

LITERATURE.

A BEAUTIFUL POEM.

SONG OF THE HEART-BROKEN MAIDEN.

One of the sweetest things that Crabbe ever wrote, is the following song of a heart-broken maiden, cracked by the perfidy of her lover, and sighing gently to be at rest. The melody of the numbers is faultless, and beautifully harmonizes with the graceful pathos of the subject.

Let me not have this gloomy view,
About my room, about my bed,
But morning roses, wet with dew,
To cool my burning brows instead;
As flowers that once in Eden grew,
Let them their fragrant spirits shed,
And every day their sweets renew,
Till I, a fading flower, am dead.

O let the herbs I loved to rear,
Give to my sense their perfumed breath;
Let them be placed above my bier,
And grace the gloomy house of death.
I'll have my grave beneath a hill,
Which only Lucy's self shall know,
Where runs the pure pellucid rill
Upon its gravelly bed below,
There violets on the borders blow,
And insects their soft light display,
Till, as the morning sunbeams glow,
The cold phosphoric fires decay.

That is the grave to Lucy shown;
The soil a pure and silver sand,
The green cold moss about it grown,
Unplucked of all but maiden hand.
In virgin earth till then unturned,
There let my maiden form be laid,
Nor let my changed clay be spurned,
Nor for new guests that bed be made.

There will the lark, the lamb, in sport,
In air, on earth, securely play;
And Lucy, to my grave resort,
As innocent, but not so gay.
I will not have the churchyard ground,
With bones all black and ugly grown,
To press my shivering body round,
Or on my wasted limbs be thrown.

With ribs and skulls I will not sleep
In clammy beds of cold blue clay,
Through which the ringed earth-worms creep,
And on the shrouded bosom prey.
I will not have the bell proclaim
When those sad marriage rites begin,
And boys, without regard or shame,
Press the vile mouldering masses in.

Say not, it is beneath my care;
I cannot these cold truths allow;
These thoughts may not afflict me there,
But O! they vex and tease me now!
Raise not a turf, nor yet a stone,
That man a maiden's grave may trace,
But thou, my Lucy, come alone,
And let affection find the place!

THE HARP OF IERNE.

BY THE BELFAST MAN.

Wild harp of Ierne, though rude was thy tone
By my fingers awaked, it was motherland's own;
And oh, 'tis high Heaven alone can define
How my spirit was woven, dear wild one, with thine;
And yet we are severed, if nothing remains
Of the past to inspire thee but weeping and chains;
Oh, tell me its fiery-souled daring is o'er
And I'll wake thee to visions of glory no more!

Wild harp of Ierne, the pride of the proud,
When the true could be sung in their glory or shroud,
Shall I curse thee, and rend thee, and fling thee away,
Like a half-shattered blade on a half-ended day?
Must thy lisping be changed like the changings of men;
Or be doomed—ay, be crushed into silence again?
On, on with this strain, and our toiling is o'er,
For I'll wake thee to visions of glory no more!

Wild harp of Ierne, there's darkness abroad,
And we've tampered and trifled with tyranny's rod,
Till reason herself, like a guilty thing, sleeps,
While liberty hangs o'er the culprit, and weeps;
And the holiest thoughts ever born of the heart,
Have been changed into poison, and twisted by art;
Till the slave clasps the fetters half riven before,
And resigns him to dream of their breaking no more.

Wild harp of Ierne, thou once had a strain
Could have quickened the soul that dissensions have slain,
When the lion of minstrelsy led us along
On the track of the foe by the light of his song:
Oh, he came with a bosom nor callous nor cold,
And he left us untainted by power or gold;

And his name like a halo thy spirit hangs o'er,
Though we wake thee to visions of glory no more!

Wild harp of Ierne, they've melted the spell
That had fettered the child of the stranger so well;
For, oh Heaven! when virtue's no shield for the breast,
Can we tell where the next poisoned arrow may rest?
Shall we till, shall we toil, till our spirits are worn
Through a seed time of tears for an autumn of scorn?
Oh, the heart whispers no! but a warmth in its core
Would allure us to visions of glory once more.

GERALDINE FITSMAURICE.

FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF A RETIRED BARRISTER.

The commencement of the legal career to which I was destined took place at an eventful period, for I was called to the Irish bar in 1799. It was an auspicious year for the profession, though not for Ireland; the recent insurrection had put the mighty machinery of the law in motion, and from the attorney-general (may his soul rest in peace after the labours of that year!) down to the functionary whom a British peer elegantly styled 'the concluder of justice,' turnkeys and informers included, all its members were in full employment. Yet amid the harvests so rapidly gathered I found myself alone,—briefless, rather limited in ways and means, and without a friend in the Irish metropolis.

It was under these circumstances that, in returning to my solitary lodging through the most crowded part of Chapel Street, I one evening chanced to encounter my old school-fellow, Eugene Desmond.

We had seen each other last equipped with satchels, and grievously afflicted with Horace; but fifteen years had passed over us since then, and it was almost marvellous that Eugene recognised me.

Though schoolfellows, we had not been companions, nor rivals either, for our pursuits were different: he led the classes, whilst I led the frolics; he was boasted of by the master, and I distinguished among the pupils of Dr. Sullivan's classical seminary in the once warlike but now deserted town—I might have said village—of Carrickfergus.

Time and chance had made us strangers, and left but little resemblance between the thoughtless boy and the briefless barrister; but, in spite of increased stature and hardening manhood, the remarkable beauty of his large but finely moulded figure, and the expression of mingled gentleness and thought that dwelt in the broad white forehead and deep grey eyes, at once unsealed the book of my remembrance, as he grasped my hand, inquiring, in the old school-day tones—how years had deepened them!—"Connolly, have you forgotten me?"

"No, no, Desmond," said I, for the man's words went to my heart, then in the dearth of friendship, 'you are not one to be easily forgotten—' but before the speech was finished he had drawn my arm within his, and we walked on with mutual inquiries and explanations, in the course of which I discovered that the fortunes of our boyhood were in some degree reversed.

Eugene had been the youngest son of a Catholic family, rich only in numbers, and possessing no other resource than their uncle the bishop, and a rough, ill-cultivated farm, the meanest remnant of a once noble property, of which they kept a traditional remembrance long after it had melted from their hold, under the united operation of the penal code and their predecessors' extravagance.

That the circumstances of my birth were more fortunate, may be known by the fact that my father was a Protestant gentleman and a magistrate; but after all this and a Trinity degree, I was without occupation, whilst he, who had refused to become a priest, thereby mortally offending, not only his uncle the bishop, but the whole family, and they were nineteen strong, had made his way to Dublin, and by means of the knowledge acquired when I was leading insurrectionary movements against the constitutional authority of Dr. Sullivan, was now the principal usher in one of the best academies of the city. Eugene did not mention it, but I afterwards learned that his abilities were considered the chief support of the seminary, whose reputation was at that period higher than that of any preparatory establishment in Ireland; and that he had achieved a somewhat perilous distinction, being generally regarded as the author of sundry political articles which had made the round of the liberal papers, and were no less remarkable for their truth and talent than for an elevation of tone, which rose alike above party prejudice and government influence, but was sufficient to draw upon the writer the ominous observation of the Castle.

My pride, of which there was always a considerable stock on hand, would not allow Desmond to understand the peculiar difficulties of my position, but I now believe he suspected them, for many and earnest were his invitations to spend that evening with him, and his hopes to see me often; it was all the usher could do, and as his domicile lay right in our track—by the way, being situated in a more fashionable part of the town than mine—I at last agreed to accompany him.

We had just entered what Eugene called his 'bachelor quarters,' and he was ringing for dinner, when a much louder peal from the door-bell drowned the attempt. We heard Mr. Desmond inquired for, and the next moment two handsome and very respectably dressed youths, whom a maiden aunt would have designated 'boys,' bounded into the room, exclaiming,—

"Oh, Mr. Desmond, how glad we are to find you at home! There's going to be a party at our house. First we got the Dalys, who were to come some evening; then Miss Fitsmaurice and her uncle came, and all our cousins from Castle Shindy. Mother has remembered that it's our birthday, and father says he could collect a party; so dress and come, for we have promised not to go home without you."

"Thank you, thank you, boys!" said Eugene; 'but you see,' he continued, glancing at me, "I have the pleasure of a friend's company myself this evening."

I had hitherto escaped the notice of the young inviters, and sat mentally contrasting their conduct with my own old feelings towards Dr. Sullivan; nor was it without some confusion of face that they made the discovery of my presence. But their hospitable intentions were not to be foiled.

"The gentleman will come too," cried both, in a breath; 'won't you, sir? Our family will be very happy to see any friend of Mr. Desmond.'

In short, Mr. Desmond they were determined to have. I was quite as much pressed, and the negotiations were finally concluded by each taking his several way for the purpose of making the necessary toilet arrangements; whilst the young gentlemen resolutely took their seats in Desmond's parlour to await our return, in accordance with their oft-repeated promise of not going home without us.

Whether from his conversational talents or the amiability of his manners I cannot now say, but Eugene Desmond was what is called a general favourite in society, being admitted, or rather courted, by the best company in Dublin; and at that period the city had something to boast.

The house to which I accompanied him was that of Mr. Dillon, a gentleman of some importance in the mercantile world, whose twin sons and only children now escorted us to the mansion, and were among the number of Eugene's pupils.

I found Mr. Dillon a shrewd, good-humoured man, prosperous in the world, and prudent withal, but more liberal in politics than he cared to shew, considering that the fields and scaffolds of Ireland still reeked with the traces of the recent rebellion.

Mrs. Dillon was a pretty, lively little woman, extremely fond of her boys, and of Mr. Desmond for being kind to them; and from both I received what might be properly termed 'an Irish welcome,' on his account.

The company, like most hastily collected parties, was composed of rather heterogeneous materials; of which at this distance of time, I can only remember that the cousins from Castle Shindy formed a considerable part. There was a formidable array of young, or at least, single ladies, in the newest dresses of the season; and a tolerable supply of gentlemen from all the learned professions, including Mr. Fitsmaurice, a stern, aristocratic lawyer, who then occupied a judicial office under government, in which he acquired a notoriety for unvarying and inflexible justice, not always merited by the functionaries of his day.

He was accompanied by his niece, and if I have not included her among the ladies of our party, it is because she was one of those few remarkable persons who have a separate existence in memory distinct from the class to which they happen to belong. Yet Geraldine Fitsmaurice was not beautiful in the ordinary sense of the term; her features were far from regular, and her figure would have been diminutive but for an appearance of height which must have arisen from unusual slenderness. She had a fair complexion, but it seemed too pale for health; long dark hair, and a countenance so sweet, and yet so intelligent, that the eye rested upon it involuntarily, forgetful of more faultless faces.

Yet there was a fire in the eye at times, and a compression of the thin lip, which told of great but silent energy; and a depth of character, which might be guessed at though never fathomed. She was said to be twenty-five, but looked much younger; had been brought up in a remote western county, but for some years conducted her uncle's domestic administration in a style which left him nothing to regret in remaining a bachelor.

Under her sway his house had become one of the gayest in Dublin, and she was known to be the life and soul of every party, as I found her of ours, possessing an unbounded flow of spirits, and a brilliant wit, which my friend Desmond could only approach; and though the lady generally distanced him, their occasional encounters, as Mrs. Dillon remarked, "kept us all alive," and seemed to afford considerable entertainment to themselves.

It was in the midst of one of them, and just as the now assembled company were marshalled for the dining room, that a pair arrived, for whom our host had waited though not very patiently, for the last half hour. They consisted of a sombre-looking dowager, remarkable for her high-church piety and love of cards, which latter she was in the habit of declaring were "great helps to Christian resignation under the many trials of life;" and a converted priest, who was now preaching Protestantism, under her peculiar patronage, in one of the chapels of ease.—N. B. The lady was rich and childless, and I heard the reverend gentleman introduced as Dr. Donovan; but in spite of the change produced by time, circumstances, and, it might be disguise, his voice had a tone that was familiar to my ear as that of my early though little-beloved teacher, Dr. Sullivan.

Often in the course of that gay but eventful evening