

The Examiner.

"THIS IS TRUE LIBERTY, WHEN FREEBORN MEN—HAVING TO ADVISE THE PUBLIC, MAY SPEAK FREE."—EURIPIDES.

Vol. II.]

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND, MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1848.

[No. 62.]

MISCELLANY.

THE WELCOME BACK.

BY ELIZA COOK.

Sweet is the hour that brings us home
Where all will spring to meet us—
Where hands are striving, as we come,
To be the first to greet us.
When the world has spent its frowns and wrath,
And care been sorely pressing,
'Tis sweet to turn from our roving path,
And find a fireside blessing.
Oh, joyfully dear is the homeward track,
If we are but sure of a welcome back.

What do we reckon a weary day,
Though lonely and benighted,
If we know there are lips to chide our stay,
And eyes that will beam love blighted?
What is the worth of the diamond's ray
To the glance that flashes pleasure,
When the words that welcome back betray
We form a heart's chief treasure?
Oh, joyfully dear is our homeward track,
If we are but sure of a welcome back.

LIFE AS IT IS.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

There is an old saying that extremes meet, and no adage can be more strikingly verified than this is in human life, by the frequent encounter of the serious and the ludicrous on the same occasion. There cannot be a more erroneous notion than that popular one, which appropriates to mirth and grief each its own peculiar stage, like the Parisian theatres, where one house is devoted to tragedy and another to comedy; whereas the world is a vast stage; whereon tragedy, comedy, and farce, are not only acting at once, but sometimes by the same performer. Of this truth, one of the most remarkable characters in its drama must have been well aware, when he pronounced his memorable sentence, that "from the sublime to the ridiculous is but a step." Even thus closely lie the domains of laughter and tears, divided, not by an impassable frontier, as some suppose, but dubiously separated by a debatable land, leaving easy access to either territory, and, of course, subjecting the rival kingdoms to frequent incursions. Thus tears are seen at festivals, and smiles at funerals; nay, laughter, in the writer's experience, has mingled with lamentation in the chamber of death. Nevertheless, even Shakspeare, the best judge of man, next to his Maker, and the best acquainted with the human heart, has been moused at by some of his owlish critics, for his abrupt transitions from the pathetic to the humorous, as if such were not the very warp and woof of our variegated fabric. These alternations of lights and shadows are imperatively necessary to a faithful picture of life; but it is sometimes made a cause of reproach to the painter that he should be accessible at a tragical occurrence to any livelier associations, as if the same tearful eye that appreciates the sorrows of the inmates of a house of mourning, should see nothing but melancholy in the smirks of the two smug mutes at the door. But death himself sometimes cuts a caper in mockery, and the very skull of man wears a grin, commemorative of the farcical passages in the serio-comic entertainment that is over. There is a class in the present day called, par excellence, exclusives, but the Passions do not belong to this caste, they meet, mingle, and shake hands. They are not bigoted sectarians and separatists, but congregate and communicate freely in one great temple—the human heart; so that life becomes from the mixture a sort of Irish wake, a medley of joy and sorrow, with some weeping, and some laughing, desolation and jollification, howling and singing, praying and drinking, loving and fighting, with the grave in the back-ground. Even the same passion will sometimes transform itself so utterly, as to raise doubts of its identity; thus Grief, in passing merely from house to house, will change in manners and costume as much as if she had travelled from London and Paris, and thence to Petersburg and Amsterdam. In one place, for example—pale, with dishevelled hair and neglected dress, she will sit as still as a statue, a very Niobe, in all but the trickling motion of her tears. In another, clad in fashionable sables, she will weep becomingly into white cambric, as gracefully affected as at her first persual of Charlotte and Werter. In a third, cased in 'abominable blacks,' instead of spring silks, she mopes less like sorrow, than a fit of the sulks. Elsewhere you may find her violent, hysterical, and noisy, raining like

St. Swithin, sobbing, snuffing up salts, and, at measured intervals, bursting into a loud exclamation, as if instead of crying for a husband, she was crying mackarel. Finally, you may meet her at Brighton for a change of scene, fair, fat, and forty, telling you, with the comedy, cosy composure of a quakeress, that her heart is broken, she is tired of life, and her address is 10, Brunswick Terrace.

But poetical justice is one of the merest fictions; and consists, as the term imports, rather with Utopian views than with the real rugged course of human life. To place Virtue or Vice in one scale, and an adequate portion of Good or Evil, as reward and punishment in the other, may produce food meet for babes; but the picture has little reference to the true course of events in this variegated world, where the base and bad rejoice and revel daily in the high places, whilst excellence mourns in the dust. Honesty begs for bread, and knavery prospers, adding houses to houses, and land to land. The just suffer, whilst the unjust judge in ermine. Folly rules, and wisdom pines unheard. Vanity is caressed at the expense of genius,—and sanctimonious hypocrisy tramples on human piety. The mortal balance, indeed, preponderates in favour of the wicked. It follows necessarily, that the unscrupulous man, who justifies all means by the end, and rejects neither fraud nor cruelty when they conduct to his purpose, must arrive more frequently, and by a shorter path, at his object, than the conscientious one who will not strain a principle or deviate one step from the line of rectitude. Thus wealth, power, and worldly honour, are apt to become the prizes of the crafty and the violent, the corrupt and the depraved; the swindler, the perjurer, and the tamperer with blood. Hence, such anomalous awards as the traitor's death to the patriot, the felon's imprisonment to the honest debtor, and persecution and poverty to a benefactor of mankind. The child, however, is taught by his copy-book that 'Virtue is its own Reward,' and every volume in his juvenile library not only inculcates the same principle, but holds out a direct promise of an equitable adjustment in this world, which is only to be looked for in another: an absurd system, by which, instead of being forewarned and forearmed by a practical prospect of the trials to come, the good boy grows up a good man, and is astonished and disgusted to find himself, instead of being even a silver-gilt Whittington, a condemned object, walking the world barefoot and penniless, with the reward of Virtue hanging upon his neck, in the likeness of one of those tin or pewter medals of merit that used to decorate him at his academy. This is an evil in our literature that demands correction: as our preparatory schooling is chiefly derived from the writings and the teaching of the female sex, it would be well if the schoolmistress would go abroad with the schoolmaster, and pick up some principle of conduct for youth, superior to the servile, selfish one of the puppy, who is conscious of the breaker behind his heels, with a dog-whip in one hand, and a piece of liver in the other.

TREASURE NOT THE COSTLY GEM.

Treasure not the costly gem.
Treasure not the thing that's rarest;
Queenly pearl or diadem,
Gain no lustre from the fairest!
Treasure things of common mould,
All earth's humbler creatures treasure;
Joy cannot be bought with gold—
Riches change not care to pleasure!

Treasure not the voice of praise,
Malice sometimes lurks 'mid praising;
If you would your fortune raise,
Truth can better aid the raising!
Treasure truth, its sacred bowl
Holds a draught that's cold and bitter;
Honied words may glad the soul—
Gall displease, but still be fitter!

TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES.—Temperance societies are in themselves an effect of the advancing intelligence of the times. It is doubtful whether they could have been established with success twenty years before. They occupy now a distinguished position. Let us survey the steps they have trod. When the men of Preston first declared their pledge of total abstinence, it was received as the declaration of a number of fanatics, and no man could have anticipated the results which have followed it. It is true that men had long been startled by the fearful progress of dissipation amongst us, had confessed themselves baffled, and almost given up the contest in despair. Temperance societies began; they opened a vast field of inquiry, and exhibited an awful amount of crime and profligacy,—a great waste of national wealth and individual means.

The public mind was in some degree prepared for a grave consideration of the subject, and became gradually alive to its importance. It was then proclaimed, as with the voice of an oracle, that intoxicating drinks are not necessary to men in health. This startling announcement ran through society; some ridiculed it, some argued seriously against it; all predicted the speedy downfall of a monstrous folly, and spoke with derision of the exuberant promises which the delighted and enthusiastic apostles of a new truth held forth. The advocates were sneered at, but the principle survived; and proclaimed by the tongues of men inspired by a generous love for their fellow-men, it drew eager thousands around its platforms. Springing from the very depths of society, flowing forth in genuine and unsophisticated eloquence from hearts rejoicing in their own deliverance from the slavery of strong drink, it ran on exceeding the expectations of its own disciples. It brought from the lowest sinks of misery and wretchedness many who had been given up—a class of men, whom it was supposed no human influence could reach; it stopped many who were gliding down the same dangerous path. But those who saw the advantages of the temperance movement, only in the number of drunkards it might reclaim, saw a very small part of the good it was calculated to effect. That was only the first breaking out of a revolution—a peaceful and moral one, the full effects of which even now baffle conjecture. It may be well for us to examine a few features of the question, to show how much we have all undervalued the movement.—*Lectures on the Moral Elevation of the People.*

THE GRAND MISTAKE OF ALL GOVERNMENTS.—If monarchs and republics had devoted to the extension of knowledge a twentieth part of the resources they have wasted to maintain armies, build forts, and man fleets; if they had relied upon the knowledge that enlightens, rather than upon the art that debases and destroys; if they had paid less homage to muscular strength, and more to the progress of intelligence, nations would not now be in a state of profound turbulence and almost hopeless pauperism. We should not now be the sad spectators of bloody struggles between the nations and their governments, nor the deadly animosities which exist between the employers and the employed—between the muscles of the workman's arm and the fullness of the employer's purse. The maintenance of armies has absorbed immense riches, and has hindered commerce; armies have pauperised and caused internal commotion in the countries that maintain them. Universal fraternity is as yet an utopian principle, and it will remain so as long as national prejudices, supported by ignorance and aggravated by misery, shall divide the people into rival sections at war with one another.

LISTENING.—People talk sometimes of the earnestness of the listener, the eagerness with which the head will turn to hear, and to know, and the length of time that can be thus lingered away without weariness; but have they ever compared all this with the talker—with the look and manner of one who delivers herself, under favouring circumstances, of a long pent-up and selfish grief? Let all hearers who are thus situated look well to their supply of daylight, gas, or fire—to the clock upon the chimney piece, or to anything that can with propriety mark out the limits of human endurance; but to one thing they need not look, to the natural winding up, from exhaustion or weariness, of the speaker.—*Social Distinction.*

BEAUTY.—Beauty is, after all, a mere matter of opinion; and the utility of the object to which the term is applied, often constitutes with the applicant its propriety. Having always esteemed the landscape, visible from a favourite shrubbery walk, as really beautiful, I was one day this summer annoyed to find it hidden by some linen hung out to dry in the nearest intervening field, and which, internally, I determined was the ugliest object ever presented to human eyes; but I was ere long led to think differently, and to meditate on the different conceptions and standards of beauty, entertained by individuals, according to the various influences of birth, education, profession, and circumstances, by the simple incident of a maid servant entering the walk to deliver a message to me, and exclaiming, 'How beautiful that linen looks! did you ever see, miss, a finer sight?' 'So, then,' I thought, 'that has beauty to her, which is positively ugly to me, the application is general, and the inference obvious; wherefore, I will murmur no more.'

SARCASTIC—VERY.—A chap who was sentenced to the Penitentiary at Boston, the other day, for having two wives, said that his was a confoundedly hard case—to be punished over again for an offence which carried its own punishment along with it.