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This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

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Literature.

A SONG.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

Sleep!—the ghostly winds are blowing;
No moon's abroad, nor star is glowing;
The river is deep and the tide is flowing
To the land where you and I are going!
We are going afar,
Beyond moon or star,
To the land where the sinless angels are!

I lost my heart to your breathless sire;
'Twas melted away by his looks of fire;
Forgot my God, and my father's ire,
All for the sake of a man's desire—
But now we'll go
Where the waters flow,
And make us a bed where none shall know.

The world is cruel; the world's untrue;
Our foes are many; our friends are few;
No work, no bread, however we sue!
What is there left for us to do,—
But fly—fly,
From the cruel sky,
And hide in the deepest deeps—and die?

THE SHADOW ON THE PILLOW.

The following song, from the pen of Mr. James Ballantine, of Edinburgh, author of "Castles in the Air," "Like blades of grass keeps its sin drag of dew," &c., has just been published and set to music. The song is founded on the following incident, communicated by Sir John McNeill:—"A Highland soldier had his arm so severely wounded that it was about to be amputated, when Miss Nightingale requested the operation delayed, as she thought that under careful nursing the arm might be preserved. By her unremitting care this was accomplished; and the poor soldier on being asked what he felt towards his preserver, said that the only mode he had of giving vent to his feelings was by kissing her shadow when it fell on his pillow as she passed through the ward on her nightly visit."

Borne helpless from the field of fight,
Hewn down with wounds and scars,
I prayed "Heaven come and help the right
And end the cruel wars."
I swoon'd—I dreamt an angel band
Bore me o'er ocean billow;
I woke—and lo! an angel hand
Was smoothing down my pillow.

'Twixt death and life, through day and night,
My wounds unconscious kept me
Of all, except those eyes so bright
That kindly watch'd and wept me;
And even me, in your far land,
Had waded the weeping willow,
Had it not been the angel hand
That smoothed the soldier's pillow.

Oh, earth but once heard such a tale,
So heavenly and so human,
As that of Florence Nightingale,
The angel type of woman,
What marvel that a soldier tell—
A poor but grateful fellow—
He kissed her shadow as it fell
At midnight on his pillow.

TWENTY YEARS' VALENTINES.

An old bachelor was sitting on the fourteenth of February in a comfortable apartment which artistic minds would have termed a studio, but to which he gave the more appropriate name of snuggery. The room was neatly but elegantly furnished. There was no plethora of useless books, and no row of handsome volumes in ostentatious crimson bindings, shone behind glass doors which were never opened. The few books on the walls were classics, and friends to the proprietor. Mr. Lendrum, for such was the unpoetical name of the bachelor, was engaged in examining a packet of letters. The letters on the table were old and crumpled; the ink of some was faint, and the flowers that wreathed about their borders were withered. If any of them had come freshly into your hands by post on that day, being delivered by your maid-servant with a significant smirk, you would have said they were valentines. And such they were.

Mr. Lendrum was at present in possession of a small income, on which one man could live comfortably, though a married couple would have been driven to strange contrivances. But until he was thirty-five years of age Mr. Lendrum had the credit of being heir to an estate of five thousand a year. I need hardly state that his expected fortune drew upon him much attention, and that he was courted by every young lady in the neighborhood. During the twenty years between the age of sixteen and thirty-five, a heap of letters came into his hands on every recurrence of the fourteenth of February. The packet he had then on the table was composed of all the valentines he had received during his period of wealth. Of course, when the rich man to whom Mr. Lendrum was heir died, and it was discovered that he had spent more than his income, and when Mr. Lendrum, like an honest fool, gave up the estate to the creditors, the valentines ceased to pour in, and the young ladies turned their attention to retired merchants and bankrupts who had made their fortunes by being ruined. The old story. Ovid told us long ago what we had to expect from friends:—

"Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos.
Tempora si fuerint tristia, solus eris."

Mr. Lendrum was now soliloquizing upon each letter as he took it from the table. I will give his reflections, word for word.

"This was the eldest Miss Jenkins, from whom I received these rhymes:—

"Dear Thomas, if you will be my valentine,
I only am waiting to say 'I'll be thine.'"

"She had only been waiting to say that to some dozen men, but she never found a suitor. She was thirty-five when she began to seek for lovers. Before that she had plenty, all of whom she jilted. Here is the second Miss Jenkins, who had her sister's cast-off suitors, as she had her cast-off clothes. In that family the eldest sister played with any thing as long as she could, and then handed it over to the second. Thus it descended from one to the other. I was behind a bush once, and heard a youth offer his 'art and 'and to the oldest Miss Jenkins, and what's more, I heard the charmer recommend him to pay his court to the second sister." He did, and was turned over to the third—to the fourth—to the fifth, and finally he married the sixth.

"This letter was from Fanny—my Fanny, as I once called her—every one's Fanny, as I very soon discovered. How I

loved her—for three days. But some one told me, as a profound secret, that he was engaged to Fanny, five minutes after she had sworn eternal love to me. I believe she was engaged to twenty people at the same moment, and she was never married, because, a few days before the appointed wedding, she received letters from most of her former lovers, threatening to forbid her marriage in church, on the ground that she was engaged to them.

"Here is a note from Clara, on whom every one doted. I was her favorite for a time, and I prided myself on it most absurdly. I was engaged to her till a young earl came to stay in the place, and then of course I was vanquished. Shall I ever forget that summer night calm and fragrant; the stars looking down, as if they were the sky's eyes, approving, as I then thought, a youth's passion. I had an appointment with her in the meadow behind her father's house, and she did not come at the time. I waited there two hours, wondering why she did not appear. Finally my patience was exhausted, and as I saw no light in her window, I did not venture to climb up to it, as I had so often done. I heard soft and low voices in the garden, and looking over the wall, I saw her walking in the shadow that a cedar opposed to the moonlight with the young earl. I crept round silently, and got under the tree, so that I heard all their whispered converse. I thought it strange that he made the same vows and protestations that I had made to her; that he showed the same fervency and spoke in the same overstrained language. But I thought it stranger that she received them in the same manner that she had received them from me. When he had told her nine times that he would willingly die for her, I was unable to suppress my anger, and I moved, preparatory to springing upon him and clutching him by the throat. But by the movement I made I got out of the shadow, and the fond lovers saw the shade of a body on the moonlit sward. Of course Clara screamed, and the earl put himself into a posture of defence, crying out, 'Come forth, base spy! Show yourself, eaves-dropping coward!' then there was a scene indeed! I boasted of a higher and holier claim, like some young fellow in Bulwer's novel, and we spoke indignantly for some minutes, in the true lover's jargon. Our interview might have lasted forever, but for the arrival of a third party, another lover, who had waited three hours in a garden bower, according to appointment with Clara. He reproached us with the same love-terms; and really he seemed to take the matter very much to heart. So strong were the proofs he gave us of her love to him, and her faithfulness to us, that we both resigned her to him, much to her disappointment, for he was poorer than either of us. They were married sometime after, and she henpecked him grievously. Now he is dead, and she proposes to throw herself on his tomb. I don't suppose he will like her to get inside the tomb, but will prefer to have the earth interposed between them.

"This is a valentine from the only honest woman I ever met. I won't tell her name, for that would be slandering her, and depriving her of all future position among her sex, and all chance of occupation. She did not love me. Her parents threatened her with a parental curse if she did not endeavor to win my affection,—a good parental homily on love, faith and obedience! The father drew up a rough draft of this valentine. It was submitted to the mother, and altered and approved. The father then copied it out fairly into his business-like hand, and it seemed with him like drawing up—T. Lendrum, Esq., Dr. to—. One daughter's affection, Settlement, £2,500 a year. Ditto, ditto, Pin-money, £500, and so on. What could the daughter do? How could she disobey her father when he ordered her to do wrong, seeing that she had not disobeyed him when he told her to do right? So she sent the valentine; and on my discovering the sender, which I did with some ingenuity, I fell in love with her, and made an offer. It was declined. On this I brought forward the valentine, and with many approaches to tears but with a firm demeanor, she revealed to me the whole matter. How I admired her then! Her conduct was heroic, and I accordingly swore eternal friendship and esteem for her, as she would not allow love. I said I would not reveal her name. What would the sex say to a woman who refused the heir to £5000 a year, solely because—she did not love him? Mr. Snake, in the 'School for Scandal,' requested everybody not to tell of his one good action, because he lived by the badness of his character, and he would lose every friend he had in the world, if it was known that he had once acted rightly. In the same manner a woman lives by flirting and breaking hearts, and the faithfulness and frivoly of her character. Were it known that one woman had once acted sincerely, the whole sex would be suspected. I do not wonder at the ill-treatment received by the only honest woman I ever had the pleasure of meeting from her fellow women.

"Here is a valentine from a clever woman. She actually fell in love with me, and was only cured by observing how foolish one of her admirers looked, when speaking of a passion for her which she did not feel for him. Being cured of love, she turned satirical and wrote a novel, introducing all her lovers as characters, and libelling half the county. I have had valentines from many clever women, but I never fell in love with any. It is absurd to see a lady who is about to write a novel on flirtation, practising for it on some young man or inexperienced soldier, who believes his charms are fascinating the designing coquette. Of course this belief seems often well grounded. That is the lady's fault, not the gentleman's.

"All these valentines came before I was twenty-one. When I came of age these letters took a more serious character. They hinted at the blessings of marriage, of two hearts beating in concert, joined by sacred ties and for ever united. I was informed by several young ladies, by post on the fourteenth of February, that the age was now attained when manhood was commenced, that two hearts together more readily warded off the troubles and perils of life, and more in the same affectionate strain. All this love was transacted with an eye to business; the amount of endearment was as exactly regulated as would be the amount of pin-money. No wonder I was disgusted with all these professions, and searching for some young lady whose affection was not mercenary, and whose regards were to be purchased without money. I found one girl of this species, and made love to her *incognito*. She did not know that I was heir to £5,000 a year, and after a long siege she partly yielded, and began to return my love. Her father did not look upon me with any degree of favor, for he was a mercenary man, and was looking out for the rich Mr. Lendrum, not knowing that the object of his search was at his daughter's feet.

"One day, after I had offered the daughter my love for the thirtieth time, she asked how we were to live? On this I revealed my actual position. She trembled, and almost wept. I asked her the reason of her emotion, and

she told me that my wealth placed a gulf between us, because of her father's avarice. She had resolved, she said, never to marry a rich man, because she knew her father would always be calling on him for money, and would embitter the domestic life of her and her husband. I urged, as a defence, that we would live separately, that I would not yield any money to her father at his request, and that nothing he could do should make me regard her with diminished affection. She was fast yielding, when her father came into the garden where we were, and called her to him. When she came, he told her not to pay any more attention to me, as he was about to invite the rich Mr. Lendrum to his house, and that she must aim at gaining his hand. The daughter refused. She would not marry any whom she did not love.

"And why should you not love Mr. Lendrum, girl? asked her father. 'You'll find gold a great stimulus to love, if you look at things in their right light. I order you to love Mr. Lendrum: disobey me, if you dare.' The father hereupon retired into the house, and I dried the daughter's tears, by assuring her that our marriage was now easily to be accomplished. I received the father's letter on my return home, asking me to pay him a visit with my tutor. I accepted his invitation, and came to his house, much to his surprise of course. Well, to make a long story short, she discovered that she did not really love me so much as to prefer me to my tutor, whom she married privately by a special license, being given away by me. The father stormed, and would have abused me, but that I had stopped his mouth by a loan of a hundred pounds the day before.

"Such is the history of some of my loves. I haven't inclination to trace them further. The young lady who has married already, and did not wish her father to know it; the young lady who was forty years of age, and wanted to be thought twenty; with the numerous other specimens of female purity that a rich young man meets with in his passage through life. Poor women! that have to bear, not only the faults of their own sex, which are large enough in all conscience, but have also to bear all the faults of men, which, people say, are caused by them. How many men are there who always makes fools and knaves of themselves in the most natural manner, and then say the sex has caused it."

LITERARY PABULUM.

Few of our readers, while perusing flaming articles in the *Times*, and other big-wig journals and magazines, on the liberty of the press, are really aware of what this phrase actually indicates. They have a vague idea that there is now no Star-Chamber or High-Commission Court; that prosecutions for libel are much diminished in number and altogether altered in kind; that a man cannot now be pilloried for the severest reflections on an "old marquis," or have his ears docked for contumelious comments on the bench of bishops; they glory in the thought that Higg, Swigg or Blogg may start his penny journal in favour of oppressed nationalities, and ruin himself off-hand without any one caring a snuff about it—and a very glorious and admirable privilege this is too, we are not going to gainsay that; but all this time they never give a thought to the other side of the picture—never trouble themselves to inquire what kind of literary entertainment is kept for their poorer brethren; just as our great-great-grand-fathers, who delivered us from tyranny, never concerned themselves about the goings on at Newgate and Tyburn. A free government was the cry in one place; a free press is the cry in the other. But we must not let the advantages of the general principle blind us to the gross faults and shortcomings which exist in detail.

We have on our table before us some score of the penny publications which are provided for the hebdomadal amusement of the wives, sisters and daughters of the British mechanic; and very stimulating and attractive their titles and contents are. We doubt whether any lady in the land—in fact we don't about it—gets as much excitement out of her circulating library, which supplies her with Jane Eyre, Zee, Blondell, and other works of high art and delicate looseness, as Betty Lutestrung or Bill Blinkers gets out of the *Mudies* and *Cawthornes* of the New Cut, Shoe Lane, and Holywell Street. The *Poacher's Bride*, or the *Blasted Beech*; the *Brompton Burglar*; the *Spanish Brigands*, or the *Fatal Dagger*; *Sidney Belville*, a *Tale of the Present*; *Cœur de Lion*, an *Historical Romance*; the *Flower of the Farm*, or the *Titled Traitor*—are a few of the epics and tragedies which are doubtless at this moment rending with passion or drowning with tears half the milliners' and shoemakers' apprentices in London. It is an indispensable qualification in all these serials that they should be illustrated. The first page of *The Poacher's Bride* contains a portrait of Arthur Coventry, a young gentleman who is a mysterious connection of the wealthy squire, who hates the poacher, who befriends Arthur, who has protected his bride from the "lawless insults" of the "pursued aristocrat," who has therefore driven Arthur from his house, who has taken refuge in a hut in the forest, whence he sallies every evening to meet the daughter of the clergyman, who is also beloved by the squire's nephew, who is accidentally slain by the aforesaid Arthur, who is very nearly hanged, but is rescued at the last moment by the poacher, who had been present at the blast beech when the fatal deed was done, and who ultimately proves Arthur to be the legitimate son of the squire's elder brother. The young man in question is clad in the usual attire of an English gentleman—namely, a double-breasted sailor's jacket, with braid in front, and large buttons on the upper part of the cuffs; a short single-breasted waistcoat with brass buttons; turn-down collars; and tight white ducks. His hair is parted in the middle; and the expression of his countenance is something between that of a chorus-singer at Evans's and a Jew attorney in Gray's Inn, of the name of H. Jones.

The *Crompton Burglar* is a different style of affair altogether. Here we have a frontispiece and no mistake, displaying citizens carousing, and attired in those marvellous garments which are known to the vulgar as trunk-hose, doublets, surcoats, &c. The enormous chests and sinewy legs of these worthies are delightful to look upon; and the gable-ended houses in the background are of that well-known character for which the Adelphi Theatre is so deservedly famous.

Cœur de Lion, by the author of *Jack Cade*, is the regular business—none of your mere flimsy love-stories or tales of low life, but a genuine historical novel on the grand James and Bulwer scale, where "my halidome," and "my troth," and "b'yr lady," form the staple of the dialogue; and the hero on his roan war-steed performs nearly as many marvellous feats as the author himself in his place at Astley's. He carries a banner which, from its size and shape, serves, we should think, for the counterpane of his bed at night; his lance is about the bulk of the mast of a ship, and his moustaches touch his shoulders. This hero has his good and

his bad points—his good ones being an unvarying readiness to fight any body he comes across, and a disposition on all occasions to throw down "a handful of bezants;" his bad ones, a slight tendency to cholera, which leads to many unfortunate mistakes in the way of hanging—an uncontrollable inclination to imitate the great King Edgar in the case of his female subjects, be they maids, wives or widows, and we must confess, a cruel but pious love of torturing Hebrews. Our old friend the banished noble, who lives in the woodman's cottage, and magnanimously saves the king's life when the boar is just going in to finish him, is of course a prominent character.

The Flower of the Farm is a harrowing tale of "innocence betrayed," but betrayed in such a remarkably agreeable manner that we are quite thankful to the author for sending us away in so good a humour. The noble seducer is certainly "a villain," and "the flower" is certainly to be pitied. But she has such capital fun in the splendid villa—where, we suspect, ducks and green peas, with standard sherry, were placed upon the groaning board daily—has so many new dresses, and such "brilliant gems," that we cannot feel all the horror we ought. When, however, eventually forsaken, and presented with £100 cheque, which she gives in disgust to the crossing-sweeper, she returns to her broken-hearted parent, and dies in her arms, we feel that probability and morality are alike satisfied.

If our readers imagine that we have been practising on their credulity in the above sketch, they are wondrously mistaken; we have given but a faint picture of the absurdities which are every week served up to the fiction-loving portion of the poor. We have said not a word of the generous nobleman who, being repulsed in his overtures to the blacksmith's wife, immediately requests Heaven to inform him whether such things can be, bestows 60,000 crowns on the blacksmith's family, and invites the "honest fellow" to supper the same night. We have said not a word of the high-born lady whose husband, a gallant knight, is thrown into a dungeon by his feudal lord, and whose release is only to be purchased by his wife's dishonour—this being, as is very well known, the recognised mode of proceedings among the nobility and gentry of the period. We have not attempted to describe the demeanour of the lady, as, with distended nostril and flashing eye, she assures the proud earl that, rather than submit "to his loathed embrace," she would bury herself in the depths of "yon dark lake;" or, should all else fail, that she "bears that about her will protect what she values more than life—base despot!" touching at the time the point of a dagger, exquisitely polished and adorned at the hilt with jewels of inestimable value. We have altogether passed over the thrilling incident of the gentleman who murdered his betrothed in mistake for a chimney sweep, and did penance for the rest of his life by wearing a scraper next his heart—of the noble-hearted damsel who hid herself for three days in the robbers' cave, to detect the foul conspiracy against the life of her lover, who was to be accused of poisoning his rival, who had in reality been put to death by the robber-chief, at the instigation of a neighbouring "chatellane," who coveted his broad lands—of the repentant miser, who succours the stranger youth something after this fashion:

"My business with thee is brief," said the miser: "thou'rt unfortunate?"

"Alas!" replied Percy, "I am wretched."

"I pity thee—I pity thee."

"Thanks, thanks, good Jasper," said the young man; "your commiseration for the misfortunes of your fellow-creatures does honour to your head and heart, and well becomes your gray hairs."

"Bah!" exclaimed the miser; "enough of this—thou'rt ruined!"

"Beggared!"

"His words move me," said the miser aside; "and there is something in his voice and features that— But pshaw! I am wandering. Thou lovest the fair Alice Clifford!"

"To distraction," said the youth.

"But her uncle has resolved to sacrifice her to another; isn't not so?"

"Alas!" said Percy, "tis too true."

"And what think'st thou of doing?"

"To win myself an honourable station in the service of my country, and to forget that such a being as Alice ever existed."

"A brave resolution, lad," said the miser; "but thou must not want money; thou'lt need it."

Percy looked at the wretched old man with more astonishment than ever; but the miser averted his gaze.

"Oh, where shall I find a helping hand?" said the youth.

"Take this pocket-book," replied Jasper: "it contains a sum sufficient for thy wants for some time to come—take it, and may Heaven prosper thee!"

"Oh, generous sir!" said Percy.

"Nay, nay," interrupted Jasper; "I am unused to gratitude. Take it; and when thou art in a foreign land, in thy prayers forget not the wretched old man, Jasper Scrimpe; he needs them."

"Good old man, hear me."

"Away!" said the miser: "I would be alone."

Publications of this class generally run to some thirty or forty numbers, and the author is usually paid at the rate of about a guinea a sheet—the sheet, as our readers know, containing sixteen pages—and as, even in the smallest, a page contains upwards of forty lines, this is somewhere about the scale of a farthing and a half a line. They are greedily devoured by the whole class of domestic servants, especially housemaids and pages, by young gentlemen and ladies "behind the bar," and by shop-girls of every description. Their effect is not doubtful: the least pernicious consequence is that it renders boys of this class dissatisfied with their situation in life, and leads them to form all manner of monstrous schemes for their advancement, which are well if they ended in nothing less than disappointment. But on their female readers the effects are more dangerous; their heads are filled with visions of lords and ladies—of sudden conquests and brilliant nuptials—of dangers and temptations encountered and overcome by their heroines, to which nine hundred and ninety-nine women in every thousand must have succumbed. Of course they believe they are capable of as much themselves—a delusion found out too late; at the same time, their passions being excited by highly-drawn scenes of love-making, which, though they contain nothing absolutely indecent or immoral, are still sufficiently suggestive to work an infinite amount of mischief. We most earnestly caution our humbler readers against this trashy and noxious species of literature, which, introduced into their families, will too frequently send their sons to the recruiting-sergeant, and persuade their daughters to say "Yes" to the first pair of handsome moustaches that asks them.