

The Columbia Democrat.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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TERMS:

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POETRY



Home of the Departed.

Perhaps the mourners learn to look to the blue sky by day and the stars by night and to think that the dead are there, and not in graves," said the child in earnest voice. "Perhaps so," replied the old man, doubtfully—"it may be."—Boz

The tangled briars have overgrown
That little hill of earth,
And sweeping rains have worn the stone—
I cannot read the birth,
Or when this mouldering frame within
Left the vain world of care and sin.

It breathes, I know not what of dread
And desolate forgetfulness;
This grave, unwept by thoughtful fear—
Untrod by foot of mourner—yes,
Deserted utterly, and left,
Of visitants and friends bereft.

'Tis hard to bring my heart to feel
That thus the world can wear away
The yearning sadness that will steal
Upon our soul on that sad day,
When we lay down the axe we have,
Into the cold and silent grave.

Memories it cannot be that life,
And busy care can e'er efface
The memories of the bosom's strife—
That sometimes to that resting place
The pensive wanderer may not stray,
To spend the hours of parting day.

Be still, fond heart! Why dost thou cling
Thus to this lonesome spot?
Does not a higher impulse spring
In mourners' hearts and hear't thou not
Those standing by the narrow prison
Say, 'He is not here, but he hath risen!'

Oh, child of fancy! gentle maid!
May I a lesson learn from thee—
That those who lie in the grave I've laid
Whose forms no more o'er earth I see,
Are not beneath the crumbling sod,
But in the spirit land with God!

And when with them I would commune,
I will not see with fearful eyes
The graveyard's melancholy gloom;
But look up to the clear blue skies,
Or to the silent stars by night,
For thither have they winged their flight.

SOLILOQUY TO HIS BRECHES.

You're old, they say; a rusty pair
Of antiquated breeches;
And many a rip, and many a tear,
A woful warning preach

Alas! that patch upon the knee,
Full sore my leg doth fell it,
And many a time in company
I'm put to 't to conceal it.

Your threads are bare as beggar's purse,
And holes in each worn pocket,
Are daily getting worse and worse.
My heart—the sigh doth shock it.

ON DITS.

'You'll split my sides,' as the oak tree
said to the flash of lightning
'I'll stick to you,' as the treacle said to
the fly.

'I'm dreadfully cut up,' as the crimped
cod said to the fish-monger.
'Why don't you hit one of your own
size?' as the tenpenny nail said to the sledge ham-
mer.

'Come in out of the wet,' as the shark
said when he swallowed the little nigger.

A FRAGMENT FOR THE YOUNG
TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

Are there any among you my young friends who desire to preserve health and cheerfulness through life, and a length to reach a good old age. I so, listen to what I am about to tell you. A considerable time ago, I read in one of the newspapers of the day that a man had died near London, at the advanced age of 110 years, that he never had been ill, and that he had maintained through life a cheerful, happy temperment. I wrote immediately to London, begging to know if, in the old man's treatment of himself, there had been any peculiarity which rendered his life so lengthened and so happy; and the answer I received, was as follows:—

'He was uniformly kind and obliging to everybody, he quarrelled with no one, he ate and drank merely that he might not suffer from hunger or thirst, and never beyond what necessity required. From his earliest youth, he never allowed himself to be employed. These were the only means he used.'

I took a note of this in a little book where I generally write all that I am anxious to remember, and very soon afterwards I observed in another paper that a woman had died near Stockholm, at 115 years of age; that she never was ill, and was always of a contented, happy disposition. I immediately wrote to Stockholm to learn what means this old woman had used for preserving her health, and now read the answer:—

'She was always a great lover of cleanliness, and in the daily habit of washing her face, feet, and hands in cold water, and as often as opportunity offered, she bathed in the same; she never ate or drank any delicacies of sweet-meats; seldom coffee, seldom tea, and never wine.'

Of this, likewise, I took a note in my little book.

Some time after this, again I read that near St. Petersburg, a man died who had enjoyed good health till he was 120 years old.—Again I took my pen and wrote to St. Petersburg, and here is the answer:—

'He was an early riser, and never slept beyond seven hours at a time; he never was idle; he worked and employed himself chiefly in the open air, and particularly in his garden. Whether he walked, or sat in his chair, he never permitted himself to sit away, or in a bent posture, but was always perfectly straight. The luxurious and effeminate habits of citizens he held in great contempt.'

After having read all this in my little book, I said to myself, 'You will be a foolish man indeed, not to profit by the example and experience of these old people.'

I then wrote out all that I had been able to discover about these happy old people upon a large card, which I suspended over my writing desk, so that I might have it always before my eyes, to remind me what I ought to do, and from what I should refrain. Every morning and evening I read over the contents of my card, and obliged myself to conform to its rules.

And now my dear young readers, I can assure you, on the word of an honest man, that I am much happier, and in better health than I used to be. Formerly, I had headache nearly every day and now I suffer scarcely once in three or four months. Before I began these rules, I hardly dared venture out in rain or snow, without catching cold. In former times, a walk of half an hour's length fatigued and exhausted me; now I walk miles without weariness.

Imagine, then, the happiness I experience; for there are few feelings so cheering to the spirit as those of constant good health and vigour. But alas! there is something in which I cannot imitate these happy old people—and this is that I have not been accustomed to all this from my youth.

Oh that I were young again, that I might imitate them in all things, that I might be happy and long-lived as they were!

Little children who read this, you are the fortunate ones who are able to adopt in perfection this kind of life! What, then, prevents you living henceforward as healthily and happily as the old woman of Stockholm, or as long and as usefully as the old men of London and St. Petersburg?

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE BANKRUPT'S SON.

A NARRATIVE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

It sometimes happens that the characters of individuals assume a decided form by the intervention of an unexpected incident, or the being placed in new and responsible situations. Few, indeed, whose lives have been marked by uncommon energy and determination, tending to the accomplishment of a definite purpose, but may trace the starting point—the crisis in their history—to some event which, by rousing their dormant faculties, or exciting some hitherto slumbering motive, has given a new turn to their habits, & a new colour to their lives.

George Belmont was in his nineteenth year when he received a summons to attend the sick bed of his father, who, after maintaining a high reputation as a tradesman during the greater portion of his life had failed in business, and whose constitution, already shaken by cares and disappointments, sunk under the combined evils of poverty and a keen sense of the degradation he believed attendant upon his bankruptcy. George was his eldest child. He had received a liberal education, and been intended for a physician, but his father's difficulties having deprived him of the means of completing his professional studies he had obtained a situation in the counting house of an extensive manufacturer in the town of C—. Up to this period of his life George had manifested no energy or ability, but was regarded by his employer as a steady well disposed youth, possessing merely talent sufficient to enable him to discharge his duties in a satisfactory manner.

Young Belmont, who was considerably disappointed in not being able to follow the profession he had chosen, and who imagined that he had a distaste for mercantile affairs, contented himself with the bare performance of his prescribed duty, indulging secretly the hope that something might yet turn up more congenial to his wishes. From the dream of the future he was, however, effectually aroused when standing by the bedside of his dying father—a sense of the responsibility attaching to him as eldest child, and only son of a widowed mother, came home to his understanding and to his heart. On George's arrival at home, he found that his father had been some hours speechless, though it was evident to his afflicted relations that he retained full possession of his faculties. With the anxious searching look so common to the dying, he gazed now on his wife, now on his little daughter, and then his eager eye sought the countenance of his son; who, struggling with emotion, made a vigorous effort to conduct himself with manly fortitude. Replying to the wishful and touching look fixed on him, George said—'My dear father, I will, by the help of God, endeavour to supply your place to my mother and sister. I am young and strong. For your sake and theirs, I will devote myself to business, and do not doubt but I shall be able to make them comfortable.' And as the youth uttered these words, in a voice tremulous with grief, he bowed his head, and tears fell thick and fast upon the almost rigid hand he held in his own.

But it now became evident that, though George had in part rightly interpreted his father's wishes, something yet remained unexpressed, which disturbed his last moments, for he made violent efforts to speak, and with much difficulty articulated—'I wish to say more—something more.' George stooped to listen, but could only catch the words—'Should it ever be in your power—my son promise me—'

It was agonising to witness his ineffectual efforts to proceed; but just then the truth flashed across his son's mind, and he exclaimed with earnestness—'I understand you, dear father; and I do most solemnly promise, that if it should be in my power, I will pay your creditors to the uttermost farthing, and may God prosper me as I fulfil this promise.'

A beam of joyful satisfaction illuminated

the countenance of Mr. Belmont. He grasped the hand of his son, and appeared to invoke a blessing upon him. The weight removed from the mind of the sufferer, he peacefully closed his eyes, and in a few hours George Belmont was fatherless.

The sad event proved an epoch in the life of the young man. The affecting scene he had witnessed, the solemn engagement he had entered into, together with his new and heavy responsibilities, combined to endow him with strength of purpose to apply vigorously to business. Though very young, he soon rendered himself useful and even necessary to his employer, who was glad to secure his services by such an increase of salary as, joined to a trifling annuity secured to the widowed, enabled the family to live in comfort and maintain a respectable appearance. Shortly after her husband's death, Mrs. Belmont removed to C—, where she not only had the advantage of her son's society, but was also enabled to place her daughter Emily at a good day school.

It is well known that success in any employment naturally begets a fondness for it, and thus it proved with George Belmont, whose activity and devotion to business increased with increasing years. Nor did his prosperity tempt him to swerve even in idea from his intention to pay the debts which so heavily weighed down the spirit of his poor father, but George had yet to learn that there may be opposing motives, which may render the performance of duty distasteful and difficult. This lesson he was taught by painful experience.

Amongst Emily's schoolfellows there was one with whom she formed a close intimacy, and from whose society she derived both pleasure and advantage. Anna Burton was about three years older than Emily. Her father was a solicitor, and though not rich, he moved in society to which the Belmonts had not access. Childish intimacy ripened into friendship as the two girls approached womanhood.

Through the interest of Mrs. Burton, Emily when in her eighteenth year, obtained a situation as daily governess, which furnished her with the means of independence, and enabled her still to enjoy the society of her mother and brother. The amiable qualities of Miss Burton: her beauty, talents, and above all, the attention she paid to Mrs. Belmont and Emily, won the esteem and affection of George, and inspired him with fresh motives to exertion. Receiving as much encouragement as a kind and respectful lover can expect so long as his sentiments remain unexpressed, George for a time indulged in blissful anticipations of future happiness, though without distinctly examining the foundation on which they were placed. A cessation in the visits of Miss Burton first led him into a train of uneasy reflections on this subject, & compelled him to deal faithfully with his own heart, and to investigate his intentions. From his sister, George learned that there was no diminution in Miss Burton's regard for her. On the contrary, Emily declared that she found her increasingly kind and attentive, with this only difference, that she avoided all occasions of intercourse with her brother. It was evident, then, that she was influenced either by coquetry or the wishes of her friends. A little consideration convinced George that the latter was the true reason.

And now followed a struggle between duty and inclination—the most severe, perhaps, to which a young man similarly circumstanced can be exposed. From the period of his father's death Belmont had observed the most rigid economy, denying himself even the reasonable and proper indulgences suitable to his age, in order to lay by part of his earnings towards the accomplishment of that object which he looked upon as the most sacred and important of his life. Though this pious fund was not yet sufficient to enable him to redeem his pledge he was master of a sum large enough to place him in a situation to ask the hand of his beloved Anna. Delay might endanger the happiness of his life. He could not bear that the woman he loved should labour under the imputation of in-

dulging a preference for one who did not possess the sanction of her parents, or who was regarded by them as an inferior. Best of his father's debts, his intentions would remain the same—his exertions receive additional stimulus from Anna's approval & sympathy. With such arguments did George for a time endeavour to persuade himself that he might, without injustice, defer the execution of his long treasured project; but, finally, a sense of right triumphed, and his renewed determination to redeem his pledge imparted to his agitated and troubled spirit a degree of peace to which he had been for some time—

The affection which George Belmont bore his mother operated as a powerful motive to his perseverance in the path of duty. Her confidence in him was, he knew, unbounded. The hope that he would be the instrument of wiping away the only blot upon the memory of her beloved husband, had hitherto proved the cordial which had sustained and cheered her during the seclusion and privations of her widowhood, imparting to her declining years something of the hopefulness of youth as she fondly pictured the time when, through the medium of the son, the honour of the father should be fully established, and her children receive the reward of their virtuous exertions and self-denial in the respect of the wise and good. To disappoint these cherished hopes, and betray the trust reposed in him, George felt to be impossible; and he regarded it as most fortunate that, just at this time, he was requested by his employer to undertake a journey to America. The mission about to be intrusted to him was important and confidential. The period of his stay was uncertain, but on the other hand, the pecuniary advantages it held out were considerable, and it was even hinted that a partnership might prove the result of a satisfactory arrangement of the business.

When George communicated to his mother the offer he had received, she at once advised him to accept it, adding, that the loss of his society would be more than compensated for by her conviction that his bodily and mental health would be benefited by the change. With cheerful alacrity did this judicious parent superintend the necessary preparations for his departure, wisely avoiding all unnecessary and sentimental regrets, and whilst both mother & son refrained from explanations respecting the principal reason which reconciled them to the separation, they fully understood and appreciated the generosity and delicacy of each other.

We hope our readers will not condemn George if we confess that he actually sailed for New York without making a single effort to communicate with the object of his affections, and Anna—but we forbear investigating minutely the state of the lady's feelings, it will suffice to say, that, allowing for the due proportion of the self-inflicted torments to which lovers are liable, she believed that she discerned the true state of the case, and, strong in faith, she hoped for the best.

We will pass over the eighteen months spent by Mr. Belmont in the United States and introduce him again to our readers at the end of that time, greatly improved both in manners and circumstances. Extensive intercourse with the world, joined to the information he had gained in his travels, had done much to correct the too retiring and almost bashful demeanour of the clerk, whose sedentary and retired habits had kept him ignorant of the forms of polished society. Having skillfully transacted the business on which he was sent, he had received as the reward of his exertions a small share in the lucrative concern to whose interest he had unremittingly devoted himself for the last ten years; and thought but a month had elapsed since his arrival in England, he had ample time to prove the truth of the proverb—'Men will prize thee when thou does well to thyself.'

'A month! can it be only a month since my son returned home!' thought Mrs. Belmont, as she sat awaiting the return of the

young people from an evening party given by George's late employer, for the express purpose of introducing Mr. Belmont to a select circle of his friends; and yet how many events seems crowded into that short space. My dear George a servant no longer, but a partner in the most extensive concern in C—; his long hoarded and hardly earned savings increased to an amount sufficient to enable him to call together the creditors of his father, and satisfy all their just demands; and my daughter—my modest affectionate Emily—enabled, by his means, to mix on terms of equality with the society she is fitted to adorn. Surely, goodness and mercy have followed me, and my mourning is turned into rejoicing.' As these and similar reflections passed through the mind of the mother, her heart swelled with emotions of gratitude to Him who has styled himself the God of the fatherless and widow. She was aroused by carriage wheels, and in a few minutes was joined by her children.

'Oh, mamma!' exclaimed Emily, as she warmly embraced her, 'you should have been with us this evening to witness your son's triumph. I assure you Mr. Belmont has created quite a sensation, and been the lion of the party.'

'Nay, you do injustice to the successful debut of Miss Belmont,' observed her brother gayly, 'what think you, mother, of our little demure governess setting up for a belle?'

But, seriously, pursued the young lady, 'it has been amusing to witness the polite attentions we have both received from persons who lately would have treated us as inferiors. Mr. Burton, especially, was extremely cordial, and so pointed in his behaviour to George that Anna was evidently distressed by it, and I thought her unusually reserved. If I am not mistaken, he gave you a pressing invitation to his house, Mr. Belmont?'

'Yes,' replied George, 'I am happy to say he did. And now, mother, if you are not too tired and sleepy, I should be glad to ask your advice on a subject of great importance to me.'

'I understand you, my dear son, and my advice is marry. Hitherto your position and circumstances have prescribed silence as your wisest and most honourable course. Now your altered situation and excellent prospects leave you at liberty to urge your suit. I hope and believe you possess the esteem of our dear Anns. You have my cordial approbation and blessing.'

'Thank you; this is only what I expected of you dear mother, but I feel far from sanguine as to my success. I think—that is, I hope—Anna and I understand each other, but, notwithstanding Mr. Burton's apparent cordiality, I apprehend some difficulty respecting the disposal of I am about to make of my ready money. You know I cannot marry without funds, and I fear that he will neither make me any advance, nor sanction the necessary delay.' In this case, what I am to do is the question?'

'Would it not be advisable to wait until you have met the creditors, and settled the business?' suggested Mrs. Belmont.

'Dear mother, no. I cannot consent to keep Anna longer in suspense. I am no stoic, and my experience this night has convinced me that it would be unjust to her to postpone my declaration. No; no, I will seal my fate to-morrow; and if Mr. Burton raises objections, Anna will at all events know that I am not to blame.'

Having made this magnanimous resolve, George went to bed, but not to sleep. Excited by his recent interview with Miss Burton, whose unaffected delicacy and womanly reserve had charmed and touched him, and agitated by doubts and fears as to the result of his interview with her father, he lay ruminating upon his prospects, and when at last he fell into an uneasy slumber his dreams were but a continuation of his waking reveries.

With a beating heart did our hero knock at the door of Mr. Burton's house on the following morning, and request a private audience of that gentleman. On being ushered in to the library, George at once explained the object of his visit with the eloquence with true feelings never