

The Republican Compiler.

By HENRY J. STAHL.

"TRUTH IS MIGHTY, AND WILL PREVAIL."

TWO DOLLARS A-YEAR.

A Family Newspaper—Devoted to Politics, Agriculture, Literature, Arts and Sciences, The Markets, General Domestic and Foreign Intelligence, Advertising, Amusement, &c.

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Choice Poetry.

THE BORROWED BOOK.

BY F. S. COLZENS.

I lent my love a book one day,
She brought it back, I said it by;
"Was little either had to say—
"She was so strange, and I so shy."
But yet we loved indifferent things—
The sprouting buds, the birds in tune,
And time stood still, and wreathed his wings
With rosy limbs from June to June.
For her, what book to dare or do?
What peril attempt? What hardship bear?
But with her: ah, she never knew
My heart, and what was hidden there!
And she with me, so cold and coy,
Seemed like a maid bereft of sense;
But in a crowd, all life and joy,
And full of blissful impudence.
She married well, a woman needs
A mate, her life and love to share;
And little care sprang up like weeds,
And played around her elbow chair.
And years rolled by, but I content,
I knew it, let me have reason,
"Till age's touch my hair beset,
With joys and gleams of silver light.
And then it changed, I took the book
Which she had read in days gone by,
And as I read, such passion shook
My frame, I needs must frown or cry.
For here and there her love was writ
In old, half-faded pencil signs,
As if she yielded, bit by bit,
Her heart, in dots and underlines.
Ah, mirrored foot! too late you look!
I know it, let me have reason,
This mirrored foot! too late you look!
Unless you read it afterward!"

Select Miscellany.

From Household Words.

THE GLEANER.

"They have all been touched, and found base metal!"
—SHAKESPEARE.
"So this is my return to my native village!
This is my reception from relatives, who owe me so much!" Thus thought, rather than said, a poor looking old man, as he stood leaning over the gate of a newly cleared wheat-field, in the bright, bustling, busy harvest time. "One," exclaimed he, as his musings took a tone of passion which broke unconsciously into words, "one—yonder portly landlady, forsooth, sitting in her bar, as she is pleased to call it—her bar, quotha! In my young days it was the little boarded parlour opening from the tap-room. A bar in the old Red Lion! What shall we hear of next? One, bedecked, and dandified, with her gown like a rainbow, her fringed apron, and her cap stuck out with flowers, sitting in her bar, if that be its title and name, amongst her glasses and punch bowls, with a bell upon her table and a net of lemons dangling above her head; she, Miss Collins, as she calls herself—she used to answer to the name of Jenny Collins twenty years ago—refused point blank to acknowledge me! denied to my face that she had ever seen me! called me a cheat and an impostor! wondered at my impudence in attempting to pass myself off for her dear uncle, Michael Norris; threatened me with the stocks and the round house, the justice and the jail! Precious minx! She whom I rescued from drudgery and starvation, from living half shop woman, half maid, with the stinky turgid clear-starcher, in Bedford Marsh; whom I set up in that very Red Lion—perched upon her throne, in the arm-chair, in the bar!—purchased the lease, the furniture, the good will; paid the first year's rent; stocked her cellars, clapped a hundred pound note into her hand! And now that I come home old and lame, sick and ragged, she reviles me as a vagabond and an impostor, and tells me to be thankful to her compassion and tender-heartedness that she does not send for the constable to carry me to jail! Liar that she is!—base, ungrateful, perjured liar! for she knew me. I saw that she knew me; ay, as well as I knew her. She would be glad to be no more altered in the years that have changed her from a slim girl of twenty-five to a bloated woman of five and forty, than I, in those same years, with all my griefs.
"Then her brother—laugh!—It maddens me to think of his baseness—whom I educated and apprenticed, finding him money afterwards to put him into partnership with old Jones, the thriving linen draper. He, indeed, did not pretend to deny that I might be his uncle; but, grant that I were, what claim had I upon his charity, more than any other starving wretch? What was I to him? He pitied me, Heaven knew! but what could I expect from him? O, the smooth-speaking, soft-spoken knave, with his pity and his charity! Hypocrite in look and word! His tone was gentle as if he had been bidding we welcome to bed and board for my whole life long. What a fawning parasite that would have been, if I had accosted him like a rich man. Well there is some virtue in these rags, since they teach false tongues to speak the truth. Then came my cousin Anthony, whose daughter I portioned, whose runaway son I clothed and sent to sea. And this Anthony is now a great meal man—a rich miser, who could buy up half the country. What says he? Why, he was poor himself—the second—no, body knew how poor, and had been forced to make a rule to give nothing to beggars; ay, he called me a beggar! I might go to the Union, he said; the workhouse! O, the precious rascal! The son of my father's brother, brought up in my father's house—worth a hundred pounds and would have sent me to the workhouse—me, his only living kinsman! O, this world! this world!—I thought for my old school-fellow Nicholas Hume, the spendthrift, whom I bailed in my young days, when little richer than himself, and saved from prison by paying his debts. What was his gratitude? Why, he forsook had never heard my name. Michael Norris? Who was Michael Norris? O, the black me well enough twenty years ago, when I returned from the West Indies, a

rich man, husband of a wealthy Creole, master of flourishing plantations, to visit my early haunts, help my poor relations—I found them all in distress, some way or other—and shook hands with my old friends! Nobody had forgotten me then. But now that I come back a ragged cripple, houseless, and friendless. And the old man paused, and lifted his wretched hat from his thin gray hairs, and passed his tattered handkerchief over his furrowed brow, with an air which proved that he was as much oppressed by mental suffering, by indignation and disappointment, as if by the sultry heat of an August noon.
"There are none left now," thought old Michael to himself as, exhausted by his vehemence, he sank into a milder mood; "none left for me to apply to now, except the three orphan children of my poor nephew, William Leslie, the cousin of these hard-hearted Collinses, and their mother; and they, I fear, are themselves in great want, and great trouble. He lately died, after a series of undesired misfortunes, and a long and wasting illness; and she, working as hard as ever woman did work to keep herself and her family out of the work-house—Lant Union to whose comforts my precious cousin Anthony so tenderly consigns me. Poor things! they may well deny any knowledge of me, for they never saw me; and I have had a good sample of the slight impression that benefits conferred leave behind them! William was only eighteen when I left England and returned to Jamaica, after my last visit. A fine, frankhearted lad he was. I remember wishing to take him with me. But my poor sister would not part with him. She had married again after the death of her first husband, William's father, and a wretched match she made; for this second husband proved to be a habitual drunkard, always half mad when intoxicated, who broke out at last into desperate frenzy, and but for my interposition, would have murdered the poor boy. I seem to see the struggle now," thought the old man, closing his eyes; "he flung himself upon William with a table-knife, and I rushing between them just soon enough to receive the blade in my arm. I bear the mark of the wound still. The madman was sent to an asylum, and there soon died. And my poor sister, well off for her station, could not part from this only son. He was a fine lad, was William, spirited, and generous; and when she also died he was already attached to the girl whom he afterwards married. I helped them, too, for I loved the boy; I helped on that match, for it was one of sincere affection, and they were in a way to earn a handsome competence; there must have been some imprudence, or great ill luck, to have reduced them to such poverty." So ran the train of the old cripple's reveries. "I never suspected it; he never wrote to me; and I, engaged in my own affairs, and with children of my own—well, I will see them, however. They are in this field, gleaning. So said their neighbor. Yes, this is the field; there they are. I'll see them," thought Michael Norris, "though it is probable that they too will know nothing of me." And opening the gate, the old man limped slowly across the furrows, and began gathering the scattered ears of corn in his withered hand.
We have said the field, although, after passing the gate, which admitted him between the two high hedges that bound it on the northern side, the wide expanse from which the wheat had just been garnered assumed the appearance rather of a large open ridge of arable land, bordered by the high road, and terminated by a distant village, than of the small wooded enclosures so common to the midland counties. A pretty scene it was, as it lay before him, bathed in the sunshine; and a lovely glow was that to which his attention was immediately directed. A pale young woman, whose regular and beautiful features received additional interest from her close widow's cap, stood before him, holding a fine infant in her arms; a very pretty girl of twelve or thirteen was flourishing a tuft of wheat-ears before her baby's eyes, smiling herself at the smile she excited, while her little brother clung to the mother's petticoat in momentary fear of two high fed dogs attending a gentleman and lady riding slowly along the road.
The poor cripple drew back, and sat down under a clump of maple and hawthorn, gay with the purple wild, vetch, the white bindweed, and the pretty clematis, known by the still prettier name of the "traveller's joy;" whilst the riding party called off the dogs, spoke graciously to the child and his mother, and passed slowly out of sight. As they left her, Mrs. Leslie, for she it was, approached the old man, to replace her infant in his cradle; niches under the fragrant shade of some overhanging hazel stems, just beside his rude seat. Struck by the evidence of poverty, sickness and sorrow, afforded by his tattered apparel, and his wrinkled yet venerable countenance, she took up a pitcher, which stood by the cradle, and, with the kindness which the very poor so often show to each other, and a remark upon the heat of the day, offered him a small cupful of the milk which formed the contents of the jug. He took it with a trembling hand, and thanked her with an emotion, which our readers will comprehend, but which at once surprised and interested its object.
"Your name is Leslie?" asked he, after returning the cup with thanks and blessings, he made room for her beside him on the thymy bank. "Your name is Leslie?"
"Margaret Leslie. It is so."
"The wife of William Leslie?"
"His widow. Ah, me! his widow!" replied she, with a sigh. "The widowed mother of these children, Michael," added she, as the boy came near them, "take some milk yourself, and carry a cupful to your sister, and bring what wheat-ears she and you have gathered to my little heap."
"Michael," echoed the old man, "your husband's name was William! How came you to call your son Michael? But the name belongs to your family perhaps; your father, or some favorite brother?"
"No," replied the widow, "it was for a different reason. A very dear kinsman of my husband's bore that name, and in token of love and gratitude to him, and in fulfillment of an old promise—so our only son was christened."
"I remember," muttered the cripple to himself, "I remember William said that his first boy should bear my name, and I think he wrote to that effect after the child was born; but the letter must have arrived at the time of misery." Then rousing himself, and turning to the gentle creature, whom a feeling of unusual interest detained at his side, he addressed her. "Do remember now that William Leslie had an uncle called Michael Norris, but what particular case of gratitude."
"What cause?" inquired Mrs. Leslie;

"a thousand causes; from a mere infant, when I have heard my husband say that he gave him the first shilling that he ever possessed, that kind uncle, absent or present, was his good genius. He insisted on his being sent to Belford School; paid himself for masters, whom his guardians thought superfluous; rescued him from the frantic frenzy of his step-father; saved his life at the utmost peril of his own, from the furious assaults of that wretched madman; placed him in the paper mill, which, but for the rash speculation of his partner, would have been not merely a comfortable income for himself, but an affluent position for his family; and, last and dearest kindness, when William, with his characteristic generosity loved a poor girl, the portionless orphan of a naval officer, when interested connections and officious friends all opposed the union, did not he, from across the wide ocean, send himself not merely his appropriation of the destined marriage, but a portion for the destitute bride? I never saw him," continued Mrs. Leslie, in a lower tone than that which had been dictated by her enthusiastic recollection of her benefactor's goodness; "but night and morning I have prayed for him, and night and morning do my poor children join in those prayers; and my dear husband, amongst his latest words—"
"Did he pray for the uncle who seemed to have forgotten?" asked the old man, his voice half stifled with emotion. "Look, Margaret," added he, stripping up his sleeves and showing a deep scar extended diagonally across his left arm; "this scar was received from the knife with which his furious and frantic step-father was pursuing William Leslie. I am Michael Norris. You do not disdain to acknowledge the cripple who comes to your door hungry and ragged. Here, too," said he, taking from his pocket a bundle of papers, "are characters that you well know."
Tearfully, yet joyfully, the warm-hearted and grateful Margaret returned the embrace of her venerable kinsman, presented her three children to him one by one, and replied to his questions as to their change of circumstances.
It needed few words to tell the story. Nothing is more rapid than a descent. The rolling of a stone down a hill is a true type of a falling fortune. Taking advantage of a long illness with which William Leslie was afflicted, his partner engaged in desperate speculations. They failed. The rash speculator absconded, and William remained a bankrupt, without a friend or resource. Honest to the last, his wife resigned her small settlement to satisfy the creditors. His debts being paid, he tried every means of living, and whilst he retained his health had supported his family by the most persevering industry; but a fever, occasioned by over exertion, had come on; his constitution, impaired by anxiety and labor, had been unable to resist the attack, and since that period the wife, who had been the faithful partner of his cares and his toils, had at least so far succeeded as to maintain her children without the assistance of charity, whether public or private.
"Why not have written to me when this bankruptcy took place?" inquired the uncle.
"Alas, dear sir! we had heard of that terrible hurricane, in which—"
"In which," said the old man, filling up, with stern composure, the sudden pause that from a mixture of delicacy and sympathy had arrested Margaret Leslie's words—"in which the plantation where I resided was laid waste, my house levelled with the ground, and my wife with four helpless children in the ruins! In striving to rescue them, this thigh—"striking the withered limb with a hazel twig—"this thigh was broken. I owe my preservation to the gratitude of an emancipated negro; but for months, for years, all my life, all nature, was a blank before me! I have sometimes wondered how I could have survived such a blow; for what purpose was I spared! The doubt was sinful, and finds its rebuke, its thrice merciful rebuke, in this blessed hour. You heard, then, of my losses, dear Margaret? Poor William heard of them?"
"We were sure that something must have gone amiss, from receiving no reply to the letter which announced the birth of our boy, and claimed your promise of standing godfather at his christening. William did not like to write again upon such an occasion; it would have seemed like encroaching upon your too generous spirit. But when the news of that awful hurricane arrived, and Nicholas Hume and the Collinses made inquiries in London, and ascertained that your plantation had indeed been amongst those laid waste—then your silence was too well explained! I heard this sad news first; for it arrived during the dreadful illness which preceded my husband's bankruptcy. And when he regained so much breathing time after his own misfortunes as to ask news of you, no tidings could be obtained; all trace of you seemed lost. O, that he had lived to see this day! His will had lived to see once more the kinsman he loved so well!"
The old man pressed her hand in speechless emotion, and Margaret, smiling through her tears, went on:
"I can't live with us, dear uncle, and we shall wait upon you and work for you, and be happy together—as happy as we can be without him—after all! My Annie is a good girl, O, such a good girl! and my dear niece, dear uncle? and poor Michael, your namesake, is a boy of a thousand. We have had much to be thankful for. Farmer Rogers, the overseer, whose books my husband kept, (little Michael keeps them now, as well, the farmer says, as his father did,) supplies us with milk twice a day. Mrs. Lascelles, the rector's wife, employs Annie and me constantly in needlework for her large family; and if we can but keep our pretty cottage—if we can keep that cottage at the house porch poor William planted the hony-suckle and the China rose, and the vine which now covers the thatch—that cottage where we worked and wept together, and where he died the death of the righteous; if we can but live together there, within sight of the turf that covers his dear remains, I should ask nothing better on this side of the grave."
The widow's tears flowed afresh, and once again the old man pressed her hand.
"Is there any doubt of your retaining this beloved habitation, dear Margaret? And does my coming cause that doubt?"
"O, no, no, dear uncle, not in the slightest degree. The cause of doubt is, that we have no lease, and that Miss Collins, as she calls herself, poor William's cousin, wants it for some purpose or other; people say with some view of marrying, but this is idle talk, village gossip. What is certain is, that she wastes her time in wishing to give two pound, and that I am willing to give two pound, and that I am willing to give two pound to—"
"What cause?" inquired Mrs. Leslie;

give. If our old landlord, Mr. Godfrey, had stayed, he and Lady Elizabeth had promised, that I should remain; but the Hall, and the village, and the whole estate are sold, and the new lord of the manor is coming this evening. —Hark! you may hear the bells ringing even now. Mr. Godfrey and Lady Elizabeth intend staying a few days at the rectory; you saw them ride by with their dogs; they have promised to speak in my favor to the new landlord; they mentioned it even now, and the good rector and his excellent lady will second my position; still—"
"Be of good cheer, Margaret. Even if you should leave your pretty cottage, I would wager something—"
The old man checked himself and resumed in a different tone—
"Who is the new lord of the manor? what is his name?"
"The property was purchased by Mr. Price; but he is understood to be an agent, and I have not heard the name of the real proprietor, who is said to be an elderly gentleman, and so rich that he will hardly be tempted to turn an old tenant from her cottage for so trifling an addition of rent. Nevertheless—"
"Once again, Margaret, be of good heart," reiterated her uncle.
"The tenants are to meet him in the avenue; the farmers and their sons on horseback, the cottagers, women and children, on foot. I ought to join them? I have no shame in honest labor, but do shrink from meeting the scorn of those purse-proud kindred who—"
"Poor Margaret's tears fell fast. "Ought I to be there, dear uncle? I will go or stay, as you direct."
"Go, Margaret, go, and fear nothing. Gather up your treasures; the jug, whose generous draught was the sweetest I ever quaffed; the wheat ears, and cradle with its growing babe—blessings on its dear face! Go boldly; I will not shame you by these unseemly rags, but will rest awhile under the friendly shade of the hazel, while you return home and prepare for the procession. Be sure that you fail not. We shall meet again soon, dear ones! For the present, farewell!"
There was something about the old man, ragged, sick and lame as he was, that Margaret found it impossible to disobey. So, heartened up, she knew not why, for many have felt, without being able to give the feeling its true name, the mingled power of sympathy and appreciation to comfort and to cheer, she called about her her blooming children and departed, Annie and herself bearing the cradle between them, and the boy laden with the gleanings of the day.
The setting sun gleamed brightly between the noble elms that formed the beautiful avenue to Corston Hall, gilding the rugged branches and turning into pendant emeralds the leaves of the branches which met across the wide carriage road; met and interlaved in a lengthened archway that might well have suggested the rich intricacies of a cathedral aisle in the proud days of Gothic architecture. The village bells pealed amain, horses pranced, flags waved, the children of the parish schools strewn the gaudy flowers of the early autumn; and as the carriage of the new lord of the manor rolled between the ivied lodge to the gray old Hall, a quaint, irregular structure of Elizabeth's or James' day, with a tame peacock sunning himself on the stone balustrade, a large old English spaniel basking on the steps, and the tenants in their holiday apparel grouped round the porch, an artist, whether painter or poet, might have envied the accident which produced an arrangement so felicitously picturesque.
Something of this feeling, however, unperceived or unguessed by herself, mingled with the natural emotions of curiosity and interest in our friend Margaret's bosom, as, standing humbly apart between her two elder children, with her infant in her arms, under a large sycamore, she gazed around upon the scene, and perceived, gaily adorned, in the extreme country fashion, the rival candidate for her beloved cottage—the buxom landlady of the Red Lion surrounded by the unbidden kind of her husband. Neither Margaret nor her William had ever applied for assistance to these people; and yet she knew instinctively that some from pride and some from shame felt the silent reproach of her unassisted poverty and her blameless life—that all wished her absence, and would contribute, as far as in their lay, to turn her from her home; and in spite of the encouraging forebodings, her heart sank within her as she gazed upon the scene, and perceived, gaily adorned, in the extreme country fashion, the rival candidate for her beloved cottage—the buxom landlady of the Red Lion surrounded by the unbidden kind of her husband. 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