may be blamed, and ought very speedily to be attended to. The Emperors of France, Austria, and Russia are but the merest tools wielded by a higher hand; are each but as the weather-cock on the spire of a city steeple,—the wind of heaven blows upon it and it turns round, ominous of storms; presently, and by some unseen and unknown influence, the gale takes a turn, the vane wheels about once more, and the dangers of which it warned us are over and gone.

Britain has been lax as a nation, and has left undone those things which she ought to have done; and it is the duty of every one who thinks he can move his fellows to a return to duty, to take advantage of his place by doing so, contemning all false delicacy and shamefacedness. Therefore, because one boldly avows his belief that the Almighty reigns over all, governs all, and that it is He, and not Louis Napoleon, who afflicts the nations, one need not be charged with either canting or preaching. On this assurance we think it honest and right to publicly express the ideas which have been fomenting in our mind during the last few months,

Despite what malcontents may say, this is the best empire wherein to live that exists in the wide world. America boasts itself the "smartest nation in all creation," and yet, behind all its bunkum and bombast, it profoundly honours Britain, and secretly votes her in nearly every sense the best of them all. Every public institution in our midst is as free to operate as are the winds of heaven; and a man may lay hold of whatsoever craft he chooses, whereby to enrich himself and make him a fortune.

This boundless freedom has long been turned into licentiousness. In the churches there have grown up gross schisms and heresies. The cheap press has become prolific of trashy, and often vile, nonentities. Frauds and crimes, public and private, have become as common and stale to most newspaper readers, as ditch water. Selfishness has grown out of this unlimited freedom. The landed aristocracy are in great part the secretly avowed enemies of political and educational reform; the manufacturing princes have grown rich, and increased in luxury of living, stuffing into their pockets the money they acquire, forgetful that they are assisted in its acquirement by poor, ragged, ignorant wretches, who once born into the world, live out their brief span of life, and go down to their graves uncultured and untaught!

The Almighty sees all this, and the man were worse than an infidel who, paying a slavish deference to all that people will say about him, declines to speak out boldly what he thinks upon such momentous question as this. It is our belief, and the more we ponder it, the more we feel convinced that it is to the anger of offended Heaven that we may attribute the troubles of the past, as well as those which seem to threaten us in the future. However, if we, by a proper use of the gifts and privileges we enjoy, could but bring a blessed smile upon the now clouded countenance of the Almighty, it were a far better security for our national peace, than the existence of millions of Volunteers would be, armed to the teeth, their courage at the sticking place, and all their colours flying.

Granted, cries everybody who reads this article; but how is it to be done? By acting in this locality upon the following scheme, we think—the proposition of which is the chief aim of this paper.

Dundee swarms with a mill population, among whom there is a vast number like those of Nineveh, who do not know their right hand from their left. Now, what hinders any working man, who can read English fluently, from teaching a poor mill boy to read as himself was first taught? What prevents the young clerk in a writer's office, or, indeed, any clerk, from learning the same boy to work accounts, or even to write text? Nothing does or can hinder them from from doing those things, save a want of being incited thereunto by pure Christian feeling and humane consideration. But just think of this, if a large army of respectable young men, belonging to the classes we have referred to, were to band themselves together, were to call upon the rich and influential of the town for their assistance in the matter of books and school accommodation, were to go to the parents of those poor ones, ask them to send their children to be thus taught, and were to hold a certain portion of their leisure time as sacred to this Christ-like purpose, what a noble and glorious spectacle Dundee would present to the view of the whole world! Then might city missionaries and other earnest Christian teachers of the same kind, indeed, have hope of success; they could pour into minds then partially enlightened the clear and genial lustre of religious truth. Show the poor ones that they, mean and degraded as they seem, formed a part of those stupendous systems of creation and Providence which were originated ages before the sun began to shine, or the world to exist. Show them the order and beauty of all God's works, every thing being provided in exact quantity and place to suit the convenience and comfort of man. Then, as the pure light of these thrilling and magnificent revelations should break dimly and dubiously upon their imaginations, the teacher's hearts would be gladdened by seeing smiles of dawning intelligence suffusing faces lately stolid and unmeaning. Yes, and as the Creator never created any human being to live the life and die the death of the brutes that perish, can it be imagined but that he should beam upon our land and upon ourselves the summer of his returning love and approval?

We are earnest in all this; personally we would gladly take a hand in such a work, or help to set it agoing. We, therefore, lay the scheme before the public, trusting that it may result in some practical exercise of Educational Patriotism and Philanthropy.

(June 30, 1860)

CASTLE STREET CHAPEL—THE MORNING SERVICE.

A Life Sketch.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

The sight-seeing visitor to Dundee, passing down the west side of Castle Street, may observe the words "Dundee Bank" inscribed upon premises with stout iron bars to their

windows. Above those premises, and in a line with the second and third floors of the houses adjacent, he will also observe a solid seeming front, apparently that of a church. It has three large pointed windows, with massive stone mullions, each one branching off at the top. The divisions between these mullions are filled up with diamond-shaped panes of the common order. Four peaked stone ornaments, placed at regular distances along the top of the wall, are the only attempts at architectural decoration about this front; and the entrance door, close upon the street pavement, admits the visitor to ascend by easy flights of steps into the interior of the building above stairs.

This building is Castle Street Congregational Chapel. Within its pulpit ministers the Rev. Alex. Hannay, one of the leading men of the Congregational body. He is an earnest, hard-working, painstaking pastor to his people; an elegant writer, and contributor to the *Scottish Review;* and is widely known as one of the ablest orators on the Temperance platform.

This chapel itself—originally erected for the Scotch Episcopalians in Dundee—is, internally, comfortable in accommodation and handsome in appearance. Its roof, high and plain, is grained in imitation of light wainscot, the wood being apparently laid in planks. The platform and reading desk are erected in a recess at the furthest extremity of the chapel, where formerly stood the communion table; behind the reading desk there is an alcove-like seat, its interior stuffed with dark crimson velvet—the carved facings that form its outer edging being grained in imitation of dark oak, enriched with gilding. In the main wall of the recess there is a high and very handsome painted window, the full effect of which is greatly destroyed by close proximity with some buildings adjacent. Set into the wall, on either side of this recess, there are a couple of elegant tablets, having inscribed upon them, in illuminated characters, a selection of choice Scripture passages; the tablets, surrounded with beautiful gothic designs, are raised up from the surface of the wall, and hatched in white and gold. The walls, east and west, have each a couple of large sectioned windows, light and cheerful in effect,—they are furnished at the top with fringed draperies of crimson, and between them on either side of the house there are three finely carved gas brackets, having neat circles of burners. The walls are painted of a light stone colour; the front of the gallery at the west end of the church, and formerly used as an organ loft, is grained to imitate wainscot; so are the pews, which are low in the backs, remarkably easy to sit in, and adapted, if necessary, for the congregation's kneeling at prayer.

This commodious chapel, and its accomplished minister, we choose to pourtray at the time of the morning service; when, as we judge it, their most effective traits are most particularly observable.

At eleven o'clock every Sunday morning, the members of this large and respectable congregation may be seen quietly passing down the street, and gently dropping in at the door of their chapel, while the dense concourse of church-goers are thronging the adjacent High Street.

Within the chapel everything has an air of stillness and composure,—there is an appearance of respectful, reverential silence; and you can hear the sound of the church bells, faint and subdued by distance. A few minutes after they have ceased, and amidst a general din of preparation, comes the minister, Mr Hannay, for whose entrance to begin the service of the morning the congregation are in waiting.

With a gentlemanly and easy gait he steps upon the platform, and slips sideways into the alcove-like seat. He lifts the hymn-book, quietly seeks out the hymn, rises up, steps forward to the reading desk with an air of calm dignity; then, lifting his face fully and broadly to the audience, he in a voice of firm and grave seriousness gives out the number of the hymn.

His reading of the verses, many of them selections from the beautiful Olney hymns, is scrupulously correct, tasteful, pointed, and scholarly. One thing in his reading we specially admire—the complete absence of that mawkish sing-song drawl which many minisers seem to think indispensable to the reading of religious hymns. Not allowing his voice to sink at the end of each line, but rather gradually and softly raising it, he at the same time appears to feel the influences both of their sentiment and smooth, beautiful rythm. His chaste and tasteful rendering of the verses, and the air of peaceful repose that pervades the entire place, is very refreshing and grateful to the mind.

Presently the precentor rises to start and to lead the tune; and here we may remark the really sweet and beautiful singing to be heard in this chapel. Taking into consideration the fact that there is no trained choir in attendance, designed to assist the precentor, it is very creditable indeed. This remark is applicable more particularly to the treble voices—many of which are silvery and pleasant to a degree.

The singing over, Mr Hannay rises to read the lesson of the day, upon which we have a specimen of admirable Bible-reading, not admirable alone, but as touching smoothness and harmony of tone, delicacy of accentuation, and a minute attention to point and period, stands a model, and may in itself be listened to with profit and pleasure. Nor is this an occasional merit in Mr Hannay's reading; his every effort of this kind is equally meritorious; and we do not remember of a time, so far as this matter is concerned, when he was not up to the mark, and fully prepared to satisfy the most exacting and fastidious critic.

Closing the book at the end of the lesson, the congregation, following the instinct of habit, softly and quietly puts itself into the atitude of prayer.

He begins the prayer in a suppressed but judiciously emphatic tone of voice, gradually rising until it reaches a tone impressive, distinct, and satisfactory to the ear. As regards the language, it is ever well-chosen, fitting to the occasion, eminently calculated to solemnise the minds of the hearers during the remaining portions of the service.

After the prayer there is the reading and singing of another hymn, in which all the merits of the first service of song are reproduced. When it is over, Mr Hannay rises agan; and, giving out the text, begins to deliver the discourse. His sermons are all written; nor does he attempt to hide his manuscript, as many preachers most vainly and foolishly try to do from the view of their congregations. Nor needs Mr Hannay to do so; for although his sermon be thus before him, it is by way of mere precaution. Seldom or never does he require to confine himself to its perusal; for pleasantly evident is it that the words are all his own, quite manifest that the sentiments and ideas have all taken shape in his own reasoning, doubt-exploding comprehension. He begins calmly and dispassionately to the proposition of his subject. Every sentence is emphatic, pointed, telling. The hearer feels that no tyro is beginning to address him—he cannot help but look and listen. Subdued, suppressed though his voice be as he begins to unfold his purpose in the discourse, there is a charm in the nervously modulated tones of his voice that tells you that the possessor will yet rise to heights of oratory and of argument that will thrill you through, and smite home conviction to your soul by pure force of searching, striking, brain-rifting argument. This impression is correct; already has he forgotten the manuscript—all his powers of mind are concentrated to one focus. 'Tis the power of earnest, deep, painfully acute mental research in the first instance; in the second, the set determination to let no shaft of argument or of appeal fall short of its mark, if aught in word, look, or action, can avail to send it quivering to the hearer's conscience. Every sound is now hushed; the voice of the speaker rings clear and sharp in the wide space around

him. By an involuntary action, bred of intense earnestness, he gradually moves from behind the reading-desk. His movement becomes bolder, though never stagey or offensive; for it is natural, and belongs to the man. The argument and voice of the speaker work fast to a climax—the soul of the hearer is stirred, roused, excited, carried away! The speaker pauses for a second; a profound silence reigns. He has just hunted down to death the last vestige of some sinner's favourite doubt, and has left him without a rag to cover his moral nakedness.

For powerful and striking platform oratory; for subtle, quick, and searching analysis; for justice, correctness, and finishedness of deduction, Mr Hannay assuredly stands unrivalled in the Dundee pulpit. It is a thing of significance that he comes down to, and reasons away, every doubt with a jealous anxiety—that he bears fully and firmly upon those minute excuses that take form in the hearer's mind even as he listens, and while he shrinks from plucking out that right eye of the flesh with which he sees beauty in moral deformity, and grace in the grovelling stoop of the world's sworn follower. In all his discourses there is an anxious solicitude apparent—a determination to dig to the very foundation of the heart's sympathies, and tendencies—to grasp truth as one grasps a strong lever, and apply it with vigour and might to those refuges of lies within whose crumbling walls human frailty and guilt seek to find a last hiding-place. Grimly he disdains to palliate error; seeming, as he does, to say—"Will God extenuate sin? how, then, shall I extenuate even its shadow? Down with false agencies! Stern, grim, exacting I *must* be; at your peril, be you unheeding, supine, and impenitent!"

Not unfrequently have we heard Mr Hannay charged with dogmatism—with a certain absolutism of manner, betraying impatience of contradiction—but this is an impression formed mainly by a class not over-gifted with ability to personal private judgment, who accept first impressions as finally just. Mr Hannay is essentially a reasoner—it is his forte; he weighs anxiously and thoroughly whatsoever his mind suggests; whatsoever he *writes down,* so far as he can possibly judge, is scrupulously, rigorously correct. And what is the natural result of such profound and solemn cogitation but this—that, having diligently and carefully sought for, and grounded his own foot firmly on the rock of truth, he feels confidence in the reality of his discovery, and thus is able, so far as human ability can go, to lift any trembling, sinking brother or sister across the gulph of doubt. It is the duty—nay, the unspeakable privilege—of the religious teacher to boldly and fearlessly speak forth his well-grounded conviction of those subjects—a privilege growing out of the strength of his spiritual or intellectual decernment. For our own part, we hold him right in thus emphatically speaking his views, and honour him accordingly.

Another unjust and injurious impression about Mr Hannay is, that he too often mixes up with his Sabbath day discourses, sentiments and exhortations tending to abstinence principles; and that the effect is a weariness and impatience on the part of those who do not relish the temperance element in the pulpit. This assertion is flagrantly untrue, as it is a deep wrong done to the fame of Mr Hannay. During many occasions on which we have heard him preach, we never once heard him press this topic more pointedly than any other faithful minister might have done; and certainly we never did hear him inflict a set temperance sermon upon his ordinary congregation. The assertion will seem at once worthless and absurd to all who know the preacher; for it is not at all likely that a clear-headed, reflectve man like Mr Hannay would so risk offending even casual hearers by riding his hobby so much out of season. It is, we think, from the fact that on weekdays Mr Hannay gives so much attention and support to things in the temperance way, that this rumour takes its rise. It was this, we also opine, that prevented his success at his first coming to Dundee; and even yet the same thing causes him

to be regarded with somewhat of that shyness which, in spite of their personal merits, attaches to all temperance advocates, with a very few exceptions.

But whatever failings may fairly or unfairly be laid to Mr Hannay's charge, his merits as a preacher and orator put them far in the shade. It is a delightful cordial to the intellect to behold true ability at any time, and in any place, even when shining with its own unaided lustre; but when educational polish, true taste and feeling conspire to enhance and set it forth, exquisite is the pleasure that accrues. This pleasure flows spontaneously from the heart, when one listens to such well-prepared and well-considered addresses as those of Mr Hannay. Standing up as a man, without anything of parson-like pretension, either in name or in pulpit decorations, he appears before his people simply what he is—a salaried servant, faithfully discharging his duty of preaching to them the unsullied gospel, in its plainness and simplicity; knowing, indeed, that they like his teaching, and cordially appreciate his efforts for their spiritual, moral, and intellectual advancement. Thus, in all things, Mr Hannay, in his capacity of a clergyman, approves himself faithful; being, besides, a gentleman out of the pulpit, and a friend to every good work. What more can, or needs any man, attempt to be? Nothing more; and as regards, Mr Hannay, in these respects, we say he does well.

To close this sketch; if any one would realise the picture here given; would see such a combination of merit as we have enumerated, he may do so by doing, as the writer of this sketch has done, and intends doing from time to time, as opportunity shall permit—namely, by giving attendance and attention any Sabbath-Day in— Castle Street Chapel, at the Morning Service.

(August 18, 1860)

THE NECESSITY FOR WORKING MEN'S COLLEGES.

An Essay.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

That it has been the custom, time out of mind, for Scottish parents of the working classes to devote the earlier years of their children's lives to the acquirement of some secular education is a thing well known, right in practice, and highly creditable as a feature in our established nationality. In the case of past generations of our sires and grandsires the modicum of mental culture was often so slippery and hard to keep, so niggard in quantity, poor in quality, and clumsily administered, that the peculiar methods for its injection into the minds of its recipients were remembered by them long after the "thing signified" had nearly died out. And even among fathers of the present generation of young working men and women there is seldom to be found that facility in reading, writing, and figures which even in them is desirable. As far as their own individual cases are concerned, many of them reason, and with some justice, that they have no longer any set purpose to serve by keeping such an acquirement in active exercise, that since they have retained as much of it as serves to carry on their small and homely businesses, they say that they have done well. In this they have erred, and do err; for, since the children who have grown up around them require, in this more active and advanced era, an increased share of intellectual training, they have clearly done wrong in leaving them to acquire such a share of it at school as but half fits them for filling many of the most desirable and influential situations in society.

Nor is this evil of defective education altered, even in this present day, when so much more need exists that such negligence should be "reformed altogether." Great marvel is made in society when a working man vaults into opulent and influential place; but the fact is,

that want of suitable culture alone prevents them from so rising in exact proportion to their number and importance in society. For this there are three grand reasons. First, because what little of education is given to them at school is in many cases soon lost, through the absence of some immediate and pressing necessity in the majority of mechanical occupations, calling upon them to keep their slender stock of education in healthful and active use. Secondly, because of the inherent and too seldom resisted aversion on the part of all youths, to whatever gives less of pleasure than of pain. Thirdly, because a prospect of actual profit to the parent, to be derived from his child's labour, becomes a consideration in itself more powerfully destructive of all desire for the child's progress in knowledge than all that youth's aversion and the parents' own indifference put together. Of this lamentable negligence, the bitter and woeful fruits are soon apparent. The youth grows up to manhood—a manhood perhaps distinguished by talent of no mean or even middling grade; he feels the fast growing and silently impulsive powers and aspirations of his mind; he sees the dull, hopeless prospect of a life to be spent in lowly labour, with ever and anon opportunities slipping past, any one of which, did he but possess an available primary tutorage, might have been the grand chance of his life! All this the youth grows up to experience; he begins to taste the gall of regretful recollection; he blames his father's laxity and inertness, whose consequences are now for him, at least, almost past redemption. And it is bitter to drag out the lees of a lost life! Notwithstanding, he hopes against hope, takes to a course of all but worthless self-teaching; often feels sick and weary in the bald and barren struggle, yet trusts, through a huckstering compromise with works of self-tutorage, and evening schools, to redeem his lost time. After all, he speeds but poorly. Gradually he gets disgusted with the semi-ignorance of his pretensious and doughty teacher, and the paltriness of his school appointments, and setting down hopeless toil as his predetermined destiny, submits himself to it with all the patience and resignation he can muster.

But his natural love of knowledge thus ruthlessly and cruelly beaten down, still lives and lingers on in hope, for his soul's longings can never die out. Perhaps the occupation to which he has been apprenticed is very plain in its practice; for that very reason he sincerely dislikes it, and fain would exchange it for one more intricate and abstruse. Or, the reverse may be the case; his trade may be too ramified in its complications, or he is weak in body, and a clerkship would suit him exactly, had he only an education sufficiently liberal. Or, again—he has learned a trade by which he cannot subsist in comfort, and would take to some other one, if his acquirements were such as to help him to its highest honours. The writer of this essay has known dozens of such cases; and many hundreds there are in Dundee thus situated, seeking to rise above their adverse destinies, but cannot rise for the simple want of educational vantage-ground, whereon to hopefully and nobly struggle.

Instantly, and without a shadow of hesitation, the writer of this essay expresses his firm belief, that the grand sweeping remedy for this crying defect in the education of his class, is the instant and liberal establishment of Working Men's Colleges in every large town and city. Some one says, "Have you not cheap evening schools; and what is your fault to them?" Of course we have evening schools, is our answer; but they have failed. Why? Because, inseparably connected with common evening schools confined to narrow districts there is a certain repellant feeling which the majority of grown up men and women cannot get rid of—they shrink from showing their ignorance to their neighbours who have communion with them daily; they have an irksome dread that their fellow-scholars would be quizzing at their deficiencies and laughing covertly at them; so the majority, rather than risk the enduring of

such a sensation by twenty times choose to stay at home. Well do we know that this will be called a frivolous feeling, and one that ought to be got over. Exactly; but it is not, and cannot be, got over by many; for than the ignorant man none is so susceptible of ridicule and contempt; and this is the great real reason why night schools fail to touch the mass of ignorance, whether the theory be accepted or not.

How unspeakably different would be the case with truly popular Working Men's Colleges. There, without shamefacedness, might come the half-taught and the utterly ignorant, the young man and the old man, from every close and wynd and corner of our densely populated towns; and where, on the pupil's part, his first task would be to frankly and openly avow all he knows and all he would like to know; and all he would unlearn that he has learned before. Here would be a glorious understanding between pupil and teacher, and a clear and pleasant field whereon to labour! The upgrown pupil, with heart eased of all that millstone incubus, the dread of ridicule, would begin his studies with a lightened, grateful, and glad heart, enjoying the exercises of the seminary with a zest such as would of itself be the teacher's sweetest reward, for the best and the meanest would stand fully avowed! And the generous founders and patrons of such an Institution, who might speak their delight on entering into and beholding such a place and work. Better and richer to their hearts than the rarest cordials would be the spectacle; for how could they see it without their sleep being more pleasant, and their dreams more sweet?

Such an Institution has been proposed for Dundee, and when first the project was mooted in the columns of this journal, many and sincere were the wishes of not a few working men, the writer of this essay among the rest, that, on the part of the monied orders, the idea might be heartily encouraged and made practical; but months passed away and no response was given to it. However, knowing by experience how hard a matter it is to move the great men of this town, and make them take up any subject in right earnest, yet convinced from the righteousness of the cause of its ultimate success, the conductors of the *People's Journal* again returned to the charge in a short time by putting to the influential men of the district the frank and straightforward interrogation, "Who will help the working men of Dundee to establish a Working Men's College?"

That many of our class, burdened with taxes, and pinched in pocket by the high price of provisions, are unable to materially assist in the establishment and equipment of such a Seminary, is at once understood, so that clearly the means must come from some more potent quarter; some large-hearted, philanthropic benefactor of our class must arise; but it occurs to us at the sametime that if our class, which is to profit by the existence of such a College, do not seek for it in its own name, its members will never see this College at all. As we said above, hundreds in this town would avail themselves of it, were it once opened, but we must speak aloud in concert, and prove that we *need* it; that we *really seek* it, and that we would actually *benefit* by it. When famine is abroad in a country, the people are clamorous for bread; they cry aloud for what they have not, and a spirit of want comes upon them; but in Dundee no such signs or symptoms are seen or heard among the intellectually hungry; and back upon our friends of the press is apt to come the mortifying reproach that they are a parcel of new-fangled dreamers, who, to please some popular whim, are raising a useless and uncalled for outcry. Hard and callous, then, were the heart of the man who, ranking himself among the sons of labour, would not speak out in vindication of such friends, and offer such suggestions on the subject as, that they who may be disposed to assist us, shall not be altogether in the dark on the subject of how the scheme is to be put in operation.

Some difficulty was expressed in the last leader of this newspaper on the subject of teachers; the writer would here offer a suggestion on that point, pressing the matter on those whom the suggestion affects, with the utmost deference and respect. For among all the ministers of the town who weekly exhort us to the improvement of our time, and recommend us to the embracing every opportunity for acquiring sound knowledge, there were surely not a few to whom we might look for no small share of assistance in this matter. The pulpit has been the grand friend of the poor hitherto, as well as of the rich: to it we owe in great part that safety which we more or less enjoy both within and without our dwellings. It has served to smooth down the asperities of our nature, and has brought us to conform agreeably to the agencies of a needful and salutary restraint, setting itself up thereby in the veneration and respect of the world's best and wisest sons. Its masters are men whose intellect is cultivated and framed by a course of set training, and are therefore, of all others, the very men who, by their habits and education, are fitted to effectually cope with the darkness and ignorance of the human mind, and who should therefore, strain a nerve to put into practice the weekly injunctions to which they so eloquently and faithfully give utterance.

Nor were this, we think, to entail upon them hardships greater than are shared in by other members of the community,—for it were an unheard of thing to affirm that ministers have no leisure time as well as other men. Some members of the profession, perhaps, jealous of its dignity, and willing to discourage the idea, may say that the minister is the soul of the pulpit; that to take him from his high altitude and bring him to labour within the walls of an academy were to degrade his office, by blending the minister and the schoolmaster in one. No such thing; this service on his part would be voluntary; the College would be a voluntary affair of itself; the attendance voluntary; the support voluntary; all the teaching, with the exception of drawing classes and others, would be voluntary,—everything voluntary, except the refusal to undertake a tutorship, where time and capacity to teach make it a bounden duty on the conscience to "come over and help us."

And I ask, who would be the first to reap the advantages of such an establishment but the ministers themselves? Those seminaries once established, and a change for the better would soon be seen in the aspect of many of our church-going audiences. Instead of preaching to dull, unappreciating crowds, some asleep and some unconcerned, there would be seen in every corner of our churches, attentive, intelligent hearers of the preacher's discourse;—men who, having judged the matter within their own minds, could fitly apprehend what it is to produce whole quires of correctly-written matter, the fruit of an entire week's labour of mind and body, and who, sympathising with their minister's endeavours for their behoof, would, out of pure kindness, make a point of listening fully to his sermons. If a system were set on foot, whereby the ministers of the town could give a night or two by turns alternately with other friends of the movement, paid or unpaid, I do not see what there is to hinder the Institution from coming into existence for want of teachers. And, apart altogether from the claims of the young community for such united service from the clergy, it were nothing less than a direct benefit to themselves, inasmuch as that, by bringing them more frequently into contact with the labouring classes, the ministers might the better see with their own eyes their people's condition and mental status, and so be enabled the more fittingly to address themselves to the varied shades of intellect which are necessarily to be found in even one congregation.

Thus has the writer of the present essay attempted to elucidate his conceptions of a Working Men's College, and endeavoured to show how the attempt ought to be made for establishing one in Dundee. And where can he better seek to advocate this scheme than in the columns of

this newspaper? A paper read by upwards of 20,000 persons must ever be an object of peculiar interest to the people who live within the range of its circulation; but specially so must the *People's Journal* be to the landowners and millowners of this district, seeing that it is read by their servants and dependants. Thus seeing their newspapers, they cannot help seeing their people's wants expressed and advocated, at the same time that they feel inwardly called upon to assist in their fulfilment. Will none of those rich men give of their abundance for this great and noble purpose? Will they not give one effort to rolling away the stone of ignorance from the sepulchre of intellect? Surely some of them will do it. In the late words of the *Journal* itself, "Who will help the working men of Dundee to establish a Working Men's College?"

(December 29, 1860)

CHEERY BLINKS IN A DARK WINTER'S DAY.

A Sketch for the Season.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

When the veil of wintry darkness is partially uplifted from the face of Nature—when, for a time, clear blue prevails on high, and when clouds, white and pure, sail swift across the far expanse—then, the spring time, gentle and young, seems promising to dawn. Then, also, the weary birds, of late so mute and few, break forth into jubilee, making the hoar woods to ring with their shrill and silvery pipings; then, too, it is, that the heart of man, sweetly deceived, o'erflows with inward joy; lightly and cheerfully bounds his spirit, though he scarce knows why—hope and gladness beam upon it for a season, and a long-felt load of oppressive dullness, lately weighing it down, gives place to a free, exultant freshness, as he hails those early foretastes of the budding, beauteous Spring.

Confined within the walls of home, be that home ever so happy and beloved, it is not the less a hardship to bear therein the bondage of a long dark winter. Yes, even though closely protected from the fierce blasts of the storm, and chill of the nipping frost—for the heart of man needs something more than mere present comfort. New scenes he seeks; the prospect of a renewing to all these charms of outer Nature, that refresh, gladden, and illumine his strangely-fashioned soul. For, if his dwelling be in the country during such a season as the present, how barren and ungenial a thing it is to draw aside the covering of the window, and see outside that bleak unchanging waste of sterile fields and naked trees, their sprigs and branches crystallized beneath with clear pendants of ice, powdered above with snow. And even in the town or city, to look without, and behold before him the same cheerless range of dull buildings and frozen streets, on which latter the pasengers cringe and cower with cold, as they hurry to their homes or follow after their businesses. Quick, at such times, there thrills through all the frame a shiver of discomfort; the spirit droops, and yearns for a blink of warm sunshine, wishes for the coming of those softening gales that woo the crocus from its dark, cold bed, to be the pioneer of a coming summer. For the dance grows a weariness, the song becomes stale, books cease to charm, even social converse fails to satisfy; and for the bright green mead, the garden and the grove, man's longing spirit yearns with strange and silent desire.

How welcome also to the poor town encircled invalid are those cheery blinks in a dark winter's day! On his back he has been stretched for months, and during all that time has been doomed to gaze out upon an endless train of leaden coloured clouds—each succeeding cloud, as it passed across the narrow proscenium of his sick-room window, seeming to look blacker and more frowning than another. How intensely he wishes for just one glimpse of the

brilliance of a summer sky to relieve the cold, sickening monotony of those sullen mountain masses, floating before his sight so lazily and dull! Suddenly, and when he leasts expects it, breaks forth one bright and glorious ray of sunlight, silvery and clear! It falls upon the broad gable of a white sandstone house just opposite, and reflects its pure effulgence into every corner of his solitary sick-room, flooding it with a mild lustre. Poor weary soul, how glad he is of that blessed light! "Oh that† it might last," he inly prays, "that sweet soul cheering ray!" And so it does last for a little while, as if to shed a gleam of joy upon his sad loneliness. Nor does it come alone: all the sights and sounds usually heard and seen on a fine winter day salute and gratify his senses. Out from the neighbouring houses come the children, and straightway begin to gambol before his window. They engage in stiff battles at snow ball, some running, others giving chase, all leaping and tumbling among the deep snow wreaths, so soft and so pure. At the sight of this harmless fun, the poor sufferer feels an exhilarating freshness filling all his being; he feels more benefit from it than he has experienced from all the pills and drugs he has swallowed for a month. So the little boys laugh and shout; the windows gleam and glitter in the sun; the gossips come out to talk; the beggars come out to beg; the dogs come out to bark; and the very policeman himself rubs his hands cheerfully together, smiles on the passengers, nor cares a straw though the ragged boys pelt one another with filth, or "breeze up" slides half as broad as the pavement.

On the ladies of the community, rich and poor, those cheery blinks have a very happy effect; they woo the fair ones out for an airing, and so indirectly help to add a redeeming and fresh charm to the bleak wintry aspect of the streets. There the lady of fashion, comfortably arrayed in her heavy and cosy mantle, sails proudly along; her delicate neck protected by an ample boa, her hands thrust‡ into the heart of a fine, soft muff, so cosily and snug. What a beauty of a bonnet! and just look at the pretty milliner girls, as they take stock of its ribbons, feathers, and bugles—estimating to a penny the cost of its up-making—going into ecstacies with the beauty and elegance of her costly winter dress; and surveying, with the discriminating attention of professional critics, that beautifully flowered and crimped border of a petticoat that hangs in snow-white folds to the foot of her crinoline. And this trim and cheery little wife of a working-man, who, because 'tis a fine day, is come out with her husband's dinner, to his place of labour. The bread is neatly tied up in a clean white towel; the little tin flaggon, polished clear as silver, hangs lightly from her hand. There's a picture of thrift and usefulness for you! See how smart and rosy she looks! Just observe her natty little bonnet, too; not a "mutch" remember, but a bonnet, with a modest sprig of flower. The bonnet, and the flower, both a little the worse for wear, but like herself, looking very pretty. Don't forget to notice her shawl—a small one of shepherd tartan, with black and white checks—very thin, of course, when compared with the thick fur mantle of Madame Pompous, who swept past a little ago, but which, along with her well-made dress of dark merino, is as good in its way as that of Madame, and is every bit her own.

Poor body!—here comes granny and all the bairns to catch the cheery blink as long as it lasts, though she's not very able to carry that great heavy laddie now, no longer the "sookin' infant" he once was. And there's wee Tommy, too, hanging to her skirts, and "trailin' his little cartie" behind him; to say nothing of little Aggie, who greets for "a bawbee to get candy." And just look at this old file, with the jolly-looking face—he, too, is come out to enjoy the cheery blink, though his nose appears to be red and warm enough to heat the "paris' kirk." In his right hand he carries an umbrella to fend off the snow should it fall, and the "peg" keeps a

† Printed 'thate'.

‡ Printed 'thurst'.

sharp look-out lest the mischievous boys should chuck him down with a hard snowball. Here's a little wee lassie, "barefit and bareleggit"—poor thing, she's "no very weel"—her feet are red and "hackit" with the frost; her thin white face and miserable rags make one "wae to see them." God help her, she has a "weerdless mither 'at drinks every hap'ney!" What's that under her ragged "peeny?" It's the whisky bottle! This wretched creature is what is called a "nateral bairn"—her mother has sent the poor girl to bring her "leevin' oors"† from the tammy shop, as long as the blink lasts. And there is the "stookie feegar man" with his board on his head; he, too, has come out to give his goods an airing, and precious goods they are. Look how calm and placid Shakespeare seems as the bonny mild ray falls full on his countenance! How stern and dark is the face of Napoleon Bonaparte standing with his back to the sun, confronted as he is with Neil Gow the fiddler. How beautifully chaste and sad is Naomi and her daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, and what a fine shade of soft melancholy that cold wintry sunbeam is giving to their meek and classical features! Of Milton's face we have but a side view; the sun just bronzes the point of his nose, and he turns bashfully away as if from the unveiled loveliness of the Greek Slave, who, as if forced to unveil by her master, would fain turn away. Filling a nook by themselves stand Venus and Martin Luther in proximity suspiciously close, while John Knox and Queen Mary, stationed just opposite, look quite indifferent about the matter. Not far from these kneels little Samuel, his hands clasped in prayer, the innocent angelic expression of his face forming the very antithesis of Samson's with the gates of Gaza on his back. The "stookie feegar man's" gallery of notables includes, in addition to these, Father Mathew and John Wesley preaching each other down in a very demonstrative fashion; while Tam o' Shanter and Soutar Johnny are drinking healths to the "grave and reverend seigniors" in overflowing measures of barley bree!

These are some of the milder features that come out in the street during these cheery blinks in a dark winter's day. And although we may thus at times speak of such in light and genial phrase, yet oftener should we do so in gratitude, for a blessing and a joy they are, when the ruthless frost has killed all the bright-eyed children of the garden with its deadly influence. Winter is a dark, destructive season to the charms of lovely Nature. Like a sour and aged wooer, who, during the absence of a warmer and more favoured rival, has by force of fear won the object of his love, but who, soon after she expires with grief, is called to confront the returning favourite, so hoary winter, having blasted the life and beauty of this earth, now spitefully withdraws the veil of black and stormy clouds from before the face of the sun, his rival bidding him gaze with tear-dimmed eyes on his lately bright and blooming mistress—her face not now radiant with beauty and with smiles, but dark, cold, and grim—her bonny robe of green that he once saw her wear—gone! herself dead, and folded in her shroud! In the midst of such dreary desolation, how can it be else than a delight to be visited by such cheery blinks in a dark winter's day! Bonny blinks—cheery blinks, oft may they visit us yet during the present reign of Nature's midnight, cheering our hearts and chasing our gloom away—promising that coming victory of their source, which gradually consummates as the months roll onward—soft and gentle in spring, warm and beautiful in summer, in autumn mellow and golden with splendour and with plenty. May they lengthen and strengthen, these bright and cheery blinks, to gladden the captive's drooping heart, and enliven the sick and weary. In the many attics of this Dundee, and down in its dark, deep cellars, where poor souls toil wearily for daily bread, or starve for want of it, may these delightful bursts of sunshine penetrate, filling their spirits with joy, as they hail its bright appearance with this happy acclaim—"There goes a handsome

† Printed ' "'leevin oors" ', i.e. 'leaving overs'.

blink of the sun again—it's a blessed thing to see! It shows that, if neglected by man, we are not forgotten of God, who pities us in out hour of darkness, and gives us bonny—Cheery Blinks in a Dark Winter's Day!"

(February 2, 1861)

DUDHOPE FREE CHURCH.

A Sketch.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

That the establishment among any community of an able and intelligent minister of the Gospel, constitutes an event worthy of being celebrated in a dignified and becoming fashion, all will allow: and every good hearted man will rejoice to see such a thing verified, whether his own sect, and that of the preacher's be, or be not, the same. If such an induction takes place in a town or city, we hold it to be no less a piece of good news, of which the press should joyfully inform the citizens, than that it would proclaim to them the lucky falling to their share of any other piece of public good fortune,—because the benefits which may accrue to the town therefrom are very great in number when duly calculated and summed up; nor is their importance unequal to their numbers in any respect. Therefore, having seen and heard such an one in his own field of labour—having carefully observed him in the discharge of his more immediate duties there,—having also judged of his personal fitness and mental ability, as far as possible, and that in a friendly, fair, and impartial manner, it then becomes the higher privilege of the press to do all in its power to the end that such a minister's abilities may have fuller opportunity to operate, and that he may grow in usefulness day by day.

Such, in the present instance, being the writer's conviction, he feels called upon, as on past occasions, to act it out, by bringing into well-merited notice a late valuable addition to the ranks of our local clergy, in the person of the Rev. William Stewart, and his recent induction as minister of Dudhope Free Church. Mr Stewart is a young man, lately released from a country charge, but one whose high intellectual ability marks him out as destined to become a very eminent preacher, and a distinguished ornament to our Dundee pulpit. Of Mr Stewart's private worth, it were a pleasant thing to speak; but 'tis to his merits as a preacher that we must now confine ourselves—so, to the enumeration and elucidation of those merits, we now desire to call the attention of the reader.

The first peculiarity to be noticed in Mr Stewart, is his perfect ease and want of constraint in the pulpit, from the time when he enters, till the moment he leaves it, at the close of the service. There is an entire absence of assumption about him—he has no grand airs: he seems quite at home, nor could any one judge from his staid manner that he bears along on his mind such a treasure of precious thoughts, counsels, and truths, as he anon reveals. In order that silence, as complete as possible, may pervade the house, he judiciously abstains from opening the service until such silence be obtained; after which he rises, and, with singular brevity, gives out the psalm, in a voice which has with it a strong, sonorous roll, at first not a little startling to a stranger's ear. Nor does he read long ere all the traits of a practised reader begin to appear; there is no effort apparent in it, such as appears when one is trying to read well. And, yet, though there is that exactitude in his reading of the psalms, which comes partly of habit, it lacks the dignity which is imparted to the same portion of the service by others we have heard and admired; nor has his reading that polish which we have, on former occasions, remarked and commended in the past. These, however, are things which time and care must remedy; for they are essential to that pleasant and refreshing sensation which most people desire to experience during the time of the Sabbath Day services.

His prayers, which are rather long, he utters in the same deep, strong masculine voice, which produces a very solemnising impression on the hearer's mind. He speaks slowly; it is evident to the close observer that his mind is intently engaged in thinking of what things he will ask for, rather than upon what way and tone of voice he will seek them in. One feels that, though the preacher speaks slowly, yet, that his soul is diligently engaged in darting quickly and deep down into itself—that it is panting to compass and bring up for expression, all it's cravings after spiritual help and light, as well as for the forgiveness of sins and shortcomings on his own part, and his people's alike. Altogether, his prayer is very impressive, solemnising, and powerful, both in matter and in manner of utterance.

Mr Stewart's Scripture reading also partakes of that tact, attention to point and accent, of which we remarked that it comes of habit and nice education of the ear; which, when it is practised, shows good discrimination, and enables the listener to detect at once whether the reader is or is not possessed of the ability to appreciate beauty of composition—whether it be or be not his own. But in this, as in his psalm-reading, Mr Stewart as yet lacks that dignity and polish which time and practice alone can impart to it.

It is in deep earnest study of the human heart, of the attributes and nature of Deity, in a remarkably complete and quick apprehension of the force and meaning of the sacred text, and in beauty and appositeness of quotation that Mr Stewart excels. Lecturing is his *forte*. His first two lectures delivered in the writer's hearing—the one upon Hosea 2d chapter and 8th and 9th verses; the other upon the 47th, 48th, 49th, and 50th verses of the 2d chapter of St John's Gospel—served at once to substantiate this impression. His study of the Divine nature appeared most vividly in the last mentioned of these two lectures. In the narrative, as the reader may learn by referring to it, our Saviour hails Nathaniel with the words—"Behold an Israelite in whom is no guile;" a salutation which, as he will see, naturally suggests to Nathaniel the interrogation, "Whence knowest thou me?" and then our Saviour's proving of his Divine omnipresence by the the reply which follows—"*Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree,* I SAW THEE!" It was one of the most convincing and impressive discourses to which we ever listened; it showed that the speaker was deeply, truly in earnest; and the recollection of the striking truths, and of the strangely emphatic manner in which they were enunciated, remains as fresh in out memory now as when we heard them uttered. Mr Stewart's lectures and sermons, though not read, are all written—laboriously, powerfully, and carefully written—from the deep-felt impressions of his soul; and one paying close attention may easily perceive what are his favourite strains of thought; for, when any strain of reflection has taken possession of his mind, he gives utterance to it with a strength of emotion such as doubles its force. His powerfully masculine voice rises and rings again with an almost metallic sharpness; and this, coupled with the subtile, conscience trying truths it so rousingly proclaims, at once startles and alarms the soul of the hearer, so that, affrighted, he feels that this man, by the light of the Gospel lamp, has been keenly searching, sifting, and scrutinising every corner of his hitherto dark and unexplored heart. There is no mistake about the fact that Mr Stewart has been deeply, solemnly earnest in his study, and now he feels heart-warranted and bold, as he stands up in his pulpit, determinedly declaring what he has conceived to be truth, for he has high and holy things to speak about—everlasting realities to deal with—he has come there to speak of and deal with them, and do so he does—yes, he does repeat them, ring them in the ears of his people, to the end that they may be warned, instructed, counselled, and saved, if possible, by merit of the high and sacred truths which clamour in his breast for utterance and struggle into light!

As we said before, Mr Stewart's sermons have in them this valuable quality, that they take a deep and strong hold upon the hearer's memory; for so well conceived and wrought out are they,

that both the words he uses and the ideas embodied in them, quit not the mind for whole weeks after both have found expression. Here we must signify a hope that even while endeavouring to acquire fresh dignity and polish in his preaching and reading, Mr Stewart may not fall into the extreme of over punctiliousness, thereby perilling his ability to edify, in order that he may please. The main object of this, and similar sketches by the same writer, touching the merits of some eminent clergymen of Dundee, were written, not to incite those preachers to a straining after effect, but rather that their more useful and substantial qualities might be popularly brought into more general notice, so that younger men might study them, and profit by the exercise. Mr Stewart has in him many of the elements of popularity, but his great secret lies in his deep earnestness; so, while he still remains the same earnest and anxious student of the Bible and its great Author, for the spiritual nourishment and edification of his own flock, he may at times taste the sweets of the world's applause by favouring the intelligent working men of this town, when called upon, with a popular lecture, in some future course as the time may suggest. This hint is remarkably apposite to the one we gave in the opening of this sketch, about the benefits which fall to the a community from the establishment in its midst of an able and intelligent minister. We trust by-and-bye to see it acted upon in the case of the Rev. William Stewart of—Dudhope Free Church.

(March 16, 1861)

MIDNIGHT AND MORNING.
A SKETCH.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

When the black drapery of night hangs gloomily and in silence over the city, when prowlers are abroad, whose vile purpose it is to wait for the halting of the watchman that they may ply their unhallowed trade, then troubles and dangers abound, and that watchman feels anxious and uneasy. But when the morning sun, rising from his couch in the east, gives to that vigilant guardian promise of rest from his wanderings, telling him that the dangers of darkness are past, that the lives and treasures of the citizens are in their own keeping, and will no more be required at his hands, then he rejoices that rest will visit his aching limbs, and sleep seal up his weary eyelids. For the morning breaks forth in splendour and in beauty, fresh and balmy gales spring up around, clouds, rosy and glowing with blended purple and silver, are flooding the heavens with sweetest lustre, telling the tall spires of the young day's birth, till they blush with mellowing radiance as they bask in his dazzling beams!

What is the mortal life of man or woman but a series of transitions from darkness to light and from light to darkness? singing in the spirit of joy, or sinking in the mire of sorrow; morally bounded by the two great alternatives of midnight and morning?

Is it not midight now with yon fond and doting mother who bends lovingly over the couch of her suffering first-born son? Anxious earnest watcher! many a troubled and wistful look she has cast toward that little cot; for therein lies the sinless cause, to her, of many a wakeful hour—therein for a few days her darling has been tossed in the heat of a burning fever! The man of medicine has told her that at midnight the crisis would come; and now fear and hope, fervid prayers and tenderest caresses alternately divide her time, and chequer the term of her lonely vigils. What a picture of tenderness is here! Mark, how with person thrown over the white-fringed coverlet of rosy red, she tries to encircle his little sleeping form! Intently she gazes at him; softly she folds back the coverlet to let him breathe more freely, ever and anon, with tear-filled eye and trembling accent, trying to sing a soft lullaby as she raises his little head and smoothes down his snow-white pillow! "Dear innocent," she inly says, "what have

you ever done that you should suffer so?" Best beloved of her own heart and her husband's, in him many bright hopes are centred, on him thousand choicest blessings have been lavished, on his pure brow many soft and precious kisses have been laid! When his father went away to plough the foam-crested billows of the ocean, his manly eye grew dim with a tear—that tear rolled down his cheek as he tore himself from them: and never comes there a letter from the far land, but fondest blessings, written kisses, and tenderest caresses are its chief and cheering burden! Dearly prized life, guileless object of so much solicitude, well may his mother's heart ache to breaking as she pictures to herself the bare possibility of her child's decease, with its sad concomitants of a little empty cot, a little dark coffin, a little train of sable-clad mourners, an absent husband and father, a lonely, lonely house, and a cold silent hearth! Oh, poor weary wretched one—for her great sorrow the heart bleeds, and the eye overflows with pity's bitter waters! For while those agonising thoughts flit and hurry through her brain, she prays, weeps, and watches for the morning. Just as she thus earnestly prays for it, the morning breaks forth; midnight, with its gloom and sorrow passes away, and morning, dewy and beautiful, is come!

Through a parting in the curtains, the pure and silvery ray is bursting, and by its light she sees that the danger is gone, and her darling sleeps peacefully! What a revulsion of feeling follows this! Down on her knees she sinks by the side of that little cot, o'erwhelmed with gratitude and sacred joy: then, clasping her hands in raptest emotion, dissolves in a gush of glad tears, thanks kind Heaven that the black midnight has vanished, and that the morning has returned!

Now, also, return to her mind those rosy and golden visions which oft, in fancy, she indulged, as he lay on her bosom in health's hey-day. She sees him again as a graceful, gentle boy—first in beauty, first in virtue, first in every fair and elegant accomplishment. Then she beholds him a noble and blooming young man, before whose footstep the fair flowers of the valley might bow, as though conscious that the pink and model of perfect manhood had deigned to pass their way! Next, she beholds him a rich, happy, and courted man, walking in the lustre of his uprightness, blessed and honoured of God, loved and respected by men! The morning dawned!—ay, verily, and shines to its meridian!

Would that upon all her faithful sisterhood, in like circumstances, and in like sorrow, the sun of peace might dawn in gentle and pure effulgence, cheering their eyes and rejoicing their hearts with its kind and holy radiance!

Midnight reigns, too, in yon lonely attic, wherein sits an aged and careworn widow, her face buried in her hands, her body motionless and still. Around her all is silence complete and profound; the roar of the wintry wind without gives to the stillness solemnity and expression. She is alone; all is sad-seeming and strange; mute is the crouchant figure, half-cowering into the fireplace, within which a few dying embers of wood are fast growing black. Why sits she so silently and still? is she asleep, or is she weary and trying to sleep? She is asleep—she is weary—but she is not resting, for her dreams are oppressive and painful. Three fair and stately sons she had in her brighter days—they gladdened her heart from morn till eve while yet they were with her; but the night of sorrow came, and her sun went down! When the gold fever raged and spread, her boys caught the infection. They went out the one after the other, and for a time they sped well; but their season of prosperity was brief, First the eldest died of heart disease, and so did his brother; as for the youngest, she has not heard from him for years. Poor old body! she was reading all their letters over again just before she fell asleep—and she never reads them, but she sighs and sobs herself asleep! The neighbours say that her reason will totter some night while she reads them, but she "cannot help it." Yesterday, a man came to say she must go to the Poor-house, and ever since then she has wept like a child. Fitfully she

now sleeps, and in her dreams she follows them to the distant land of their adoption. She sees their wanderings, witnesses all their strugglings. Toilfully they strive and dig for wealth; with feverish anxiety they watch their scanty earnings—one day gaining a little, but scarce having gained it, when the thief, prowling abroad, robs them of the whole, and they become the prey of want with all it horrors. Now she weeps and sobs again in her painful slumber, but her dream departs not—it only changes to a phase more terrible, and an interest more intense.

In the middle of an arid and cheerless wilderness, she beholds the interior of digger's canvas tent. In that tent there is an ill-clad bed, and on that bed there lies the form of a man, tossed in the agonies of some fatal disorder. Livid are his lips, and his eyes gleam with the lustre of insanity, produced by long and lingering sickness, untended and uncared for. Not soul save himself can the aged dreamer see—not one is by to give him a brother's help, and not a drop of water is near. In mad fury he clutches the bed clothes; wildly he glares with his blood-shot eyes; he gasps for breath, and struggles furiously, tormented with acute pain, and intolerable thirst. Heavens! he attempts to rise! He rolls, plunges, writhes on the ground, smites the dusty floor with his fists, bites the flinty stones, swallows the dry, choking powder; leaps, half rises, staggers; down, down, he is again! oh! will nobody run—will nobody run to and help him——"

How the poor sleeper shakes and trembles under her terrible emotion. 'Tis her own son—her youngest boy—whom she thus sees in torment, amidst the far-off wilds of Australia. Nor does the horrid vision terminate, till with a piercing scream she faints and falls backwards, when in rush the alarmed neighbours, and the poor woe-stricken one is brought to consciousness again.

The same clear and silvery ray of the morning sun, which enabled the youthful mother to decern that her babe slept peacefully—that blessed sunlight now shines through the frail storm-window of her lonely attic. It cheers her spirits, revives her hope, brings back serenity to her poor troubled heart, sweetly whispering that, although her prospects in life are dark as the past midnight, yet that these prospects may soon break forth into beauty and sweet fruition. Nor is she mistaken. Scarce has she risen from her poor bed in the morning when her sky grows clear and beams with promise. On the stair she hears the postman's foostep; he calls her name aloud; she opens her door and receives a letter. Half-sinking again, but this time with joy, she breaks up the envelope. 'Tis a letter from her youngest, her sole surviving son, whom she saw in the dream that tortured her late slumber. So he lives still, and longs to embrace her with all the warmth and affection of a true and loving child.

Some one told him, long ago, that his mother was dead, and her letters, badly addressed, had all miscarried. Long and bitterly he mourned for her; the news came just as abundance of wealth poured into his hands. Lately, another man told him that she still lived—that she was not dead, though want and penury, worse than death, had overtaken her in her helpless age. Then he had written in all haste, and these were the closing words of his kindly epistle:—"I will leave behind me the scenes of my toils and hardships; where my brothers lived and struggled, and where, 'after life's fitful fever, they sleep well.' And, dear mother, since the past few years of your life have been clouded with sorrow, and crushed into wretchedness with want, its latter days shall be spent in happiness and peace. Use the money I send you in whatsoever way you may see meet, and be cheerful and hopeful and happy till my return; then the recollection of our long separation shall but add fresh pleasure to the days that are to come!"

Bright words! blessed, blessed words!—when they meet the widow's weeping, but, now how gladdened eyes—happiness dawns upon her heart, and beautiful then is the contrast between—MIDNIGHT AND MORNING!

(April 20, 1861)

BONNIE ROSLIN CASTLE.

A Sketch.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

Chancing to be in Edinburgh during the course of last summer, we formed one of a numerous party who went off on a trip to the far-famed ruins of Roslin Castle and Chapel, intending to catch a passing glimpse of the rich romantic loveliness of Hawthornden. Accordingly, at the hour appointed, no less than ten omnibuses dashed up to the door of our rendezvous, in a street adjacent to George street. Soon the provender cart followed them, containing hampers stuffed with savoury mutton pies, cold round, no end of bread, together with all the supplementary comforters of brisk ale and suitable seasonings. Thus,—with a bright sky above, a blooming earth below, light hearts within, and happy faces all around,—we rattled away through Frederick Street down to Princes Street, passed Sir Walter's princely pile, over the North Bridge, along Nicolson Street, and so on, till we sped along the broad bright country road that leads to Roslin, familiar in story and famous in song.

Amidst the general glee, one of our party made the discovery that our 'bus decorations were incomplete, there not being a single leaf of laurel to be seen on their outsides, to remedy which he proposed a rare expedient—every one would contribute a pocket-handkerchief, which was done; next, contributions of pins were levied on the ladies of the party; the handkerchiefs were pinned corner to corner, and soon a broad and comical banner floated in the breeze, from a staff formed by two walking-sticks firmly tied together with a piece of stout cord. Rich were the jokes passed thereupon; every man was judged by his handkerchief. If one man owned a silk "hanky" he was a noble in the 'bus; a ragged napkin was a sign of distress, and its owner was "ragg'd" accordingly. Jack, who owned the silk one, came in for many mock honours; Geordie, of the tattered one, was asked whether he took his rag to the kirk on Sunday; Willy, who boasted a large yellow one, with ten white spots and twenty big holes in it, was expected to feel ashamed of himself; and Charlie, with a napkin about ten inches broad, was called upon to explain how he managed to cover his nose within such scanty proportions. Thus. with joking lads and laughing lasses, talking wives and squalling bairns, there was little room for sorrow and still less for care.

Arrived at the ancient baronial pile, we soon drew forth the provender; and, sitting down on the bonny green turf, were speedily served with galore of glorious pies, bread, mustard, and sparkling ale. Then did a jovial and happy party line the dike-sides of Roslin—every one looking better pleased than his neighbour. As soon as the feast of bread was ended, the feast of fun began. The youths were taxed in a style giving rise to roars of laughter; the married portion of the men victimizing their younger friends, by saddling upon those unfortunates their wives and children. Bob was put in charge of a "greetin' infant," Davie got a "bonnie little lassie" to lead by the hand, Alick had a wife twice as large as himself, and Ned had the oversight of a "great big bubbly laddie." Soon the party rose up, divided into other and lesser parties—each one setting off to amuse himself and herself as best suited them.

But never did a more delightful day shine down on Roslin than was that on which we thus wandered near its ancient tower, proceeding, as we did so, to rake up from among the dust of antiquity all interesting recollections of which we had heard in former days—of kings, lords. knights and ladies, whose names are now entwined with it in the pages of romance. First we visited the Chapel, escorted by the keeper, who, with wand in hand, proceeded to describe to us, one by one, each dainty piece of chiselling in roof, chancel, or nave, giving us *his* version of this, that, and the other portion, finishing up with his strange and certainly incongruous story about the far-famed 'Prentice Pillan. Next we visited the Castle itself—explored its

dark, deep dungeons—climbed up, and seated ourselves upon its aged and interesting walls—ascended eminences, and descended into deep, green dells, to observe its appearance there. After having passed two hours in this most pleasant and interesting occupation, we set off to feast our eyes on the ever charming scenery that lies stretched in silent beauty around it.

There, with the Esk to guide us, we soon became lost in a thick maze of woody recesses and red rising cliffs, overgrown with the glorious garniture of summer. The braes towered up like one great conservatory, rich in all the splendour of uncultured and lavish Nature. In the dark green thickets, doves cooed softly and low; birds out of number, and out of view, but still delightfully near, poured forth one mellowed and continuous chorus of woodland song. Softly, balmily, and warm, heavy with the health-giving perfumes of the grove, came the sighing summer wind, causing the leaves to twitter gently, the tall tree tops to wave gracefully—the whole scene serving to awaken in the mind of the wanderer those strange, stilly, and soul-soothing emotions which arise when one traverses such a place in peaceful leisure. It was to escape from the thraldom of that gay party, and to plunge into the heart of an Eden like this—to be alone—alone! for even in midst of the happiest society, one often experiences moments of disquiet; times when, like a dove, the soul longs to fly away and be at rest, unharassed by the exciting and even half-pleasing employments which such pleasuring times more specially demand.

Following for some distance the course of the murmuring Esk, and feeling by-and-bye somewhat fatigued, we sat down by its margin to enjoy the pleasing flow of the stream, within view of that hoary ruin, of which minstrels have sung so sweetly and so often, and to which fiction has imparted so many sweet and beautiful attractions, so many resistless and engaging charms. Where we seated us, the waters flowed between two gently sloping braes, and by the water's edge, just within sight, grew two pure white lilies—water lilies—with long green stalks, nearly full blown, and which, by force of the wind, had been bent almost to breaking; so much so that their blossoms hung gracefully over, nearly kissing the surface of the tide. In the bottom of the river's bed lay a large white stone with sharp rugged edges, which offered a stubborn barrier to the strongly flowing current, causing innumerable bright sparks to foam up and wet the pure petals of those lilies till, filled with the clear cool water, they swept it back again, drop by drop, into the shining bosom of the stream. While we sat and watched those simple and neglected flowers, several gusts of balmy summer wind, stronger and more vehement than others, came sweeping down the braes; those slender stalks bent low, and were dashed amongst the waters of the river, till we imagined that both lilies were gone. But not so; the gale died away; a soft lull succeeded; then gently uprose the again saturated blossoms, dripping wet, but each looking fresher, sweeter, and lovelier, bathed in the pellucid waters of the Esk. Gazing on them thus, and with our mind turning on the dim romantic memories of the "twin flowers o' Roslin," Ellen and Clara (of whom the Ettrik Shepherd† tell[s] us that they appear only once in every seven years, to linger a while near those stately ruins where once they lived in youth, ere that marvellous and romantic transformation into the king's snow-white hounds, Mooly and Scratch), how well did those fragile blossoms, slender and full of gentle grace, serve as fit emblems of that beauteous pair! We left not their vicinity until the latest moment of that brief time which we could spare to this sweet and congenial enjoyment.

When we rejoined our party the sun was sinking, mellowy and bright, behind the remoter hills; and as all the stragglers were gathered together once more, the 'busses were again in request. Nor was our return less merry than was our going out. Songs cheered the way, and the thought that we had passed a brief season of real and blameless enjoyment gave life and spirit

† James Hogg (1770–1835).

to the strain. Soon we reached Edinburgh—that strange city of reek and riches, of deep poverty and haughtiest pride—where, after ascertaining that all our party had shared in the common happiness, we sought our several homes, filled with much happiness and satisfaction of heart.

There are some who sternly decry all those excursions, without distinction, and hold forth loudly upon the scenes of excess by which they are sometimes distinguished. Nor, to a certain extent, are such gatherings without blame. Outrageous and rude debauchery is ever a fit subject for condemnation; it is an infringement of good manners and good morals, ever bringing reproach on all those who take part in them. But if we are to have any enjoyment at all—and specially if the poor toilers of the factory are at all to see a green field, or running brook, a pure, unsullied gowan, or a green old forest of stately trees standing in their silent majesty—then we must have those excursions; for it would never suit—nay, it is simply impossible, that in a factory one should seek for leave of absence to-day; a second to-morrow; a third, on the day following; and the like. It could not be accomplished. Therefore, whatever is to be done in the way of excursion, must be done at once, if at all. It should be the special duty of those having the oversight of the rest, to suppress all riot, and prevent such as *will* drink, from molesting those who would be sober. Nor is it a task so very hard of accomplishment, if at all properly gone about—compassed in the spirit of watchful kindness, actuated in the main by a sincere regard for the general character of the party. At least, such was our experience in the like circumstances; for, so delightful was the enjoyment of that sunny summer Saturday's excursion, that we look back to it with much lively satisfaction of mind, connected as it is more especially with all that is lovely in nature, and pleasing in the history of—Bonny Roslin Castle.

(May 25, 1861)

LINDSAY STREET CHAPEL.

A Sketch.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

In the popular process of photographic portrait taking, plainest faces, plainest costumes, and humblest environings often come out with most distinctness on the well-prepared glass; while fair faces, showy raiment, and gaudy draperies sometimes show to least advantage. In the equally popular art of pen-and-ink sketching it is sometimes the reverse. Therein every feature in a king's countenance, every fold in his robe, every pearl in his sceptre, and jewel in his crown, shines out in happiest relief. The writer possessed of a pleasing style, gifted with judgment to select, patience to study, and taste to pourtray his subject, is surely thrice blessed. He can so make every mark and lineament stand palpably out upon his page that, speaking to the common heart with the voice of verity, that heart cries out and says of the portrait, It is very good! Such a writer is perforce the popular artist, and such a subject is the popular man. The artist carries away the reflection of his subject in his memory for the time, fixes its tint, compounds his colours, stretches his easel, and spreads out his pencils ere proceeding to illumine the vacant canvas with his magical life-tints of light and shadow. Yet stern truth must prevail in both cases, else the colours are wasted and the labour lost. Plain men must be painted plain, and men of ruddy complexion must have from the pencil of their limners the happier colours of the rose.

Concurring, as we must, with these latter truths, it is as true that, in sketching merit of every kind, the writer of these papers should sometimes meet with with men—excellent, gifted men, and profound thinkers—whose portraits, from an absence of all glow and colour, cannot be painted. Their merits must be described rather than sketched and coloured, for they

cannot advantageously be dealt with by the pen of the sketch writer or the prose poet. Thus, in filling up the background for such a portrait, it were but to insult its subject were we to spread thereon the glowing gold and bright cerulean of the popular heaven. We must put back our gold tint, our purple, our gorgeous crimson, and soft sky-blue—bring forth our chaste white, or sober seeming brown; draw out a commonplace figure, one simple and unimposing, it may be, yet eloquent in its simplicity and beautiful in its truth.

Specially is this necessary when preachers and other public men of whatever kind are concerned; and sure are we, that hundreds of the earnest-minded men and women who read this paper will own that there are men, to whom, as preachers, they have listened for years—able, self-denying, consistent living men,—but who never once thrilled them with oratory or any charm of style, by nothing, save by that inward delight of the soul which all experience when under the influence of one's teaching whom they felt to be gifted with superior spiritual and intellectual penetration. They must have felt what a pity it is that men such as this should too often feel distressed for lack of due appreciation, and that, too, from the mere want of being brought into proper notice; feeling confident that, could such attention be procured, a more numerous and congenial class of hearers would certainly be brought around them. Sabbath after Sabbath, year after year, those men are seen to labour on, obedient to an indomitable and strong sense of duty to conscience and to God, yet the beholder is saddened to think that all their grave, earnest and pious thoughts, so fraught with precious truths, so excellent in conception, beautiful in expression, and abiding in the memory, after being uttered in the ears of a few, should all be laid aside once more—doomed to vanish down into the greedy and deep gulf of forgetfulness, never to be produced until other preachers shall come upon them by chance in their turn. Have you, reader, as you listened to such an one, never felt your heart stirred, warmed, and made to glow within you, as, one by one, the speaker recalled to your recollection truths connected with his subject, which you, in your more thoughtful hours, often revolved within your mind—thinking of which made you wonder inwardly whether any one else ever had, with yourself, such precious and deep thoughts in common? Some sweetly sounding chord of the heart he chances to touch, some truth dear to your soul's unspoken experience, some bright particular jewel gathered in the dim and silent mine of religious thought—the very possession of which is proof enough to you that the preacher has been there also—some profound and solemn mystery, with which in time past your own partially aroused soul has struggled in solitary helplessness, causing you, in spite of yourself, to inwardly exclaim—How true, how true that is; how often I have felt the same! And, as you recognised in the speaker a sympathetic fellow-worker in the ever enriching fields of spiritual research, have you never felt your heart drawn toward him with a kindly cordiality, certain that, were you to sit down to write on the same subject yourself, you would use the very same words to express your meaning? that you would utter them, too, with the same energetic and expressive tones of speech? You feel that you would do so; and you cannot help liking the man, whoever he may be, that thus fulfils your own ideas of these solemn and private concerns of the soul.

Just such a description as this suits him who is the subject of this sketch: on the personal observation of years we have long ago felt assured that it will be granted true, by all who have known the faithful and unpretending ministrations of the Rev. David Cook, of Lindsay Street Chapel.

For the faithfulness with which he discharges his duty to his flock, and for the high talent and finished education he evinces, Mr Cook well deserves the favour with which he is regarded by his own congregation; but one great drawback to his popularity is the extreme plainness of his style, the more abstruse and learned cast of his matter, linked to a certain characteristic mannerism in

speech, as also a close and unremitting perusal of his manuscript. This is much against him. He fails at the outset to produce any very marked and striking effect; but, listened to attentively for a while, the interest of his sermon increases. His sentences, at first pithy and sententious, gradually lengthen and gather force as he proceeds; while, at the same time, his diffidence lessens and disappears in exact proportion as his sympathy with his subject warms, and grows in ardour and in strength. The silence that reigns throughout the chapel is respectful, marked, and deep. The audience is select in number, but high in point of intelligence, being manifestly a thoughtful and appreciating body of people. And never did we hear a sermon from Mr Cook that was not well worthy of such marked and signal appreciation; never did he fail to speak from the heart to the heart. His discourses, so far as we have heard them, have all alike been gemmed with the same quality of telling and saving truth; ever has his sympathy with the pure and generous feelings of the human soul been great; his conceptions of the wisdom and providence of God, of life, of death, of duty, and of faith, have all been near in their approaches to our ideal of those profound and solemn concerns. It is the testimony of those who have known him best and longest, that no dread of ill health, and no shrinking from a complete monopoly of all his time, prevents Mr Cook from fulfilling what seems to be his duty to conscience and his flock. Even the casual hearer feels, as he listens, that the speaker has successfully grappled with his subject, of whatever nature, never quitting it until he has mastered its every favourable and effective point.

But of all Mr Cook's merits as a clergyman, the becoming and chaste style of his prayers strikes us as being the best and greatest. They are, in truth, worthy of commendation. Couched in the purest and choicest phraseology and spoken extempore, they are models of devotional utterance. Pleasant and calm in tone and conception; beautiful in the spirit of true Christian charity toward all the world; reverent and humble in their manner of presentation, they raise the speaker in the esteem and respect of all who listen to him, while he offers them up in the ear of that just, omniscient, all-powerful Being to whom they are addressed. Never did we know Mr Cook to offend in this respect: his conviction, often expressed, that God is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, effectually prevents him from falling into the very gross and woeful enormity of a too great familiarity with his Maker. He evidently speaks under a holy restraint of the immediate presence of that Maker—conscious that he is hemmed in on every side with His sacred essence; that less tangible than the air he breathes, yet as real, infinitely more real, than any flinty rock that may be struck with a hammer, is the sleepless scrutiny and vigilance of a listening and a loving Creator. We never sat down after hearing Mr Cook thus solemnly engaged without feeling deeply solemnised in soul, strengthened in every lofty and worthy aspiration.

Another merit of the service in this chapel is the accompaniment to its service of song in the shape of the organ—itself an excellent instrument, as well as a noble-looking and agreeable ornament to the house. To Dundee readers of this newspaper it needs not that we describe its appearance. To many of them its exterior and capabilities are already well-known. It is well adapted to the size of the house; and were it joined to a greater number of alto and treble voices, the music would be very sweet and very pleasing. We have marked a growing improvement in the handling of the instrument by the organist—an amendment brought about either through the exercise of a fine taste, or else by close and sedulous practice. The second portion of the music, which consists of chanting, is very creditable to the choir and congregation. Were it not out of our province, we should willingly mention some particular occasions on which we have admired this feature in the services of this chapel, as well as specify some of the hymns and tunes which, according to our own conception, best suit it. This, on second thoughts, we refrain from doing;

leaving it to the choristers to make their selections, and having no doubt but that they will continue to exhibit that excellent taste in their singing, which, till now, has characterised them.

We cannot close this sketch without calling the public attention to Mr Cook's Thurday evening lectures, in themselves a weekly treat, and a treat of which the public, through ignorance of its existence, has not hitherto rightly and sufficiently made use of. Those lectures, which occupy only an hour in delivery (singing and prayer included), are familiar and entertaining, sometimes blended with touches of fine humour, and to the general public doubtless more attractive than the Sabbath-day discourses, seeing that the latter are necessarily of a strictly religious character. Sometimes he takes for his subject the biographies of eminent and good Christian men, of all ages, ranks, and professions. He treats of them in a thorough, but at the same time brief and comprehensive style; remarks their early traits of excellence; traces their life's course upward from childhood to boyhood; touches upon their more amiable and practical virtues at that tender and interesting period of life; follows them up to the mount of blooming manhood; tells how the early buddings of talent and of worth expanded and burst forth into beauty and fruition. When on such a theme as this Mr Cook is a delight to be heard; but we will never forget how grieved we felt, and out of conceit with our native town, when, on a recent winter evening, we listened to a lecture from Mr Cook, the production of which, both for its length and for its quality, must have cost its author much labour and research, but which was delivered to an audience the number of which we would blush to set down as assembling in the heart of a town like this. The subject was Admiral Parry, the Arctic explorer—of his youthful worth, his love for his parents, his ingenuity, his perseverance, and his final success. On leaving the chapel along with the handful of hearers, we saw, on the opposite side of the street, one of those low, pestiferous, pickpocket nurseries, a theatrical booth, crowded with dozens, aye, scores of young people, while scores and dozens outside clamoured for admission, eagerly forcing their pence upon the tattered mountebank stationed at the door, and who refused to take their pence or to admit them within. At that moment we felt humiliated and indignant; for, as we beheld the lecturer walk down the street on his way home, we could not help feeling convinced that nothing short of an abiding and strong sense of duty could hold out against such discouragement. We felt vexed at the inertness of the public, who, although the lecture had been announced in the newspapers, had not mustered in becoming numbers, and we inly resolved that, should the time ever come when we could do aught to advocate and advance that good man's claims upon the patronage and countenance of the public of Dundee, it should be done with a will, roundly, sincerely, and in earnest. And now that it is done, let it not be forgotten; let it be seen that there are men in Dundee who will not know the whereabouts of real talent and sincere Christian endeavour, and not encourage them; good men that will not have it said that in their town any seeker after his fellow's welfare shall lack for fitting cheer and kindred support. Lest this should not suffice with some, and as many like to have their musical taste gratified while their hearts and understandings are improved, we state that, besides the eloquent lecture, a treat of organ music is in store for them, and that the hour of meeting is eight o'clock on Thursday evenings.

(July 20, 1861)

SIX O'CLOCK IN THE SCOURINGBURN:
A Sketch.
By James Easson.

A short and pleasant walk between the West Port and the Messrs Edward's spinning-mill at six o'clock in the evening is one of the most amusing things that can well be imagined. The

man whose object is to gain an accurate conception of Dundee life will find his pains rewarded by taking such a walk at the hour mentioned, for in the course of such a ramble he will see the picture all unvarnished—the bare life-likeness, the unrestricted speech of one and all who walk that homely thoroughfare. There is no attempt at useless finery—no dancing master makes a livelihood in that right homely street; and, except a little snuff be used among the girls, they have no costly luxuries of any kind among them. And yet the sight is very cheering too, for, the hard day's work being over, now the glorious evening sun, with rich and ruddy light, is bathing every dark and sooty tenement. Men, young and old, commingle, and a sense of glad emancipation from a long and toilsome thraldom so lightens all their spirits that their feelings find free and glad expression, the quick and prone infection multiplies and spreads to all around. To catch this fine infection is a thing to be desired—so let us take the reader down that homely street, and, side by side, note down a few of the more conspicuous notables that meet us in their order.

Just as we reach the Scouringburn, the factory whistles sound, and forth they come in one long dingy stream. Upon the face of each and all a common gleam of gladness rests, while, as is the case with not a few, larks, jokes, and laughter vary all the scene and make it more agreeable. Jack bawls to Jean, and Jean to Bill, Bobby to Willy, and so on they go. To note the endless train of conversation were a thing almost impossible, for it is but by fits and starts that any clear conception of its purport can be gathered. Nor would it be the proper way to doso. Our business is to note the several characters as they quickly pass before us, and, in order rightly to do so, we must give to this task all the time we can command.

First comes a smart and tidy steam-loom lassie, walking along at such a spanking pace as nought on earth save life and love could tempt her to employ. Love wings her feet, and the light and happy twinkle in her clear blue eye, bespeaks of happy thoughts within. Her sweetheart is a young sailor, whose ship goes down the river at a quarter-past ten, and so she wants to meet him at the Arbroath Station as shortly after nine as possible. Two little boys scamper after, each of them the very picture of high and glad anticipation. Out of breath they run, discoursing all the way about the evening's fun. Hanging to each other's arms, down come two small mill girls, ranting might and main, their bare heads, short goonies and little "harn petticoaties" thick covered with mill stoor, oblivious of which they make the street ring with their homespun—

"Dowdle-owdle, eddyll-eddyll,
Lumpty-daddle-da!"

Two big bouncing Irish girls follow, talking over a grievance. Biddy scolds Katy for giving herself and Barney the cold shoulder last Saturday night when coming down the Overgate, Next come half-a-dozen wild laddies noisily arranging a pitched battle for next Sunday afternoon behind the Law. Gathered round a stationer's window stands a group of mill and steam-loom girls, gazing at the love-cards and pictures. Their tastes may be easily known; for while the steam-loom girls, more refined in taste, are busily engaged in looking at the costlier engravings, with lots of cupids, flowers, and fine love poetry, the mill girls are nothing but delighted with the picture of a red-haired flesher, with a long-tailed coat of lightest blue, adorned with green buttons, a pair of yellow breeks, a flaming blue apron, a long gully-knife; his head like a milk-barrel, and his blazing red nose covered with big warts. By comes the policeman—a big-bellied, long-legged sample of the species. He sends his ill-spun carcase bang aganst the little group, sending them to the right-about, and so gains to himself a salute by no means complimentary—

"Hey, ye big-nosed red raw!"

"Hoo-ya!"

"Gae wa', ye keelie-lookin' ghost!"

"Hey, Tammy, kick that big red-raw for me!"

The "peg" smiles a smile of grim disdain, and passes a group of little Irish children standing under a grocer's window. One child is boasting to the other that she can say the Creed all through, and knows the Carratchers by heart. Quietly and slowly comes a youthful pair, deep in a very important bit of talk. They are engaged to be married soon, a thing one may easily see from the merry leers cast in their direction by sundry cheery steam-loom girls, "linkit-in," and walking just behind. Down in the gutter, half-a-dozen little boys are getting up a fight between a couple of half-starved pups, when presently comes a fish-cadger's barrow, nearly running them over—pups and all! A Cowgate cart follows, blundering along furiously, quite besieged by a swarm of the same kind of boys, who will climb into the cart, despite the man's laying right and left with his heavy whip. Through the crowd come two men bearing an empty Infirmary-chair, which they set down before the door of an Irish lodging-house. It has come for a poor fever-stricken sojourner, whom want of means to live and suffer where he lies has forced to go to the Infirmary, there to wait for life or death. About the sad conveyance gather groups of young children, whose sallow features now tell an eloquent tale. In the corner of a lane lounge a number of Irish navvies, laughing and gossiping loudly. They have tossed up for heads or tails. Barney has lost, but can't pay, and so must stand the "rag" of all the rest. Past comes as old wifie on the hunt for "blazed milk." She has crackit owre lang, and, having left the porridge on the fire, is now in a terrible case lest the girls come in and find the porridge "singit." Running westward, with his "faddle's suppil," comes little Tammy M'Lazy. He has idled off his time, and now pelts along "what leg can lift." Ill speeds Tammy, for, crossing a wide gutter, his foot slips, down he goes, the flagon flying one way and the spoon another. Presently up comes a crowd of mill girls to comfort and condole with Tammy in a way peculiarly their own.

"My cricky, sic a lick he's gotten!"

"Good greaty! what a queer thumpin' you'll get, lad!"

"Hey! what gar'd ye lie doon there, min?"

"Ee, the darlin' pet! he's clortied a' his claes!"

"That's howpity-dowpity for you ony wye!"

Bobbie's "faddle" now appears, seizes the offender by his coat-neck, and marches him away, doubtless to undergo the elegant bit of correction hinted at by the loud-mouthed mill lassie aforesaid.

Such are a few characteristics of the homely individuals who crowd the Scouringburn at the glad and ever-welcome hour of six o'clock. After supper-time the great majority do not appear again upon the street, except it be in summer, when a few come out to breathe the evening air. In winter time the hours are spent in social conversation about the ingle neuk, and very few come out to hang about the street. Were we to enter any one of the adjacent domiciles, we should there see spectacles to make our very hearts rejoice—scenes of thrift and household charity, and many homely acts of mutual kindness both given and received. Sights of filth and wretchedness we there might also witness—none of them being pleasant to pourtray. But, in the happier homes just mentioned, sister takes turn about with sister to make the house look neat and clean—rubbing up and scrubbing up to make the hearth look bright. Upgrown daughters we may see, after standing on their feet the live-long day beside their noisy looms, now busily engaged in mending or in washing—all with a view to the comfort of the family,

that none may point at them the finger of reproach. Some read and others learn to read; some talk and some sing, and thus the brief and happy hours of evening wear pleasantly away.

When mentioned as a class, factory workers are very often sneered at, but, coming as we now have done so closely into contact with them, we may well put in a word of brief defence. They do not *all* deserve the sneer we mention. Many of them cultivate the social virtues to a marvellous degree, their ways and means considered. Look at yonder specimen now walking down the Scouringburn. We say she is a model of her own industrious class. Can you see any speck or flaw in all her simple dress? No. Some rents there once were in it, but they are all mended now, and that so neatly that it were hard to tell whether a fairy had not done the work. And then so free of dust and stoor it is! Those fine white worked stockings, so well washed and so neatly mended—all, all are her own hands' work! And yet the thoughtless and heartless still would flout at all her humble merits. Compare that girl's noble patience and manifest long-suffering—her troubles and privations—for they stand in strong array before the Maker's mind—with that of her whose days are wasted in a drawing-room, literally destroyed, and say which is the noblest and the best woman in the world's tough strife. The factory girl maintains her place in the higher scale of being, because the factory girl is useful, she is needed, and, besides, she is productive to an eminent degree—every sense and faculty in her composition is productive, and does its proper work. Her way of life may not be seen by all the world, but still her right example is before us all—still it preaches patience, still it preaches industry, still it preaches sweet content. Long, then, may all her kind be prospered, long to them may every thing conduce to happiness and peace!

For years the merits of the poor hard-working factory girl has been a favourite theme with us. Her value and her claims have never yet been half considered as they ought to be; nor have we any patience with those loose and lying people who are always crying out that that a factory life unfits a young girl for ever making a profitable wife to a working man, as if her training up beside her father's hearth were not the very thing which either makes or unmakes her in the future of her life, and as if, when a woman truly loves her husband, she will not bring both heaven and earth together to make her husband happy! Let no man thus despise the woman of his choice for such a mean consideration—yet such we know has more than once been done. Because that has so long been done towards that slighted class, we now conclude this paper with a little poem written several years ago,† and leave that brief production to answer for itself:—

In a thrifty dress of an homely guise,
  All iron'd, smooth, and clean,
The factory girl, at the brief meal hour,
  Is always to be seen.
And there is ever on her face
  That look which seems to say,
"Industry is the noblest plan,
  By which to live you may."

Both snow and sleet her ceaseless feet,
  Can brave without regret;
More sweet thinks she it thus should be,
  Than sleep and wake in debt.

† It is printed, in a slightly different form, in *Select Miscellany of Poetical Pieces* (1856), with the title 'The Factory Girl'.

And she lightly warbles while she works,
The moments to beguile,
As quick they fly, like the rapid wheel
That merrily whirls the while.

Around and around the mighty arm
Of the engine sweeps its track;
But every turn still serves to bring
The hour of respite back.
When the mighty bell on the lofty roof
Calls out with clamorous din,
"To your homes now go all ye below,
Who closely weave and spin."

Then home she goes to that much-lov'd hearth,
And there sinks down to rest;
When a well-won meal rewards her toil,
Of all rewards the best.
Then when the homely board is swept,
Some reading forth she'll bring;
Or haply with her brothers young
She tunes her voice to sing.

Year after year this is the sphere,
In which she spends her days;
An endless scene of activeness
Her hist'ry's page displays.
And though her lot may be obscure,
The less of care has she;
So may her happiness increase,
And toils unnotic'd be.

(December 12, 1863)

This contribution elicited the following two letters of protest on December 26, 1863; Easson's reply followed a week later.

MILL GIRLS *V*. STEAM-LOOM GIRLS.

"J. G.," Arbroath, while giving Mr James Easson credit for "the tastefulness of his many productions which have appeared in the *Journal*," is of opinion that he has not been quite just and impartial in treating of the different tastes exhibited by power-loom girls and mill girls as regards the attractiveness of engravings in the stationers' windows. He particularly objects to the distinction made between the two classes in the following extract from Mr Easson's paper, "Six o'clock in the Scouringburn," which we published a fortnight ago:—"Gathered round a stationer's window stands a group of mill and steam-loom girls, gazing at the love cards and pictures. Their tastes may be easily known; for while the steam-loom girls, more refined in taste, are busily engaged in looking at the costlier engravings, with lots of cupids, flowers, and fine love poetry, the mill girls are nothing but delighted with the picture of a red-haired flesher, with a long-tailed coat of lightest blue, adorned with

green buttons, a pair of yellow breeks, a flaming blue apron, a long gully knife, his head like a milk barrel, and his blazing red nose covered with big warts." "J. G." observes that a careful perusal of the above will let any person see how ridiculous Mr Easson would make the mill girls—how low, degraded, and infantile their tastes are to be thus enchanted by a many-coloured daub; but, as a lover of strict sense and justice, he challenges Mr Easson to prove the words he uses in his sketch.

"A Mill Girl," Arbroath, writes as follows, on the same subject—I was surprised to see such a sketch about factory girls and mill girls. There must be an awful difference between Dundee and Arbroath mill girls, for I can assure you there is not such a thing as a harn petticoat to be seen in our streets. Short-gowns, of course, we do wear, but they are almost as free of stoor as Mr Easson's coat is. He seems to have a bad feeling towards mills girls, and a very good one to the factory ones. I cannot see how there should be such a difference. We have dirtier work, but when we come to the street you would not know the one from the other. He terms us the "Loud-mouthed mill lassies." What does he mean? Does he know that in a factory we can scarcely speak loud enough to be heard? Again, he says their tastes are more refined. How can he make that out? Who is it that fills our streets with gaudy colours? See that it be not the factory girls. If he would enter one of our mills, he would see brought out some of the finest feelings in our nature, which he will not see in a factory. When the work of a mill girl goes wrong, her neighbour will be as busy as herself to get it right again, while the factory girl must attend to her own. There has been much said against us as a class by various writers, but I think they would be far better employed attending to their own business, and letting other people's alone. It has become so great a crime now-a-days to be a mill girl that some of them deny that they are so, but I will never do such a thing.

MILL GIRLS *V.* FACTORY GIRLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PEOPLE'S JOURNAL.

SIR,—Most of the faults mentioned by "J. G." and "A Mill Girl," in last Saturday's *Journal*, spring from misapprehension, and so call for very brief reply from me. Both parties seem to imagine that I would fain make mill girls seem ridiculous and low. I assure both that nothing was farther from my intention. I simply wrote from the impressions made upon my own mind, similar impressions being, doubtless, entertained by all who pass existence in Dundee. But for "A Mill Girl" to say that I have any bad feeling towards her class is merely foolish, not to say ill-natured, almost justifying the remark of an acquaintance of my own that "A Mill Girl" inclines to take offence where none was intended. At all events, I have sense enough to know, and am happy to avow, that mill labour is perfectly honourable, being perfectly honest, and that mill stoor is no disparagement whatever. I said in my sketch that the factory girl's nobility sprung from her usefulness. Equally noble, then, is her sister of the mill, since the factory girl could never weave if the mill girl never spun. Apart from this, the girls I mostly had in view were strictly infantile in years—thoughtless little ones, who cannot read well, but who, at the same time, have a keen relish for the comical in pictures—of which girls—clad in the very harn petticoats "A Mill Girl" denies—swarms may every night be seen crowding that very Scouringburn in which my sketch was taken. Neither do I disparage mill girls for talking loud and free. It was in no bad spirit, but in a spirit purely humorous, that I set down the words to which "A Mill Girl" objects. I know that, as they have to call aloud within the mill, in order to be heard, so do they speak aloud

from habit when they are without its walls. Touching the question of gaudy colours in factory girls' dresses, I said nothing about them, so that the remark regarding these cannot apply to me.

"A Mill Girl's" plea that more obliging dispositions are shown within a mill than in a factory, bears its refutation with it. Because the factory girl has no time to help her neighbour is no proof at all that she is not equally willing so to do, if it were within her power. As to its being a crime to become a mill girl, none but a fool would say so; and as to the various writers who have spoken against them, all I can say is, that I am not among their number; for during the nine years over which I have written for Dundee penny papers, I never wilfully said a single offensive word about them. However, sir, your correspondent the "Mill Girl" proves herself to be a girl of pluck and sense, because, in the close of her epistle, she glories in that work, and honest way of life to which Providence has been pleased to appoint her. Therefore, with respects to "J. G.," and wishing that "A Mill Girl" and all her class may more and more increase in love to their profession, I desire to remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

JAMES EASSON.
(JANUARY 2, 1864)

THE PAINTERS' PRIZE LETTER.

For the prize offered to Painters for the best letter containing suggestions for the improvement of their condition, only two competitors have appeared, so that the task of adjudication has not been a difficult or onerous one. The difficulty of doing justice in this case has been still further diminished in consequence of the marked superiority of the letter of one of the competitors over that of its rival. The letter to which we allude is that of Mr James Easson, painter, Dundee, whose contributions in prose and poetry have at various times formed a pleasing and valuable feature in the *Journal*. To Mr Easson we unhesitatingly award the prize—a judgment in which we are sure the only other competitor ("A Journeyman Painter, Edinburgh") will at once acquiesce. Had our Edinburgh correspondent had a less doughty champion to contend with than Mr Easson, he might have had some chance of carrying off the laurels, but with Mr Easson for an antagonist he had none. The matter of his letter is good, and it is deficient only in point of composition, grammar, and spelling. His principal suggestions are, that the wages of painters should be raised so as to be on a par with those of the building trades; that the men should unite together in order to further their common interests; that the men who are constantly employed during the summer should have a share of the work in winter; that this could be done by giving them half-time, or week about, in winter, as is the case in some Edinburgh shops; that the system of paying to unmarried men half the wages allowed to married men when they are sent to country jobs should be abolished; that the wages in winter should be reduced, so as to induce people to have their houses painted in winter, and so increase work at that season; that the hours of labour should be shortened; that a sick fund should be established in connection with the trade; and that masters should take a greater interest than they have hitherto done in the wellbeing of the men.

The following is Mr Easson's Letter:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PEOPLE'S JOURNAL.

SIR,—It were simply an impertinence in me—a working painter—to commence lecturing those of my own trade upon the hacknied themes of common thrift, personal cleanliness, and habits of sobriety, every one of which are much better understood by these than I could

ever make them. Upon such parts of minor morals young and old of all trades are agreed; so, avoiding such, rather let me modestly proceed to show as best I can, how painters may be profited in pocket by having a more constant round of work secured to them in winter—and this, I think, can only be secured by removing certain wrong impressions which possess the public mind with regard to working painters, and the painting trade in general.

First, sir, on the score of young apprentices. A new and better system ought to be adopted touching these—a greater share of attention ought to be accorded to that class than oftentimes is given. Apprenticeships in general last over five years, three of which are often taken from the lads and made to pass in doing all the merest drudgery that lies about the shop. Everybody knows that needful drudgery must needs be done by some parties, in spite of which, fair-play always should be done to individual lads. One year or eighteen months out of the five years is surely long enough in all conscience, to make an individual youth the slave of all his neighbours, the remaining four years or so to learn that trade by which he is to earn his daily bread. Not only after that should lads be sent with hands who are qualified to learn them their business in properly arranged routine, but masters should take periodical cognisance of the progress made by their apprentices—cheering them onward by kindly words and timeous advice, or else exhorting them when fagging or discouraged. During the second year of his apprenticeship, an apprentice should be sent along with a plain hand to learn such parts as whitewashing, common plain painting, papering, and the like; during the latter years, graining and ornamental work should occupy his mind. At present such rules are grievously uncared for—apprentices being often left to pick up their learning as they best may. No doubt but that over-competition in the painter, as in almost every other trade, helps very much to bring about this result. Undue carelessness and love of ready gain conspire in other ways to bring about the same state of feeling. Nevertheless, it is a most mistaken policy for masters to adopt—since, instead of merest drudgery, the more of valuable work a master can teach his apprentice to produce during the time the lad is his must surely be the more enriching even to himself.

This much I may say regarding the apprentices—a class which, figuring largely in almost every trade, should never be forgotten. Passing on, let me now proceed to speak of false impressions which possess the public mind about the painting as a trade, and which never fail to issue to its disadvantage.

First, sir, the public think that paint can only be applied in summer weather; that then, and only then, it dries, and otherwise is treated to advantage. Never was a more erroneous conception formed regarding any subject. The principal objection made to painting is its smell—so much so, that monied folks who paint from habit judge it needful even to evacuate the premises while work is being done. The needlessness of this will very soon appear when they reflect that painters not only live as long as other people, but actually look stout; that almost all our master painters are men of robust constitution; and that since it does not harm those who always breath amongst it—a day, a week, or even a month, in only its vicinity, cannot materially injure them. Besides paint, when treated to advantage, ought to dry moderately quick; whereas the heat of summer often tends to dry it far too speedily, besides aggravating its bad smell to a very great degree. Winter weather, on the contrary, tends rather to subdue these noxious odours; and there is always such a moderate degree of heat within a dwelling house as quite suffices, with the aid of patent driers, to dry paint in a space of time reasonably brief. Not only this, but paints even in winter, by the aid of such driers, can easily be made to dry at almost any speed. Were people, therefore, wise enough to do their painting work in winter weather the gain would equally be divided by customers as well as the employed.

Again, sir, persons painting during summer weather often greatly wrong themselves by crowding on the painter of a district all at once, so that all the work needing to be done at one time is apt to be gone over rather superficially, even when well paid for—masters being tempted to follow up the old maxim which exhorts the wise to make hay while the sun shines. Neither should parties having work requiring extra care proceed to do such work in summer weather, since it is plain to every one that the journeyman employed upon such work is apt to be taken from his task by far too often—sent away to other jobs—so having his mind diverted from what he was about that he cannot give that full attention to to the work in hand, or make that proper job he otherwise would make. Again, sir, much depends upon the frequent personal visits of an experienced master, or of his trustworthy foreman, to the place where work is being done; and since neither can be everywhere at once, the men in summer, left to themselves, often, through ignorance, make mistakes costing much trouble to rectify; and faults in workmanship are suffered to proceed unchallenged, which seriously affect the interests both of customers and tradesmen in the end.

Further, sir, persons having painting work to do, whether proprietors or factors, injure their own private interests by having work done by over-driven estimate, so causing masters to use bad material in order to obtain work—a course which, being followed, seldom or never yields them satisfaction either through length of service or by beauty of appearance. Others never paint their properties at all, or seldom—so ultimately injuring their own pockets, since, as every man of sense well knows, that nothing so much helps to preserve property, whether of wood or iron, as good sound paint, well applied. Tenants, also, adopting a false economy, seriously detract from their own comfort by not cleaning, for its own sake—abandoning the false doctrine which is summed up in the common question, What need they be painting other people's property, since they do not know how short a time they may be there? Never was a course of reasoning so deceptive. As well might they enquire What need for making clothes, since tomorrow they may die? Such parties, not through greed, but simply through a false economy, very seriously impair their own comfort, and deprive the painting trade of much valuable work which otherwise might fall into its hands.

Again, sir, many persons also wronging themselves through other sorts of false economy, or else through pure conceit, insist on painting for themselves—a thing which, like the aforementioned course, seldom yields them any satisfaction. Scarcely, sir, is there any subject upon which less is known than that known of paint among the public generally. First, they know nothing of the proper way in which it should be wrought, or the way it should be laid on in order to produce a fair effect. In general they lay it on a surface all unprepared by polish to receive it. They plaster it upon the top of grease and filth which have accumulated possibly for years. The consequences are, that the surface shows its coarseness, that it never dries, and so becomes an eyesore and a pest to all who see and touch it. Not only this, but they are sadly disappointed with the scanty length to which their paltry pound of blue or green is found to go. They thought a pound of colour quite enough to paint a house. It hardly does a yard; so in desperation they generally forswear paint from that time forth! Than such a course as this, sir, none can be more foolish, since, if not prepared to pay a regular master's charges, they should at least keep their work until the winter season, give it to a journeyman, and leave it to his more finished taste, a course which always will be found to yield the greater share of pleasure to themselves.

These few remarks, sir, in a general way. And now one word regarding painters and their prospects in Dundee. It it well known that of late years much of the work in this locality has been done by hands from Edinburgh; and the reason may in briefest words be stated—first, and chiefly,

from their manifest superiority in taste, and in freedom of its exercise; second, from their more conspicuous quietness of manner and politeness of address. Our now projected Albert Institute promises to remedy the first of these—it opens up a new and pleasant field for young apprentices never before enjoyed by any of their peers, and puts it in their power to take away that stigma and reproach which stamps our local trade with inability to cope with others at a distance.† Than the decoration of their dwelling houses, sir, nothing comes nearer the interests of the monied men of any district, so it is always a thing to be desired that painters in Dundee should be encouraged by the wealthier classes, since it plainly would become a saving if the painters of our own town could be brought upon a par for general ability with those of the metropolis. About superior method and greater regularity of carrying on of work, it should be left to men who have had more or less experience in the city I have mentioned. Touching quietness of manners and politeness of address our painters of Dundee need not be in the shade, because for general intelligence and enlightenment, so far as reading goes, I joy to say that I have always found the workmen of Dundee superior by far to those of other places. It, therefore, but requires a little common tact and firmness on the part of Dundee master painters to bring about such a quietness of manners in their men, that workmen from a distance shall no longer be preferred.

I may with greater justice, sir, congratulate the painters of my own town upon the vast improvement in their habits which has taken place of late. In former days the taunt of drink and general unsteadiness was levelled at painters as a class—the nickname of a "drucken painter" being synonymous with everything degraded in the social scale. In Edinburgh still those baleful habits hold their ground, and are to persons otherwise disposed a weekly source of great annoyance and vexation. I therefore could desire that, with a growth of better habits in Dundee, an increase also of accomplishments in things pertaining to the trade should soon be brought about; and, looking to that Albert Institute I have already mentioned, and considering the ends which it is meant to serve, I think we do not look in vain.

I have thus, sir, endeavoured to enumerate a few improvements which I think might be effected in the painter trade—abstaining almost wholly from those abstract questions upon which I judge it out of place to dwell at any length. I know, besides, that there are many clever men connected with the trade residing in Dundee and elsewhere, by whose pens, I trust, this humble effort of my own may be largely supplemented. The improvement of any standard trade becomes a common theme for all who make their living by its exercise; and any one who thinks that he can speak a timely word in its behalf should make a point of doing so. However, sir, by opening up the columns of your paper to a course of letters like the letters now appearing, you make that paper more and more a People's paper, for a channel thus is opened up through which a stream of lasting good may flow to one and all. Trusting that many of my own trade will see it right to avail themselves of this your kindness, and enter on the present competition, I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,

Jas. Easson.
(January 23, 1864)

† 'The Albert Institute was built in 1865–67 as part of the nationwide desire to share in the Queen's sense of loss at the death in 1861 of her beloved and high-minded husband. It also coincided with a wish on the part of the members of Dundee's emergent business class to acquire a visible symbol of their participation in the current cultural renaissance. The Albert Institute is Dundee's lasting memorial to the Victorian era, although since 1984 it has been known as "the McManus Galleries" in memory of a former Lord Provost.' (www.leisureandculturedundee.com /localhistory/streetwise/albertinstitute; Source: 'Dundee Names, People and Places' – David Dorward)

THE LOVELINESS OF TRUTH.

By James Easson.

Few things so fill the heart with love towards a fellow-man as when we know him one whom we can wholly trust, and when we also feel he speaks to us the pure and simple truth. No feeling warms the soul with such a cordial glow as when we witness truth exemplified by all around. Yet, strange to think, and stranger far to tell, how deeply and how frequently we vex our very souls by loose and diverse wanderings from truth—raising within our hearts those bright gleams of remorse which never can be rudely quenched without our serious loss. Still, pure and beautiful does truth appear, especially as now when set expressly down to think, the subject rises on our mind in its eternal beauty—challenging our admiration and engaging all our love.

How happy and how pure a thing is truth—how free from cause of quarrel—how susceptible of practice! Merely to tell a circumstance exactly as it happened; frankly to speak one's candid mind as far as prudence leads; plainly to give a fair denial or assent whenever they are sought; honestly to call good good, and evil by its proper name. And this is simple truth, the beautiful and free! which, fancifully put, is like a timid maiden wooing the notice of some group of noisy disputants whose angry passions she would fain appease; and holding in her kindly hand a certain cure for more than half the sorrows which excruciate the world.

How useful, too, as well as beautiful, is truth! It does away with all necessity for awkward explanation, and enables parties cheerfully to manage the affairs of life without the least mistrust. It causes neighbours to see eye to eye, and even strangers, without risk, to take their fellows just for what they seem. How lovely, too, is truth in all the close relationships of life—in the candour of a little boy towards his father, acknowledging his petty fault without extenuation, and in the prompt forgiveness accorded to the same; or in the meek devotion of a tender wife, whose heart is truly wedded to her husband—who looks into his face with smiling confidence—who could not have a secret from his ear—who could not even live but in his smile. Truth, to married life, in such a case, is daily food, for thus in after years, as in the sweet days of their courtship, truth shows the young wife's virtues mirrored in her face, clearly as pearls among the sparkling waters of a mountain stream. Even in one's self how pleasant are the fruits of truth; for, speaking thus, we never need to fear the face of man. By day or by night, one calm, unbroken gleam of happiness irradiates the soul, undarkened by those clouds of fear which sadden and perplex. And then we have no apprehension of a neighbour slandered, or a friend deceived—nothing have we beheld which should have been revealed. For us, the world may fearlessly go on, since we have never wronged its votaries, or cast a stumbling-block athwart its way. And then how goodly is sweet truth as it exists between a master and his trusted servant, when that master's interests are left within his servant's power. Truth, at those important times, is far beyond all possibility of estimation—since comforting it is to know that, passion dead and principle alive, those vital parts of honour and of life are as secure as in the keeping of a son. And thus in many more relationships the lamp of truth burns on with a certain clear and steady lustre peculiarly its own; and happy we if, gladdened by its light, we mix no base alloy with that most holy oil which freshens and sustains its blessed flame.

How real and how charming both in odour and in beauty is this gentle flower of truth—an unassuming plant, blossoming better in low gardens of the poor than in those gay conservatories of the rich and proud, whose air is hot and artificial. A modest bud is truth, as well befits a soil so humble—pure and white, and destitute of coarse and garish shades. To it the whirlwind

of detraction is particularly severe—often it nips and tries to injure truth, but cannot kill it, since it is an everlasting flower and cannot die. How potent, too, is truth as a preserve to every righteous cause! Planted and matured is truth, corruption cannot dare upon that honoured system. The darkening slime of error is detected long before its baleful sap has managed to defile truth's luminous purity, or mar its saintly beauty. And then in taste how most unlike all false preserves is truth—mild and sweet instead of salt and sour. Besides, how amiable is truth when mentioned as a pathway leading to the home of perfect happiness. How straight and clear, and free of tortuous crooks and turns, quite dispelling fear, lest, straying from the route, we lose ourselves, and thereby mar our pleasures by the effort to return. One long delightful prospect stretches out before our feet. Above our head the mild sun of content beams brightly down. Along the margin of the path, in soft luxuriance, blush the flowers of love and friendship, as in meek humility they court our gratified attention. Nor is this path of truth an unfrequented one—delightful company is to be met thereon. Budding youth may there be met—a bashful country maid, with dancing step, sparkling eye, soft cheek, and dewy lip—with witching smile, and hair of shining gold. Robust manhood, also, often walks in truth's delightful way, breasting it along in that brave port of pride with which the Maker clothed his form in Eden's green retreats. And gentle childhood also gambols in truth's road—a charm of candour in† its every glance, a world of sunny joy in every trill of childish song. In truth's domain we all of us are children—at least, we all are brethren while we walk in truth—one in heart and one in soul.

But sacred truth when mighty minds through doubt are verging on chaos, resembles most a brilliant beacon-light high set upon some sea-lashed rock, engendering tranquillity and kindling hope within such souls while shooting forth its peerless rays afar. To truth's soul cheering light, and by its sturdy crags, bewildered mariners on error's troubled sea, their ballast of opinion gone, and all their sails of mental independence rent, may moor their sinking rafts, and taste once more the sweets of safety and of rest. And feeble souls, besides, unfortified by native strength, derive from truth's unfailing source fresh strengthening to tread this dimly lighted sphere—a world within whose crowded thoroughfare deluding counter-lights so thickly do abound. And sacred truth has ever a complexion of its own—a happy native purity of look impossible to match. In it there is an utter want of halts and flaws; in truth there ever is a certain wondrous fitness, quite fulfilling the remark that it is stranger than fiction. Truth, again, is like a quiet river, deep and strong, in silence bearing everything along by its resistless sweep. Truth also acts without the least ostentation, and, like beauty, needs not the foreign aid of ornament, but is when unadorned adorned the most. And this most priceless benefit is shared by truth—it never fails to win the general sympathy in every company and under any circumstances. Even the most reckless and immoral man of all the race right cordially detests deceit, and specially when practised on himself. It has been said, and I believe it true, that Satan, of all things in the world, despises most a crafty man, although he works by craft himself; because a person such as that would cheat both God and man, if he could compass it with safety and success. What deep dislike fills all the mind when we detect a neighbour guilty of some breach of truth—how warmly we despise him, how small he seems, how pitiful and mean! Whereas when even that man for whom we had the least esteem speaks, if it were but once, what we find out to be the simple truth, how soon to him does all the warmest fervour of our heart break out again in smiles. Indeed, it is by truth alone that even the world continues to exist; since, were there not between the men who fill it that

† 'in' printed twice.

fine freemasonry of truth, the world's affairs would soon resolve themselves into confusion, and through sheer force of mistrust. But truth has signs and colours specially its own, which never are mistaken. Note the countenance of any one when speaking by authority of truth on things of greatest import. See how little need the speaker has for outward ornament—since, if he be the real exponent of a truthful creed, how candour's honest spirit alters and transforms the man into a kind of angel. Did error ever swell man's bosom with emotion such as this? In error's cause did ever human face like this suffuse with living red? Instinctively we seem to know when truth is spoken forth—since not by look, or blush, or shrinking of the eye, does truth show sign of paltry fear. Besides, as fear is ever the counterpart of falsehood, how easily does truth become the victor—whilst, although by lashing all its passions into storm, falsehood attracts the vulgar eye—there everlasting truth looks calmly on and smiles the braggart thing to scorn. Thus in every place, and under any circumstances, truth is ever most to be preferred—its pure and happy practice still should be the guide of our existence.

It plainly were an endless task to number all the victories of truth—its prizes in the Senate and its triumphs on the fields of war. This holy cause inspires its orators to speak with brilliancy—divine in its effect upon themselves, entrancing on all who listen to their heaven-born eloquence. Upon the minds of even those who are its enemies the might and influence of a truthful pleader is perfectly irresistible, so that within his heart the adversary feels that even himself would fain be on its side. Then inch by inch, as truth's pure light comes in upon some evil cause, that system's crooked and uncomely windings are revealed—its miserable props, all founded in duplicity, are one by one discovered by the earnest speaker, and the whole stands out before the world in grim and ugly incongruity. Also in courts of common law how soon, to even an unpractised eye, does truth and falsehood severally show. And more in such a case than in any other truth's distinctive features stand revealed. The simple tale of him "who hath his quarrel just" is quiet, smooth, and plain—frank and ready in deliverance—needing naught of lawyer's craft to draw it forth. That speaker's patient smile of confidence tells more in his behalf than all his artless words, and truth in general repudiates all secondary motives, such as private interest. The sister-cause of justice ever has its perfect sympathy, for, having compassed what it deems its own, truth always rests content. And then upon the field of fame how gloriously does truth and justice triumph over forces seemingly invincible, especially when wickedness and falsehood vainly seek to justify themselves by force of arms. In perfect confidence the rivals seem to meet; but, whilst the evil power, with brazen desperation, is the first in heat and fury, those noble ones in calmness wait the shock, and meet it with their lives held freely in their hands. How lovely even in death is truth's most placid mark imprinted on their brows who fall! With hacked and ragged blades, with trappings bathed in gore, their bodies pierced with many wounds, but with their faces turned to heaven, they lie extended, seeming quietly to gaze upon the starry sky! But not alone in the Senate, at the bar, and on the fields of fame has truth been seen to best advantage—damp and gloomy dungeons of the world's tyrants held in former days their witnesses for truth; and truth's fair countenance, calm and serene, has been illumined by the fires of dark and cruel men. Rack and knife, stake and flood, have every one been tried against sweet truth, but could not make it flinch. How splendid also are truth's triumphs when connected with the press! Its grand assertions of the common rights of man—its firm attacks on all unjust monopolies—its service to religion and to morals—all so priceless and so great. To enumerate the victories of truth as linked with an enlightened press is much beyond all power of conception. Mental light consists in truthful knowledge stored within the brain; and where were truthful knowledge, as it is commonly received, without the press's aid? Truth and a liberal press must evermore go

hand in hand as long as earth's affairs are in their present state; and thus while each helps each, a mutual lustre will at once be given and received. Truth in every walk of life must co-exist with our existence, in order to produce that perfect confidence which makes the present sphere an habitable sphere at all. Yes, truth will ever triumph—ever should. For every heart should be a shrine for truth, and never while we live should we defile that shrine, though well we know that, struggle as we may towards a life of perfect truthfulness, our human frailties will not suffer us to reach it.

Notwithstanding, let us struggle on—the will in Heaven is often taken for the deed; so, when we seem as almost nigh to faint in our attempts to compass perfect truthfulness, shutting out all mean considerations about how it may enrich in this world's goods, let us direct our gaze unto and keep it fixed upon that fairer quality embodied in the title of these humble sentences—THE LOVELINESS OF TRUTH.

(April 30, 1864)

THE GRACES OF HUMILITY.

BY JAS. EASSON.

Fairest amongst all the virtues which adorn the human character shines sweet and true humility, at once the loveliest of all the rest and best beloved by men—a grace which, if it much beseems a cottager, as well becomes the sumptuous dweller in a regal hall. When genuine, this sweet humility arises from an inward sense of all men's primal spiritual equality—from a firm belief that only lowly truth and honesty secures us sterling peace in life, a glad and tranquil end, and an honourable place at last amongst those chastened souls whose natural lofty pride was laid in time by wholesome strokes from Heaven's preparing hand.

Winning, especially amongst the rich and great, is really true humility. Sitting down a little while to think it over, let us try to reckon up and enumerate its happy fruits in these. It softens all a great man's state with genial mildness, fills his heart with gentle joy, and wreathes his face with smiles of quiet grace. Goodly raiment makes his outward man look comely, but a real and pure humility of soul is the jewel hid within. Unconsciously its beauty radiates around him as he walks—beams mildly from his eyes, is seen in all his acts, and softens in his tones. That great man's condescending manners make him real friends amongst the poor, for they of all the rest are easier won by genuine humility. How much the toil worn labourer appreciates a kindly look or pleasant word from one in a higher social station, when it has been gained by honest means! Consider such a case—let fancy sketch a suiting picture for itself. Mark such a lowly hind, when, travelling home at eventide, he meets a wealthy man whose noble-hearted manners make him loved by all. The evening sun is nearly set. Its deepening shadows gather. That poor man's brow is moistened with laborious sweat—so, with his back bent down with toil, he abides amongst the darkness of the dusky way. Suddenly he meets such a wealthy neighbour. "And how is honest John this evening?" is his kind salute. "I'm glad to see my worthy friend so well!" Then stretching forth his whiter hand he clasps a lowly brother's in! From that soft hand, by cordial sympathy, outflows a happy soul of fellowship, which quenches pride, and fuses both in one! Their meeting has been brief, 'tis true, and few the words exchanged; but, gladdened and refreshed, they take their several ways—the rich man happier at heart he scarce knows why—the poor man glad to think he is not quite forgotten yet—that still he has a friend on earth, and that were he even to die that night, one worthy heart would sadden at his loss, and wish his spirit well! Yes, heaven-born humility is a noble thing all through; it is the real sweetener and smoother of the world's rugged ways.

Becoming and essential, too, is lowly-born humility amongst the sons of toil; nothing half so loathsome as the foolish pride which swaggers in a workman's dress. What so soon betrays an innate littleness of soul as the high-blown pride in one whose daily bread has to be earned by hard and patient labour? An empty pride is this; and no amount of working talent ever yet could justify its reign. Still more to be despised is the braggart haughtiness begotten of a little lease of temporary power. How paltry its possessor seems! "Drest in a little brief authority," such an one will swagger to and fro amongst his patient mates, with face so full of pride, and with his back upstraightened like an iron bar, speaking to them in tones of empty dignity. How such an one defeats the very ends he means to gain! and how would kindly words and pleasant looks much better suit his place! Amongst the dweller of a humble neighbourhood how fair is meek and pure humility! Common heirs to lowly labour, dwelling in one common thoroughfare, how condescending looks and courteous humility becomes their social state! All of them the selfsame summons calls to daily work—the same street serves their little ones for space to sport upon—the same hours bound their term of needful daily servitude. How well becoming, too, in those who rise above the ranks of social life is this most kindly spirit! Conscious that save by favouring circumstances, such honourable altitudes had not been reached by them, that not by themselves alone but by others helping them, they now enjoy their welcome dignities, that by some sudden blast of evil fortune they might any day be levelled with the dust from whence they sprung—conscious of all this, how well the looks and actions of humility befits them every one! To distribute their gifts with a humble air, to condescend to smile their thanks for favours given, to treasure in remembrance their early days of toil and struggling, this well becomes the men who slowly rise from Fortune's basement to its crown!

Amongst the learned and the clever, too, how beautiful is chaste humility! That scholar must be really amiable who owns it to himslf as true that the veriest beggar in the street, if taught and helped as he has been, might have an intellect as brilliant as his own, and grace as well some loving social band. To think with deep humility upon those early days of his when, but a youth at school, he saw no charm in books, felt no love for learning or for study, how he, if left as then he was, to grow apace without discovering those sources both of pleasure and of power which he has since found out, how little better even himself had been! Neither can a clever man discard the exercise of meek humility although his talent, jewel-bright, shine bravely out, and though his genius tower far above the height of ordinary minds. In one short night and less the powers of that mind may fade before some fell disease; or else the lurid gloom of madness may descend, and reason, like a stately steed startled by a very trifle, cause him such a shock that soon his friends will pray his anguish may be quenched in death!† Amongst the virtuous and good—those whose strength of resolution seems most likely to survive the shocks of strong temptation—even there how fitting is humility! Betimes, within such hearts, although they may be mainly good, the seeds of easy self-complacency are thickly sown, and will, if not prevented, soon spring up in an abundant crop. Such persons walk the earth around, and as they walk they see the down-torn victims of the tempter meet and pass them in their ways. They behold those poor ones' timid glance of envious respect—half covetous, half spiteful, and they feel even pleased in spirit at the sight. Their own minds are clear, their consciences are still, with easy step and stately do they sail along—their very blood flows placidly and calm within them, under the influence of flattered self-conceit. Gradually do they wax proud, and soon humility

† This passage is strikingly prophetic of James Easson's own fate six months after the date that this was printed.

becomes no portion of their daily mood. And yet how little need have they for lofty looks! Finest gold they still should recollect grows soonest dim, brightest steel gets soonest rusty, whitest robes are soonest soiled. How most absurd is consequential virtue! courting, flattery, and taking praise for that which it should never even appear to see—a pride which seems to say in forceful phrase—Stand back, for I am holier than thou! How lovely, on the other hand, that meekness of a virtuous soul which, like a modest flower, sheds its fragrance all unconscious on the common air—charms the senses of beggar and king alike, by which it gains the gratitude of each! How winning, too, amongst the beautiful in womankind is meek humility! A powerful thing is this, especially when linked with the incarnation of a truly handome woman. Easy it is to think one the opposite of humble—an imperious dame, who, with a queenly air and wealthy plenitude of charms, in spirit, tells her wooer if he would gain her love he first must worship her! Not such an one does sweet humility sit well upon. Rather sits it well upon a modest maid of form more slight and delicate. Arrayed in a dress of colours light and texture gossamer, to a scruple elegant and neat, and matching finely with her flaxen hair and mild blue eyes—on such an one a look of simple innocence and unalloyed humility sits passing well. By her the heart is taken quite by storm by mere strength of gentleness. The matter soon commends itself to common understandings. Yon haughty beauty is natural pride personified; the other pure humility, equally unassumed. but close allied to girlish loveliness. The one repels the looker-on, and rouses in his heart a rebel spark of pride; the other wins one's love, and seeks for sweet protection rather than for worship.

In a preacher of the Gospel, too, how well becoming is humility. I know not, neither can I imagine, how a truly earnest minister may once indulge in pride. So constant are his studies of the dread effects of pride upon this weary world, so near his frequent heart-conceptions of our Saviour's lowly character, of his charges touching deep humility—these, I think, may well prevent an earnest minister from ever waxing proud. Within his mind he evermore must have it fixed that a divine humility made Christ take from His sacred brow the crown of Paradise and lay him low among the dust of death! Then, rising grandly up from that refinement of humility, he ascended upwards, and, for his deep humiliation, had the powers of Heaven, earth, and of perdition too, made subject to His word. And then to think of Satan's dreadful fall through sheer want of humility! He who, as a bright sun of the morning, looked with Christ upon unfallen man as looked his Maker on the sweet and solemn dawning of the world's young day! In truth, this same humility is a wondrous feeling—it becomes the worldling, saint, and sage—it is the fertile maker of amenities at once in rich and poor.

The happy social triumphs of this principle must therefore be a pleasant theme to dwell upon—so, in conclusion, let us turn and note a few of these. In the sweet submission of a loving wife towards the husband of her youth, methinks the goodly fruits of fair humility may best of all be seen. Adorned with the ornaments of a "meek and quiet spirit," I opine that a beautiful and modest wife looks something like an angel. Mated to a man of kindred mind, who has the soul to appreciate a model wife, such a happy woman seems, indeed, man's perfect counterpart. Their cheerful, peaceful home—how beautiful it is! and she, its chief presiding genius, how engaging, with her wifely air and chastened beauty! She seems to know that she has now become a gathered flower, blooming for him alone who took her from amongst her charming mates, and placed her by his hearth, to shine henceforward there, its "bright particular star." Impressed with this sweet truth, she has much subdued her pride of maiden loveliness, and blossoms now in comparative seclusion. In consequence, so quiet her person's very motions are become—so gentle in her speech, her very footfall silent as the

dew, her accents kind and low. And this is not a mere ideal—such model wives are plentiful. I myself have witnessed them—seen many happy homes of which a loving humility in woman is the priceless secret. In a king towards his subjects, too, not only is humility right graceful, but it is of all things else most useful and in place. What nation but detests the iron rule of an imperious autocrat, frowning like an angry demigod on subjects, all of whom he should regard as being his children, to treat them as a father and a friend? How differently it befalls with one who is a king indeed, the idol of his people's choice, whose every fresh appearance causes shouts of hearty gladness, and who knows in spirit that through his condescending manners every courtier is a real friend, every casual word a word of love. How pleasant to himself must be the toils of such a kingship, where the bulk at least of all his subjects freely yield to him the honours of a glad allegiance, and conspire to make his sway both happy and complete! Amongst the poorest family circle, too, how gratifying is a peaceable humility of spirit! When brother yields to sister, younger to elder, and especially where a feeling of dependence one upon the other makes forbearance both desirable and due—how goodly is humility. The little sisters, taugh[t] by a judicious mother that upon an elder brother's manful labours half the comforts of their house depend; that he should ever have their kindest care and most respectful sympathy, and that their heart's most earnest wish should be to make their brother glad by a kind and humble manner. Yes, in even the trivial matter of a lovers' quarrel this same humility, if mutually exercised, might lessen days of sighs and nights of tears, and save vast oceans of regrets. Who has not felt or seen such fateful stuggles beween pride and strong affection—even between the loyalest votaries of love—honest spirits, whose hearts and sympathies were all the while at one. But they, forsooth! were each so proud that, rather would they rend each other's hearts as though with cruelest steel, than yield a single inch. Thus has many a pure first love been simply tortured even to death; love which might have bloomed to beautify the wastes of many a weary life, and made the recollection of their youthful joys so sweet that, gladdened by its memories, they might have bid defiance to the gathering glooms of age. But lovers' quarrels are simply foolish when compared with the mightier things of which we must take note. For when we look from human kind, and witness the stupendous works of God spread round us far and near—this wondrous globe of earth whereon we dwell, yon far-revolving sun or queenly moon—those silvery stars so brightly peering from the dark blue sky of night—that green old ocean, awful in its depth and breadth, withal so ceaseless in its weary wail. And then those lofty hills and solemn woods—those boundless tracks of fertile field and shadowy vale—if these we stop to contemplate, and then look inwards on ourselves, how well may all of us feel humbled to the very dust! Nothing half so quickly humbles man before himself as when he looks at God's right matchless works—so simple yet so terrible and grand. From nothing can he draw forth lessons so effectual to suppress his pride, and make him walk the world through under the wholesome guidance of a quiet spirit.

Thus, let us all look low, and, passing through this strange probation state, be "clothed with humility." Let us recollect that still a mighty Power watches over all, and so selects that they who humbly live, in perfect time, place, and degree will surely be exalted. Not to gain this world's applause should we become so humble; for this humility, like virtue, is its own reward. For peace within ourselves should we be good to the best of our ability, however small that goodness may become; and for a reason similar we evermore should cultivate those good and potent properties—THE GRACES OF HUMILITY.

(November 5, 1864)

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE "JOURNAL'S" LIFEBOAT.

By James Easson.

Well may all the *Journal's* lifeboat friends take heartiest encouragement when they reflect, not only on the splendid precedents afforded them in modern lifeboat history, but also on what their own projected craft may yet achieve; for there is much to gladden in the thought that Scripture sanctions their attempts, and that even Noah's Ark, of ancient days, was but a sacred lifeboat—in fact, the very one that rescued man from death complete, and gave the world a second primal father. A precious thought is this. It shows us from the very first that gentle mercy smiles on all such enterprises, and that lifeboats may claim a patronage both ancient and divine. Also, well may we from this example seek to perpetuate a class of vessels so ennobled, leaving grateful rescued ones to shower on us their kindest benisons for service given even in years to come.

Might not this thought of itself conduce to sanctify the cause of lifeboats far and near? I think it truly might; but, lest it be too briefly given, in the course of these reflections, doubtless others of a kindred sort may be indulged in. For the present let us try to conjure up within our minds some shadow of that object the production and continuance of which we each of us espouse—to realise the spectacle we are likely to behold on that proud day when, taut and trim, our Lifeboat gets from worthy hands her noble name, The People's Journal, thereupon disporting in the world's view a smart and shapely thing; giving at the close, briefly, some attention to the part we each must bear in her creation. On that glad afternoon—doubtless some Saturday—thousands will assemble to witness her earliest voyage. Out the little fairy will dart across the water's glittering bosom like an arrow, quick propelled by nimble hands or nimbler machinery. An active little thing our lifeboat will appear, glistening in spotless white, lively red, and brightest blue, manned by men both young and strong, with ribbons on their caps, and on their jackets, smart rosettes from wives and sweethearts. Some of the *Journal's* more enthusiastic friends would doubtless wish, if that were possible, to raise a tempest in the sea that afternoon, just to test the lifeboat's capabilities; and yet, though this will fail, all the requisites of smartness, safety, easiness of management will doubtless be exhibited, whatever be the weather sent. Easily may we imagine how she will comport herself. Darting like a bird to some imaginary wreck, she, doubtless, will take care to astonish all the natives with the speed she can command to reach some given point. Then, as a most mischievous flirt may tease some tardy lover, she will give her tidy self all sorts of saucy airs, pretty tosses of her sparkling oars, and smart sweepings of her graceful shape. These lively doings over, three rending cheers will then be given towards her future weal, and after that the object of the people's kind regards will soon be guided to her post of duty near some shallow coast or towering headland, a critical place, where dangerous rocks and shifting sands do oftentimes beguile the trustful mariner, and where the melancholy sea wails out its endless monotone. Even in that still solitude the boat may teach occasional lessons to the folks who casually visit her when on her post of danger. Influential strangers, wandering near her close vicinity, and seeing such a likely craft, may naturally inquire what worthy boat she is? to which some friendly fisherman may make reply that she sprang from honest pence of friendly working men and women; that in her fortunes thousands of hearts are interested with an almost personal affection. Like a wholesome seed cast into fruitful soil, this information may enkindle in the stranger's heart a wish to build a similar boat, and thus another and another craft may be happily added to the list of vessels dedicated to the noble work of helping seamen in distress, and bringing many a useful member of society back from death to life.

This, I grant, is, after all, "the baseless fabric of a vision," which vanishing, leaves "not a wreck behind," for we are painfully aware on waking up that the needed wherewithal is yet to gather. Never fear! "Mony hands mak' licht wark," says the old Scotch proverb, so let us each and all as one begin! Joking apart, the lifeboat properly considered has an almost sacred aspect, for are not life and life's quick preservation very solemn things? Simultaneous effort is the grandest thing about the present movement, since it has its parallel in every happy case of noble liberality this earth has ever seen. Many parallels like this might advantageously be mentioned. When Solomon's temple rose silently and shone with gold, doubtless also the workmen there employed esteemed it honour of the highest sort to gild its glorious dome, drape its gorgeous rooms, and beautify its spacious courts. Modern times have given us similar means for works of kindliness like that which fills our minds at present. Many reasons, for example, might be given why the John Williams, missionary ship, while yet she lived, should be the most successful craft afloat. Her origin and her object both were happier far than those of any other modern ship. Her timbers, so to speak, grew from the the pence of happy Sabbath scholars, all of whom exulted in the goodly work of giving pennies of their own, or else of honestly acquiring them from others. That noble ship while she was being built had her progress regularly reported to her myriad little friends by teachers' lips and Missionary Records, whilst many prayers were breathed that, like a second ark, she soon might skim the world's waters, with pious men, like Noah's spotless dove, seeking for leaves of holiest promise. And when she was complete, doubtless the breeze that filled her sails was laden with fervent prayers from honest friends of every rank and age, whilst kindly wishes for her good came from infant lips in every corner of the land. At length she left the busy wharf, and until lately weathering many storms, she did her heavenly work right well. This, though in a sense subordinate sense, we trust will be the history of our gallant boat in days to come; so that, if not assisting many to reach the "better land" in a way so very direct, she may at least be the means of lengthening out the days of some, and may no less actually afford them future opportunities of coming safe at last to that most blissful haven.

Ready and graceful images might thus be multiplied to shadow forth the grandeur and importance of our present generous scheme, and many other words of cheer be said to warm the hearts of all her kindly friends and advocates. But these may now be few, because the unanimity with which it is likely these friends will push their noble work will need, as I believe, no stimulus of writing properly to foster it. The benefits she will confer on those that need them most will be her greatest commendation. Thus, as when a cheerful king begins his mild career with smiles and words of promise, and like the cheering sun his face dispels the gloom of years, so, from the minds of sea going people everywhere, the advent of the People's Lifeboat may be gladsomely regarded, causing them to cry with hearty earnestness—God speed the PEOPLE'S JOURNAL! As every subject of this ideal king would don his grandsire's rusty blade to help his sovereign in the strife, so doubtless will every man maintain a lively interest in the People's Lifeboat, lending to it a helping hand for ever after, ready even, if need should happen to arise, to man its timbers in the hour of danger.

This gallant lifeboat once obtained, never will night of storm descend, but as we hear the gloomy tempest thundering hoarse and far away, imagining we see it beat the ocean into foam as it roars around our shuddering coast, we will say within ourselves—There's a night for the People's Lifeboat! Some Saturday perhaps we will hear of more poor sailors saved, some only son plucked from the gulf of death, some nearly darkened home made bright! Then, if guesses would prove certainties, if many lives would thus be rescued, how glad would all our spirits

be to think our humble efforts were the means of saving these? And who of us is safe from such a death as this? Who does not go to sea at some time of his life, either on business or for pleasure? Reader, you or I may yet be monuments of lifeboat preservation! for the world is wide, and health is ours, and when or where we yet may need to sail and be in peril, God only knows! At least one penny is not much to give in order to ensure some happy thoughts like these, as well as to demonstrate the right goodwill you entertain towards the now projected People's Journal Lifeboat!

(January 28, 1865)

The following item under the heading 'THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH' appears to be (or to contain) an extract from a letter by James Easson to the Editor of the *People's Journal*, which quotes and comments on a passage by Famiano Strada (1572–1649; Prolusions Lib. II. Prol. 6). If so, it was the first of Easson's contributions to the *Journal*.

"J. E." gives an extract from a humorous and imaginative piece, written by Strada nearly three hundred years ago, which is remarkable as being almost prophetic of the electric telegraph, and may gratify the curious and speculative:—

"There were two lovers that kept up a correspondence by the help of a certain loadstone, which had such virtue in it that if it touched two several needles, when one of the needles so touched began to move, the other, though at never so great a distance, moved at the same time and in the same manner. The lovers being each possessed of one of these needles, made a kind of dial plate, inscribing it with the four-and-twenty letters, in the same manner as the hours of the day are marked on the ordinary dial plate. They then fixed one of the needles on each of these plates in such a manner that it could move round without impediment so as to touch any of the letters. Upon their separating from one another into distant countries, they agreed to withdraw themselves punctually into their closets at a certain hour of the day to converse with one another by means of this their invention. Accordingly, when they were some hundred miles asunder, each of them shut themselves up in their closet at the time appointed, and immediately cast their eyes upon their dial-plate. If he had a mind to write anything to his love he directed his needle to every letter that formed the words that he had occasion for, making a little pause at the end of every word or sentence to prevent confusion. His beloved in the meanwhile saw her own sympathetic needle moving of itself to every letter which that of her correspondent pointed at. By this means they talked togther across a whole continent, and conveyed their thoughts to one another in one instant over cities or mountains, seas or deserts."

In the third volume of the *Spectator*, published in London in 1739, I find the above quoted in Article No. 241,* on the expedients of absent lovers to console each other during long separation, after which the *Spectator* then adds—"In the meanwhile, if even this invention should be revived or put in practice, I would propose that upon the lover's dial-plate there should be written not only the four and twenty letters, but several entire words which have always a place in passionate epistles, as flames, darts, die, languish, absence, Cupid, heart, eye, hang, drown, and the like. This would very much abridge the lover's pains in this way of writing a letter, as it would enable him to express the most useful and significant words with a single touch of the needle." The above extract, and the suggestion made by the *Spectator*, have been fully realized in all their practical every-day reality, but I doubt if lovers have found it so convenient and secret a mode of communicating their sentiments to each other as the lovers mentioned by Strada; they had no third party between them and their dials, but now there must be two confidents before converse can be had, and lovers

generally are not very favourable to this character; so we may set the Electric Telegraph down as of little use to absent lovers, and we may say for social and private correspondence generally, but it is of incalculable advantage to the matter-of-fact business of the world, where speedy intelligence is needed, and, as knowledge is power, instances could be extensively multiplied to show that in this respect the Electric Telegraph has been of great service to man commercially, socially, and politically. Some even pretend to see in it the shadow of the chariot wheels of universal brotherhood, and it will remain only a shadow, unless the generous spirit of scientific enquiry rest not until electricity has been made the prime mover of telegraphic machinery, doing the whole work of communicating and printing, thus making it complete, and of more extensive application, by enabling us to send and print off long telegrams as fast as ordinary speech. Subtle, mysterious, and wonderful are the doings of electricity. We know only a part, and only a part have been turned to advantage. By it we can guide the ship o'er the dark, trackless, boisterous ocean, and by it we can speak across the world with a touch of the finger. Strange as it may sound, the human body is an electric machine, having positive and negative currents in constant operation. Truly, if we knew all even in regard to this, we are fearful and wonderful creatures, surrounded with a wonderful accumulation of beautiful mysteries, the results of which we only see, and with all our powers and experience scarcely comprehend. Therefore, I would press upon every one to study the laws of nature. God governs all things by fixed laws. Drink less frequently at the streams of light literature, but dip deep into the wells of science, and be assured you will find the waters sweet and invigorating to the spirit, opening the eyes to the true pleasures of existence, and elevating the heart above sordid trifles.

(January 23, 1858)

The Autobiography of a Working Man (November 1 and 8, 1862), which is anonymous, may not be by James Easson, though the dates given in it would fit his history, and both men had a sailor as father. But the writer of the autobiography married in 1858, while Easson never married. The writer was not a painter, but worked in mills and coalmines. Neverthless, the autobiography must give a realistic account of the early life of some young working class men in Dundee at this period, and it is possible that James Easson wrote it as a fictional autobiography (perhaps to conceal his authorship). The style is close enough to Easson's, anyway.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WORKING MAN.

Part I.

From my earliest recollection, my life has been a strange, chequered, troubled one, full of ups and downs—at times grievous and trying in the extreme, and at other times assuming a more easy phase; yet, taken at the most trying stage, I believe it can be matched by hundreds, out of the many thousands who, from morning till night, traverse the streets, and crowd the gateways of the public works of my native town—Dundee. I have no recollection whatever of that most important individual who, in general cases, fills up the chair to the left of the fireplace, and bears the heart-cheering title of "Father." My father was a sailor, and to pursue his profession, left the port of Dundee, in the transport barque John Barry, bound for Sidney, but having transferred to the ship Buffalo, for Bombay, he there caught some disease prevalent in the East, and died, leaving my mother unprovided for, with two children, my sister being then nearly twelve, and I two years old. There was then nothing left for my mother to do

but to put me out to a dry nurse, and go with my sister to mill work. I was here seized with measles, and lay for a considerable time, my life being despaired of. The farthest back flight of my memory only carries me to this house, where I remember, at my recovery, of having sore hands, and being in the habit of picking them, was often put into a state of perturbation by the doctor saying he "*wid cut them aff*." My mother, after paying the doctor's bill, found her "usually light" coffers quite empty; and to prevent pecuniary embarrassments, I was taken to my grandmother's, an old woman past the allotted span of man's life, who lived in the close No. 4 West Port, where I spent some of the early days of my life.

I was next sent to school under the tuition of a Mr ——, at what was technically called the "*noo schule*," but being very coarsely dealt with, as I considered, both by master and scholars, I occasionally played truant; and, the more I was punished, it seems that I deserted school the more. On one occasion when the master sent some scholars in search of me, they carried me before his august presence, and after I had got my "pawmies," he further punished me by putting me below a high three-legged stool upon which he sat when hearing the classes. There I sat, making sll sorts of wry faces, and, putting my fingers to my nose, setting the pupils in a roar of laughter every now and then, until the master, lowering his head, observed my movements, and ordered two of the biggest boys to carry me to the black hole (a dark recess below the gallery). I was soon hoisted to an elvated position on their shoulders; but, on turning the corner of the gallery, I clutched hold of the railings of the same, and resolved to have my freedom. On they would force me, but still I struggled for my escape; and, summoning all the energy I could muster, I made a desperate leap, and, to the master's chagrin, pitched my feet through the window, smashing two squares of glass. They never got me to the black hole, and at dinner-time I left the school, no better than on the day on which I entered. How long I was at liberty I don't know; but this I know, that in the year 1840, I was entered in the Dundee Sessional School, Meadowside, under Mr Hamilton, I being then about six years of age. Here I learned my letters in due time, and in 1841 carried off the prize of my class. I need not enlarge on my school-boy days, being, like most others of my own age and sex, romping, wild, and careless; but I may mention one incident which I can never forget that happened about this time. I think it was about 1842 or 1843 that a sore stroke of bad trade came over the manufacturing districts of Scotland, and of course Dundee came in for its share. I remember that there were very few mills in full operation at the time, and the working population were in great distress and misery, so much so that an unemployed roll was drawn up, and all whose names were entered received one shilling per week for support. My mother was on the roll, and her last donative had gone long before the next was due, and that gaunt-destroying angel, Hunger, was preying upon us. I was past feeling his dreadful pangs; but, when coming up the Overgate from school, passing a baker's shop, I observed some broken biscuits in the window, and the thought rushed through my over-sick brain that they can't be for sale, I'll go in and ask some pieces for my mother and grandmother; but as I hesitated on the theshold of the door the fragrance of the baker's shop so wrought around my hungry heart and empty stomach, that I actually fell to the ground from perfect exhaustion. How I got round I know not, but I remember coming up the street with a small bundle of broken bread, which was very acceptable at home, after knowing that it came honestly. I rarely enjoyed the privileges of my companions at school. On one occasion, when the scholars were admitted to see a grand panorama in Thistle Hall for one penny each, I had to content myself by staying at home, my mother not being able to provide me with a penny. On another occasion we were admitted to the Watt Institution at the same charge, and, being unable to procure the needful, my teacher kindly gave me the money, and I enjoyed the treat as well as

the rest. I got every encouragement from my teachers to learn, and the third year I again carried off the first prize of my class, a splendid Testament, with a suitable inscription.

About this time I was initiated into the art of spinning upon the hand wheel, my grandmother earning a scanty pittance by spinning coarse yarn expressly made for nail bagging. It was not very long before I could come more speed at the wheel than my grandmother, and had a certain quantity to throw off every night after school hours before I got out to play. Sometimes I was so far indulged as to get a halfpenny on Saturday night if I got off more yarn that my allotted "darg," and every halfpenny went for story-books. Sometimes I would keep my halfpenny until I got another, and was thereby gratified with a penny story. They were generally of a fabulous or fairy-tale order, but I had many other little books of a religious character that I got at the Sabbath Evening School. I was very fond of reading anything that came in my way, and if that can be called a disease, it will carry me off to the grave, for it sticks to me to this day, and has no appearance of leaving off soon. But for all my reading and all the good advice that I got from my only parent, I often fell into scrapes, and although of a minor character, still they sometimes led me into difficulties. Few persons would like to confess to committing blunders, but, as I am writing my own life, I must give the bad a place along with the good, and must insert one ever-memorable epoch of my existence, although I should incur your scorn. In the summer of 1843 I had the honour, or rather the dishonour, of being treated to a visit to the interior of Bridewell against my will, as the sequel will show. We always got a half-holiday on Saturday at school, and I, along with a few more schoolfellows, generally spent the afternoon in visiting the Shore, passing our opinion on the build, tonnage, &c., of the different vessels that might be lying in the harbour at the time. Well, on a certain Saturday afternoon, after going our rounds as usual, we were coming home by way of Union Street and Nethergate, and, when near the top of the former street, I—being in advance of my companions—spyed a lad running a hoop on the pavement, and, with a stick that I had in my hand, I gave the hoop such a thundering blow that it went spinning with railway speed down the street. Ah! but that was a dear blow for me, for one of my companions, seeing the hoop coming at such a careering pace, stooped down to check its progress, and what happened do you think? He only caused it to diverge from its former course, and it launched into the window of an earthenware merchant! The merchant quickly made his appearance, and as quickly he seized me and the lad that was with me, but the owner of the hoop made off, and was seen no more by us. We were then handed over to a policeman, who conducted us to the office, and after getting our names and addresses, we were put into a cell, the interior of which it never entered my head to examine, although usually endowed (as phrenologists would say), largely with the organ of inquisitiveness, as it took up all my time crying with terror and kicking at my prison door to get out. I made such a bawling noise, that on several occasions the officials threatened to flog me, and I believe now that they would have inflicted some punishment upon me had not my mother come and paid my share of the window. But, alas! my punishment only awaited me when I got home, and the reader is left to judge for himself in what manner the punishment was inflicted, when I tell him that the instrument used was a leather belt, about 4 inches broad, and burnt hard at the one end. Owing to the condition in which my mother was left, and the small wages earned by her at the spinning mills, she could not provide me with a trade, and, in fact, being so long under the control of that despot, Poverty, I was taken too early from school—being scarcely ten years of age—and sent to the Messrs Edward's works, Scouringburn, to work half-time; and although I did not relish the confinement of the flax-dressing machinery department to begin with, yet, by dint of

perseverance, I managed to remain there about two years. I cannot describe my feelings, nor the excited state of my over-exalted mind, when I came home, for the first time, with my solitary shilling in pocket, being the proceeds of my week's work. I thought that shilling was an almost inexhaustible sum, and nothing could possibly keep me from singing with delight as I sat turning it over from side to side, minutely examining it, before my mother came home. I thought to myself that I was sure of a "bawbee" that night; but, alas! I was sorely mistaken, for that shilling, and every other shilling that I earned for the next four months, was carefully put past, and never brought to light until they paid the tailor's bill for a new dress for Sunday wear. Towards the end of the year '47, death made a sudden call at our domicile, and in his cold embrace the weary woes of my grandmother were brought to a close, after a prolonged pilgrimage of eighty-five years; and in the summer of the following year, in consequence of the scarcity of work in town, my mother engaged herself and me to a millspinner in a central rural district in Fifeshire. What sort of change that was for me no one can conceive, unless like myself, brought up in a populous town, and, then, like a caged bird set at liberty, to roam at will among the shady green woods. What hours of unallowed† happiness I have spent wandering alone, "Far ben yon dark green plantin' shade," gathering the ripe blae berries, and listening to the wood-pigeon's melancholy notes; and what days of delight I have enjoyed climbing the green braes, bedecked with Flora's handiwork, and spangled with the dew of the morning, or climbing the rugged precipice in search of wild raspberries, or brambles. Everything around me was new, and let me cast my eyes in whatever direction I might, there was something strange for my investigation. Something curious met my gaze, and thus prying into every corner and cranny, examining and comparing every leaf and every tree, would the time pass away until often the sun would sink his broad red disc under the western horizon, proclaiming to me the unwelcome tidings that night was at hand, and that it was time for me to withdraw myself to my new home, there to sit and think of all I had seen and learned, and whether I cast my mind's eye on the fields of waving corn, on the sloping brae-sides clothed with meadow grass, on the old red sandstone rocks, on the glassy surface of the burn, meandering sluggishly along its pebbly channel until it reached that sudden and steep declivity, where it rushes onwards with impetuous speed, careering over the rocks in sublime grandeur, and wrought up into white foam and spray at the bottom; or even on the trees of the adjacent plantation, whether on the gnarled oak, or on the white-skinned birch—in everything that turned up I saw the footprints of a Supreme Being. It would be sheer madness even for an Atheist to imagine that everything is under its own control. Let him walk out into the country and behold "Nature looking up to Nature's God," and then ask him if he is fool enough to say in his own heart that "There is no God." This was a great change for me in more ways than one; not only was it a change from town life to a life of rusticity, but it was a greater change in me leaving behind me companions of my own age and sex, and coming to rove about alone, for there were no masculine companions of my own age here—a manager, an overseer, and a mechanic being the only male operatives employed at the work before my induction, all the other workers being of the feminine gender; and consequently my element was entirely changed, so much so that, as I had not the pleasure of mingling among associates after my own kind, and through course of time getting weary of rambling through the woods and dells of the surrounding district, I began to work on the credulity of my immediate neighbours, who, taking them as a class, were all strong believers in the supernatural. Although the plans

† Probably for 'unalloyed'.

of the most of my tricks were laid for my own diversion, at the expense of the women (who were of all ages, from the blooming maiden just emerging from girlhood to the old widow or spinster of three-score-and-ten), yet often would the superstitious fear of the men of the place be set on edge, as, for instance, when one dark night I would get a large rove bobbin attached to the end of a string (ingress to the interior of the mill through the windows being easy), while the other end of the string would be conducted through a hole in the window, and extending to the place of my concealment, either in the burn or in the braes, where I would sit and rattle the bobbin in an empty can until the male "trio" would come with lanterns and search the premises in vain for the intruder, and, after a fruitless search, lock the door, when the knocking would again commence anew, to be followed by a fresh search to no purpose. Such scenes as these were of frequent occurrence; and yet, strange to say, I never was suspected, until one occasion when late one night I got the image of a man hastily made, composed of matting, ropes, &c., arrayed in an old coat and hat; and then suspending this effigy by the neck from a trough that conducted the water overhead across the road to the mill-wheel, I went to bed. In the morning, when the manager came to light the mill gas, judge of his consternation when he got the legs of the supposed suicide dangling in his face; he set down his lantern without delay, and ran back for assistance, knocking on the overseer's door, crying, "Come awa', Geordie! come awa'! there's a man hangit 'imsel' ower the trows." Geordie, without delay got up his wife also, she running about from door to door relating the sad calamity that had happened at the mill. After getting the mechanic on one end, the three went to get the man cut down. By this time the mill road presented an animated appearance, being crowded with women in a state of semi-nudity, setting at defiance the extreme sensation of the cold of a winter's morning; and, when the trying crisis of cutting down the suicide arrived, behold it was only a joke, and I was charged with the perpetration thereof. Of course, a long, serious face and a flat denial were my only response. A great many tricks of the same nature were continually played off by me without detection, only one more of which I will allude to in this short narration. One night the evil genius, in his fantastic frolic, goaded me onward to dress up a young ash sapling of a tree in the form of a woman, with long, flowing hair made of flax—the materials for dressing it being quite near, as a washing of linens was lying on the green for the purpose of being bleached. I arrayed the body of the tree in a sepulchral style, enveloping the whole (except the head) in what might appear to be a winding-sheet. My elfin work being finished, I retired to a convenient place, being a large thorn tree at the end of the green, in which I sat to watch the proceeding of the first that came that way. Every thing worked well in my estimation—the gentle wind kept the apparition in perpetual motion—the long hair flowing softly on the breeze, or falling in graceful folds around its shoulders. I had not been long in my place of concealment when I heard a door open. The time approaches, thought I to myself, when the gratification of my strange desire for fun should be completed, when lo! who should come out of my own door but my mother, with a bason of clothes that she had been washing, and was intending to bleach on the green. On she came, little suspecting that her son was sitting in the thorn tree watching her approach. (I was terrified to cry, for that would have made matters worse, bad as they were), until she turned the footpath leading to the green, when she cast her eyes upon the spectre, who, bending backward and forward, presented a ghastly appearance, and the huge form of the woman, apparently magnified to still larger dimensions by the pale moon beams dusky light. For one moment she stood, her eyes fixed on the unearthly figure, till, with a crash, the bason fell from her hands into fragments, and she turned round and fled to the house, leaving the clothes to bleach the best way they might

where they fell. I crept from my hiding-place and came into the house, but was afraid to let it be known that I was the perpetrator of this, lest the whole might (and justly to†) be laid to my charge.

(To be continued.)

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WORKING MAN.

(Concluded.)

I indulged in my "mad pranks" until I reached the age of eighteen, when my passions began to wax stronger, more especially that passion arising from affection between the sexes. Being thrown by my daily labour in the midst of a female circle, there can be no wonder that I was thus early smitten by the captivating smiles of womankind. My early love was devoted to a young maiden of sixteen, fresh, fair, and rosy, with an expression of grace breathing around her which imparted an unspeakable charm to all her movements: that girl was dearer to me than I can find words to express—so frank, so genuine, and so true. It is really a treat to find such a true, honest-hearted creature in this world of shame and coquetry. Oh, how some people err in excusing by gaiety of nature, by thoughtlessness, by a desire to please, the sin of playing the coquette. Love is a wonderful transformer, and plays strange antics on them that worship at its shrine. Under its uncontrollable influences the proud man becomes humble; the timid becomes strong; the man who has prided himself, it may be, on his knowledge, his accomplishments, or his acquirements, suddenly becomes mute and and foolish; while he who falters habitually in his speech talks with fluency and grows eloquent. Even the fiercest natures in the human race can at times be moved to singular gentleness, which is otherwise most foreign to the temper they usually possess. And if love works these strange freaks upon its worshippers, is there anything to be wondered at when I tell you that I began to feel the amorous sensations which generally are predominant in the bosom of a lover? My wild tricks were cast aside, and then, instead of scaring and frightening the women of the place, I would wend my way to the trysting-place, there to meet her whom I, in my young rapturous enthusiasm, believed to be something more than human; and even now, as I sit by my own fireside, it is a source of happiness, although mingled with sadness, to ruminate on the days when I sat me down side by side with her in the sequestrated dell, roamed about beneath the wide-spreading branches of the trees of the plantation, whispering tales of love and pledging our vows before none but an all-seeing and an all-hearing God, or wandering through the old church yard among the silent dead, and noting the solemn warnings rehearsed by the tomb-stones in the form of epitaphs and inscriptions. These are scenes of purity, unalloyed with anything pernicious or licentious, that spring up before me in my solitary moments, bringing her back fresh before my imagination with a halo of glory beaming around her; but, as is well known, "the course of true love never did run smooth," so in my case the adage holds good, as will be seen in the sequel.

About this time, my mother getting very frail ad unable for mill work, I took her from the mill, and although my wages were small, still, by some economy, they were made to eke out so as to supply our daily wants. I being a little ambitious for more wages, applied to my master for more, but being refused I determined to be looking about for a better situation; and I was not long in securing one as overseer in a mill, on the south coast of Fife, whither I and my mother shortly after removed. This was in the spring of 1853. Here, although parted from her whom I held dear, I was often cheered by our correspondence in writing, and occasionally

† For 'too'.

by visiting her on a Sunday. I did not remain long in this situation, as the low roof of the mill, the dust of a preparing room, and the general confinement all combined to make me very languid and sallow in my appearance, and I even began to lose my appetite, and so I made arrangements for leaving the mill work altogether for good and all; and, after securing an underground labourer's work in an adjacent colliery, I gave in my notice to my master that I intended to leave the mill work, and in due course commmenced my underground duties. Here, again, for a second time was my element changed. First from a town life, amidst companions of my own age and sex, to a rural district with no one of whom I could make a companion at all; and now, from the free dazzling light of the sun to a coal mine, to be plunged into utter darkness, save what light might be shed by the flickering rays proceeding from a collier's lamp. My mother thought that if I was losing health in the mill, I would lose it more so in a coal pit. She tried hard to dissuade me me from going there to work, but I had no other resource, and I went, and I became no worse. In fact, I recruited my health very soon after. I continued at this employment for about two years, when a sudden outburst of water overpowered the pumping engines, and the plant of the pit was sold by auction. Liking the pit work better than the mill work, I set out in search of employment in that line, and was not above one week idle when I commenced work in another pit not far from the last.

During the time that I worked in the first pit, I was often visited by, and returned the visits of, the one beacon of my soul, who was by this time in a very delicate state of health, so much so that that grim tyrant, Death, clasped in his cold embrace her for whom I could have stretched me down in her stead, and frankly given up the spirit to its Maker. I will not here try to describe the emotions felt by me as she lay before me pale and mute, or the sharp sensations that went through my heart as she was borne to her last resting place, and in the exuberance of my grief, like poor Topsy, I could have lain down and cried: "I wish I's dead too—I do."† But I had someone to live for; I had my poor frail mother suffering severely from asthma, and fading away fast to "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns," and when I cast my thoughts in a retrograde direction, and pictured before my imagination the many severe struggles which my mother endured during my infancy and childhood, in bringing me up the length of working for myself, I considered it my bounden duty to cherish and protect her in her old age and second childhood.

About this time the first of the now many penny newspapers came into existence, and as I was, and still am, fond of my newspaper, I hailed the birth of the Cupar *News*, as a new era in literature, not having got a paper to read for the last two years, in consequence of not getting neighbours to join with me in subscribing for one, and being unable to provide a high priced paper for my own use, I readily subscribed for a copy of the *News*, and continued reading and corresponding in the part of the paper known as "Pastime," until the beginning of April 1858, when the *People's Journal* made its first appearance in the village where I reside, and since that time, nearly four and a-half years, I think I have only been three Saturdays without my *Journal*. It was a source of happiness for me to sit down on a Saturday night after the toils of the week were over, at a clean fireside beside my mother, and read to her the news of the past week, or at times sketches from some book, and often pieces of the sacred volume, being more edifying to her, while she sat "garrin' auld claes look amaist as guid as new." But ah! even this pleasure was not long to be enjoyed by me, for the destroying angel had taken possession of my mother, and sat lurking in her lungs, ready at any moment to snap the vital cord that binds the spirit within the mortal part of our organization. Little, little did I think, on

† *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Chapter XI.

the last Saturday night, that I sat thus reading to her, that the next Saturday night she would be stretched cold and low. She turned rather worse than ordinary on Tuesday, and gradually sank until Saturday night, when death put an end to her sufferings; and here was I, in the chamber of death, and in the world, at the same time, alone, to digest my heartfelt grief. I kept quite calm, for real grief is never clamourous. It seeks to shun every eye, and breathes in solitude and silence the sighs that come from the heart.

After my mother had departed this life, I sat gazing for some time on the pale visage of what remained of her who gave me birth, until I bethought me that I must get some assistance from some neighbour to perform the last duties to the inanimate form before me. I arose from the bed-side, and staggered rather than walked across the room, and went out in search of help. I returned with an intimate neighbour of my mother's, and we had her properly laid out; and with my own hands I closed the eyes and mouth of my only parent. On the Tuesday following, I laid her head in the grave. Oh! what volumes could be written on that one word—the grave. It buries every error, and covers every defect of the deceased; it extinguishes every resentment of the survivor, and from its peaceful bosom spring none but fond regrets and tender recollections.

It was not until I returned home from the interment, and when the neighbours each took to their own homes one after another, that I found my desolation in its full force. I sat down and wept like a child; I was alone in the world; no kind adviser to guide my steps now. I felt now that I had to assume the man instead of the youth, for, let man be ever so old, in the presence of his mother he feels that his childhood has not all departed. I devoted the day after my mother's funeral to the making of arrangements as to my subsequent course of actions. Among the rest of my arrangements, I engaged a woman to cook my breakfast, and send it to the pit for me every morning. With a sad heart I resumed my underground labouring work, and disguised my feelings the best way I could, and I would even venture to pass a joke, for, as the diamond is found in the darkess of the mine, or as the lightning shoots with most vivid flashes from the gloomiest cloud, so does mirthfulness frequently proceed from a heart susceptible of the deepest melancholy.

Time rolls on apace, or, as our own national poet says, "nae man can tether time nor tide;" and after the lapse of eight months of a lonely life—living alone in my solitude—I began to get heartily tired of coming home to an "out" fire after my day's labour, and having to kindle my fire and cook my own dinner before I got it. In short, I got sick with doing everything required in a house (except washing my clothes, this I never tried, and never intend to do now); so a question arose within myself at this time, to be answered only by myself, as it was to decide my future fate—that was, whether I should sell off my household goods and live in lodgings, or take to myself a wife and retain my home. The latter part of this question rose predominant before me, and I often thought to myself that domestic society is the prime charm of life, for if a man's fireside be comfortable, he may despise the malevolence or the ingratitude of the world without, and bear with fortitude the injuries of that fickle dame fortune, and as Allan Ramsay says, "hame is hame, be it e'er sae hamely." I had a great deal of hankering within myself with regard to the selling of my furniture and depriving myself of a home, so I resolved to look around me and see if I could find one that would be willing to cast her lot with mine for better for worse, and be my partner through life. I fixed upon a very young lass in the neighbourhood, who, through time, blushingly referred me to her mother. I got her mother's consent, and she willingly became my bride. The time fixed for our nuptials was Handsel Monday, and accordingly on Monday the 4th day of January 1858 I was married, fourteen

months after the demise of my mother, and I must say that a very happy wedding it was; and, as the bright spots in my life have been few enough, I need not be blotting any of them out; and, since for one moment of mirth I have had an hour of sadness, it would be a despicable sort of prudence to diminish the few rays that have illuminated the chequered life that I have hitherto passed. Life is like an April day, full of sunshine and shower. Like the earth, the heart would yield no good fruit if it were not at times watered with the tears of trouble and sensibility, and the fruit would be as useless if not ripened by the sunshine of loving smiles. Here was yet another change for me, and I cannot say that I have had any cause to regret making this change from a life of single blessedness to the higher and holier state of matrimony. Eleven months after my marriage I was presented with a daughter, my first-born child, and my readers (if any) can imagine my joy when first I dandled my own offspring. Another two daughters have been born to me since the birth of my first, one of them since the commencement of writing this autobiography. In finishing, I must say that, if I have failed in taking the prize held out,† I have at least gained one lesson in composition; and it must be known that it is far from being true, in the progress of knowledge, that after every failure we must recommence from the beginning. I hold that every failure in the pursuit of knowledge is a step to success. I at least have done my best, let what will come of it; and I don't blush, even though I have failed in this my first attempt, because in my opinion ignorance, so far as learning is concerned, is no disgrace to those who have never possessed the means of improvement. It is otherwise, however, when opportunity has been neglected; and, for myself, I frankly confess that my knowledge is but as the rivulet—my ignorance as the vast body of the mighty ocean.

† There was a competition for the best autobiography for which the *People's Journal* had offered a prize, but this contribution does not in fact seem to have been entered for it. See the Editor's remarks on "The Autobiography Competition" on October 25, 1862.

iii: Short Stories

POMPEY'S BREAKFAST—A TRUE PICTURE OF EDINBURGH LIFE.

One fine morning during the past summer, and at an unusually early hour, the mansion of a rich East India Captain, situate in one of the fashionable crescents of Edinburgh, was thrown into great confusion, and its inmates into great distress, for a lamentable—a *very* lamentable—occurrence had just taken place. Was it the death of the master of the house, who had been found dead in his bed? No. Was it that any body had suddenly been taken ill? No. Neither had the Captain's niece eloped in the night, nor any other calamity of any such sort, but it was Pompey—her little lap-dog, Pompey—he had refused to eat his breakfast, which to serve up was the special duty of the tall footman, John. Oh, poor dear little creature, Pompey—the dear, dear little dog—the fine little pet; so the crusty old Captain's niece was half beside herself to think that her sleek little doggie, Pompey, had not taken his usual meat—the poor little creature!

John, the tall footman, was in agonies; the cook was in a stew lest† she might be blamed doing the poor little doggie's chicken over brown. The fat house-maid sat in the drawing room sofa, wringing her hands—the butler vainly tried to pour oil on the troubled waters of their feelings by assuring them in a whisper that Pompey was over-fed, and that it was only a slight colic. But all this would not do: they ran upstairs and down stairs—to the kitchen and back to the servant's hall—asking and answering questions as to the state of the poor little Pompey, who lay before the fire in the latter place like a big fat sheep, scarcely able to move from excess of fat and want of exercise.

Never, never had the dear little pet refused his breakfast before (such was the wail of the house-maid)—the most regular dog in his habits, and so sensible too! He was *so* fond—*so* very fond—of the Captain too; he lay at his bed-room door all night and whined, just like a little baby, when the gruff old man gave him a kick that sent him spinning over the stair-rail. Oh, deary, deary—and he would not eat! Oh, could not that cook prepare a sweet little sauce for the dear animal's chicken? if not, what was *she* good for? What a state of mind kind-hearted Miss Catherine must be in, when she should come down to the drawing room and have him brought up to her on the rug! The soft-hearted house-maid was all but crying at the bare reflection of that trying scene.

Miss Catherine, the Captain's niece, had been crying all the morning in her bed; but she could not think of rising to see, in person, the infirmities of her favourite lap-dog. She had one of the servants constantly coming with reports upon his progress towards restoration. At one time she had to tell that his hind leg moved slightly, and that he had attempted feebly to wag his dear little tail. At another time he had winked his one eye, and the other had opened just so little, and then closed again. Oh, she was sure, quite sure, that he was getting round fast! but if it were not impertinent in her—only a poor servant girl—she would say that the captain had injured the poor little doggie's head on the preceding day, when he lent it such a rap on the skull with his walking cane. "What! my uncle strike Pompey? My kind old uncle hit my dear, little doggie? Impossible!" And Miss Catherine flung her over upon the soft couch and cried and sobbed, and sobbed again.

That morning Miss Catherine had a crow to pull with her old and indulgent uncle. She had never heard of such barbarity in her life. Somebody at once hinted that, by making his fortune in India, he had been engaged in the terrible slave trade. To be sure, she never believed it;

† Printed 'last'.

how could she? He had been to her always the best of uncles—he maintained her—he housed her—he kept her in pocket-money—and so it became her to give the lie to all evil reports such as that. But to strike Pompey!—to hit the dear little manie!—fearful! She called the servant back, and cross-questioned her again, and again, as to the particular time and place to this unheard-of assault. The poor girl stammered and stuttered, and finally hoped that she would not suffer her name to be heard in the affair, as it of a certainty would cost her her place. But Miss Catherine's blood was up, and she would there and then charge her uncle with the cruelty, and reproach him to his face, if he pleaded guilty to the charge—be the consequences what they might. If this were found out to be a trumpery fib, she, the servant, might be off about her business for a good-for-nothing lying slut.

Presto! Miss Catherine was out of bed in a jiffey. Hand over those loose clothes, and those morning slippers, and bind up her back hair with a ribbon; one would soon see who would dare, friend or no friend, to hit her Pompey "a rap on the skull." Off flew the night-gown, on went her clothes, and down to the drawing-room she ran like a beautiful fury. The footman was despatched to tell the Captain that his niece awaited his pleasure in the drawing-room with great impatience.

"Oh dear, oh dear! what's the meaning of all this fuss, I do wonder, hey?" This was the Captain who hurried on his clothes as quickly as his gout would let him, and hastened down the stairs to where his excited niece was waiting, stamping her little foot on the carpet with rage, and ever and anon stooping to fondle her dear distressed Pompey, who lay extended on the hearth-rug, turning up his eye-balls like a dying calf.

"Catherine, Catherine," began the Captain.

"Don't call me that name, uncle," interrupted his niece, "you've killed Pompey! my sweet, kind, dear darling Pompey!"

"What?" roared the Captain.

Miss Catherine returned no answer, but sobbed in her own lap.

"The devil!" cried the Captain, taken all aback by this unwonted behaviour, "what *does* this all mean?"

"Oh, it was cruel of you, uncle—cruel," again sobbed Miss Catherine. The Captain only stared.

Suddenly she dried up her tears, and rising, confronted her uncle.

"Did not you hit my poor Pompey a rap with your walking-cane yesterday?" she asked.

"No—yes—no—that is—of course I didn't; why should I hit Pompey with my walking-cane? I did give him just the slightest tap for getting among my feet as I was walking in the gardens there opposite; but I assure you my dear niece,—"

"Oh, you base, slanderous woman," cried Miss Catherine, turning full round upon the trembling servant girl, "You infamous gossip—you worthless trull—you—you—"

"What, what! did she dare to charge me with hitting Pompey? Ten thousand de—; but no—I won't swear—get out—get out of this house you—you shameless—you—"

The poor servant girl was ordered to pack up forthwith and leave the house. She did so; and like another Jane Shore, went forth to the world without a character, and without a friend.

Pompey—the poor little Pompey, was next to be looked to. The captain, who voted this scene the greatest bore he had ever seen, went up again to his bed, leaving his niece to cuddle her dog, and make moan for its severe visitations. She found out, however, that the poor discarded girl's story was too true; for in caressing its sleek head, she found a wide gash, apparently made by the blow of some such instrument as a cane; and felt at first that she should convict her uncle of the cowardly act. But she reflected that she was living on his bounty, and that should she lose his

favour, he might send her off to some boarding school, where crabbed teachers and short rations would soon help to put down her overweening and domineering pride.

But what of the poor servant girl? She vainly sought a new place. Oh, the poor girl had no character—no references. Then what could she do? She was an orphan, and a stranger in a strange land! Ah, what could she do—what could she do—she could only sit down and cry at a door step, and cry till her eyes were red.

The door of the house where she resided opened, and the mistress approached and kindly questioned her as to what ailed her? She recounted the story of Pompey's breakfast. The woman seemed to sympathize with her, and invited her in. She kept a lodging-house, she said, for young ladies, who had come to Edinburgh to finish their education. If the poor girl pleased she might get a place in her house as a laundry maid, and she, the mistress, would send a porter to the captain's cellar for her luggage.

Oh! happy were the bright tears that rained down the cheek of the poor forlorn one! Could she refuse such kindness? No. Then the mistress said that she might go into her room and refresh herself with a little tea. This was a crowning kindness! She fell on the woman's neck. and wept anew.

Hours flew by, her luggage had come, but she was not told to begin to work. This was strange. She was on the eve of asking for something to do, when the gong sounded through the building for dinner. She was asked to sit down in the spacious dining-room, and dine with the young ladies! This was strange too. "But," said the mistress, "we all dine together— its all the more comfortable—and," she added, "the more the merrier, you know?"

There was wine at dessert—that, thought the poor and now astonished girl, is strange too! The young ladies were no teetotallers either; they drank copiously, and their talk grew fast and free. One glass they forced her to drink—she did drink, albeit, some suspicions were thickening in her mind as to the sort of house she had got in to. She did not think long, anyhow; her eyes grew heavy—she felt sleepy—and sleep she did—just as a latch-key rattled in the front door, and a number of military officers, all half obfuscated, staggered along the lobby, and into the room where they were dining.

Her sleep lasted but for a moment; for they began roughly to handle her. Terror brought her to herself, and suddenly pushing them all aside, she rushed out from the room, and gaining the street door, flew along—she knew not whither† nor to whom.

Running thus furiously along the half-deserted squares, she soon caught the attention of a policeman, who stopped her in full flight, and to him she told her story. To the office she went in company with the officer; and a warrant being granted for removing her luggage from the house so nearly fatal to her, she was allowed to retire to a place of safety, there to sleep off the effects of the soporific drug which the vile inmates of that den had plied her withall.

The magistrate, touched with her story, made enquiries at the house of the captain, whose niece, glad of the chance to atone for her rash and cruel treatment of the poor friendless creature, told the truth, and a new and comfortable situation was obtained for her. But here is one of the causes of that deep and dark stream of female degradation which floods the streets of Edinburgh—poor, helpless, homeless wanderers—orphans are thus thoughtlessly ousted into the highways, and upon the tender mercies of the world; for if it had not been for the merest chance, who will say that the number of fallen girls had not been augmented by one by the simple circumstance attending the story of *Pompey's Breakfast*. J. E.

(December 4, 1858)

† Printed 'whether'.

THE FORTUNES OF A FAMILY: OR, THE EVENTS OF A YEAR.

Part First.

About nine o'clock on the evening of the first of January 1855, a happy-hearted family party were seated round the hearth of honest Peter Winton, a respectable master tradesman, residing at one of the suburbs of Dundee.

This blythe little company consisted of Peter, his wife, his two sons, and two daughters; Charlie, the eldest son, about twenty-five, had with him Jeanie M'Farlane, his sweetheart, a mild-featured, blue-eyed girl; James, his brother, about twenty-two, and who had no sweetheart; Maggie, their eldest sister, with her lover, Henry Webster, a good-looking and well-dressed young fellow; and Jessie, the youngest, a modest little pet of seventeen, who did nothing but blush and simper every other minute, like a sweet, witching duck that she was.

They had met for a delicious hour's fun—to chat and laugh, and recall to mind the bright, merry memories of old days. For they were not friends of yesterday's creation, although some of them were lovers; they had known each other from early childhood until now. Charlie had kissed Jeanie M'Farlane with a school-boy's pure lips long before the rose-tints of love had warmed his fancy. Maggie Winton romped with Henry Webster on the little clothes-green before the idea of a lover had any significance to her. But now they were grown up to be young lads and lasses, they had looked earnestly into each other's eyes and blushed; they each felt that pressure of the hand, the remembrance of which drives sleep from lovers' eyelids; they had made those rapturous avowals which death alone can annul, and they had hitherto kept them well.

And now they were met to spend together what they fondly hoped might prove indeed the first evening of a "happy new year."

Peter Winton had opened the affair with a jovial welcome to all. He had cracked a lively joke, and the young people had laughed at it. Peter vowed that for once they would make a night of it—he filled the glasses, and forthwith the conversation began.

"Eh, keeps a'—what time does!" exclaimed old Mrs Winton, as she surveyed the circle of blythe faces around, "when I look back an' mind aboot the time when a' you young fouk was just bairns aboot my feet—losh keeps! it seems just like yesterday!"

"Gude muckle bairns noo; then, Mrs Winton," responded Jeanie M'Farlane, with a happy giggle. "Charlie—dy'e mind when ye used to rin to the school wi' me on yer arm?—when ye lauched a' the road, till it was aye ten or twenty minutes after the hour when we got to the school-door? Ah, lad—yon was the happy days!"

"I believe ye Jeanie," was Charlie's jocund reply, "they were the happiest times ava: at least we'll never be sic free fae care as we were then. Maybe we may hae pleasures deeper and richer than they were—but never ony so pure!"

"Weesht noo, childer, the guide-wife's to drink yer healths, " interrupted Peter Winton.

"Weel, then, here's wissin' a' yir gude healths, bairns," said good old Mrs Winton, holding the glass in her hand; "an' I hope we'll a' meet again the next year, if it's the Lord's will; but oh, we are short-sichtit mortals; an' we little ken fa' will be here, an' fa' will be a-missin'!"

"Weel, weel, gude-wife, that's a' vera true," said Peter, with an easy guffaw; "bit tad, as the auld sayin' is, foulk maun aye be some gate. Tak 'ee aff yer dram there like a lass; an' by-and-bye we'll maybe get a bit sang oot amon's—eh, lads? What say ye to that?"

"Yes, so be sure, we must hae a sang," cried Charlie.

"Oh, yes: we will have a bit verse after a'," said Maggie.

"Ise warrant, whaever disna sing, they'll be singit, if the poker's to the fore," was Henry's response.

But it needed no compulsion to inspire the little party with the soul of music. Song after song was sung, and racy stories were recited, till they all cried with laughter. There were kindly wishes for happy days to each other; wishes that, as long as they lived, the light of friendship might never wane; that their hearts might still keep young though their bodies might grow old; and their eyes might ever reflect back to each other the pure lustre of truth!

Most sweet, oh, most sweet, and truly congenial are the feelings that are experienced at such seasons as these! Everything is festive—every heart is full of gladness—every sound and sight is gay. The very fire in the grate blinks cheerily and clear—the glass of friendship sparkles brightly—the songs are sweet—and the prayers for future prosperity to one and all are warm, and from the very soul.

Alas! that such happy moments, so few and far between, should also be so brief! Like all the other joys of earth, if they have nothing of alloy in them while being enjoyed, we feel all the more sorrowful when they do pass away. Bright spots they are in our lives, to which the mind gazes back with longing delight; green islets, where, pilgrim-like, we rest on our way to eternity!

Charlie rose up to go home with his sweetheart Jeanie M'Farlane just as the eight-day clock in the corner struck eleven; and Maggie rose too, that she might accompany Henry Webster to the door of her father's house. Peter and his wife shook hands with all of them, and severally wished them much joy of the year that had so joyfully begun. Amidst smiles and kindly wishes that little party broke up: perhaps they might never all meet again, as old Mrs Winton said. Who might tell?

After escorting Jeanie home, Charlie Winton straightway began to retrace his steps, and also seek his home; when, passing down a lane that lay in his way, he overheard sounds as if of a scuffle going on in a house adjacent. He stopped to listen again, and presently the voice of a woman, evidently crying and sobbing violently, still more attracted his attention. Immediately judging that some defenceless woman was being maltreated by a brutal husband, his gallantry took fire, and taking, at one bound, the three steps that led up to the door, he sent it open with a dash, and stood in the middle of the little kitchen floor. A strange and unexpected scene presented itself. Two marines, in naval uniforms, had just seized upon what Charlie judged to be the owner of the house, and the husband of her whose cries he had heard. And so it was; for, demanding an explanation of one of the marines, he was told that the husband of her who sat weeping in the corner had entered the naval service on board of their ship, and, although he certainly was the worse of liquor at the time, he had no right to abscond as he had done. He had joined them at Lieth, and from thence they had been sent to bring him back.

Suiting the action to the word, they began to drag the now repentant man towards the door of his house, with the view of carrying him off by main force. Again did his half-frantic wife begin to weep and implore. She beseeched and entreated, and went to her very knees, so acute was her anguish. She appealed to them as fathers, as brothers, and as husbands, while the bitter, bitter tears flooded her cheeks. Of all this Charlie was an excited witness—he felt his heart swell with the most lively compassion—the generous impulses of his soul grew too strong for control—he glanced at the face of that man's suffering partner—he looked at his three innocent children, cowering together in their little bed—then he thought of himself, a youth without encumbrance, or comparatively so—then, without any farther calculation, he ordered the marines to release the poor man, and offered himself in that poor man's stead!

There was an immediate pause—and in that pause what strange and diverse emotions filled the hearts and moulded the expressions of astonishment on the faces of all in that little room! The woman was the first to break silence—she threw herself at Charlie's feet—clasped his hands tightly in both her own, and sobbed and wept as if her very heart would have broken.

"So help me, Jemmey Jones!" at length cried one of the marines, "I'll be blowed if you ain't a plucky lad as ever I see. What! you go in this chap's place? I say, you'd better think twice about it, my boy!"

"No, I will not!" answered Charlie, his face glowing with excitement. "I ask you, will you have me, and let him remain? yes, or no?"

"Yes we will, my lad! tip us yer flipper, younker—there! I know you're a trump, eh? Now then, to business—what's yer name?"

"Charles Winton!" boldly replied the youth.

"Capital name! I'll be daggened if it is'nt, hey? Where do you hang out now, Charlie? come, let's hear!"

Charlie informed them all about his home and his circumstances; and finally assured them that he would not shrink from what he had done, but would be in all readiness to go with them to Leith on the following day.

Alas! alas! for the rashness of youth. Full easy was it to say that he would not shrink from what he had thus begun; but, ah! when the thought of parting with his parents, and his affectionate sweetheart Jeanie, came into his mind; when, as lying on his bed after reaching home, the mellow recollection of the past, and the bright prospects of coming days went in review before his imagination. Oh! he felt the silent tear bedewing his eye, and stealing down his cheek. Oh, agony! How was he? How could he tell them of it? How bid them adieu? Little marvel if poor Charlie, in the anguish of his remorse and repentance, could sleep none, but kept pacing the floor till the dawning of the day.

The war with Russia was growing hotter and yet more hot daily. He felt that to be bought off was a delusion in which he must not indulge. Yet he could not say farewell; and yet again it must needs be said in some way. Working himself up to a desperate pitch of resolution, he lit the gas, and sat down to pen a couple of letters—the one to his parents, and the other to Jeanie M'Farlane, his sweetheart.

When he had written these, and watered them with his tears most plenteously, he closed and addressed them. Next, going to his trunk, he tied up a small parcel of such clothes and money as he judged to be most necessary, together with daguerreotype likenesses of those to whom he had written the two letters. He lifted them up to quit the house. Oh! they felt heavy—heavy as lead. But he remembered of his promise, his manhood, his duty, and banishing every tormenting thought from his mind, he rushed from the house, and away to the place where the marines had put up for the night.

The marines had not gone to bed, but, overjoyed at hooking what they knew to be a superior man, by the transaction of the previous evening, they were holding a mad jollification in their lodgings. There was grog in abundance; and one of the company having procured a cracked fiddle, they were having a dance when Charlie entered their midst. His attendance was the signal for a revival of the spree; more beer was sent for, and, heedless of Charlie's anguish of spirit, they would have him drink though his heart might break.

But, although nearly obfuscated, the marines did not forget their duty. They had made enquiries about the starting time of the early train to Edinburgh; and when that hour was almost arrived they rose up and, each taking an arm of their man, they led him along to the

station of the Arbroath Railway, beguiling the time with whatever conversation they thought most likely to interest their sorrowful companion.

And oh! if the reader has ever felt what it is to leave behind, for the first time, the scenes of early days, and the friends most dear to his heart—oh, then will he know something of Charlie's terrible anguish during the three minutes that had to elapse ere the train went away. He thrust his head out at the window of the carriage they had entered, and took a last agonizing look of the town. He saw the house where Jeanie lived—he saw her window. Doubtless she was sleeping within—perhaps visions, happy visions of himself were making that dream doubly sweet. Farther away he saw his parents' roof, they too sleeping, and all unconscious of the awful misery of their son. Only ten minutes now!—he sank back in the seat—what, he asked, was the reason of all this misery?—his own rashness. For this cause he must forego everything dear to his soul. His parents' love, Jeanie's smiles, her winning, kindly, and pure embrace—the music of her voice—her warm kiss and communion. These he must now exchange for the alarms of war—the roar and devastation of the ponderous cannons—the rough and uncongenial fellowship of the sailors, of whose habits he knew nothing. All this was working in his heart, and it was terrible!—terrible.

But the whistle sounded, the carriages jolted one against another, and Charlie was hurried rapidly away, far from his home and the friends of his love. He arrived in Edinburgh in due time, and a 'bus that was leaving the foot of the Mound just as they came out at the door of the station at Princes Street speedily conveyed them to Leith, out of which place they went with a boat to gain the man-of-war ship that lay out on the bosom of the Firth.

But the sorrow of Charlie's parents, the agony of poor Jeanie M'Farlane, and the diverse turns of fortune's wheel, we must leave to be related in the closing portion of our story.

[To be continued]

(January 22, 1859)

THE FORTUNES OF A FAMILY.—[*Concluded.*]

Part Second.

Peter Winton and his wife awoke betimes on the eventful morning spoken of in the former portion of this story, and awaited with some impatience for the appearance of their eldest and best beloved son. He was usually up earlier than that. What could detain him? And so they waited, and wondered, and perplexed themselves with conjectures till they could rest no longer; after which, his mother went up to the little bedroom, hastily returning with the astounding intelligence that he was not in it, and that she had found two letters lying on the little table by the bed-side.

Presently a knock was heard at the door—it was Jeanie M'Farlane, as radiant and happy as a quiet mind and rosy health could make her. Mrs Winton welcomed her with a faint smile and a kindly compliment, and then handed the two letters to her husband.

"I dinna feel very easy aboot thae letters ava," he said, shaking his head doubtfully. "Something no richt about this I'm thinkin'."

He read the letters with a pale cheek and trembling hands. When he read the one to himself his hand upon it relaxed, and it dropped between his feet on the ground.

Mrs Winton sank back into a chair, overcome with affright, while Jeanie also trembled like a leaf in autumn.

"Gude keep's, min—fat ails ye?" gasped Charlie's mother.

"Oh, dear, dear, tell's— tell's what's the matter?" echoed Jeanie.

"He's awa'!" sobbed the good old man.

"Awa! My Charlie awa? my bonny son?" shrieked Mrs Winton, bounding to her feet.

"Oh, Charlie!" was all Jeanie could say; but covering her face with her hands, she wept and sobbed till her face burned and her temples throbbed with pain.

How terrible, terrible is a storm-sweep of woe like this. How desolate every thing appears to the mind flooded and overwhelmed with that awful torrent of sorrow! Oh, not all the mirth in the universe—not all the wealth of empires could lighten the load of it, or alleviate for one instant the bitterness of such an hour. And then when it softens down, when contemplation has for a very little reconciled us with our anguish, ah! how mournfully the conviction steals into the mind, that we have lost a friend. As the voice of the sad wind, careering far away over the dark swelling bosom of a midnight ocean, so does soft melancholy steal into such a soul.

By-and-bye it was all explained; and the one tried to comfort the other, even while the waters of grief were bedewing their cheeks.

Again a knock was heard; it was the man whom Charlie had rescued, accompanied by his wife. They attempted to cheer the weeping three, and related at length the doings of the preceding night.

Alas! the spirit of joy seemed to have fled from that house with him who had ever been its comfort and its light! The days winged wearily and slowly away. Thought and inward pain weighed heavily on the hearts of Peter and his wife. Their other children endeavoured to fill up the place of him who had thus been taken away. But what will make up to a mother, at least for the loss of a first-born? The heart of Charlie's father seemed to sink too; it languished like a vineyard that sees not the sunlight. They had letters, it was true, but what signifies a cold letter? They missed their darling from the house, they missed him from the workshop, and there was not even a hope of his speedy returning.

But, ah! woman is ever the weaker vessel. Mrs Winton grew weakly and thin. She could not banish thoughts of her darling out of her mind. Still she would praise her Charlie; all her thoughts were of him. She recounted, with a glistening eye, all his well-remembered words, all his enquiries after her welfare when she was ailing; then, after rehearsing them over and over, oh! she wept—as what could she do?—she wept, and so relieved her full heart in a heavy flood of tears!

Away with all the blazonry of fame and lying flattery. What are they in the balance against the crushing, melting accents of a fond mother's tongue? The pale marble that marks her resting-place by the churchyard-wall is cold and still, like her own once warm heart, and the stranger reads its simple story perhaps with a sneer; but in the mind—in the living memory, ringing like a lovely echo, faint and far—is the music of her voice. Ah! ye who know it, prize it: ye who have known it's loss, say, is it not worthy of a tear?

But the letters that once came regularly at length ceased to arrive, and poor Mrs Winton declined all the more in consequence. She sank faster and faster every day; and it became evident to all that, unless something almost miraculous were to be done, she must fall beneath this misfortune. The medical attendant did his very best; he could ease a tortured body, but a broken heart he could not heal. Good, kind, tender-hearted mother—death rudely eased her burdened spirit—it one day fled to hold communion with other spirits as pure and holy as itself.

And old Peter, thus left alone without that never-failing source of consolation that had cheered his youth and reconciled him to the appearance of old age, also began to faint in the way. The bosom on which he had been accustomed to lean was now withdrawn for evermore; that boy of her's, whom he loved, was also gone—not even the shadow of his ideal felicity

was thus remaining to cheer him. Peter Winton now felt himself, so to speak, an incubus on his family, in spite of all they could say to the contrary; and every one knows that when this notion dawns with all its bitterness on a mind endued with a sturdy spark of independence, there is for it no more pleasure on this side of the grave.

The finishing stroke came at last. One morning a letter came bearing intelligence that Charlie had been dangerously wounded in a desperate hand-to-hand conflict with a Russian officer, and that when the letter was despatched little life was expected for him.

The effect of this news upon his poor, infirm father was an illness such as confined him to his chamber, from which he never left for any length of time. He now, indeed, required all the attention they could give to him; nor was it spared what money could procure or affection contrive.

Here, on the part of Jeanie M'Farlane, was the test of youthful love. Charlie gone, never perhaps to return. But she still hoped—something bade her hope. She took advantage of the friendships of old times, and, along with Maggie and Jessie, assiduously tended the couch of the old man. Strange it is, that the heart of a truly affectionate girl will remain thus faithful to a memory—live upon it, aye, and centre her very soul upon it. Such was the love of poor Jeanie M'Farlane, and such its long-suffering—a patience and devotion which we could not define even to her own heart.

Not so with Henry Webster. He, vile traitor, had wooed the artless Maggie for the sake of her father's wealth. Then Charlie, her brother, went away, and, sorrow-like, a mantle fell upon their house. He began to grow cold. Maggie, fond, affectionate Maggie, with all the confidence of a taintless heart, often flooded her pillow with her tears. Oh! it nipped her kind heart thus to be treated! Could it be, she inwardly asked, that adversity thus cooled him? Ah! surely no. She felt her cheek burn with shame as this idea flashed upon her imagination.

But it was even so; for, taking advantage of a petty quarrel, he one evening left her, intending never to return. It was vain for feeling, confidential friends, like Jeanie M'Farlane, to whisper that she was well rid of one who had turned so faithless; the wound in a true spirit ever bleeds the more and not the less for such soothings; the arrow, the galled arrow of disappointment, rankles and festers yet the more fatally in a generous and loving woman's mind.

And so the spring waned, the summer had come and passed away; the autumn, also, had faded into winter, and the New Year's eve was again approaching. And how true had proved the words of good old Mrs Winton, now laid in her narrow grave, and all unconscious of the rolling seasons! The New Year's morning dawned over Dundee, but not a more sorrowful family was to be found than that of Peter Winton. When it dawned they had no prospect of any festivity; but it is ever the darkest hour that precedes the dawning, and in their expectations they were joyfully disappointed.

The man who Charlie had rescued, and his wife, anxious to show their gratitude for the same, came along in the evening with a well-filled basket of good cheer, and they induced the young folks to partake. They did partake, and were in a fair way to forget for a time their many calamities, or to look upon them with an eye of hope and renewed patience.

One of the party was about to drink a glass to the memory of those who were absent, when a hurried step was heard at the door; it flew up, and Charlie, the son, the lover, the deliverer, rushed in. He threw himslf upon a chair, and as he sat he wept, and his emotions made him shake in every limb.

They sat and looked at each other astonished; but in a moment this confusion was changed into the wildest and most inexpressible joy. How was that joy brightened, when he informed

them that, by making influence in an influential quarter, he had been honourably discharged from the service. When they told him of his mother's death, of Jeanie's faithfulness, and Henry Webster's baseness, his emotions were such as may well be left to the reader's imagination; and after the evening was somewhat further advanced, and the feelings of all were in some degree tranquillized, Charlie related to them the story of his adventures since that day twelvemonth he left Dundee, a nearly distracted, yet sanguine young man.

He told them of his hardships both ashore and afloat; how he had been buffetted to and fro, and how ever and anon glimpses of the happy past, and memories of the old folks at home flitted through his mind. One day in particular he had stood waiting his turn to be enrolled for the ship he had joined—he received many taunts, bearing "the sneers of office, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes"—and his mind was troubled, and his heart was yearning for home. This was in London; and, as he turned the corner of a street, he heard the feeble and tremulous tones of an old man's voice wailing the touching words of the song, "Why left I my hame." He stopped to listen; never had he heard sweeter music. He had but a penny—just one penny—but, running down, he thrust it into the palm of the poor old shivering man.

"Sir, God bless ye, sir!" said the grey-headed creature, "this is the first penny I have earned to-day; may ye never know sorrow like mine!"

Oh! never did the poor wanderers by the streams of Babel hear the songs of their native land with greater delight than did poor Charlie Winton when he heard that simple ballad, and the blessing touchingly spoken by the eyes of that thankful beggar man.

Charlie's father rallied and grew lighter of heart when his darling was restored to him; but he was never again as he was before. That Charlie and Jeanie M'Farlane were married in due time will be understood; and that Henry Webster, after getting time to try himself, was fain to return to his injured but forgiving Maggie, will also be believed. But on the night of Geordie's marriage they all missed the kindly face of the bridegroom's mother, Mrs Winton; and bright tears were bedewing the bosoms of more than one in that gay assembly. In the events of the year that had past there had been nothing startling nor melo-dramatic, but all had been terribly and vividly real. It had not been of the marvellous and extraordinary in any respect, but that which had been indeed the "Fortunes of a Family, and the Events of a Year." J. E.

(January 29, 1859)

DONE BROWN; OR, A COSTLY QUART OF BRANDY.

By the Author of "The Fortunes of a Family."

On a lovely summer's afternoon, just as the sun, all burning with gold, was mellowing the waters of the Firth of Forth, there appeared upon its bosom a trim-built vessel, homeward bound, and laden with a precious cargo from the shores of France. Wafted by a favouring gale, she bore gallantly up the Forth toward her destined haven. The name of that haven we, for divers reasons, refrain from setting down. Notwithstanding, this is a true story—for the ship did arrive, the sailors cast anchor, and the Custom-House officers came promptly on board. When the first officer set foot on board of that ship, the heart of the apprentice boy throbbed with apprehension; for, unknown to the captain or any of the crew, he had smuggled away a quart of prime brandy amongst the ship's timbers, and he wanted neither to peril his own safety nor that of his mates. And, young as he was, the boy knew that the murder must out, so in desperation he resolved to break the secret to the ear of the captain. Well for him was it that he did so, for this was the cheer of that generous son of old Neptune.

"Never mind it, my boy!" he cried, "cut along and bring your brandy bottle, keep your heart at ease, and leave it all to me. I'll make it all fair and square for ye!"

The searchers and the other officers stood on deck; they ransacked every corner of the vessel, as was their duty. The captain watched his opportunity to put in a word on the boy's behalf, and soon found it.

When the under-strappers were all below, the captain approached the leader of the Custom-House party who still remained above, and tapped him quietly on the arm.

"Well to-day, Mr Nelson?" asked the captain.

"Finely, sir—finely, thank ye," was the response.

"A-hem! perhaps you will be so obliging as do me a little bit o'favour, Mr Nelson—hey?"

"Certainly, sir, certainly; that is, if it be not contrary to duty. What is it, please?"

"Why, on my word, it's positively nothing at all, Mr Nelson—in fact scarcely worth mentioning—our 'prentice lad has brought away a drop o' brandy to be a present to his old body of a mother, d'ye see, and he wants your men to wink pretty hard at——."

"Can't do it, captain—sorry—very sorry, I'm sure; but can't allow it."

"Oh, bless me, Mr Nelson! really it's a mere trifle—why, dy'e see——."

"My dear captain, excuse me—you know me now, I should think, well enough to be aware that I never do forget my duty; anything in the world, my dear sir, I will be willing to do, but this I could not consent to. Again I say, captain, excuse me."

"Well, well, Mr Nelson, ye needn't be so jealous about your duty being infringed, you know—there *was* a time ye didn't stand upon ceremony so—wasn't there, Mr Nelson, eh?"

"What d'ye mean sir?" fiercely asked the officer.

"Oh, deary me—nothing sir, simply nothing; I said there *was* a time when you weren't so dirty particular—that's all!"

"Then you meant to say that I——"

"Once did business in the India line with my intimate friend Captain Splinter—did'nt ye now, my good fellow? Oh, none o' yer high looks with me, Mr Nelson. I know you i' the old, Mr Nelson—ha, ha!"

"Ye speak about Captain Splinter——"

"Yes, yes—exactly—Captain Splinter of the *Jolly Mermaid*—confess now, like a trump, Mr Nelson."

The officer looked hard at the captain. "You don't take me for a fool?" he said.

"Exactly the reverse."

"Thank'ee kindly," said the officer sarcastically, and he walked off in disdain.

"Mr Nelson," said the captain, calling afer the officer.

"At your service—ha, ha, haw!"

The captain followed him in anger, and whispered something into his ear. The effect was like galvanism, for the officer faced clean round, and stared in the captain's face again.

"Who in the fiend's name told you that?" he shouted, while face and neck of him reddened in a moment.

"Captain Splinter himself," chuckled the now sneering captain.

"It's a lie, sir! The captain never did such things—he was mum to the last day of his life, sir."

"Oh, exactly—to the last day, but not on the last night, so please you, Mr Nelson, hey?["]

Mr Nelson was white in an instant.

"Well, well, Captain," he said, after thinking for a few seconds, "I'll pass your lad to-night after dusk. Will that do, captain?"

"That's all right, sir. I wouldn't have been so very urgent, d'ye see; but as I know you wouldn't refuse if you but once knew me to be old Splinter's friend, why, I thought I'd just insist on't. Besides, whatever I begin—ahem!—I—hang it!—I don't like to make a mull of it, d'ye see? It's a bad idea, d'ye see? In fact, it sticks in my gizzard—that's it now, eh?"

"I smell, sir," said the officer. "Well, give me your hand, I don't keep malice, captain; its a sulky tenant. Shake hands, there!"

"Good night, Mr Nelson."

"Good night, captain."

Dusk was come, and the 'prentice boy went down to get his bottle of brandy out of the hands of the captain.

"There you are, my trump," said the jovial seaman, "but please let me ashore before ye go home with your drop o' bingo. I'll be off in a twinklin'."

"Thank'ee, sir, I'm sure I'm obliged ta'e, sir," said the lad, feelingly.

"Not a bit of it, my man. I'm off—by-bye!"

After the captain departed the boy came on deck with his brandy bottle, and was about to jump on shore—

"Halloa, ye young scamp—stop there; what's that you've got with ye—hey?"

This was Mr Nelson, who had stayed aboard to catch the boy. Mr Nelson had a "little scheme" in his head.

"Nothing, sir," faltered the poor boy, and quaking like an aspen leaf, "it's just nothing at all, sir, if you please."

"Thank'ee for that same, then," replied Mr Nelson, attempting a joke, "your nothing looks like something, if you please: hand it here, will ye?"

"Oh, sir; oh, dear, dear sir; please don't peach on me, sir; mind my mother, and pity us, sir!"

"Stay your infernal screeching, you yelping swineherd!" shouted Mr Nelson, affecting a passion, "I'll hit ye a dab on the nut it ye don't—d'ye hear?"

"Oh, yes, sir—here's the brandy, sir. It's brandy, sir; but oh, sir, don't!"

"Silence!" roared Mr Nelson.

"Ye—ye—yes, sir," whispered the lad, scarcely above his breath.

"You don't speak of this to the captain—d'ye hear that? I'll take the brandy to the Custom House and get it made all right. They'll keep it, you know; so ye needn't expect to have it back again. If you mention this to the captain I'll have you arrested immediately for cheating the revenue—mind that!"

"Look out, lads," said Mr Nelson to the other officers who stood at some distance.

"All right," replied they.

Mr Nelson jumped ashore without once looking at the lad from whom he had taken the brandy; but, darting down a street opposite to where the dock was situated, he went off to his own house, intending to keep the bottle of brandy for his own private use. But the boy was on his track, determined to see the end of it, so he followed the officer to the door.

Mr Nelson's wife was in the house of a neighbour, and in the full enjoyment of a gossiping when her husband came in. He heard her bell-like tongue at its duty in that neighbour's house in another part of the tenement; so, putting down the bottle at his own door, he went for the key to admit himself. In a moment the boy darted up the stair, seized the bottle, and in a very few minutes was far from the clutches of Mr Nelson.

Morning came, and with it to the ship came Mr Nelson, trembling with terror, lest some mischance should have informed the Captain as to the abuse of the 'prentice, and the

whereabouts of the brandy of which he had been made a widower. And so he might tremble, for the boy related the whole affair to the Captain on the previous evening, at his own house.

"Never you fear, my man," said the sailor, "I'll read Mr Nelson a lesson in good manners which he'll not forget in a fortnight or so. I'll make him pay for it too—d——n me if I don't!"

Mr Nelson came on board, and the captain hailed him with sailor-like abruptness, "Come along, ye whey-faced land-shark!" he bawled from the poop of the vessel, "deliver up to me—yes, to me, swindling scamp—give up to me the drop o' strong ye took from my 'prentice boy; quick! Give it up, or I'll knock your two eyes into one—d'ye hear! Ho! don't stare at me like a milliner's dummy! Give me up the bingo!"

"Captain, captain! I say, don't make a row, I—"

"Give up the drop o' brandy, then, you rascally thief!"

"I don't know where it is, captain. I don't have—"

"I know where it is, then; I have it! Yes! and I'll call the police and have you arrested. You took the liquor to your own house. The Custom House people never smelt it, I know. Here, lads, give him in charge of a constable—quick!"

"Oh, captain, captain, captain; mercy, my dear sir, I—I'm a father—the father of a family. Oh, sir, do—do have pity on—"

"Halloa, lads! stop there—don't bring the police, if ye please; he's snivelling now! Confess you are a swindling sneak, then; and you're free!"

"Oh don't make me say that, captain, don't make——."

"Yes! down on your marrow-bones, and speak the very words I tell you; down—down! or, split me! but I['ll] have you given up yet—down!"

Mr Nelson went slowly to his knees before the excited sailors, and a sorry spectacle it was.

"There, then," he said, "I'm as bad as ye call me, sir; will *that* please ye?"

"No, by the living jingo! ye white-livered scoundrel, since yer blood is made o' snow-broth—hang me, but I'll sweat ye yet. Shuffle out three pounds to the lad—the 'prentice lad—and he'll drink to the health of yer beggarly carcase; after that ye may get up!"

"Anything, but don't make me sit on my knees like a lame beggar."

"As you are," added the captain.

"Here's the money, then, boy; don't tell about this now! Say you won't."

"Well, 'spose I may promise ye," laughed the lad, "since you've some down handsome, for ye *are* done brown; and this has been to you—*A Costly Quart of Brandy*.

J. E.

(February 19, 1859)

CORNELIA AUSTEN, THE GENTLE BALLAD-SINGER—AN INCIDENT OF EDINBURGH LIFE.

By James Easson.

Returning home, after a very pleasant ramble in the vicinity of Edinburgh, on a certain evening in September, there came under our notice one of those strange and interesting incidents which almost savour of the romantic, and take a settled hold upon the memory.

It was half-past eight o'clock; the city itself was quiet, for during the afternoon a slight rain had fallen; moreover, the gloaming had set in. The walk had been by the princely walls of Watson's Hospital, and the return was by the New Town, through Moray Palace and Heriot Row. It was when entering the last named thoroughfare that the voice of a female, unusually

sweet and delicate for a street singer, fell† upon our ear; so, prompted by curiosity, we stepped along the pavement to have a look at its possessor.

Heriot Row, we must premise, is a lengthy stretch of genteel houses in the New Town, which the passenger along Princes Street may soon reach by passing up any of the adjacent streets to the northward; holding up Castle Street, he will find himself opposite its western extremity, from which it extends eastward to Abercromby Place. Between it and the northern extremity of Castle Street to the south, there lies one of those wide and beautiful public gardens, whose lovely flower plots and grassy slopes give to Edinburgh that delightful blending of town and country which is not to be found in any other British city. But at the time of which we write, the occupants of the genteel dwellings were nearly all gone to their country quarters, so that there was no light visible in many of the windows. The windows of such houses as were then vacant were covered with sheets of coarse brown paper; and in the few dwellings still tenanted could be overheard the sounds of the harp and piano; these, as we said, were very exceptional, for the street, as a whole, was dull and uninviting.

Nothing daunted, the lonely and sweet singer sung on. Her shrill, clear notes, quivered and echoed in the wide empty space; but, as yet, not a penny had been given to her. For there was not a human being near, and little sign of any one being likely to appear. Still those soft cadences rang along the noble street till by-and-bye—such is the effect of merit—the windows of some houses near gave token that the song was not altogether lost upon the dwellers within. The warm crimson curtains were parted aside, up went the heavy Venetian blinds and sashes, then the inmates stepped forth upon the iron balconies to listen. The lonely warbler did not seem moved by this homage paid to her abilities, but caroled away as if no notice had been taken. By-and-bye they began to talk about her in whispers, and the bystander on the kerbstone might have heard the high encomiums that were passed upon her talents; in a few minutes a handful of silver money rung upon the hard stones of the street, and the listeners once more retired to their snug warm drawing rooms and parlours within.

While rendering our mite, we had an opportunity of examining the interesting singer, the outline of whose form could barely be distinguished amidst the dusky way. Before us, on that wet hard thoroughfare, stood a young woman, as elegant in person as might have been found in any of the proud dwellings around. Mild in feature, retiring in manner, shrinking from the gaze of the stranger, no one could look upon her without feeling that naught, save some dire and sorrowful necessity, could have brought her to this position. A strange, sweet, tender beauty of countenance she had; and withal a tearful, heart-broken glisten in her swimming blue eyes. She was thin, too, and appeared stricken with cold. She wore a thin cotton gown, and a poor rag of shawl; but, despite all this, there was an air of faded gentility about her, telling of happier days. It was evident that she had originally belonged to a class of society far above the vulgar.

We handed her our mite—she bowed her head in mute thankfulness, and enquired briefly and modestly if she might sing our favourite song! We mentioned, enquiringly, a few of Moore's Irish melodies—she spake not—but again bent herself slightly to signify the affirmative. We then returnd to our former stand by the kerb-stone.

The song was sung with most exquisite feeling, and was evidently a favourite with herself. It was the old, well-remembered words—"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps." There was a remarkable absence of that wretched rowdyism so peculiar to street singers—a delicate personal appreciation of the beautiful poetry embodied in the words. But

† Printed 'felt'.

the strain came at length to an end; when, for some reason best known to herself at the time, she saw fit to make it the last song she was to sing for that evening.

Gathering her thin shawl around her, and fastening it with a pin, she turned abruptly about, and moved to go westward again, the way she had come. Intensely interested, we followed behind at some distance. West she went—and having gained the end of the Row once more, she turned up Wemyss' Place, up Castle Street to George's Street, then along Princes Street to the west, down the Lothian Road, and latterly passing through the West Port, she entered upon, and passed into one of the low cheap lodging-houses in the Grassmarket.

We must here ask the reader's pardon for omitting to say that this interesting songstress was evidently not a native of Scotland, but spoke with a pure English accent. She was, however, it seemed, intimately conversant with the locality she had just traversed, and possibly with more of the city than that we had followed her over. To gain more accurate information concerning what we felt certain must be her somewhat singular history, we had recourse to a quarter where such information was certain to be had. In this we prospered, for the following is the story of that lonely warbler:—

Her name was that which figures at the head of this sketch—Cornelia Austen. Her father was a physician in one of the most lovely districts of England, an honourable man, and a clever practitioner. Mene was a large town, within a day's walking journey of the village where her father lived, and in that town a detachment of soldiers was generally stationed. At the time when the interest of Cornelia's story begins, there lay in this town a detachment of the —st Regiment, under the command of a Captain Buckmaster; and while resident there, the Captain had the misfortune to sustain several injuries from the bursting of a fowling-piece; nay, so severe were those injuries, that his life was despaired of. The Captain, however, was young, and he found it hard to die, just when life and fortune seemed beaming with promise. His father, who resided in London, posted down when he heard the gloomy tidings; and his mother, who could not have borne to see her son's agony, remained at home in her sumptuous dwelling in the metropolis, whilst telegraphic messages were constantly sent to her. The distress of the captain's father was extreme; so every medical man, whose fame made his advice and assistance appear valuable, was sent for. Among the rest came Cornelia's father, Dr Charles Austen.

None save Dr Austen could venture to bid the sufferer hope for a much longer lease of life; but he, nevertheless, did so, although not without some grave inward doubts. But hope, he wisely held, was a cardinal medicine in the captain's, as in many another case; so he led him to hope that the sun of health and happiness might yet illume his heart.

The wound was fast getting to a critical state; under the intense and prolonged pain, the powers of the mind were fast fading away. Dr Austen found it necessary to have the patient removed from the Garrison Hospital to his own house, which stood in a retired place near the village where he lived. When in a state of semi-insensibility, the Captain was accordingly removed, and thus the doctor came within more easy reach of his military patient.

But here a difficulty arose. Who was to wait upon the invalid when his attendant was ncessarily absent? Dr Austen was at his wits end to think who he might procure for such an important office. Mrs Austen was weak and subject to nervous fits; the old woman whom he was wont to employ had lately died, and somebody must be had. Who could he get? He recollected about his daughter Cornelia, and the thought once mooted soon became a settled idea in the mind of her father. It was thus that Cornelia became the nurse of the Captain for five hours out of the twenty-four.

'Twas a half-conscious swoon that lay on the patient's mind. He saw as through a mist—all seemed like a dream—he heard not, felt not. He swallowed whatever of sustenance they gave him passively. Yet one gazing on his face could descern a faint motion of the lips as if he spoke to himself the visionary wanderings of his soul. It seemed a strange and deathlike trance; so one might have imagined that in the silent watches of the night, Cornelia might have felt that superstitious dread so natural to girls like herself, for she was but nineteen years of age, and, being the only child of her parents, had, of course, no companion of her own age save their servant girl, and she, having done her day's work in the kitchen and elsewhere, was in no way entitled to take part in nursing the invalids entrusted to the professional care of her master.

But poor Cornelia wanted none to help her in this labour of filial duty. She took, she knew not why, a strange interest in the recovery of the Captain. She would gaze on his pale, wasted features long and often; and as he lay there so dead-seeming and void of motion, she caught a strange sign rising up to, and finding passage from, her lips.

Thus a fortnight passed away. The trance in which the Captain had lain was expected soon to break up, leaving him partially recovered. And so it did one day just as Dr Austen entered the room, after stealing a short time of necessary repose.

Cornelia was in the act of laving his temples with some of the preparations prescribed by her father, when, to her joy, he uttered a faint cry, and began feebly to turn in his bed from side to side. The Doctor darted forward, snatched the phial from the hand of his daughter, and leading her gently from the room, closed the door behind her, at the same time adding that she should be called for whenever her services might be required.

By-and-bye the patient opened his eyes and sat up on his couch. He gazed anxiously round the room as if looking for some person or thing he either expected or desired earnestly to see. But he seemed disappointed in obtaining the sight he anticipated.

Speech was now restored, and he, in very weakly tones, enquired how long he had lain in that state, what had brought him there at first, whether his parents were aware of the misfortune, and, lastly, who was the beautiful and elegant girl whom he either saw, or fancied he saw, in his state of trance?

Now, the doctor was a rigidly strict man in all his notions of what was right and proper. He knew well that it was a dangerous thing to bring his daughter into contact with a roystering man of the army, even if his character were seemingly good. But as it was, he knew nothing, save by name and common report, of Captain Buckmaster. This for certain he did know, namely—that his child was no fitting associate for a man of his patient's rank of life. Thus judging it poor Dr Austen, as will be seen, did evil that good might come.

He denied all knowledge of the gentle Cornelia. He maintained that the notion of a young girl's tending his sick bed was the illusion of his own mind, a delusion bred by the severity of his recent illness. But the Captain would have none of this, and vowed to search the house whenever he felt able to move about.

This vow struck consternation to the soul of the kind and faithful physician—he repented the hour when it first struck him to introduce his darling only child into that sick chamber. But at this he felt vexed again, for it was truly with the purest and most humane motives that he had so acted, and he breathed a silent prayer that heaven might lead the mind of his patient into some diverse channel, and away from the remembrance of his beloved child, his only solace, Cornelia. Poor old man! he loved his dear child, that only one in all the earth, upon whom the fondness of his aged and honourable heart was ever lavished, to whom his inmost

soul was even turning in deep parental tenderness; and how he trembled now, when even so much as a shadow of danger seemed to hover above her innocent head.

But the kind physician had a soul to act when danger seemed to threaten either him or his. He had made a mistake—now for its recovery. His remedy was sharp: that night his daughter must leave the house, and go to London—there to abide in the keeping of an aunt, until such time as the danger of a meeting with the Captain would be over. And so it fell out, that long ere the patient awoke on the morrow, the daughter of Dr Austen was speeding her way to the metropolis, there to wonder at and secretly to complain against the sudden removal to the centre of that mighty city. She thought it strange that she would not be thanked in person by him whom to tend had been to her happiness, and whom to behold was a pleasure as sweet as it had been new.

Between such hearts there seems to exist an electric chain by which the emotions thereof have mysterious transmission. In how far the transmission of these were aided by future events will appear in the following portion of this story.

(November 5, 1859)

CORNELIA AUSTEN, THE GENTLE BALLAD-SINGER—AN INCIDENT OF EDINBURGH LIFE.

By James Easson.

Part II.

About a fortnight after Cornelia left her father's house, the Captain became restored to health, as far as to be able to move about. He explored the dwelling of his generou physician, who, looking upon it purely as a whim, allowed his patient to be thus far gratified.

Cornelia was, of course, far from thence; and when Captain Buckmaster, after he had ranged the premises and could find no girl such as his fancy still pictured to him, and his heart whispered was a reality, became not a little disconcerted; but vowed to set his heart upon none save that woman who would possess, in at least some degree, those graces of person, and that gentleness of demeanor that characterised his ideal.

Whilst the Doctor's tantalising laugh was yet ringing in his ear, the Captain and he were startled by a rap at the front door, bold and business-like; it proclaimed the arrival of the postman, with letters for the former. They were from headquarters in London; and were to the effect, that as soon as might be the Captain was to despatch his detachment to the metropolis with the officer next to himself in rank; himself to follow as soon as restored to health. The order for removal was from that date, and the time for marching to be a fortnight thereafter.

He instantly informed his medical attendant concerning the marching order; and had the gratification to learn, that by the time the specified fortnight would have expired, himself might possibly accompany the men in person. When alone by himself, Dr Austen felt not a little uneasy that Captain Buckmaster should thus be ordered to the very place of all other places from which he could have wished him to be absent. But, he argued—London is such a wilderness of a place, he might never meet with Cornelia there! And so the innocent Doctor allayed his own fears; so when the fortnight sped away, and made his patient capable of enduring some little fatigue, that patient took his departure—not without leaving behind him signal proofs both of his own and of his father's gratitude for services so precious as those the Doctor had rendered.

The exertion and excitement consequent on the execution of marching orders, restored the mind and spirits of the Captain to their former tone. He was speedily on the way; after which

the speed of railway travelling soon put distance to the rout, and the Captain and his men within the compass of iniquity London.

As everybody is aware, a person may be in that city for only one hour, and in that short space, forgather with those whom years have hid from his sight. Or again, a man may be in that same place for years, and never see a human being he knows, or by whom he is known. The former was the case with Captain Buckmaster and Cornelia Austen. For, scarcely had the former got time to draw up his men in order, when casting just a stray glance upon the crowd that throng the station, he detected the pale sweet face of his cherished ideal, Cornelia; and she too regarding him with a look of painful uncertainty, blended with timid bashfulnss, such as made her seem, in his eyes, twice more charming than before! He was in an agony of perplexity as to what way he should act. He could not speak with her in the midst of that gaping and vulgar multitude—yet he *must* speak to her. This was his state of mind, when again looking about, he saw her speeding her way up the street in the opposite direction. So in one instant bringing his own confidential servant to him by a signal, he bade the man follow her, and having instituted certain careful enquiries concerning her, come back to his room and report. An hour after the servant returned with the news that the young woman was the niece of a Mrs Coutts, the proprietress of a first-class millinery emporium, and that she had but lately arrived from the country. In a perfect fever of exultant joy, the Captain clutched the man by the arm, and demanded whether he had learned her name? The servant replied that it was Cornelia Austen. His master there and then gave vent to his unbounded gladness of heart, car[e]less and reckless of his servant's presence. In his joy he made the man a handsome present, and dismissed him from the apartment.

Early next day the enthusiastic Captain was upon the track of his beloved ideal. But he found that circumstances, often in such cases unfavourable, was determined to fill him with mortification and chagrin. He did not see her; and the third day was no better. But on the fourth day he was in luck; for a cab drove up to the private entrance of the splendid emporium, he saw Cornelia enter it and drive off. Immediately hailing one that passed just then, he bade the driver give chase, and keeping a sharp look-out, he beheld her set down before the door of an aristocratic-looking house in one of the fashionable squares. But his delectation was complete, after dismissing the conveyance, she entered the house alone.

He guessed rightly then; she was upon some errand for her business relative, and so his part was now very simple—only to wait until she should come out again. This he did impatiently, when, after a martyrdom of fifteen minutes, she once more appeared, and tripped along the pavement in his direction. Outwardly calm, but inwardly ravished with joy and exultation, he also advanced to meet her.

The eye of love is never slow to discover the object of its devotion. Cornelia recognised the Captain while yet at some distance, and that evident agitation of her's, and the lovely blush that suffused her beautiful cheek, told him he was indeed loved sincerely. He was by her side in one instant, tendering his hand at a respectful half-venture, saying at the same moment, in gentlest accents—

"Miss Austen, I presume!"

Joyful was poor Cornelia's emotions, he did know her then! She relinquished her hand to him, and answered at the same time, in a low, tremulous rone—

"The same, sir."

A thrilling pause ensued. Then did he thank her, in terms at once tender and respectful. He repeated gratitude with all the ardency of youthful warm-heartedness. He praised her father's

sedulous attention to him during his illness, but dwelt most upon her own delicate and skilful application of the means prescribed. Poor Cornelia felt the full stream of joy and pleasure rise into her heart as those words of warm thankfulness fell upon her ear, and thus from him she had learned to love. But she modestly disclaimed any merit in the matter of his happy recovery, and attributed it all to a desire for the alleviation of suffering, wherever it appeared. The Captain was delighted, ravished with her modest and gentle speech and bearing; nor was it until she promised to mention him to her aunt, preparatory to an introduction, that he suffered her to depart.

Scarcely comprehending the true nature of those feelings she entertained towards the Captain, Cornelia innocently mentioned the Captain's existence to her aunt. She spoke of his nearness to death, but for her father's skill—of the part she took in his return to health—of his ultimate recovery so far as she knew about it—of the manner of their meeting, and his desire to be introduced to herself. Mrs Coutts was a woman of great shrewedness, and of astute penetration—a faint suspicion of the truth—nay many of them—flashed upon and disturbed her wary mind; but she dismissed them—for, thought she, "it may be but the overflow of a grateful heart; thankful for his recovery by the hand and skill of her brother, his gratitude may extend to those of his family and blood." So Mrs Coutts gave permission for the introduction to her fireside of Captain Buckmaster.

Of this permission, the reader may be certain our ardent soldier speedily availed himself. But not long was he thus admitted when Cornelia's aunt perceived the bent of her new visitor. Her fears took the alarm instantly; and she bade the gentle girl to make him understand that such attentions were not permissible in her dwelling. But, alas, she might as well have told Cornelia to bid the raging sea stand still, as bid him cease to speak his love.

Observing that her injunctions to Cornelia were altogether vain, Mrs Coutts must take the first opportunity of signifying her disapproval of his suit to her niece. She knew her duty to her brother, which was of all things to keep such a connection between the Captain and Cornelia from ever being formed. This she had not regarded with the jealous attention she ought to have done. She therefore took the first chance of telling him so, and the Captain being too much of a gentleman to insist upon a further indulgence, craved but another interview with Cornelia, after which, he said, he would seek the privilege of entering her house no more.

The interview was granted, and it lasted long. But whatever inducements, temptations, or entreaties the ardent young soldier used, it matters not to know; it may suffice to say that the loving girl consented to elope with her lover, and, posting down to Edinburgh, there be married, and there reside until the wrath of her father and his own should have passed away.

And so it fell out; for the Captain obtaining his father's countenance to a temporary absence, made such arrangements as left him apparently his own master for three weeks or a month; he set off in company with Cornelia, by railway, on the following evening, and, giving her in honourable charge to the wife of the hotel-keeper, began to make, with all speed, the arrangements for their marriage.

Just while the captain was reflecting upon whom he would procure to assist in the solemnity, a telegraphic message suddenly arrived, telling him that an order from the War Office was awaiting his instant attention in London. This was terrible news—bitter beyond expression. But attended to they must be; so, barely having time to say farewell to the agonised Cornelia, he left her in double charge of their hostess, and set off again to the metropolis.

If the summons to come back was hard and trying, what must it have been of misery and anguish to the kind-hearted soldier when he found he had orders to hold himself and his men

in instant readiness to go to the seat of war in India, there to assist in suppressing the mutiny that had begun in that important empire.

He fairly groaned in spirit; he wrote to the hapless girl who had thus confided in him; he sent her all the available money he could get; he told her with a trembling hand and aching heart to be comforted, and to look for comfort to that distant day that would, he sincerely hoped, enable them to meet. For he well knew that a return to her aunt was folly—she never would own her more. As for her father, the honest-hearted Captain nearly wept as he thought of him—so kind, and so attentive to him in his recent illness. He would have returned him his child, pure as she left him, but he had neither the time nor the means to do so. There was clearly nothing for it but to leave all to the disposal of whatever might prove the dispensation of their sorrowful destiny.

Poor Cornelia bore up under it all with a fortitude that became the woman well, who had linked her lot to that of a soldier. But she fixed her resolution of no more returning to those friends she had left; but, relying upon the captain's word that he would provide for her when even far away, she prepared to battle with what appeared her untoward fortunes. Sitting down she penned a most sorrowing letter to her lover, in which occurred the following heroic sentiments:—"If you love,"† wrote the noble girl, "I know that happier days with honour to sweeten them will yet dawn upon us; and if you fall—what will it matter—even in death I will be yours, and you mine own. If I live I shall hold myself yours in troth; and believe me—faithful to your memory will I remain until time and the blessed re-union of some future day shall reward our designation‡ and repay all our long-tried patience."

Alas! she was doomed to want for ever, and the Captain was her own—*even in death*. Yes; he died of sunstroke just shortly after his arrival; and poor Cornelia being no wife, had no official intelligence of his death forwarded to her. Often she sat alone in the quiet of the afternoons, listlessly gazing from the window of the apartments, which had been furnishd for her, upon the bustle and glitter of that fashionable Edinburgh thoroughfare, but in reality seeing and hearing none of it, for her mind and her heart were far away in a foreign land! She waited for letters, but none came; yet she never distrusted him. She blamed everything, believed all things of disastrous likelihood, but never doubted her faithful soldier; and as for his being *dead*, she maddened at *that!* But the time came when she must leave the place which she then occupied—must go hence—must think to what means for a livelihood she could shortly have recourse.

She had a voice of exquisite quality and considerable compass. Often, often in the days of her former happiness, in the quiet parlour of her father's house, had she sung to cheer his aged heart: but to that home and that father she would never return. Not that she was anything else than the same innocent one she left him; but there was the "world's dread laugh," the world's withering scorn. No, she determined to gain her livelihood by her voice. Her father had often in her hearing condemned public singing in concert rooms and theatres; yet she had often heard him compassionate the poor, modest, smirking ballad-singer shivering in the street, and often had she seen him relieve them. She knew it was vain to solicit employment as a musical instructress in any of the wealthy families, for she, poor one, was a stranger in a strange land; so she became in time the lonely and interesting ballad-singer we found her at first in the deserted thoroughfare of Heriot Row.

Yes: and while the reader is perusing her plaintive story thus imperfectly related, her sweet and silvery voice may be ringing through the stately squares of the Scottish metropolis. But

† Sic; presumably a mistake for 'live'.

‡ Perhaps for 'resignation'.

we hope and trust that the arms of parental love may yet enclasp her, and that, too, ere long. Like the prodigal in the ancient story, may she arise and go to her father, and be taken back with gladness to her father's house! This world is a harsh school wherein to learn submission; it is even so to the stout of heart and limb; but we fear it will prove hard indeed to the hapless subject of this story—Cornelia Austen, the gentle Ballad singer.

(November 12, 1859)

KINDNESS AVENGED;

AN INCIDENT IN THE WRECK OF THE ROYAL CHARTER.†

By James Easson.

Part First.

We have a tale to tell, and a moral to deduce. It is a tale of wrongs endured, wrongs inflicted through partiality; it tells of patience long tried and triumphing; of love contending for the right against selfishness and prejudice; whilst justice, watching with a keen eye the unequal contest, at length unsheathes its righteous sword, and steps in to the rescue.

Our tale, we say, will have a moral—one of wide and general application, which we shall make evident when all the incidents have been unfolded, Our first and main object is to lay bare, in all its unfairness and heartlessness, the evil of partiality in families—the favouring of one child more than another by parents, because of some merit either positive or supposed. We have long waited for an opportunity to protest against this cruelty in our humble way; and now that such opportunity has appeared, it shall be embraced by us as we go on to illustrate in detail the following singular and striking narrative.

As to our second object, it is a personal matter—to produce such a tale as will, both by its interest and execution, prove worthy of the *Journal* in which it appears; of the immense audience to whose delectation it is dedicated; and also of the rich and racy season which it is meant to signalise—the season of the New Year.

We may as well observe in the outset, that the description of localities and other minor details shall be made subordinate to the elucidation of the grand principle of fair-play, and the no less beautiful sentiment that love suffers long and is kind, and that its fruits are patience and uniform kindliness. With these premises, let us begin our narrative.

Francis Grey, a merchant residing near Liverpool, was the father of him who figures first in this tale. He had two sons, Robert and George; their ages were nineteen and twenty-three respectively. Of the two, Robert was the cleverest and the most amiable; for although George, the younger son, was of a kindly disposition enough, he had ever been his father's favourite, and nothing he ever coveted had been withheld from him. Of a thoughtful turn of mind was his brother, and those who knew him best said he would yet make his way in life with honour and credit. Such prophecies were sweet to his mother's ear. She longed to see his fine natural abilities properly developed, yet she had no undue partiality towards him, for she loved both her children with all a mother's truthfulness. But this did not hinder her from observing the favour unduly shown to her younger boy by his father; she grieved when she saw him neglected; she advocated his claims with all the fervour of maternal affection, but, alas! to no purpose—the heart of Francis Grey was set upon his son George, and upon him was all his favours bestowed.

† The loss of the Royal Charter had been reported in the *People's Journal* October 29, 1859.

Quick of observation, Robert saw his mother's anxiety concerning him—and all his soul towards her was filled with love. Not but that he loved his father too—yes, he did love him, in spite of all his coldness, slights, and often positive contempt,—but because of her goodness to him, all his purest affections found a centre and a shrine in the heart of his mother. She often interceded for him with his father—she spoke of the studious bent of his mind—remarked that since Providence had placed them in a comfortable way in the world, they should take care to give their dear ones such education as would suit their several talents—that Robert inclined towards a place in the church, and that no consideration ought to stand between him and the gratification of such an honourable ambition. But still to no purpose. Francis Grey only sneered at her arguments, ridiculed the notion of any son of his ever becoming a manufacturer of sermons, protested his dislike to all such petty morality as sermons contained, and vowed that never should a penny of his money be spent upon the young man's education for such a profession. "If you make him an architect, said he—well and good—I'll see him educated as becomes his father; or, if he choose any honest kind of business, be what it may—a merchant, or even a lawyer—still I'll see him qualified for the pursuit; but for a prosy preacher—never. And now, my dear," he would add in conclusion, "you have my decision on this matter—let it drop: I desire to hear of it no more."

And so, for the time, the matter did drop; but Mrs Grey would not have deserved the name of mother had she suffered it to do so for ever. And she did not—time after time did she renew the old story—for she remembered the well known parable of the importunate widow. But still to no purpose, and worse than no purpose—for it served but to confirm the aversion of Robert's father towards him, and made his dislike the more intense.

Gradually had George's taste been assimilated to those of his father—tastes which, if not low and vulgar, were fast verging upon it. Francis Grey, as we hinted above, was in a genteel way in life—he loved company of a peculiar kind, and encouraged it in his house. He had by this means contracted a habit of petty drinking and a love of hearty social conviviality; in this George soon became his right hand supporter. He was young and jovial-hearted, minding nothing except the sport of the passing hour. Little marvel, then, that he was his father's favourite, and that Francis Grey should never weary whilst singing the praises of his favourite son.

And although George never personally expressed any unworthy feelings toward his brother, yet he ever seemed to regard him with a sort of silent, contemptuous pity—a smile of derisive scorn sparkled in his eye, and this did more to wound the soul of his thinking, sensitive brother, than could the united venom of a thousand reproaches. George seldom spoke to him; their intercourse was that of merest courtesy; poor Robert felt himself isolated, alone, and a stranger at the hearth of his father. And oh! no place in the domestic circle is so much to be pitied, or so little to be envied, as is that of the fag or "ootlin'." The very name is suggestive of sneers and mortification! If it be a boy who occupies this unhappy place—a pale, sad, tearful face is the ideal; a solitary, dejected being, darting terrified glances at all, but especially at those who should love him best, but who do not. Nay, the trembling, spirit-broken creature, often mistrusts those who fain would cheer his heart by kindness, and warm it with a smile.

Robert was not a boy; yet he felt the burden of neglect not a whit the less keenly. When any company came to the house, Robert was never introduced—always was he thrust into the shade—not that he wished to be brought into contact with their guests—far from it; but still it showed the spirit of persecution that set up its dark abiding place in the hearts of his friends.

There came a day at length when all this partiality was to result in a consequence of fateful complexion. The nineteenth birthday of George, the favourite son, was to be celebrated, and a

brilliant company was to be assembled to do it honour. All the friends were to be called—that is, all the *rich friends*—and Francis Grey and his son looked forward to making a night of it. Time flew on, and the morning dawned upon their house after a night spent in preparation and anxiety. There were confectioners and French cookery; fashionable dresses and brilliant music; flashing crystal and ruddy wine, dancing and perfumery. When the merriment was at its height, when the heart of the father was merry with wine, some one inquired for Robert, whereupon the foolish man commenced a tirade of abuse against the harmless youth, laughed at his pretensions to the church, disparaged his natural abilities, and at length, on pretence of making the idea odious to his mother, caricatured his probable appearance, and speech, in the pulpit. With the sycophants who were half muddled with the wine they had consumed, this passed off very well for a time; but there was one portly, good-natured man there, whose personality we shall yet describe at length, who expressed, fearlessly and indignantly, his opinion of their drunken host; nay, he insisted that nothing would please him but that Robert should be brought before them, and, with all the honours, be offered a seat in their midst. The boldness of this proposal, and the hearty spirit in which it was made, completely carried the day; so that the easy-minded and half-intoxicated company applauded the thing to the echo. A message was instantly sent to the good-hearted young man, who was in his own chamber when it came, poring over a Greek Testament. He, in deference to the request of the entire company, accordingly rose up, and prepared to present himself before them.

A round of applause by way of welcome greeted him at the door of the festive chamber. He bowed with a dignity that again took them by storm. Then he thanked them all in terms at once respectful and select, and was speedily a favourite in that brilliant room. His mother was delighted, whilst his father was moody, displeased, and fretful, that his pet George should be thus suddenly and effectually eclipsed.

True to his practice, George burned with anger and chagrin, but said nothing. Like all spiteful ones, he saw policy and plot in his brother's every smile and word of courtesy. His discoloured fancy was excited by wine; so he waited but the opportunity to revenge himself upon the unoffending Robert. Mrs Grey could see with a mother's tact that something serious was to result from it all, and while she was glad to see her first-born thus happy, that gladness was mingled with apprehension that all might not end well. Meantime the glass went round, healths were drunk, and good wishes were returned, and so the evening wore away.

When all was bright and jovial, the same hearty-looking gentleman who had proposed the admission of Robert stood up and called upon him for a speech—a proposal which was received with rapture. Robert had detected in the face of his brother, during the short time he was there, that ominous. side-long look of malice which vexes and grieves the generous heart; so he, like a true gentleman as he was, resolved to make his escape as soon as might be, so that he might no longer than was absolutely necessary be an eyesore and thorn in his brother's flesh. It was this that made him, with some reluctance, decline to oblige his portly friend; but that friend would have no refusal, and his entreaties were backed up by the vociferous plaudits of the jolly party.

The old gentleman still insisted, and, thinking that he might add influence to his call by appealing to the father, he did so, and was answered with the information that Bobby, as he called him, was neither, so far as he knew, a speech-maker nor a poet; but that, if they languished for a literary performance, doubtless Bobby would read them a few stanzas from the Latin poets. This sneer was spoken in that snarling tone of unaffected spleen so offensive to every good heart, the result of which was that, forgetting the good things they had been

enjoying at his table, the entire company burst into a shout of indignation in the face of their host. Everything portended a painful scene, when Mrs Grey interfering, at length succeeded in restoring the guests to something like decorum.

But the good old gentleman, however excellent his intentions, was fated to be, for that evening, Robert's evil genius. He seemed determined to have a speech from his youthful friend; so he once more rose up, and, judging in his simplicity that George might be filled with a desire to befriend his brother, asked him for his assistance in getting Robert to speak. Of course, nothing could have been more importune for the malignant brother, who, in addition to his own bitter feelings, longed to avenge his father's defeat. With a burning cheek and a sparkling eye, he rose, and informed the party in general that, for his own part, he knew as little of Robert's attainments as did his father; but, since it appeared that his brother *did* know a thing or two, he would ask him to expound the peculiar theory of eating the wind for a dinner, and chewing the day-light for a dessert. At this taunting and insulting speech the generality of the company protested; every eye thereafter was turned towards Robert, who arose in silence to leave the table, his face flushed and burning, like to burst with suppressed emotions; and hardly had he bowed to them with all the politeness of his nature, and had his face turned towards the door, than he burst into a flood of scalding tears, and hurried away to his own apartment. And then followed a scene such as would have made a demon weep—a sight at once tender and painful. When she saw her dear one, Robert, thus give way to his terrible agony, all the pangs of a mother's heart oppressed her; and disdaining the drunken herd, and deserting the scene of their revels, away she flew, obedient to the kindly impulses of an affection thus cruelly tried and unfeelingly lacerated. Flinging up the door, which was but partly closed, she rushed into the room, caught up her dear son, who had cast himself upon a couch, and was sobbing in all the bitterness of his manly, wounded heart;—she pillowed his hot brow upon her affectionate bosom, and floods of sacred tears moistened his luxuriant, glossy hair! Oh, it was a touching and holy sight! Not since he was a child had Robert laid his cheek upon that pure and kindly pillow; but the hurry of passionate grief passed away betimes—it lasted but a moment; a moment, and he was the man again; but ah! not the irresolute young man he was an hour before, but a man, outraged by his own father, affronted by his own flesh and blood!

"Mother!" exclaimed he, starting to his feet, and erecting himself before his weeping parent. "Mother," he said, "I must go hence—must leave this house for years. No more shall this roof shelter me; beneath its shadow I have been slighted in the past; and to-night openly persecuted by my own father. May God forgive him as I do! To him and to my brother I am henceforth dead; but you, mother, who have loved me, striven to promote my interest and my happiness, I will ever truly love and fondly revere. I leave you, mother, and, ah, the wide green ocean must divide us in the body, but our hearts will still have sweet and pure communion! More my heart refuses to say; my lips will not speak what I would say; but ask me not to relent, for before you entered this room I vowed *not* to relent, as upon your breast I vowed ever to love yourself while life remains within me! I saw no chance of ever becoming what I aim at becoming, a minister of the Gospel—but I *will* be one; ay, and I will cross the ocean in search of the gold whereby to prosecute my studies. Yes, in the far off wilds of Australia will I seek a home; in its rich soil will I dig till I find the means of educating myself; early morn shall find me at work, and dusky eventide will surely see me prosperous. And then, when years shall have gone by, I will return to you—how many years God only knows—but come I will, mother, to bless and reward you for all your kindness to me! Mother, mother, dear mother, I must leave you; I must

leave you, mother—God bless you—tell my father I forgave him, and George, too; good bye, dear mother. Oh, my, my heart is break——"

Tears checked his utterance; another moment, and he had disappeared.

But the kindly reader will ask—And whether† did he go? to what place for rest did he betake himself? To answer this query, we must go back briefly to the days of Robert's youth; to those happy days when he was yet too young to be the object of special aversion to his unworthy parent; and days, too, upon which his memory rested with delight, radiant as they were with the pure light of a boyish love, and sweetened by the most thrilling poetry of the heart.

Mr Adam Miller was the name of the portly gentleman whose unlucky calls for a speech from Robert brought on the catastrophe we have described above. He was also well-to-do; he was a merchant of influence in the place, and Francis Grey and he had been young men together. In their youth they had looked upon themselves each as a great beau; their early follies had cast a bond of friendly feeling about them. They loved to recount their harmless amours, and they often laughed gleefully as the remembrance of the too trusting fair ones, and their vows of eternal constancy, all returned to mind, with the freshness of early days. At such seasons of friendly communion, they would often wonder where those fair ones had now gone—once so beauteous and blooming—and whether they were grown stout and portly, like their old sweethearts, or if they ever recalled to mind when chance brought them into accidental conclave, "the merry days of old?" Then they would speak of their wives—those ladies who laid their snares to such good effect as to entrap them in the noose matrimonial at last. Next they would allude to their children—of which Adam Miller had no plurality, only one girl, his little pet daughter, Agnes. She and Robert were inseparables in infancy; by morning's dawning light and evening's dying ray they were to be seen together; they went hand-in-hand to school in those calm, sweet days of innocence, and what Agnes did not know, it was Robert's delight to learn her if he could. No two young hearts so light and happy as theirs in all the school; no smile to Robert so sweet, so sunny, as that of little Agnes Miller,—and to her no word so kindly, or teaching so welcome as his. On the bright, brief holidays they sported in the fields or on the grassy slopes; the green, waving trees swinging over their heads, casting light shifting shadows on the emerald sward. In the lonely gloamings too, how sweet it was to play! And sometimes when Agnes' governess would come to take her home, he would see in her sweet blue eyes a bright tear, which he would fly to kiss away ere it had time to fall! Then in silent sadness would they walk with the girl to the house of Agnes' father, at whose door they must part for the night; so when he would return alone to the meadow again, oh! how changed seemed all the scene—its glory had departed! He would gaze long and pensively into the far off glowing west, where the lovely sun was sinking down into his couch of glory,—and there seemed a heavy sadness in it since little Agnes was gone! And he looked up, too, upon those gorgeous clouds, whose splendours had only a minute or two before enchanted him. There they were, in all their transient loveliness, great heaps of mellow gold up-piled upon heaps—hills of driven snow towering up afar, and softening into pale, ethereal blue! Then he would look all around him; the gold-tipped crocus, and the lily bending over its slender stalk, kissed by the stilly breeze of evening, all whispered of sadness because little Agnes was gone! And by-and-bye, with his little heart heavy under a damp of sweet sorrow, he, too, would seek his home, and there, sleeping on his quiet bed, would happy dreams visit him—dreams of calm peace and gentle joy!

And thus their childhood passed away; but although by the exigencies of age and sex they must not be at liberty to meet as of old, still they knew that that love of theirs had only

† Presumably for 'whither'.

changed its earlier phase; and even as their persons had ripened, so had their affection for each other. Yes, Robert Grey and Agnes Miller were love's subjects; but while this was the truth—beween themselves sweetly understood—yet none save themselves were privy to it, so well had they preserved the fond and happy secret. And it was to the presence of her, his loved and loving Agnes, that Robert betook himself when he fled, an agonised and determined young man, from the house of his parents.

Mrs Miller had been long since gone, and Agnes now kept her father's house for him. The reader will, therefore, observe that Mr Miller being at the birth-day party, in the dwelling of his old friend, Agnes was alone for the evening, and with blushes and bashful welcomes was Robert received, when he hurried into her sweet presence. Again, as within the solitude of his own chamber did that afflicted youth cast himself upon the nearest couch; and, under the blended feelings of wounded pride and now happy security, he covered his burning face with his hands, and strove in silence to master the emotions that swelled within him. Stunned by the sight of so much agitation—prompted by the gushing, artless impulses of her young heart, she sought to take his hands in her own, and fondly inquired what was the unhappy cause of such great dejection? The sweet, half melting accent of love and kindly pity—falling like dew upon the arid earth—falling thus too, upon his wounded bleeding spirit—and from Agnes' lips! It went about his saddened heart like a lovely glimpse of sunshine on a bleak winter's day—and looking up to that mild, sweet face—into those bright blue eyes of love—he was comforted, and, despite of all his sorrows, felt happy!

And Robert was not ungrateful for this delightful consolation. Warm as youthful gratitude, mingled with love, was his thankfulness. We will not play the spy, to tell how, in all the sacred confidence of trustful affection, they communicated to each other their hopes and fears—their griefs and anxieties—but we may add that, in the fervent vows of unwearying devotion, and unswerving constancy, they found ample recompense for all their troubles. And Robert manfully held by his resolution to depart for a foreign land. Heart-sore, and nearly heart-broken, did he maintain the strength of such necessity; and when, as their tears mingled together, when as mute with woe, Agnes laid her throbbing brow upon her lover's breast, he felt that he was all unworthy of such affection, if not disdaining such ignoble assistance as might be tardily rendered by his father, he should abide by the bold resolve he had taken. And so he did; and well-knowing that nothing he might say of comforting import, would for that evening at least, allay the storm of tumultuous sorrow in the bosom of her he so truly loved, he sought to take his leave, and with the assistance of one confidential friend, to whose house he intended now to betake himself, he hoped in a few days to complete the necessary arrangements for his departure to Australia.

And although her heart was wrung by the thought of her son's departure to that far-off land, Mrs Grey felt that it was the more manly way of attaining his object than any he could have adopted. She had tried her very utmost to obtain for him an education befitting his talents, and had failed; nor was it, she knew[,] a wise policy, now that the dreaded storm was over, and Robert's resolution fixed, to attempt to dis[s]uade him from it, or again broach the subject to his father. But she determined that justice should be done to her boy upon his partial parent; she was determined that he should not go in ignorance of the havoc which his cruel conduct had made; her very soul repudiated the foul affront that Robert had sustained, and, accordingly, when the following day brought back her husband to his senses, she did not spare him. Her words, pregnant with reproach and powerful to conviction, stung the heart of the man; already did a gleam of remorse begin to break upon his soul, as he recalled to mind the

kindly inoffensive manners and words of the patient Robert. He began to relent; he tried—oh, pitiful shift!— lay the blame on Robert's own shoulders—why did he not oftener himself ask for such an education as he required? Pride, he was certain, only had prevented him from assimilating his tastes and ways more to those of his father—a pride which, as a good son, he was bound to subdue and crush out of his heart. But, ah! those were shallow opiates to soothe his sleepless conscience withal! As well might he have attempted to forget his own existance, as endeavour to excuse his conduct with such wretched arguments as these. He at length sent for his son, who, with the help of some money he had saved, now managed to fit himself out as an emigrant; and two days after the message arrived he was to sail for Australia in the then recently-built, but now too famous and ill-fated ship—the Royal Charter.

Here we must let the reader into one of the arrangements which was arrived at between Robert and the friend with whom he found shelter during the two days he was engaged in preparing for the voyage. This friend of his was a young and very amiable lad, also a schoolmate of Robert's, and one with whom he had been accustomed to share all his secrets, except the secret of his love for Agnes. His name was Henry Lind. To him Robert had told all the story of his brother's spleen—of his father's ill-treatment—with a tearful eye, and heart even yet teeming with forgiveness towards both, he declared that he would fain absolve them from the sin of the injuries they had ever done to him; and said, while something whispered to him that their prosperity would not be of long standing, considering the extravagant way of living they had of late adopted, yet no calamity could ever be so great in his eyes, and no tidings so overwhelming, as to hear they were in distress. If this were the case with his father and brother, what would he say when his mother was spoken of? But this friend of his, for the love he bore to him, was to be in his stead at home; so, after he should have arrived at Australia, Henry was to receive from him the first-fruits of his labours in that distant land; he was to keep the money in trust, and if ever he should find out, through keeping a most careful eye upon them, that they should fall into sore straits, instantly a sum of money, adequate to the emergency, should anonymously be forwarded to them. To this his friend had consented, and Robert's mind concerning his parents became comparatively easy.

In exact proportion as Robert's anxiety about his parents' welfare abated, did the agitation of his father about him keep on to grow. Day and night had he been agonised with the desire to see and make amends for his fault of so long standing. He sent a message as we saw, one to which, without intending the least disparagement, Robert returned a mild refusal, adding, at the same time, that a vow he had made, never to return to his father's house, he was determined to keep. His father stormed and fumed—was peevish with the entire household; but again did he send a message, commanding Robert, on his allegiance as a son, to come back and speak with him. The messenger arrived just one hour too late: Robert was gone to enter on board of the Royal Charter, the ship that was to bear him far away from his native land.

With this information the servant returned; whereupon the distracted, erring man, forgetful of all else, ordered the servant to find out what time the Royal Charter was to sail. This, he learned, was to take place that very day; so Francis Grey ordered them to bring round his horse to the door, and thereon set off in pursuit, sparing neither whip nor spur.

An agonizing scene was the parting between Robert Grey and Agnes Miller on the previous evening. She fain would have borne him company to the side of that noble ship, but he could not have sustained the sight of her form receding slowly from his tearful eyes. The kind-hearted girl had promised not to come; but in the middle of that night which preceded their parting, she felt that she must see him go away, even if unseen by any one. It so fell out, that

she took her departure for Liverpool just one half-hour before Robert's father set out to bring him back.

And strange to relate, through an accident little dreamed of by any of those three persons, all of them met in the streets of Liverpool, causing a most painful ordeal for the feelings and resolution of poor Robert Grey, the despised of his father hitherto.

We cannot at present do full justice to the touching scene that followed this luckless meeting—our space is at present exhausted. But next week we will pourtray in all their pathos and interest those parting adieus.

By the manly grief and noble conduct of the son, by the remorse of the father, by the firm devotion and moving sorrow of the meek, beautiful Agnes, together with all the other incidents that lead to the final catastrophe—by the recital of these—we hope to realise all that is implied in the title of this story.

(To be continued.)

(January 7, 1860)

KINDNESS AVENGED;

AN INCIDENT IN THE WRECK OF THE ROYAL CHARTER.

By James Easson.

Part Second.

Heart-sick and weary, jaded in body, and fevered in mind, poor Robert Grey sauntered about the streets of Liverpool in company with the young man who had befriended him hitherto.

No tongue could tell how weary he felt, how dejected and forsaken; and, ah! who could have blamed him—blighted as were his fondest dreams, visions nourished since the days of his boyhood? In the deep silence of night he had brooded over them—all kindly and benevolent in their nature—unselfish and noble in their object. He fain would have filled the place of a minister of the Truth; and it was because of the privileges for good they enjoyed, that he thought them blessed who were already filling that holy office. But the chilling recollection of his father's contempt of the church, and his opposition to all those desires of his own which he most loved to cherish, would again return, bringing along with them despair and chagrin.

But that was all over now; the top-stone had been put upon his misery; for there he was, walking it might be for the last time on the shore of his native land. Neither of them spoke much; for Robert was inwardly filled by his own bitter reflections, and his companion, Henry, also felt sad at thoughts of parting. After they had walked for about an hour Robert suggested that they should enter some place of refreshment, there to await the hour that was to call him away.

Entering a modest-looking hotel, they ordered some refreshment. The waiter indicated a small room, with a table and fixed benches, and here the idea of his utter loneliness burst full on Robert's mind. He leaned his head forward with his face buried in his hands, and the irrepressible tears trickled through between his fingers, and moistened the hard polished boards. What had he done, or what had he left undone, that he should thus be forsaken and neglected in his bitterest hour? He searched his conscience over again, but could think about nothing he might wish to recall.

This thought nerved him; so he arose and said to Henry that he was ready to meet the dread moment of separation and departure. Glad was his friend to see that there was a prospect of Robert's resolution being strengthened; for were they to part in agony, he would for ever be haunted with the painful words and ominous forebodings of that sorrowful one.

Short-sighted and fondly hoping mortals that we all are! Little did they think—Robert and Henry Lind—of the dreadful test which their feelings were fated to sustain; for scarcely were they outside the door of that place of refreshment when Robert found himself face to face with Agnes Miller!

Poor Agnes! she was hurrying from the railway terminus, casting furtive glances on all sides to prevent, if possible, a meeting with Robert, and thus at once break her promise of the former evening, and render his last moment in his native land doubly painful. But there they were, as we have said, face to face—she like to sink with maidenly bashfulness and confusion, so much so that she had to support herself by an adjacent window-sill.

"Why did ye come?" was his tender, yet half-reproachful inquiry.

"Oh, Robert, Robert!" sobbed poor Agnes, "I could not help it. I should have died had I not seen your departure; but, oh, forgive me; I did not want to meet you either. I hoped to see you without being seen. Oh, Robert, Robert!"

'Twas a woman's excuse—weak, yet resistless in its weakness. Henry could not help sympathising with them, for he, too was a lover. Neither did that good-hearted young person feel hurt by Robert's seeming want of confidence—no, but he honoured him for it. He saw that like his own love it was a thing too sacred to be trusted to the care of even his most intimate friend.

"One moment alone with this young lady, Henry!" was Robert's significant remark.

"All right, my boy!" was the response.

Robert led the weeping Agnes into the next street, under shelter of a lofty archway, and there she relieved her over-burdened feelings in a copious flood of tears.

Constrained as their emotions must have been in that busy street, it was the deeper and more intense. That grasp of their hands, how spasmodic and firm—what a world of pent-up anguish and clinging fondness did it express! She would fain have leaned her forehead upon her lover's breast; but, no, they must depart, for it was now time that he were on board ship.

Rejoining the young person they had left for a moment, the three walked in silence towards the place where lay the Royal Charter at her moorings. Twenty minutes and they were at the spot—the dread place of parting. Robert was striving to hide his tears; he turned round to them abruptly, but instantly averted his face again. The steward of the ship advanced and touched his hat, announcing that it was time to be on board. Again did he turn about to say farewell, but it died away in silence on his lips—it was terribly cruel! Each one of that little group felt as if their heartstrings were breaking. At length convulsively—desperately—with his heart agonised by a thousand pangs—like the very pangs of death itself, Robert thrust forth his hand to clasp that of Agnes, but, poor girl, it was too much for her, she grew suddenly faint, amd presently sunk senseless to the earth!

Again did the steward tap Robert on the shoulder to call him away.

But, heedless of steward and all, he flew to raise Agnes from the ground, when, judge of his surprise and vexation, glancing towards a wide street near by, he saw a man on horse-back careering along, and knew the rider to be his own father!

He made a motion to Henry to support Agnes and attend to her, which scarce was done when his father, exhausted and breathless, dismounted beside the afflicted group. Rushing forward with the tears standing in his eyes, he sought to take the hand of Robert in his own, but his son recoiled in astonishment and indignation.

"Stand back, man, stand back!" exclaimed Robert, "Are you come here also to molest me, and embitter my last moment? Keep off, I say! your repentance, father, comes too late. Why

did you wring my heart and force me to desperation like this? Nay, implore me not, father; had you acted toward me as you should have done, neither you nor I would have seen this bitter hour. Father, I will not come back with you. I know you would have me return; but no, my resolution is fixed; God knows you need pity, and I pity you. Be kind to my mother, and be careful and affectionate to George, my brother. There is a poor stricken heart, too," he added, with a burst of tears, pointing to Agnes, "There she is—the daughter of your old friend Adam Miller—she loves me, and I love her again; be kind to her if you love me. Henry, Agnes, all of you farewell, perhaps for—— "

"No, no, Robert," almost screamed his father, "don't say that word—not for ever—not for ever—no, not—not that, my boy! Come home with me, Bobby, it will be made all right for ye lad; think—think of, of the fatigue—the fatigue lad, that I've endured. I've rode post to this place to ketch ye in time. Now, do come—see there's a crowd collecting, Bobby—don't hold yer father spe—stop sir! come back, I say. Bobby, I command ye, sir, come back! Well if ye will go—dy'e hear—on your head be my cur—— "

"Hold, father! shrieked Robert, in affright, "silence! Would you blast my entire future life? would you send your own child an accursed thing from his fatherland? would you crush—— "

"No, no, boy—no!" spasmodically gasped his father, "but I implore you to come back to your mother and your home. I implore you, Bobby! But if you won't, then,—then—well, lad, if you won't—you'll not let us part in anger, Bobby, my boy—eh? Don't let us separate at loggerheads, boy? No, no; give me your hand; yes, that's it—that's it. Well, Bobby, good-bye—God bless ye, lad. I wish ye all success, since you *are* to go, my son. Say farewell—there's a good fellow!"

Poor Robert, completely overwhelmed by his father's repentance, strove vainly to find speech. At length, with a heart-rending sob, he faltered out—

"Farewell, father, farew—— "

He burst into tears.

Then once more did the steward touch him on the shoulder; one anxious look at the insensible girl who loved him so well; and one shake of his friend's and his father's hands, "Be kind to Agnes, both of you," he sobbed out; and then, jumping into the small boat, was rapidly taken out to the ill-fated Royal Charter.

Gladly do we quit this scene of woe; for we need not linger over it, to tell how lonely seemed the world to poor Agnes when she recovered from her swoon, nor how poignant was the remorse of Francis Grey when his son's form and the boat that contained him receded from their sight. Nor of the sadness of Henry Lind, who nevertheless had promised to be a friend to Agnes, and not only so, but he determined to interest the young girl whom he loved in the story and fortunes of the hapless daughter of Adam Miller.

A day of doom and of ill fortune was that on which poor Robert Grey left the shores of England—a day of ill fortune, we mean, for his father and his brother George. Nothing seemed to thrive with them thereafter. Peace of mind, good fortune, and the respect of himself and his neighbours fled from George. Between him and his father there were criminations and recriminations; endless squabbles, and terms of mutual aversion. The neighbours near by heard all this, and, like good neighbours, repeated the same with illustrations of their own. But no reformation in their habits ensued; tippling was carried out in private, much to the acute grief of the really kind, good heart of Mrs Grey, who did every thing she could to subdue the evil propensities of her husband and her son, but to no purpose. It was generally understood, too, that Robert's departure was owing to a refusal on his father's part to furnish him with a

suitable education to meet his views, and a great many religious people withdrew from him their support in consequence. Thus, Francis Grey had more than the sorrows of remorse to bear, and he found the torment great and bitter indeed.

George took to the society of the dissolute and low of the place, and among them, on account of his father's reputed wealth, he was idolized, and became a kind of demigod. Every word he uttered was an oracle. The landlord paid him every manner of deference, knowing it was well to be in the good graces of young Grey, the rich merchant's favourite son. For this cause were the roughs polite and submissive. When George sang a song, it was at once voted capital; if he made a speech, it was a model of eloquence and wit; when he ordered, it was done forthwith; and when he got tipsy and grew quarrelsome, no one dared to gainsay him. To the more slavish of his admirers and pimps, the landlord gave liberal beakers of ale; for well did he know, sly man, that although Francis Grey was a falling star, yet his son's little bill would, for credit's sake, be paid. So in every way did he attempt to get the headstrong young spendthrift into his debt.

In the establishment there was a plump, saucy, rosy-cheeked bar-maid, whose ripe lips and sparkling black eyes, had lit the flame of passion in the youth's heart. She coquetted with him, keeping his mind in a constant state of ferment, all with a view to her own amusement and her master's profit. Thus George never lay out of the house; morning, noon, and night he was hanging about the bar. They drew him into numberless wagers, all made with a certain view to his loss and their gain; there were cock-fights, bruising matches, and feastings—everything to make their dupe to dissipate his means. His father, who was acting out, if not the same, at least as expensive a course of foolishness, knew as little about it as though it were not being done; and every one in the neighbourhood expected to hear of a speedy break-down, which was certain to ensue.

At one of their jollifications held shortly after Robert's departure, someone hinted that Agnes Miller and he had been on terms of intimacy as lovers, and that, by way of joke, George should now, in the event of his brother's absence, take care of and comfort his brother's sweetheart. With an oath, the young man cried that he thought the same, and that next day he would go to the house of Adam Miller and request that he should be his brother's proxy in the affections of the lovely and afflicted Agnes. But the drunken crew, impatient for some mad sport, suggested that it should be done that very night. So, to please them, up rose the foolish puppy, and calling them all to witness his boldness and the manly way in which he would acquit himself, he there and then got up and set out, all intoxicated as he was, to the house of his father's friend; the tipsy herd trooping along behind, fully expecting to see the madcap bundled neck and crop into the street. In this expectation, they were not disappointed.

Henry Lind and his sweetheart were in the house when George arrived, comforting and soothing the afflicted and forlorn Agnes. They were startled by a loud, rude knocking at the front door, and the voice of George Grey, husky with drink or excitement, was frequenly heard demanding to see and speak with Miss Miller. The servant was then overheard endeavouring to caution the coarse-spoken boy, but pushing the menial aside, he asserted that Miss Miller *must* be quite ready to speak with him, as everybody else, whom he had lately seen, made it a point to be.

Pushing up the door of the parlour, he stood in the presence of the trembling Agnes and her two friends; and scarcely deigning to look upon Henry Lind and his companion, he lifted his hat with a jaunty air, made a sweeping bow, and then in a tone of disgusting affectation, addressed himself to Agnes:—

"Haw!" he exclaimed, "I just dropped in—aw—Miss Millaw—to—to—aw—see you, if you please? 'Ope I see you well—aw—Miss Millaw?"

"I thank you, sir," faltered Agnes. "I now feel quite well, sir. Pray, be seated."

"Yas," drawled the insolent puppy, sliding into a chair. "Some gen'lemen—aw—I don't quite remembaw—said you were badly, Miss Millaw; aw—could I be of—aw—any service to you now—aw—now that our Bob is gone? Shall—aw—be very 'appy, Miss Millaw!"

"I really don't understand you, sir," said Agnes, much astonished.

"Don't understand me—aw—well—aw—well—you see Miss Millaw—you and our Bob kept company it seems, and—aw"—

"Sir!" cried Agnes, indignantly, "I trust you did not come here to insult me?"

"Not a bit, Miss Millaw, not a bit; only that—aw—I—aw—thought you might need a beau—aw—you see"—

"Mr Grey," interrupted Henry, his face flushed with indignation at the affront thus put upon poor Agnes, "much as it must pain me, I feel bound to denounce your insulting speech to this young lady; be pleased to bethink yourself, sir, and withdraw from the room!"

"And who the deuce are you, sir?" cried George, eyeing Henry with sovereign scorn; "I, sir, am a gentleman, how dare you speak so to me?"

"Because you spoke rudely to this lady, sir," was Henry's quiet reply. "Judging by your speech, sir, there is nothing gentle about you. Behave as a gentleman, and share in our conversation; do else and leave the room, least I assist you to do so!"

"Ha!" shouted the coarse lout, "do you say so?" We'll see, we'll see; 'spose you are some barber's clerk come here to fill my brother Bob's shoes, eh? I say, clerky, how are you off for soap?—nothing like lather—I beg your pardon—nothing like leather. All right, old fellow, I think"—

"Sir!" said Henry, in a voice that took the breath from George, "leave the apartment this instant!"

"Never, sir. I'd be hang—"

Henry arose and laid his hand upon the collar of George's coat.

"Will you leave the room quietly or not?" he asked.

"I shan't go—"

"Then you *shall* go out otherwise," was the retort; and, suiting the action to the word, Henry lifted the brawler clean up by his clothes, bore him into and along the passage with one hand, whilst with the other he opened the front door and flung the puppy into the middle of the street.

A perfect roar of laughter and derision from the hirelings of the inn greeted this inelegant exit of the impudent George, who, gathering himself up, began an assault upon the front door, which speedily brought upon him the now fairly aroused young man from within. Henry waved his hand for a moment to command silence, and then said, that since the insolent young man, Mr George Grey, had grossly offended both him and two ladies who were in the house, he felt it his duty to punish Mr Grey by the unceremonious ejectment they had seen; but that since he had once more repeated the offence, nothing short of a sound caning would serve to keep him quiet. The mob, anxious for some fun, applauded the speech, whilst Henry caught George by the neck of his coat once more. Up went the cane, and down fell a shower of sharp, smarting stripes upon the back, shoulders, and legs of the hapless lout, who fairly screamed out for mercy and a cessation of the tormenting cane, which quivered in every fibre as it whirled and struck!

"There! Mr George Grey," cried Henry, as he flung the wretched youth from him, "such is the medicine of which, since a boy, you have had but too little. Go! and may it prove effectual to you as a life-lesson."

Henry then calmly mounted the steps at the door, and entered the house amidst the suppressed cheers of the fickle mob.

Cowed, shame-stricken, and defeated, George slunk away amidst the scoffs and jeers of the multitude of underlings. Two days afterwards he joined a company of strolling players, and for about four years was not heard of. His part in this story is not, however, played, as we will yet have occasion to see.

And during those four years Francis Grey made no advances toward a better life—he was left by his children; and his wife, disconsolate at the loss of her boys, seldom smiled or seemed happy. At length their establishment broke down—ruined in pocket, in reputation, he was obliged to seek, and be thankful, for a clerk's situation under his friend Adam Miller, and to that good man's office he was transferred, after selling off and ostensibly retiring from business on his own account. But even in his retirement he did not give up his evil habit of secret tippling and drinking.

Robert, in due time, reached Australia, and for a period his success was not very remarkable. But he had a grand object in view, so, as he said to his mother on that night of parting, he would dig and toil both late and early to get an education for himself, and the day's end would surely find him prosperous. He went to the gold-fields, he wrought with a diligent hand, he gave way to none of the low, though popular vices of those about him; and ever when he wanted encouragement would he think of Agnes, of his mother, and also of his father, whom, despite of his evil ways, he did still revere. And by-and-bye his hoard accumulated and grew greater—he sent home to Henry Lind a certain portion of his earnings—he had a strong conviction of the truth that every man is morally bound to give to works and objects of mercy and of charity, as he has been prospered; and also that it is but in proportion as a man does this that he is prosperous or unfortunate in the world. He had no special work in that wild wilderness whereon to spend his means, so he sent home that portion which he could spare, and week by week he saw his rough and rugged way smoothed out before him, as if providentially. Doubtless he often sighed for home, but he was ever and anon getting letters—epistles of fondest affection from that dear one whose love was the bright star that beamed sweetly on his lone pathway. With what alacrity did he hasten to meet the waggon which every month brought newspapers and letters from the old country, and how greedily were they devoured! He prayed for their welfare who were at home; and he appreciated the idea that his own petition and that of those who loved him in the far-off land were both, in all likelihood, ascending to Heaven's throne in the same pure censer, and at the same moment.

The salary which his father received as a clerk was of course small; so, what with the efforts they made to live as richly as possible, and what with the continued drinking by his father, it took all their means to make ends meet. But never were they in straits, but a letter came, bearing a local post-mark, with as much money enclosed as at least put them past their then pressing straits. Mrs Grey judged that the donor was her son Robert; but Francis, receiving the benefit of the cash, cared little about who the giver might be. Superfluous is it to say that Robert was the good spirit who sent the help; and this, doubtless, was the cause of his prosperity in the land of his adoption.

Things went on for nearly four years, as we have stated, in the family of Francis Grey. Robert prospered in the far off land, and shared it with those whom he loved with a warm-hearted, kindly, and love-begetting will, which all must like, and honour while they admire. Nothing, we think, is so noble and good in the heart of a man, and especially in the heart of a young man, who has ever so many temptations to resist, as the still abiding recollection of the

home and friends of his youth; who tears himself oftentimes away from scenes and objects of extravagance and waste, that he may ever and anon be adding to the comfort of mind and body of those who long denied themselves that he might enjoy. Yes, we do most sincerely honour such an one, and as regards our hero Robert, we hold him up as a model in this respect, as one who, when he was far away, did not forget "the old folks at home."

His brother, how different! Once away, he forgot completely the little village of his nativity. Of his father, mother, brother, and all—but not of the flogging which Henry administered to him at the door of Adam Miller's house. The fluctuating, hand to hand exigencies of a strolling player's existence, drove most of them all out of his mind. One day he feasted, another day he fasted—one day intoxicated, and another day at death's door for lack of the darling stimulant—that old and miserable stay of a toper's life; and God knows that *is* a miserable stay indeed. Driven from place to place by the authorities, striving to please louts and clowns who would not be pleased, enduring cold and exposure in all weathers, but still attached to that hopeless profession by the fascination of its gaud and tinsel. So for four years did George Grey battle with the world, and exercised a profession which scarce afforded him daily bread.

But four years was fated to bring him back once more in the direction of his father's house; and thus we have him present at the strange denouement of this drama. It was Monday, the 25th Oct. 1859, that Francis Grey sat in the half-genteel lodging which his vices had brought him to occupy; he was sulking because his wife would not favour him by going out to procure gin to satisfy his thirst, when the door was thrown wide up, and in marched George, dressed in the seedy suit of a "walking gentleman" on the stage of a country theatre. Mrs Grey screamed and flew to embrace him, with all the love and warmth of a mother's ever warm heart—whilst he, not in the least affected, took the whole as coolly as if it were a bit of stage effect.

"Ha-haw! my dear little mamma!" he cried, in the true theatrical twang, "how are ye? Daddy, how goes it, eh?—excellent, well, most noble son, says my papa—doesn't he? To be sure he does. Tip us yer old flipper, as I said 'tother night in 'Black-Eyed Susan.' Now, do it heartily, daddy. my lad, and I'll give you a ticket for my benefit night—yes, in a front box too, along with mother. Now, if I don't, may I be——"

"George, George," cried his father with true sorrow, "you haven't taken to the stage, have you?"

"Taken to the stage!—yes, to be sure I have, my dear father. I had a turn for the boards, d'ye see, so I just went upon them. And where's the damage? My brother, Bobby, wanted to be a 'clargy,' as the Irish say; and I wanted to go on the stage, because I had a notion; it took no money, and I soon learned the art. So daddy, ye see, I'm no longer George, but Mister George Grey, principal tragedian of the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, or elsewhere. Just fancy that, eh? Sounds well, dosen't it? Ah, but it looks capital in print—you should see it. Now, look here, daddy, I'll just let you hear me speak Othello's speech before the Senators. Here's the Moor, and there's the sen——"

"Oh, George, George," cried Mrs Grey, "don't distress us with those profane plays you have learned; sit down and tell your father and I how you came to be connected with such a low class of people as those theatrical folks are. Do tell us; there's a good fellow—do."

"Well you see, mamma," began the prodigal, "I need not mince matters, you know; I got a sound thrashing from that young fellow, Henry—Henry—what's his name? never mind; it was cowardly on his part, that it was. I was but a boy, d'ye see, and he was a man then; but if I could just see him now,——haloo!"

At that very instant up flew the door of the lodging, and in rushed Henry with the news that the Royal Charter, lately come into Moelfra Bay, had met with some accident; that it

unexpectedly contained Robert, whose name was in the list of passengers; and that a great deal of gold was amongst the goods brought home. Up started George, and inquired whether Robert himself had brought any gold; to which Henry, surprised at the question coming from one who appeared to him a stranger, coldly made answer that doubtless Robert had brought home something along with him in the ship. This seemed enough for George; for, leaving his father to the stupefaction into which this announcement had thrown him, and his mother to the shock of her amazement, away he flew, hired a conveyance, and set out on the instant to meet his brother, hoping that, after rendering such assistance as he could, and making a great show of fraternal affection, he might get possession of a share of Robert's hard-earned money.

Whir! went the dizzy wheels—on, on, onwards to Liverpool went the vile schemer, and speedily was the city gained. Fully anticipating a large sum of money through his base plot, he felt warranted to enter a public house, where, sitting down, he called for a quantity of liquor. The fatal habit had the better of the youth most completely; and though he intended, thus sitting down, only to refresh himself with one glass, he was defeated in his intention, and drinking more and more, he at length sank upon the sofa, and fell sound asleep.

It was about twelve o'clock on the following day when he awoke; then, starting up, his ears were saluted with all the sounds of a terrific tempest. The heavens above were lurid with the appearances of a set storm; the wind careered hither and thither, howling, now miles away, and presently rebounding against the window of the room in which he was, threatening to blow it in. In the house equal disorder and commotion seemed to prevail—he heard cries of anguish outside the door of his chamber, the voices of weeping women; there were excited footsteps on the stairs and passages. "Surely it is a dream," thought he, and he rushed out upon the stair-landing.

He inquired what was the cause of all that commotion?—but looks of atonishment were for a time the only reply. That some calamity had occurred he felt sure; or he was in a madhouse, and those were the poor inmates! Suddenly catching hold of a woman who passed him, he held her till she communicated to him the startling information that the Royal Charter had been smashed to pieces in Dulas Bay.

He staggered as if shot through the heart. But not long did his emotion last, for, springing down stairs, he shouted for the ostler, and ordered him to bring out his beast, and yoke it to the conveyance with all speed. Whilst he was repeating his order in the stable-yard, he observed a crowd of persons pass the gate and enter the house, but he was struck by noticing that Henry Lind was amidst the crowd, and that they were carrying something upon a shutter in the middle of them. A terrible thought struck him—it must be Robert, his brother, returned from the far off land in which he had been sojourning throughout the last few years. In a moment he was in the house, and, ah! his thought was but too correct.

There, stretched upon a bed, lay the apparently lifeless body of his poor persecuted brother, and a momentary pang of compassion moved him. But it was only momentary, for he turned to Henry, who stood by, and addressed him, all-absorbed as he was in grief:—

"This is my brother Bobby, isn't it?" he said.

Henry now recognised the unworthy one who spoke to him, and he made answer—struggling with his swelling tears—

"Yes, George, and is it not a heart-breaking, oh! a cruel, cruel sight?"

"Yas—yas—certainly, very bad, very bad, indeed; but I say—is the tin all gone?"

Henry looked at him in blank astonishment.

"I don't know what you mean, George," he replied.

"The tin, man, the rowdy, the blunt—more properly called the *money!*"

"Oh, George, George, for shame!—look at your poor brother Robert, and say you repent of that heartless expression! The cargo, gold and all, is at the bottom of the sea."

"Is it, by jingo? then I'm off—I've been too long here, and two days more. By-the-bye, Mr Henry—what-dy'e-call-it—you have a bit of an account to settle with me for that thrashing you gave me four years ago. I'll serve you out, sir, very smartly and very sweetly, d'ye hear? Don't forget, my hearty, I'm with the old man, and I'll fight you this night when you get back. Farewell."

The heartless reprobate went out of the house, paid his due, and leapt into the vehicle. He laid the whip to the horse, and was off again towards his father's house with all the speed he could apply.

Still the tempest roared on. He soon cleared the city, and was whirling away, making the lash to whistle about the horse's ears, for he was maddened with disappointment, and upon the dumb animal alone could he wreak his spite. He was now in the open country, and his speed was at the best. While he was careering along like the wind, little heeding where the beast might take him, suddenly—in a moment—it went smash against a dead wall with a force that killed the horse instantly. The shafts flew into a hundred pieces, the body of the vehicle was shattered, and he—the impious one, the hard-hearted plotter, the flinty-hearted ingrate—was flung out into the road, where, coming down with a dash, he broke his right arm, and, uttering a thrilling scream of agony, fainted in the middle of the miry way.

Tremendous but merited judgment! There he lay who cared for no one—who had flouted the sight of his poor brother nearly dead, rescued as by a miracle from the devouring ocean. There he now lay, as insensible as his poor, persecuted, way-weary brother Robert. The hoarse wind bellowed among the tops of the tall, bare trees, and seemed to sing a discordant song of triumph over the prostrate and unworthy young man.

Robert had lost all the gold he brought in the Charter, but he had insured his life for a large amount, and also a great portion of the gold he had brought. Thus he took care that, even if he found a grave in the bosom of the wild waters, his mother and friends would still have been cared for. But he had the insurance papers made fast to his person when the crash came, and there they were all safe when he once more became conscious.

For hours did he lie in that precarious trance in the public house in Liverpool. But no sooner was he restored to life, than his thoughts reverted to his home. Henry bade him to soothe himself; but Robert vowed that one sight of his mother and of his Agnes would more than compensate him for all the dangers he had experienced. So Henry was fain to comply; and getting also a conveyance, they set out by the same way which the unfeeling George had taken.

By the time they arrived at the place, a crowd had assembled where the judgment-like accident occurred to the vile-hearted George; and no words can ever express the grief and anxiety of Robert when he saw his brother's distress. He held those bleeding temples between his hands, himself all excited and unnerved by the terrible occurrences of the wreck. He whispered consolation, and told George that so long as he had a crust, both of them should share it alike. Henry was affected to tears. He mentioned not, and never did mention, the words of George at the inn; but he knew it would make no odds to that noble one: and so they reached home at last, and were received with all the welcomes that at least a fond mother could give to her long separated, and now returned children.

We will not lengthen this narrative; and as for the moral, we opine that it needs no application by us. If, in the bright days of ruddy plenty, Francis Grey had dealt in equity by his children,

then had they been happy, united, loving, and useful. Partial and one-sided, all was jealousy, hidden sorrow, racked patience, grieved affection, separation, and ultimate disaster. Let the lesson commend itself to all whom it may concern, and that is not a few.

Robert slowly recovers the shock of the shipwreck. He is still determined to prosecute his scheme of entering the Church, and he has saved as much as will educate himself, maintain his father, and his now repentant brother George. Agnes, faithful one, her love for the wanderer is still the same—she will wait till he has gained his favourite position, because well she knows he will never be happy short of it. Do we need to ask—is not this a noble avenging of injuries done? Is not this splendid reprisals? Father, brother, late enemies, or unfeeling and utterly indifferent to his stupendous sorrrows—respecting—honouring—loving him! Friendship, unfaded and unaltered by absence—love, also, still hopeful, still precious—these, all these, won or preserved to him by meekness and patience! Yes; the title of our tale is amply fulfilled; it shews, in all its fulness that justice is approved, partiality punished, and KINDNESS AVENGED!

(January 14, 1860)

SEEN BETTER DAYS: A STORY OF EDINBURGH LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY."

Edinburgh, a city of peerless beauty, refinement, and taste, is also the abode of much that is offensive to the eye, ungracious to the sense, and saddening to the soul. There, in deep and lonely oblivion, dwell the victims of fortune—fortune deceitful, hard, and unmerciful. There dwells the rake and the wealthy profligate, slaves to their own lusts. There dwells and thrives the magnificent and meretricious harlot, side by side with the brazen-faced bawd—the one brilliant in satin and brocade, the other flaunting in flimsy muslin, coarse rouge, and coarser impudence. There prowls the young thief, cunning as a serpent, supple as an eel; and there, in some places, swaggers the insolent ruffian, who stares in the faces of the passers by, pushes them them off the pavement, and, in answer to their complaints, dares them to brutal fight, or loads them as they move along with a shower of galling and degrading abuse.

There, too, dwells the hard-wrought workman, whose business it is to keep in repair the splendid houses and palaces of the rich and great, and who, in times of scarcity, is never out of debt, and seldom happy at home. There the aged, remaining sister of a once flourishing family lives; glad now, poor soul, to work hard at anything, living on a morsel, so that she may rent a little nook, wherein to cherish in solitude the vanished visions of her youth. But among all these there also lives the young widow, once beautiful and blooming as the rose, whose faded cheek is often wet with unconscious tears, but who has vowed that never while life remains in her frame, and while memory retains its power, will she forget him who doted on her in life, and who, though dead, yet speaks to her heart with all the tenderness and affection of happier days.

Let our readers follow us, and we will furnish them with an instance of this latter kind—one most interesting in itself, and highly characteristic of the splendid Modern Athens.

In the attic of a house, bounded on the north by College Street, and on the south by West Nicolson Street, in the Old Town, dwelt such a poor and interesting one as we have described. She was the widow of a young clergyman, who, while he lived, gave promise of great ability in his profession; and believing that such ability had been given him for high and glorious purposes, strove to improve it, fell a victim to his zeal, and sank in the arms of disease and dissolution. But while he yet prosecuted his theological and literary studies, he met with and loved the beautiful Catherine Henderson. Her beauty, grace, and winning simplicity won his

whole heart, and secured to her all that heart's devotion. She lived in the village to which he annually went to pass his holidays. She lived with her mother, the widow of a once thriving farmer; and her mother, when she knew of the attachment that had sprung up between the youthful student and her daughter, felt glad of it, and testified her approval of his advances by the assent which she gave to Catherine when leave to meet her lover was required from her. Time rolled away, and some months after the term of the young man's college career was over, the aged divine of Catherine's native village, who for forty long years had ministered there, died. The parishioners, many of whom knew and loved the betrothed of Catherine Henderson, gave the youth an invitation to become their minister. He accepted the offer with joy, and when the day arrived on which he was to minister for the first time before them, he hailed it as the proudest one of his life. It was a thing beyond all things sweet and cheering to know that Catherine and her mother were present in the sacred place, listening to him with pleasure and attention—regarding him, too, with looks of kindly anxiety and wistfulness. He strove to excel; he did so, and exceeded even his own most sanguine imaginations. He dilated with living eloquence upon the honours, duties, difficulties, and after-rewards of the pastoral office; and when he had finished his discourse, and after the service came to a close, he was met in the vestry by a host of admirers, who were loud in his praise, prodigal of their compliments, and eager to accord him such a welcome as seldom falls to the lot of man in like circumstances.

With the youthful pair love's early dream was fast reaching its consummation, and so in glad and grateful mood they set about to fully enjoy it. Well for Catherine was it that they did so; for some months after their marriage her mother departed this world—blessing her daughter and her young husband, commending Catherine more fully to his love, and counselling her child, if it were possible, to be ever more kind, loving, and thoughtful towards her partner as the months and years rolled onward. And well did the sweet, young Catherine understand and appreciate these holy counsels, proceeding from the lips of one so good and so well beloved.

Meanwhile the fame of the young preacher continued to increase and spread; everywhere he was in request; from far and near they came to listen to his preaching. Nor was he long in the ascendant when he received a pressing call from a wealthy congregation in a populous and crowded city, where, would he consent to come, fame, appreciation, and emolument were certain to be the result. But his soul pined not for such dazzling honours; already his cup of bliss was full; but he thought of the proposals which had been made to him. He weighed the arguments and inducements they held out, exactly as he promised he would do, before settling in his heart upon any special line of conduct. He saw much to attract him citywards. Fame, that strongest and dearest bribe to the unsophisticated heart, glanced and sparkled before his vision like a glory, and made all the array appear one bright and glorious dream. Luxury, in the shape of a sumptuous dwelling; society, riches, and sufficient appreciation and renown, in the form of a magnificent church, wherein should assemble the rank, wealth, and influence of the country round; great crowds of men and women, Sabbath after Sabbath, seeking for admission to his church, their earnest, admiring faces upturned to his own, each and all of them marvelling at his powers, and worshipping the divine gift he so fully and richly possessed. All these things he thought of; and when he had weighed them properly, taken in connection with the idea of a town charge, as well as his own general weakness, he felt confirmed in the resolution to remain by his rustic congregation, among whom the duties were more easy, and the felicity quite as great as his heart could desire.

But he got no rest from the importunities of those denizens of the city. Still they pressed him with their importunities. They would not suffer him to remain in his humble but congenial

retirement. Innumerable were the arguments by which they endeavoured to move him from his resolution. His talents, they said, were never given to be hidden in obscurity, far from those centres of genial appreciation and talent-fostering influences. By dint of such persuasives as this, they at length prevailed, and he in due time was transferred to the supervision of a lucrative and laborious town charge.

There all these visions they had conjured up before his mind's eye were amply realised. He was adored and flattered till sheer weariness made him sick of it. Too much of good sense was his not to see that it was a very fickle and evanescent worship they gave to him. He soon saw their professions were not the genuine outpourings of unaffected attachment, and their spoken piety but the mesmeric see-saw of popular sentimentalism. Moreover, all his gloomy forebodings concerning his own health were rapidly being confirmed. Still, he must be up to the mark on Sabbath days, and how was it possible so to be when every day he must dance attendance in drawing-rooms, and play the part of lady's man at times and places all and sundry. He was inwardly harassed and tormented between the desire to please in society, and the deep, earnest craving after a quiet conscience—one that would not upbraid him with the idea that he sought to serve God and Mammon both, and each with equal zeal. And he more and more despised the hollow-hearted men among whom his own supineness had thus brought him. How unfeeling, how heartless, how utterly void of thought and reflection they were! Concerning themselves with the most contemptible and useless trifles, frittering their days and years away, improving neither in mind nor in morals; seeing the sun rise and set upon their view, their only thought being how they would kill time, and tax the patience of those who were unhappy enough to share the light of their favour. Yes; often did that young man, when, at the close of some stupid and inane gathering, he escaped from their fetters, and found himself alone amid the silence and gloom of the streets, feel his heart grow sore with a remorseful bitterness; and not unfrequently he shuddered at the idea that some humble parishioner, for whom, a few hours before, no life was expected, might possibly have made the last dark step from time to eternity, no prayer ascending to Heaven for his fainting but immortal spirit, from the lips he best loved to hear—lips which he had learned to respect and revere!

But if the transgression was thus great, the reward of duty it discharged soon descended upon the young man's devoted head. He at length sank under the strain of incessant engagements, and went down to the grave in the bloom of his days, when the bright sky of a spring day shone down on the earth, and when flower and fountain were smiling into new and gladsome life.

Catherine sank into a deep and cureless despondency; the Eden of their loves was vanished like a dream. Her heart's idol, sorely against her will, in a moment of weakness, yielded to the fascinations of the wily serpent, Fame: a serpent no less destructive to him than was the one whose seductions beguiled Mother Eve in the old primeval bowers. As soon as the agonising task of consigning her darling husband to the narrow house was over, she arranged to leave the city, whose influence had proved so fatal to all her heart's sweetest anticipations, and went to reside in Edinburgh; her companion and comfort being the one sweet boy whose birth had sealed and consummated their nuptial felicity.

And there she lived, a lone and sorrowing one, in the midst of a neighbourhood where she could seek for no sympathy or find any balm for her wounded, weary heart. She had received invitations to come and live with them from her husband's relations, but had she gone to live with them ever would the tender memories of past days have been stirred anew, and her poor spirit made to bleed afresh by unavailing regrets. She retained some of the furniture they had in former years. She had his arm-chair. his study-table, and his writing-desk, with all his

favourite books and pictures. But, ah, they looked sadly out of place ranged round the coarse walls of that miserable attic. The pretty bit of carpet, too, had been of his choosing, and it was pretty indeed. But on bright and rosy afternoons she took quiet walks in the meadows and the park, her only delight being to see her sweet boy scampering over the sward, plucking the gowans and laughing gleefully in the excess of his child-like happiness. As he gambolled there, so like in face to his beloved sire, she could not repress the bright tear that sprang unconscious to her eye, thinking, poor one, how lonely indeed the world would seem to her if he too were to be removed from her soul's embrace. And so her days wore on; no one ever intruded their attention upon her; but, if it had been that she had taken to herself some one worthy of her confidence, some kind-hearted one of her sex, not unlikely it is but that she would have told of times when the world seemed all fair and beautiful, and, with a gush of hot tears running down her yet lovely cheeks, she might say in conclusion:—Sister of mine, I am lone and friendless, God knows; but it was not always so with me. Once love was mine, and almost perfect happiness, but a cloud has darkened my noon of life. Pity me, feel for me, weep with me—I am a poor faded leaf. Nevertheless, I have—Seen Better Days.

(September 15, 1860)

THE BREEZE BORNE LETTERS.

A STORY OF FASHIONABLE LIFE IN EDINBURGH.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

Part First.

The ardent-minded young man of a fanciful or adventurous turn, seeking for scenes congenial to his heart, will find no place so fitting as the midst of a populous and far-spreading city. There is his element, for there all his inclinations may take a license, wide and expansive. Is he poetical? There he has but to step down the street a little way, and presently he is met by some witching nymph, with mild blue eyes of love, features of seraphic sweetness, and locks of wavy gold—beautiful, soft, and shining as an angel's wing. Is he a wild, harum-scarum wag? Then, in the city, he may fully and freely desport himself. Yonder, for instance, is a row in the street. Some noisy, blear-eyed apple-woman has taken it into her head to get drunk, and annoy the police. She has coolly squatted her down in the mire, from whence she now squares away at the little boys like a man, singing all the while some drunken ditty, adding to its effect by sundry gesticulations, highly provoking to the policeman, who has no ear for music, and no eye for the humorous or the picturesque. There the youth may stand till every spark of patience forsakes the peeler's heart. He begins to pull the jolly female fruiterer most ungallantly about, and hits her a rap with his baton. Up flies the youth's hot blood, forward he goes, pitches into the policeman's corporation, and is all but killing him, when lo! another peeler heaves in sight. But the youth has pluck in him—he disdains to flee. The second policeman seizes him, so does the first, and away he goes "up by;" where, next morning, he tables 10s, or goes twenty days to prison, for interrupting policeman Strutt in the discharge of his lawful duty.

This story is neither absolutely one of romance nor one of adventure, but is a pleasant mixture of both. It begins in mystery, developes into love, diverges into laughter, and dissolves in a touch of gratifying politeness.

On a bright Saturday afternoon, a young man, walking through a street in the New Town of Edinburgh, observed what seemed to be a few pieces of waste paper flying about with the

wind. Imagining at first that they were some such scraps as may any day be seen so carried hither and thither, he was about to let them take their course; but, on second thoughts, he went after, stooped down, and took them up. They consisted of three letters loosely bound together by a small-headed pin, evidently meant to fix them to the wood work of some bed-room or other apartment. The paper of the first was of a soft pink, and the odour of lavender still adhered to it. The top of the page had these words, "Copy Letter," written upon it. The writing was in a beautiful female hand, and the signature at the end was "Charlotte Cramond." It was in every respect a neat, elegant, and lady-like performance,

The second letter, written on fine white note-paper, marked with a private seal, was written in apparent haste, and in a handwriting somewhat constrained. It was short, but whether expressive or not we leave the reader to judge; for, seeing its contents are essential to the right understanding of this story, we lay it fully before them. The writing was as follows:—

"My Dearest Charlotte,—Again I must seek your forgiveness for rudeness committed in excess of zeal for your safety and felicity. To ask for your pardon on the strength of my deep and unchanging love for yourself, were a too common and hackneyed plea; and yet, I must be fain to even again advance it in palliation of my late offence. I have no other excuse to offer; for, blinded by the rage of the moment through seeing that insolent and pertinacious intruder Murray tormenting you with his attentions, and monopolizing your society, I acted as I did on that luckless night. He is altogether so inferior to youself, his family pride and——

"Charlotte, dear Charlotte, I am wrong. I did not write to disparage him—only to comfort yourself, and seek your renewed favour; which, as I anticipate, will prove the restoration of our mutual happiness. That you said you loved me once; that your heart is still unaltered; that it never will alter, might certainly be enough for me; yet dearest, a love like mine brooks not even the shadow of a rival claim. That you still do and feel all these things come yourself and tell me, at seven o'clock in the —— Gardens, where I shall look for your appearance with all the impatience of the waiting lover. Can you refuse me?—nay, I know you will not refuse me. In the hope, dear Charlotte, of seeing you at seven, I remain, sincerely, your devoted

"Richard Glover."

The third letter, written in a bold, sweeping hand, was expressive, and read as follows:—

"Miss Cramond,—Perhaps you think it became you, the pointed disdain and incivility with which you treated me on the evening of Mr Wood's party? I tell you it did not. Neither shall it profit you in any respect.

"Arthur Murray has been bred a gentleman; Richard Glover is a spooney, and a confirmed molly-coddle; then, pray, Miss Cramond, in what respect is he on a par with myself, on whom the frown of your displeasure has so signally alighted? To myself, I protest you are barely civil; but on him you smile! The slight of Wednesday evening I keenly felt, but I as keenly resent it, and I shall make reprisals in due time. You were pleased to say that, 'you should have known better than come in my way;' and as if to point the slight, you said you should not see me, nay, nor even speak to me in future! Miss Cramond, if I have displeased you in following you so closely as I have done, I am sorry for it; but I have vowed to make my feelings known to you, and I shall yet force from you a hearing. What! there is, as you well know, few houses in our circle in which I should thus sue in vain, and thus I feel the chill of your aversion the more acutely. As for Glover, I will reckon up old scores with him; and meantime I but satisfy my own heart in acquainting you with the fact, that I intend to watch still more zealously for an opportunity to tell you all my mind in respect to yourself. Apologising for this expression of my selfishness, I wish you, Miss Cramond, a very good morning.—Arthur Murray."

The first letter by Miss Cramond repeated the substance of the other two, and was evidently addressed to some confidential female friend. But the narrative was ever and anon broken in upon by expressions of real delight at the idea of a reconciliation with the writer of the first letter, as well as by confessions of the mental misery which a suspension of kindly feelings between them created within her. She also expressed her great fear of the writer of the second epistle, who, from her description, appeared to be some headstrong, irate, and even dangerous person. But the transports of joyous feeling that continued at intervals to beat though her fears, and which gave hope to the rest, was pleasant and heart-cheering to peruse. The letter ended with a thrill of delicious anticipation—pure, rapturous, and unalloyed.

Here, then, was a windfall for the young man who found it. But although it was so, in a sense, it proved to be a troublesome one. Here was at once the breathings of a sincere and manly love, beclouded for the time by contrition for faults committed in love's excess; then the spiteful, envenomed chagrin of disappointed passion and wounded vanity, spurted forth upon the paper, and sent in all its disgusting unsightliness to the fair girl, its presumed object; lastly, the fine, warm-hearted outpourings of a young and trusting female, her mind a fount of all that is naturally attractive, winning, and lovely in the feminine character. And all these he had in charge. He thought of her agony when she should discover the loss of the letters. Darting off to peruse the first letter—perhaps for the twentieth time—she should suddenly discover the loss she had sustained! Her heart smitten with a death coldness, she would think, agonised, of her lover exposed; his best feelings made the jest and scoff of the vulgar; her own thoughts and emotions also thus ridiculed and jeered at, not to speak of the writer of the other letter, who, despite his personal unworthiness, she would not wilfully annoy. All this was most distressing. The young man felt he must do something likely to return the letters to their fair owner, He made great inquiries among the domestics in the adjacent houses for a family named Cramond, but his search was utterly in vain. There was no special mention made of any locality or street in either of the letters—nothing save the plain names of their writers. Again, he thought it over, possibly the appointment spoken of in the first letter might have been meant for that very evening. Evidently, it had been written and delivered that day, so, in all likelihood, the sweet Charlotte would keep the appointment, despite the loss of her lover's communication. This thought gladdened him; he resolved to attend unobserved at the gardens. If she should come, whom he suspected might be the owner of the letters—what more easy than to step up to her, ask for her attention, explain the simple circumstance of his finding of the letters, and politely return them, rejoicing to think that his care should cause happiness to glow in the heart, and peace flow through the mind, of one who so well and so thoroughly deserved to enjoy such pleasure and relief.

Thus he settled it in his mind to do; and then the afternoon wore slowly and heavily away. Every hour seemed an age; but at length the time—the hour of seven drew near. Twenty minutes only lay between him and the time when he expected to see one, remarkable, not alone for the graces of her person, but for the more potent enchantments of a cultivated mind and taste. Ten minutes was now the time; he rose and went out, directing his steps to the —— Gardens, where such an evening of exciting and romantic adventure, startling discovery, and truly novel developments of fashionable life awaited him, as he had never here seen, but which we must defer till the concluding portion of this story.

(To be continued.)

(October 20, 1860)

THE BREEZE-BORNE LETTERS.

A STORY OF FASHIONABLE LIFE IN EDINBURGH.

By the Author of "Transcripts from Memory."

Part Second.

When the young man spoken of in the former portion of this story set out for the —— Gardens, the sun was setting slowly behind the darkening woods and valleys of the west; the mist of the gloaming was fast shrouding the city, the street-lamps were already lit, the waiting cabs looked dingy and dull, and a slight degree of cold made the more delicate of the passers-by to wrap their overclothing more closely about their breasts and shoulders. When he arrived at the main gate, the clocks of St Giles and the Tron were sounding forth the hour of seven.

It was a private garden, into which none were admitted save those possessed of check-keys wherewith to open the gates. The youth had no such key; indeed, he never dreamed of entering the grounds, and, therefore, such a thing did not seem essential in the circumstances.

Nearly five minutes were gone: the hour was struck on every clock in the city, but no sign of any one coming from the busier side of the street to that on which he stood. Hope began to grow cold in his breast; he feared that his expectation of beholding a prodigy of feminine goodness and loveliness was doomed to mortifying and vexatious disappointment. What a pity to be thus built up in such an idea, and thus be so sadly baulked! Nevertheless, he resolved to wait on till the last moment.

More dense grew the shadows; the daylight was nearly gone, and the sun itself, buried in a mass of sullen red and purple clouds. It was getting more and more chilly; he began to grow cold; "what nonsense to wait; she would not come; it was not like——"

A female figure darted fleetly past him—like a shadow she sped—noiseless and by stealth. She glanced keenly in his face as she glided by, opened the gate, and without a look on one side or the other, flitted down the walk and vanished among the dark foliage of the trees and bushes around.

'Twas impossible he could have spoken to her, so nimbly she sped past him. Clearly there was now nothing for it save to wait for her out-coming, his anxiety growing all the greater with every succeeding minute, and his curiosity the more intense.

It was evident that she dreaded detection; there was agitation in her every motion. This much he observed, transient though his glimpse had been. Her dress was of some dark material; very rich, ample, and handsome. She was no poor man's daughter; there was gentility and inbred elegance in even the hasty sweep she made, as she vanished from his sight.

But had Richard Glover been faithful to his appointment? Doubtless he was. And at that moment, hearts alienated for days—to their owners days and hours of mental suffering—those hearts were doubtless rioting in the deliciousness of a love restored to fond and rapt communion. Enchanting was the picture which the young man drew to his mind as then being transacted amid the deep, friendly gloom of that town-encircled garden. Charlotte, hasting along to meet her lover—her cheek a-glow, and her heart beating tumultuously—soon to be near her Richard, soon to look upon him, soon to expect the pleasure of restoring him to happiness by the smile of her favour and forgiveness. Richard, too, straining his ear to catch the sound of her welcome footfalls, and springing forward to meet her, accord to her affection's own most cordial and kindly welcome. Then the coy and bashful Charlotte as gently, and with ill-acted reluctance, she would gradually give him back the dearly prized smile—his gladdening heart—the low murmur of their names—the embrace, long and blissful—

"Help! help! assistance!" came a quick, sharp, desperate cry, apparently from the Gardens. Gone were the young man's reveries! He stopped to listen intently.

'Twas a thrilling, urgent scream—should he spring across the railing and search for its origin? He felt impelled to do so—but no; that perhaps were to disturb the bliss of some happy moment, some short-lived term of pure blameless delight; and this, too, on the strength of a mere conjecture. He thought it better to pause before attempting to enter the grounds.

And again his fancies revived, they gently and beautifully bloomed anew, and beautiful in truth they were. Two young fond hearts emerging into the light of life's pure morning, all joyous, free, and rosy with love's rich and happy blush. How delicious their future!—surrounded each by kind and loving friends—the comforts, elegancies, and luxuries of life ranged round them on every side. Richard his father's pride—Charlotte her mother's darling! Happy Richard—happier Charlotte! Exquisite that deep, deep plenitude of affection, thus acknowledged, thus appreciated, thus fully and sweetly returned! 'Twas the poetry of their days, the essence and glory of their dream! Mild, calm, and unruffled might their lives glide onward. No bounds to their bliss, no jar in their life-song, no cloud in their sky. Far removed from foes, happy in each other's society, how could their existence—

Again rose the scream, "Help, help! for God's sake, help!" this time from the very recesses of the garden.

So piercing, so thrilling was the sound that the young man instinctively clutched hold of the railing and tried to vault across the spikes. At the same moment a key rattled in the lock of the gate. A genteel-looking, fashionably-attired man, apparently young, was entering in haste. Down came the youth; he darted into the grounds also, the gate closing behind him with a clash. Both of them, without a word, hurried down the walk in the direction whence the scream had proceeded.

The new comer stopped abruptly where the place of danger seemed to be.

"Who wants help?" he shouted. "Speak!"

"Here, this way; oh, for pity's sake, make haste."

'Twas from behind a thick group of trees that the voice came. Round they flew, and there the scene explained itself.

Seated on one of the wooden benches, panting and sobbing violently, they beheld the young girl who had ere while darted into the garden; while, standing erect and defiant, with his arms folded across his breast, they beheld, by the faint glimmer of moonlight, a young man—robust and well built—his looks expressive of agitation, and his eye sparkling with ill-concealed rage and impatience. Both of the new comers emerged from the shadows of the trees, when suddenly the wrathful-seeming youth recoiled in evident alarm and surprise, exclaiming—

"What? Richard Glover?"

"Arthur Murray," cried the other youth. "What—what I say is all this. I——'

"Richard! oh, Richard!" screamed the young girl, as, starting up at the sound of his voice, she flew toward him. "Oh! thank God, you are come at last. Why—why have you been so long in coming? It was cruel, cruel."

To the young man who stood by, the mystery was plain; both the writer and the receivers of the letters were now before him.

"Charlotte," said Richard, gravely and firmly, "What strange, mysterious work is this? Be still, love, be still, I say, and tell me what is it?"

"Oh, Richard, Richard," she still cried; "why did you not keep your appointment? Oh, it was cruel to thus disappoint me as you have done. I came to meet you as you said, to speak the words of peace, to forgive, and——"

"For God's sake, Charlotte," cried Richard vehemently, "don't speak to me in that way. What appointment do you speak of? I made none."

"What say you?" she half shrieked. "No appointment? Oh! shame, shame; and you—you Richard—are mocking me too."

She sank, sobbing again, upon the bench. That gust of grief soon passed away. She then advanced towards her lover.

"Richard," she said, "tell me frankly—Did you not, this morning, write and send to me a letter, requesting me to meet you at seven o'clock to-night, and in this place?"

"Never!" was his emphatic reply. "Never, as I hope to be saved!"

"Oh, Richard," she said, in a suffocating voice, "are you certain of this? Nay, nay! for you must have written it. I have the let——. No, God help me, I have not the letter; it is lost—lost!"

It was now the young man's time to speak who found the letters. He advanced quietly, called the afflicted girl by her name.

"Permit me, he said, "to return the letters you lost today. I found them in the street, but frailly held together by a small pin. I rejoice in being able to restore them to their rightful owner."

"My letters! my letters!" she exclaimed, joyfully, and she thanked him. "How glad, how glad I am I have found them again. Richard," she added, "there is the letter I received purporting to come from yourself. Say—is it, or is it not your own?"

The expression of anxiety that rested upon the girl's flushed but lovely face, was painful to see. Agony at being so far compelled to doubt her lover's truth was the great cause of all her acute and cruel anguish.

"Charlotte," he said, "but for your satisfaction I should not condescend to touch, or even look at the letters, which, if they do bear my signature, are a malicious, impudent forgery; and I would that I might have the happiness of chastising soundly the false, slanderous, and cowardly perpetrator of such a deep deception!"

A mocking, jeering laugh from the hitherto silent Arthur Murray, was the response to this. "Here," said he, "stands the man whose presence you desire. Advance, most potent and powerful sir; I await my punishment; 'twas I who wrote and sent the letters!"

In one moment, like an arrow, Richard Glover darted forward, and ere the impudent braggart had the words well spoken, he received such a ringing blow as sent him reeling to the distance of some feet across the sward, where he soon lay motionless, exhibiting not the slightest sign of animation.

A deep silence ensued. A shudder agitated the frame of the young man who found the letters; he gazed at the mute and silent figure thus laid at their feet—the features one mass of blood. A ghastly terror convulsed every nerve in his body; the stricken young man looked the very picture of death—his face grim, sickening to see.

"God grant he is not murdered!" was his inward prayer, as he bent to raise the motionless young man.

His prayer was heard. Ere he had stooped down a groan escaped the lips of Arthur Murray. He had been stunned by the blow he received, but consciousness was slowly returning.

Both Richard and Charlotte now advanced, and also stooped over the wounded youth, who, looking painfully round, faintly asked where he was. They wiped the blood from his face;

all anger had fled their hearts; they mildly inquired whether or not he recognised them, and what had been his intention in acting the doubly-deceitful part he had done? Again the fiend appeared, and flamed up in the recovered young man's eyes. He sat up suddenly, and aimed a savage stroke at the face of the forgiving Richard. Not satisfied with this, he sprang to his feet and loudly challenged Richard to combat on the sward, and in presence of the alarmed and half-fainting Charlotte.

'Twas but a storm of sound; by his retreating action as he showed fight, cowardly want of confidence in himself became pitifully apparemt. But his words were rife: he bellowed and bullied to give effect to the plenitude of his fence; when, suddenly, a voice at some distance came sounding across the gardens—"Now then, now then! what's all that there?" It was the voice of a police officer.

Presently there was a stir as of some persons trying to climb over the railings. On Arthur Murray the effect was magical. The bad-hearted young man, fearful of exposure, picking up his hat, dashed recklessly up the walk and disappeared in the direction of the gate, just as a couple of policemen came rushing to the scene of the adventure.

Seeing the retreating form of the vile and petty forger vanish at a turning of the way, they gave chase, and the *finale* was ludicrous in the extreme. Arrived at the gate, quaking in every limb, the pitiful dastard fummelled and blundered in his pocket for the check-key, which he failed to find; and, half delirious with the terror of exposure, and every moment increasing his excitement, driven, goaded to force his escape, he leaped upon, and tried to fling himself over the gate, but his right foot stuck fast in the iron work. He writhed, panted, struggled, and latterly fell heavily into the street, the right leg of his peg-tops ripped clean from the ankle to the thigh. Not a moment was lost; up he scrambled, when battered, bruised, and flurried, his clothes fluttering in shreds, the spiteful, malignant, but now crest-fallen, rival of Richard Glover cleared his way through the dark, deserted street, and disappeared amid the surrounding obscurity.

The policemen, enraged at thus being baulked of a prisoner, and filled with chagrin, returned to the place where Charlotte, Richard Glover, and the other young man yet stood, each contributing to the other his share of necessary explanations. The officers rigidly questioned both Charlotte and her two friends; but finding that they were not of the stamp to need policemen's services, they were fain to take themselves off. When the officers were gone, the three left the gardens in company.

Their first business was to see the excited and trembling Charlotte safely bestowed beneath her father's roof. Crossing the street, they traversed a considerable portion of the new town, and at length arrived at the door of Charlotte's comfortable home. It was a sumptuous, rich looking mansion, with iron balconies to the drawing-room windows. Between the half-closed Venetian blinds, they saw glimpses of a large handsome crystal chandelier, the paper on the walls of a splendid French pattern, and the heavy, enriched cornice, painted and gilded with exquisite taste. Over the dining-room windows were drawn curtains of a dark crimson, heavy and ample; the gas lights blinking between the folds of the warm and cosy red. To complete the impression of luxuriousness engendered in their minds by the sight of these comfortable externals, the rich, mellow tones of a fine organ were overheard swelling out into full and rounded cadences, and then softly, sweetly sinking into silence; but again breaking out into sudden gusts of harmony, the treble notes meandering through the pealing bass, like veins of clear silver in a column of pure gold. On the front door was a brass-plate, whereon was engraved in well-drawn characters the name of Charlotte's father—Walter Cramond, Esq.

But there was no time to stand before the door in idle talk; Charlotte was anxious to enter the house. With a gentle smile she tendered her hand to the young man who had so honourably restored to her the lost letters, and sweetly bade him good night. The youth then retired to a distance to allow the lovers an opportunity of exchanging some few words of parting adieu. Not long did it occupy them; looks more than words were used to express their happiness. When they at length parted, Richard joined his young friend, and both of them retired to an hotel, where, at the instance of the former, rich wines and refreshments were served up in generous abundance. Thereafter the hours glided pleasantly away. Richard, now restored to happiness, was the best of company; happiness, supreme happiness, was in the glance of his truth-speaking eye. And the youthful finder of the letters—was not he also most truly happy? Truly, yes. In all their lives these young men will never forget the happy restoration of—THE BREEZE-BORNE LETTERS.

(October 27, 1860)

BANISHED FOR LOVE.

A REAL HEART STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY."

When a noble-minded, enthusiastic woman, moved by an impulse of her heart, steps from the position assigned to her by mankind, and tries to do the world a service, what a sneering, contemptuous expression sometimes creeps over the face of that very world whose interests she seeks to advance! Comes she forth as an authoress, then she is voted a household virago, cynic in petticoats, blue-stocking, too clever by half, and far too fine for this world. Or, is she an orator in her own little way, and pleads the cause of reason, then are the scandal-mongers full of exultation. When she appears before them, her nerves sustain an awful trial. Lolling back in their places, the fault-finders stare at her person with looks broadly flippant, or undisguisedly indifferent; and when she, poor one, catches the eye of some lazy listener, she beholds therein, not the glisten of a kindly sympathy, but the dull look of unqualified unconcern. No wonder, then, that noble-minded women do not appear to illumine and purify the often unclean arenas of the press and the platform. From the above causes the reproach of her own heart, whether deservedly or not, is ofttimes far keener, and ill to be borne with, than all the taunts and all the scorn that the world can cast in her face, or cover her name withal.†

But if such be the reception and the treatment given to woman where the more common affairs of daily life are concerned, then, when the heart and its feelings are involved, and even where no blame is attachable to her, how dreadful are the consequences if she dares to speak out! An individual offender of the sex, when fairly caught, is, of all her gentle kind,

† This paragraph prompted a female correspondent to write to the editor of the *Journal* an enthusiastic eulogy of James Easson's attitudes to the independence of women question (December 1, 1860): ' "Grandmother" writes:—In the *People's Journal* of Novembe 24, we read an article entitled "Banished for Love"—a real heart story. We do not mean to criticise nor to enter into the merits of the article itself, but the preface to the story is worthy of our best thanks; and while we render our grateful acknowledgments to the author of "Transcripts from Memory" for the very high compliment he has bestowed upon "public-minded enthusiastic woman," we humbly pray that he himself may be possessed of that goodness of heart which will at all times prove a blessing to its possessor. We sincerely pity the poor miserable being who is continually spitting venom—scattering fire-brands, and issuing forth bitter words—like the hot vapour of a boiling cauldron—scalding, and scorching, and piercing to the heart of every one within reach. How much valuable reproof is lost through the bitterness of spirit in which it is given.'

the most to be pitied; and yet she is the very one who gets least of consideration from the world. Dragged to its sovereign bar, she has little fair-play shown to her, and less mercy; for no one thinks of the master emotion, Love, so irresistibly dominant in her soul; of that emotion's swelling therein, all-absorbing and powerful; and they never dream that the poor case before them is but one among the thousand similar cases, that ever throb and strive tumultuously in the world; that in this one instance the emotion has desperately vanquished its cool-headed keeper, Prudence; and, bursting from its prison, haplessly—as in the case of our present story—has betrayed itself to the object towards whom it has ever been turning—thereby exposing its new-blown tenderness to the world's scorn; and her own heart's regret in days and years to come.

That the latter of these cases is specially true will be found of more verity when the reader has perused our present story—one which, although it be in part a fiction, is not in its incidents and its ground-work so entirely void of foundation.

Oliver Parker, an Edinburgh gentleman of independent means, had a daughter—an only child—seventeen years of age when we thus begin her story; and having an aptitude for learning of more than average greatness. Her beauty was everywhere extolled; and, as might be expected from the abundance of her mental powers, her accomplishments were at once graceful and great in number. Such being the qualifications of Agnes Parker, how could her parents help regarding her as the pride and ornament of their house? They dreamed of her prosperity in the night watches, prayed hourly for her happiness and safety, and lavished upon her all the love and all the endearment that parents' hearts can bestow.

In all these things the conduct of Agnes's father and mother was blameless, but still in one respect they erred greatly. They forgot about those elements which made up their own happiness when they were like her—elements as needful to that child of their's, as her love and filial obedience were to them, now that the evening of life was fast overshadowing their heads. They thought, like many good people in this world, that wealth is the only one thing needful; shutting out the idea that so easily appears to every one who thinks for a moment on the subject—thinks of the living martyrdom which a woman must endure, linked to a man whom she can never approach with any feelings more congenial than mere respect and submissive obedience. And yet, such was her feeling for Walter M'Gregor, the man whom she was doomed, by her mother, to accept for a husband and companion all the days of her after life.

But she had been beforehand with her parents in this matter—she had loved secretly; but the object of her love neither appreciated her regard, nor was he at all her equal in refinement, taste, or mental culture. Nevertheless she loved him despite all his defects; and her affection proved to her a luckless and disastrous one. Long did she try to conquer it, but all in vain. So, as the hopeless aspect of her future, touching her secretly adopted lover, was never likely to change into one more promising, she in a moment of weakness stepped from her place, gave her self-chosen lover to know of her preference by sundry little ways, and received for her pains the chastisement of a contemptuous repulse to the love she thus revealed. That Horace Mossman—such was his name—was justified in declining the regard thus proferred to him will at once be allowed; but the expressions of scorn and ridicule he showered upon her were not so capable of being defended. However, the love of Agnes Parker did not thus suffer without its consequences. A deep feeling of rancour sprang up within her heart towards her former favourite. She now hated him, because he had thus flouted at her advances, and ignored all those merits which had been her pride in days past. She therefore resolved to hate him in future as heartily and as profoundly as ever she had loved and admired him before.

She plunged, in a tide of giddy pleasure, all the bitter and dark reflections which had thus sprung up in her mind; she endeavoured to forget that she had ever drunk the waters of a deep and distressing mortification. Meanwhile Horace Mossman was married to the woman of his choice, and in due time became the father of a daughter, whom he loved tenderly, because of the marked resemblance she bore to her mother, towards whom he had ever evinced a real and unaffected devotion.

In the breast of Agnes, this marriage of Horace Mossman's was the death of hope. She relinquished all her self-will, married the man whom her mother had sought out for her, and became an obedient, but secretly unhappy and unloving wife to the unsuspecting Walter M'Gregor, to whom she at length presented a son, to perpetuate his father's name, and be the heir to his immense fortune.

Twenty years now rolled over the heads of those whose destinies we have thus far traced. They still regarded each other—Agnes and Horace Mossman—with the identical feelings of so many years agone. But they had often met in society, that refined Edinburgh society to whom both of them belonged. And Agnes, on her part, strove to imbue the mind of her son with a like hatred of Horace Mossman to that which filled her own heart; but it could not be done. The youth—Lionel by name—was too generous of mind to hate a family who never wronged him, but whom, on the contrary, he admired, and to one member of which he had for some time entertained feelings of a nature, the farthest removed from hatred that could be imagined. For Caroline Mossman was dear to the heart of Lionel M'Gregor. He loved her with a love of surpassing strength; and thus the idea of hating her family, as his mother desired him to do, was preposterous in the extreme.

Lionel, in his turn, was nearing that age when marriage is desirable by all who have the more vital interest of their sons right truthfully at heart; and so, one evening the mother of Lionel called him to her room, and commended this subject to his consideration. She had, as she told him, not been unmindful of his happiness; and spoke of the merits of a favourite young lady of her own acquaintance, upon whom the smile of his love might worthily alight; this she might say fearlessly—unless some equally good match of his own choosing, and of which she, as his mother, could approve, should happily supersede the one she had in view. Well did Lionel know that a crisis was at hand; and yet he could not, for the life of him, imagine why his mother so much disliked the Mossmans; but he knew that he had but to mention their name, when she would shower upon them, and upon himself alike, such a torrent of disparaging terms as might well make any man think well about it, even if he were stronger of nerve than Lionel M'Gregor. But why, on the other hand, should he shrink from the avowal of a pure and honourable love, the object of which was as fair and gentle a being as the Creator ever fashined in loveliness, or furnished with a mind? The thought was conclusive with Lionel: he there and then spoke forth his love for the beautiful Caroline Mossman, and determinedly told his parent that to no one else of her sex should he offer the heart which he there possessed.

For a moment his mother sat mute with consternation and surprise: never had she dreamed of such a refusal. When she did speak, she spoke to purpose; and the luckless youth, upon his allegiance as a son, was ordered to prepare forthwith, and set out on his travels through Italy and Germany, there to remain until such time as his undutiful and vagrant attachment to Horace Mossman's daughter should subside or burn out.

In vain did Lionel attempt to reason with his mother on this subject—no reasoning would move her from her first resolve. He was thus obliged to yield; and the same night on which the conversation took place, that night he broke the sad story to the ears of the lovely Caroline.

With sincere feeling she grieved with him over their misfortunes; but advised him to assent to his mother's harsh demands; assured that though he might be absent from her in person, yet never from her mind should his image decay, or her love for him depart.

The youth blessed the faithful girl, and thereafter took his departure. Next morning he set out for the isles of the south. A year now passed away. The love between Lionel and Caroline was kept alive by letters, which his mother could neither see nor prevent from arriving at the house of Horace Mossman.

And 'twas Lionel's mother who suffered most from the absence of that good-hearted young man. She failed in health; and her medical advisers told her that, unless she should take means to remove from her mind some, to them unknown, load of anxiety, she should certainly fall a victim to her own infatuation and obstinacy. She was at length aroused to a sense of her folly in regard to Lionel; so she resolved to send for him, and once more attempt, if it were possible at all, to effect a transfer of his affection to the object of her own choice.

She sent abroad the necessary summons; and home in due time came her son, glad enough, doubtless, to once more behold and be near to the idol of his love. He was torn by regret when he saw the state to which his absence had brought his mother; yet when she proposed to him the transfer of his affections, painful as it was for him to refuse, he did so; and to avoid seeing his mother's consequent grief, he took the first opportunity of leaving her apartment.

She then felt all the harshness of her conduct toward her son, but experienced a feeling of comfort warming her soul as the determination grew in her to no longer stand in the way of his happiness, let the cost of an assent to his marriage with Horace Mossman's daughter cost what it might. She thereupon rang the bell, and desired that her son would return to her chamber. He soon came, and received orders from his parent to take their private carriage and fetch to her from their own house the once loved Horace Mossman and his daughter Caroline.

Cheerfully did the youth set out on his joyful message, and soon returned with Horace Mossman and his child; although the former, ere he started out for Lionel's dwelling, had many doubts about the propriety and expediency of consenting to the youth's invitation. In a short time they were all three in presence of Lionel's mother within the closed doors of a strictly secluded apartment to which she had meanwhile caused herself to be borne. Not one inch of her dignity did she bate. Frankly she told the silent Harold Mossman that recollections tenderly connected with himself had no share in causing her to seek the favour of his presence; but solely, on account of the young people, she said, had she condescended to ask for that favour; her consent had been formally given in his presence; there the favour was at an end. Mr Mossman was no longer a visitor than himself might choose to remain.

Proudly uprose the haughty father of Caroline Mossman; not a word did he speak, though he longed to cast back her disdainful semi-defiance in the proud woman's teeth. He rose up, bowed stiffly, and with smile of mockery on his yet handsome face, passed calmly from the apartment. Scarce had the door closed behind them, when the proud mother of Lionel M'Gregor fell from her luxurious arm-chair to the floor, a stream of blood issuing from her mouth, and sinking into the soft and costly carpet beneath her!

All her calmness had been forced: a calmness in her then weak and dangerous state most fearful, and, as seen by the catastrophe now brought on, an effort nothing short of an absolute and devoted sacrifice. That night she died, and the tears of bereavement were seen in the eyes of the agonised Lionel M'Gregor.

When the funeral was over, Lionel sought an interview with Horace Mossman, at which he asked to be told the story of that mysterious episode in his mother's history which only his

intended father-in-law could disclose to him. Horace Mossman was just in his account, now that death had done its work on the woman who in life had defied him. Nor could Lionel justly blame Horace Mossman, now that he expressed repentance for his youthful folly: all he could do was to regret the fact of his departed mother's early infatuation in so avowing, unrequested, a love which had cost her such misery in life, and such an awful death at last. The only reflection which he had to console him with, was the poor one that years had not increased her wisdom. He thought of his own misery when he pined in a foreign land by her mandate; how she grieved the girl who afterwards became to him an affectionate wife, while he remained abroad a martyr to his feelings; to all intents and purposes—BANISHED FOR LOVE.

(November 24, 1860)

RANDOM WRITINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY."

NO. I.

HOORAY!—JACK'S THE LAD!

When a sailor comes home with his heart full of fun, and his pockets full of money, what rummy pranks he does play! How many of our readers ever heard tell of a miserly sailor on the bright side of five-and-twenty? Not one. No, poor fellow,—hard earned as his money is, he spends it freely with the mates of his choice; and short though the hours be, when once he gets ashore, he spends them gaily with the friends of his heart, and the girl of his love.

Ay, to be sure he does; for Jack is none of your beggarly hunks, whose greed eats them up, and who run off to bank every shilling,—not he! Jolly and free-hearted ever, he calls upon his messmates, Tom, Bill, and Harry,—and off they go to the first snug groggery, there to have a glass and a song, a fiddle and a jig! Then as the glass and the song go circling round, Jack's manly heart grows merry, and all his soul is a-glow! He laughs and sings and snaps his fingers at care, for he takes the world as he finds it.

"Lor, Tom!" he cries in an extacy of delight, "how I should like to see my little sweetheart, 'Tildy!—bless her kind heart! How I should jest like a sight of her now, to be sure! Harry, did I never tell you about 'Tildy?"

"Never, " says Harry.

"What!" cries Jack, in astonishment, "did I never tell you about my 'Tildy?"

"Well, now, that is rum," exclaims Jack, "but never mind; I'll tell ye all about that arterwards. I say Bill, what dye think my old school-missus said 'bout me the last time I seed her ladyship?"

"Summa't rare, I'll be bound!" cries Bill.

"Why, then," says Jack, laughing, " it *was* summat queer, and no mistake. D'ye see, she a rum 'un—sixty years old if she's a day; but she dresses young—just like my 'Tildy. Well, d'ye see, when I came home off my last trip, I goes strait to see my old father, but I wasna long inside o' the house, when, who should toddle in arter me, but rare Belly Park—that's the old lady's name. A steady old file is my father, d'ye see, but likes his joke, and has it too. So, says my father, says he—'Belly,' says he—'d'ye know this young 'un?" says he. 'Losh, keep me!' screeches Belly; and then says she—'Hoo d'ye think I sud ken the young man?' 'Why, Belly, you're very blind to-day,' says my father, says he; and then says he—'Belly, this is our Jack—your old scholar!' 'Losh, keep a' budy, sirs!" screeches Belly again; and then she says, says she—'Stand up, Jackie laddie, an' let's see ye.' So up I gets, double quick. Belly slews

her big spectacles to the crown of her head, and sings out—'Ee, Jackie laddie, Jackie laddie; sic a great, *great* muckle laddie you've grown!"

"Haw, haw, *haw!*" roars Bill.

"Ho, ho, *ho*!" guffaws Tom.

"Ee, Jackie laddie, Jackie laddie!—sic a great, *great* muckle laddie you've grown!" vociferates Harry.

There is a perfect roar of hearty and genial laughter, which shakes the walls of the cozy snuggery wherein our tars are assembled. When it is over, Jack starts to his feet, and makes a grand proposal.

"I say, messmates," he cries, "jest look 'ere! Should'nt ye like to see my darling 'Tildy? She'll make ye welcome for my sake, bless her sweet eyes; and then I can have a talk with my old folks, while you lark with the other lasses."

"To be sure we will!" cries Tom, Bill, and Harry, altogether.

"Why, then," says Jack, "We'll just be off. But what shall we have to carry us there?"

"Why, the railyway, to be sure," answers Bill.

"Railyway be hanged!" cries Tom; "we'll have a mail coach."

"Mail coach be blowed!" bawls Harry; "we'll have an omnihoss."

"Omnihoss be jiggered!" says Jack; "we'll hire a noddy."

"Capital!" roars the other three. "A noddy!—down with the money, boys; we'll muster a noddy!"

And away to the coach-hiring office go the jovial tars, there to hire a cab, or, as Jack calls it, a "noddy," thereby to convey them to Jack's native place, and the home of his darling 'Tildy.

"Shall I come along with you, to work the horses?" asks a needy and seedy Jarvey.

"Pack off, you lubberly scamp!" answers Jack. "D'ye mean to insinivate that Jack Smith can't pilot his own ship? Well, now, you're a greasy son of a barber, too! Be off, or I'll chuck ye bang into the mud, with a buzz in yer ear, and a crick in yer neck!"

"Gee up!" screeches Tom, giving the horse a poke, and off they rattle.

"Three cheers for Jack and his 'Tildy!" shouts Harry.

"Ay, ay, lads!" vociferates the three in concert. "Three cheers for Jackie Smith and his 'Tildy! hooray! hooray!! hooray!!!—JACK'S THE LAD!"

(December 8, 1860)

RANDOM WRITINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TRANSCRIPTS FROM MEMORY."

NO. II.

JACK TURNED BAPTIST.

"Hooray! Jack's the Lad!" was the roystering cheer of our three jolly friends, Tom, Bill, and Harry, as, mounted on the top of their "noddy," they rattled towards the streets of the seaport town.

Past experience had taught Jack and his friends that if they would come comfortably back to port, they must leave the price of their back-coming lush with the landlords of such roadside inns as they might visit by the way to the village; for, though Jack on his part sometimes took a bit of money with him up the country, he seldom brought any down. By thus paying for their prospective grog, they would both save time and trouble. Jack should turn the front of his cap to the back of his head on their leaving the inn, saying to the innkeeper—"D'ye know *that*, landlord?" The landlord was to nod familiarly in assent, and the tars might "hook it" at their leisure.

Crack went the whip!—whirr went the wheels!—past flew the milestones, farms, cots, churches, woods, lakes, and country seats; when all of a sudden they came upon a couple of Jew pedlars seated on the top of a milestone, chattering some sort of gibberish, intelligible only to themselves.

"Aha!"cries Jack, with a jolly laugh, "Split me if here ain't Judas and Guy Fawkes in company! Corn in Egypt, old boys, ain't there? Come up and give us yer company, will ye? That's the style, old man; ketch hold o' the spars—ahoy!—there ye are, both on ye fast as limpets. Now, then, open yer mouths, and let yer tongues wag!"

And so they did wag their tongues, little to the profit of Jack and his friends, upon whom they palmed off for fine gold an amazing quantity of their trashy jewelry. Betimes the entire six reached the place of Jack's destination, and while he and his friends were receiving the welcome of their friends, both of the Jews slipped off the "noddy" and disappeared.

To tell how the tars enjoyed themselves—how they romped, and danced, and fiddled, and sang, and tippled, and told yarns—would be an endless job. At length the village publican was drained dry, the old women were delighted, and the lasses fathoms deep in love with Jack and his gay companions. To finish the spree, and top the whole quite handsomely, Jack and his friends presented the girls with the tinsel jewelry of the quack pedlars, and had it thrown back in their faces, with no end of insinuation, to the effect that themselves and their jewels were, doubtless, both of a quality.

Back to the sea-port went the chop-fallen tars, vowing vengeance upon all Jews in general, but their former fellow-travellers in particular,—when, who should appear on the road before them but Judas and Guy Fawkes, each pack on back and staff in hand. Jack winked significantly to his friends: up came the Jews once more, and home they gallopped at a fine rate. At the inns they "twigged" the operation of the cap; thought there was "something in it"; Guy Fawkes offered a price for it, and had it sold to him. At the inns they paid the bills, and on arriving at the seaport, attempted to give Jack and his friends the slip.

But Jack and his friends were "fly." The pedlars entered a hotel, ordered and ate a dinner, tried to pay by giving the cap a turn, and were first soundly kicked by the waiter, and afterwards flung into the street, where Jack and his friends picked them up, tied their long beards together, put a stiff pinch of hellebore snuff, first into the nose of Judas, and then into that of Guy Fawkes, who thereupon half sneezed each other to death. To finish the farce, Jack took Judas, while his friends took charge of Guy Fawkes, soused them head and ears in the harbour, and set them down to dry, amid roars of laughter from the bystanders, and gave Jack and his friends three deafening cheers as they returned to their ship.

"Hooray!"—roared the spectators—"down with the pedlars!—three cheers for—JACK TURNED BAPTIST!!!"

*The above anecdote, upon which the author once intended to found a story, was recorded to him about two years ago. He has thus chosen to adapt it to suit his present series of "Random Writings."

(December 15, 1860)

INDEX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Select Miscellany of Poetical Pieces. By James Easson. Dundee. Dundee: Printed for the author by Park, Sinclair & Co., Dundee. 1856.
Dundee, Perth, Forfar, and Fife People's Journal. Dundee. 1858–1865.
Alan Reid, *The Bards of Angus and the Mearns*: *An Anthology of the Counties*. Paisley. 1897.
The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume 2: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707–1918). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 2007.

JAMES EASSON (1833–1865) suffered from more disadvantages than most men are able to bear. He was an illegitimate orphan, and his seaman father died before he himself was born. His mother died when he was two, and he was brought up in Dundee in great poverty by his only surviving relative, his widowed grandmother. He attended only an elementary school and a Sunday school, and worked most of his life as a house-painter in Dundee. He died at the age of 31 in the Lunatic Asylum in Dundee. He left a small book of verse, and had contributed to the Dundee PEOPLE'S JOURNAL several other poems and a number of articles, sketches and short stories that in many cases are illustrative of life in Victorian Dundee and show great concern for the poor, the sick and those with disabilities. He was a popular writer in his time and came to be known as the PEOPLE'S POET. This book includes reprints of all Easson's extant writings.

ISBN: 9780952745525