

## LITERATURE.

[The following fine ode to the Mocking Bird is by a correspondent of the Louisville (U.S.) Journal. Poetry, as well as empire, seems 'westward' to 'take its way.' The Carey's, 'Amelia,' the 'Two Sisters of the West,' Mrs. Nichols, and many others who have recently won reputations beyond the Alleghanies, are founding a poetical literature, rich, and various, and peculiar, that will be quotable in the next ages. We may add to the list the American Anacreon, 'Harry Barry,' and the author of this fine piece which follows.—Will any one tell us who he is?]

## TO THE MOCKING BIRD.

Bird of the wild and wondrous song,  
I hear thy rich and varied voice,  
Swelling the greenwood depths among,  
Till hill and vale the while rejoice!  
Spell-bound, entranced in rapture's chain,  
I list to that inspiring strain!  
I tread the forest's tangled maze  
The thousand choristers to see,  
Who mingled thus their voices raise,  
In that delicious minstrelsy;  
I search in vain each pause between—  
The choral band is still unseen.

'Tis but the music of a dream—  
An airy sound that mocks the ear—  
But hark again! the eagle's scream,  
It rose and fell distinct and clear!  
And list—in yonder hawthorn bush,  
The red bird, robin, and the thrush!  
Lost in amaze, I look around,  
Nor thrush, nor eagle there behold—  
But still that rich, aerial sound,  
Like some forgotten song of old,  
That o'er the heart has held control,  
Falls sweetly on the ravished soul!

And yet the woods are vocal still—  
The air is musical with song—  
O'er the near stream—above the hill—  
The wilder notes are borne along!  
But whence that gush of rare delight?  
And where art thou? or bird or sprite?  
Perch'd on yon maple's topmost bough,  
With glancing wings and restless feet,  
Bird of untiring throat, art thou  
Sole songster in this concert sweet!  
So perfect, full, and rich, each part,  
It mocks the highest reach of art!

Once more, once more, that thrilling strain!  
Ill-omen'd owl, be mute, be mute!  
Thy native tones I hear again,  
More sweet than harp or lover's lute;  
Compared with thy impassioned tale,  
How cold, how lame, the nightingale!  
Alas! capricious in thy power—  
Thy 'wood note wild' again is fled—  
The mimic rules the changeable hour,  
And all the 'soul of song' is dead!  
But no—to every borrow'd tone,  
He lends a sweetness all his own!

On glittering wing, erect and bright,  
With arrowy speed he darts aloft,  
As tho' his soul had ta'en its flight,  
In that last strain so sad and soft,  
And we would call it back to life,  
To mingle in the mimic strife!  
And ever, to each fitful lay  
His frame in restless motion wheels,  
As tho' he would, indeed, essay  
To act the ecstasy he feels—  
As though his very feet kept time  
To that inimitable chime!

And ever, as the rising moon  
Climbs with full orb the trees above,  
He sings his most enchanting tune,  
While echo wakes through all the grove;  
His descant soothes, in care's despite,  
The weary watches of the night;  
The sleeper from his couch starts up—  
To listen to that lay forlorn—  
And he who quaffs the midnight cup  
Looks out to see the purpling morn!  
O! ever in the merry spring  
Sweet mimic, let me hear thee sing!

## STRANGE STORY BY A STUDENT.

[Communicated by Isaac Webster, Esq., L. L. D.]

SHOWING HOW HE PROPOSES TO PAY A VISIT HOME,  
AND WHAT BEFEL HIM ON HIS WAY.

I had just caught a glimpse of them walking down the college square, arm in arm, and I wondered why they should not immediately have called upon me, especially as they passed close to my chambers. I was about to run out and hail them, but recollecting that I was neither shaved, nor dressed, I deemed it better to wait a little,

satisfied that they would certainly come to see me, and in the meantime I took up the letter which lay still unopened upon the table, and read as follows:

'MY DEAR CHADWICK—My father is a good deal concerned not to have heard from you for such a length of time. It is now three months since you wrote to us—a circumstance quite unusual in one possessed of those regular and studious habits for which you have always been so remarkable. He hopes you will pay attention to your health, and not overwork yourself. There is nothing new in this part of the country, unless the departure for America of your two former school-fellows, James Nugent and William Rafter, both of whom sailed for Upper Canada on last Tuesday morning. A few of their friends, myself among the number, accompanied them to the sea-port, and actually saw their vessel expand her sails to cross the broad bosom of the Atlantic. Their cousin, Tom Sleator—for you know he stands in that relation to them both—is also preparing to go, and on next Friday an auction of all his goods and furniture is to take place at his house. He sends his most affectionate regards to you, and, as he never expects to see you in this world, he bids you farewell for ever, but trusts to meet you in a better one. He says he would be glad to see you once if he could—but as he knows that that is out of the question he does not expect it.

Enclosed you have a ten pound note, which my father sends, lest you might feel any way cramped in your circumstances. As for ourselves we are all well. My father had a slight touch of rheumatism last week—but it is gone. My mother joins him in begging that you will take care of your health, and above all things, not study too much.

I am, my dear Chadwick, your ever affectionate brother,

ALEXANDER GRAHAM.

I felt great compassion for my poor brother, in consequence of the delusions to which, unhappily, I and his whole family knew he had been occasionally subject. For instance, his account of the departure of James Nugent and William Rafter to America I felt to be one of them—I myself having seen them both only a few minutes before, walking arm in arm down the college square. At all events I lost no time in shaving and dressing, after which I sallied out, and on arriving at the college entrance, I was just in time to catch a glimpse of them turning at the outer gate towards Westmorland street.

I paused, and felt hurt that they should both be so near my chambers and declined coming to see me, especially as they knew my number. However, after a couple of minutes' hesitation, I followed them to Westmorland street, but in consequence of the delay caused by it, I could neither come up with nor discover any trace of them whatever. Still I felt for my poor brother, because I feared that their presence in Dublin was an incidental corroboration of my apprehensions lest he might relapse into those delusions which induced him to imagine so many strange things that had existence nowhere but in his own brain.

As for Tom Sleator, however, I know myself that he and his family had made up their minds to follow my brother Edward to America, where he was advancing rapidly into wealth and independence, and it struck me that by a short visit home I could satisfy myself upon many points—for instance, upon the appearance of Nugent and Rafter in Dublin, who were stated to have been on their way to Upper Canada, and, what was of more concern to me, upon the condition of my dear and affectionate brother Alick.

Having taken all these points into consideration, and feeling myself fortified besides by the ten pound note, I resolved to start by the Belfast coach the next morning, and accordingly at half-past seven I found myself an inside passenger, and on my way to Black Park House, the residence of my father. It was called Black Park House in consequence of \* \* \* where the spectre was in the habit of appearing.

[Here there is an obliteration in the M.S., which appears purposely blotted out, as if he had felt regret at having detailed the circumstances, whatever they may have been.]

On reaching the town of \* \* \*, the nearest point, in fact, at which it touched in the direction of my father's house, the distance being ten miles by the shortest road, which went across the mountains, I felt so anxious to reach home that I preferred the latter, wild and gloomy though it was, to the better but more circuitous one, which would have brought me through the inhabited country. The season was about the beginning of March, the night was tolerably calm, but ever and anon there would rise that moaning breeze which passes solemnly along, like the voice of lamentation, and which dies away in something between a prolonged sob and a sigh. The light of the moon, too, was dim and ghastly, and shed a wild and spectral character upon every prominent object around me. For my own part, I rather enjoyed the feeling of romance occasioned by this, and as I proceeded through the dismal solitudes, I amused myself by trying to turn the trees or other objects into such fantastic shapes as pretty strong powers of comparison suggested to my imagination. This kind of fearful enjoyment increased upon me so much, that I began to feel as if, among so many grotesque and supernatural-looking shapes, it was impossible that I could be actually alone.

In this way I proceeded for a distance of about five miles, when I remembered that there was a kind of broken pathway, sometimes distinct, and sometimes not,

even in day light, but still such as I imagined my early sporting habits had made me sufficiently acquainted with—that went in a more direct line across the moors—until it came out on the great road which passed within a couple of hundred yards of my father's house.

I had, with my characteristic want of reflection, forgotten to consider how long the light of the moon could be depended upon on the night in question, but in point of fact, I deemed it next to an impossibility that I could mistake the path with which my feet had, to use a common phrase, been so intimately acquainted.

The turn from the mountain road along which I was proceeding, to the path in question, was at the head of a little glen, the sides of which were covered with that description of underwood peculiar to mountain glens and dells. The sides of it were thickly tangled with hazel, hawthorn, dogberry, mountainash, and holly, and along the bottom ran a prattling little stream, whose banks were fringed with the varieties we have just described, which in many places met across it, so that it consequently peeped out only occasionally, whilst winding through this romantic little spot of lonely but picturesque beauty.

One side of it was now in deep and impenetrable shadow, whilst the other lay in that dim and dreary indistinctness that lends such an inexpressible feeling of terror and delight to such scenery, when viewed in solitude at such an hour.

On taking the path across the head of this glen, I felt still in that mood of imagination which gives peculiar shapes and life to everything that meets the eye under such circumstances. A mournful breeze came up slowly from the glen, and as I advanced I thought I perceived a tall, supernatural being waving a long arm in an admonitory manner, as if to warn me from taking that path. I felt no terror, so to speak, for I knew that the object before me was a bush set in motion by the breeze; but I experienced a wild kind of excitement, which was not without pleasure, nor wholly without pain.

I had left the mountain road, and was now beyond the object which seemed to have warned me back, when, just at my very ear, I thought I heard the word 'Chadwick'—my own name—pronounced with something like distinctness, yet not in such a manner as to render the fact of its pronunciation certain. It might have been my name, or it might have been some sound which the power of my imagination had shaped into it, just as it had given to the visible objects, that presented themselves to me, wild and fantastic forms as I went along. This little incident, however, shook my fortitude more than anything I had seen during that part of the mountain journey which I had yet passed.

I now became far more observant of the sound than of the sights above me; but having gained an elevation that commanded a view of the wide and dreary moor that lay in front, I felt considerably relieved, as even in the struggling light I was able to recognise its undulations, and thought I could discern in the dim and uncertain distance the top of the mountain that overshadowed Black Park House. I accordingly proceeded with fresh confidence, and had got about a mile into the dark expanses before me, still satisfied that I was on the proper path—as, indeed, was the case—when I found that the little light that had hitherto been so friendly to me, was gradually fading away—the moon, in fact, being upon the point of setting behind the mountains that rose to my left.

I now felt the full force of my folly in having, for the sake of saving a couple of miles, departed from the safe mountain road, and had thoughts of retracing my steps, when behold, the light had completely disappeared, and I found myself alone upon the wild waste, and in utter darkness. I would, however, have still returned, were it not for the dread of missing my way. The glen I had passed was, on the side next me, precipitous in many places, and I knew not but in such palpable darkness I might have walked over one of its beetling cliffs. I determined, therefore, let what might happen, to proceed with as much accuracy as possible in the direction of home, certain that there was less risk in traversing the undulations of the moor than in encountering the danger of the precipices behind me.

I soon found, however, what it is to walk along the expanses of a mountain solitude in pitchy darkness. In the course of a few minutes I had lost my path, and in a very brief period afterwards became conscious that I was completely, and in every possible sense astray. It is impossible to describe the terrors which now crowded upon me. Any person who has lost his way in a lonely place at night, and out of the reach of human aid, will understand what I felt. The sensation is one of peculiar horror, combining as it does, a frightful apprehension of personal danger, mingled with a vague but painful dread of something that is more than natural—or, at all events, of something that it fears but cannot define. All sense of my relative position was at once lost, and I knew not in what direction I was proceeding.

In this painful position I called aloud for aid, exclaiming, in my loudest voice—

'Help, if there is any one within hearing; I am a traveller who has lost his way!'

This I repeated at the top of my lungs several times, when at last I heard once more, just at, or rather into my ear, the word 'Chadwick!' firmly, and as I was now certain, distinctly pronounced.

'Who speaks?' I shouted; 'in God's name, who are you, and what is near me?'