

Strange as the events detailed in the succeeding narrative may appear, they are, I have not the slightest doubt, true to the letter. Whatever impression they may make upon the Reader, that produced by them on the narrator, I can aver, was neither light nor transient.

SINGULAR PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF THE LATE HENRY HARRIS, DOCTOR IN DIVINITY

AS RELATED BY THE REV. JASPER INGOLDSBY, M.A., HIS FRIEND AND EXECUTOR

In order that the extraordinary circumstance which I am about to relate, may meet with the credit it deserves, I think it necessary to premise, that my reverend friend, among whose papers I find it recorded, was, in his lifetime, ever esteemed as a man of good plain understanding, strict veracity, and unimpeached morals — by no means of a nervous temperament, or one likely to attach undue weight to any occurrence out of the common course of events, merely because his reflections might not, at that moment, afford him a ready solution of its difficulties.

On the truth of this narrative, as far as he was personally concerned, no one who knew him would hesitate to place the most implicit reliance. His history is briefly this:— He had married early in life, and was a widower at the age of thirty nine, with an only daughter, who had then arrived at puberty, and was just married to a near connexion of our own family. The sudden death of her husband, occasioned by a fall from his horse, only three days after her confinement, was abruptly communicated to Mrs. S—— by a thoughtless girl, who saw her master brought lifeless into the house, and, with all that inexplicable anxiety to be the first to tell bad news, so common among the lower orders, rushed at once into the sick-room with her intelligence. The shock was too severe; and though the young widow survived the fatal event several months, yet she gradually sunk under the blow, and expired, leaving a boy, not a twelvemonth old, to the care of his maternal grandfather.

My poor friend was sadly shaken by this melancholy catastrophe; time, however, and a strong religious feeling, succeeded at length in moderating the poignancy of his grief — a consummation much advanced by his infant charge, who now succeeded, as it were by inheritance, to the place in his affections left vacant by his daughter's decease. Frederick S—— grew up to be a fine lad; his person and features were decidedly handsome; still there was, as I remember, an unpleasant expression in his countenance, and an air of reserve, attributed, by the few persons who called occasionally at the vicarage, to the retired life led by his grandfather, and the little opportunity he had, in consequence, of mixing in the society of his equals in age and intellect. Brought up entirely at home, his progress in the common branches of education was, without any great

display of precocity, rather in advance of the generality of boys of his own standing; partly owing, perhaps, to the turn which even his amusements took from the first. His sole associate was the son of the village apothecary, a boy about two years older than himself, whose father, being really clever in his profession, and a good operative chemist, had constructed for himself a small laboratory, in which, as he was fond of children, the two boys spent a great portion of their leisure time, witnessing many of those little experiments so attractive to youth, and in time aspiring to imitate what they admired.

In such society, it is not surprising that Frederick S—— should imbibe a strong taste for the sciences which formed his principal amusement; or that, when, in process of time, it became necessary to choose his walk in life, a profession so intimately connected with his favourite pursuit, as that of medicine, should be eagerly selected. No opposition was offered by my friend, who, knowing that the greater part of his own income would expire with his life, and that the remainder would prove an insufficient resource to his grandchild, was only anxious that he should follow such a path as would secure him that moderate and respectable competency which is, perhaps, more conducive to real happiness than a more elevated or wealthy station. Frederick was, accordingly, at the proper age, matriculated at Oxford, with the view of studying the higher branches of medicine, a few months after his friend, John W——, had proceeded to Leyden, for the purpose of making himself acquainted with the practice of surgery in the hospitals and lecture rooms attached to that university. The boyish intimacy of their younger days did not, as is frequently the case, yield to separation; on the contrary, a close correspondence was kept up between them. Dr. Harris was even prevailed upon to allow Frederick to take a trip to Holland to see his friend; and John returned the visit to Frederick at Oxford.

Satisfactory as, for some time, were the accounts of the general course of Frederick S——'s studies, by degrees rumours of a less pleasant nature reached the ears of some of his friends; to the vicarage, however, I have reason to believe they never penetrated. The good old Doctor was too well beloved in his parish for any one voluntarily to give him pain; and, after all, nothing beyond whispers and surmises had reached X——, when the worthy Vicar was surprised on a sudden by a request from his grandchild, that he might be permitted to take his name off the books of the university, and proceed to finish his education in conjunction with his friend W—— at Leyden. Such a proposal, made, too, at a time when the period for his graduating could not be far distant, both surprised and grieved the Doctor; he combated the design with more perseverance than he had ever been known to exert in opposition to any declared wish of his darling boy before, but, as usual, gave way, when more strongly pressed, from sheer inability to persist in a refusal which seemed to give so much pain to Frederick, especially when the latter, with more energy than was quite becoming their relative situations, expressed his positive determination of not returning to Oxford, whatever might be the result of his grandfather's decision. My friend, his mind, perhaps, a little weakened by a short but severe nervous attack which he had scarcely recovered from, at length yielded a reluctant consent, and Frederick quitted England.

It was not till some months had elapsed after his departure, that I had reason to suspect, that the eager desire of availing himself of opportunities for study abroad, not afforded him at home, was not the sole, or even the principal, reason which had drawn Frederick so abruptly from his *Alma Mater*. A chance visit to the university, and a conversation with a senior fellow belonging to his late college, convinced me of this; still I found it impossible to extract from the latter the precise nature of his offence. That he had given way to most culpable indulgences, I had before heard hinted; and when I recollected how he had been at once launched, from a state of what might be well called seclusion, into a world where so many enticements were lying in wait to allure — with liberty, example, everything to tempt him from the straight road — regret, I frankly own, was more the predominant feeling in my mind than either surprise or condemnation. But here was evidently something more than mere ordinary excess — some act of profligacy, perhaps, of a deeper stain, which had induced his superiors, who, at first, had been loud in his praises, to desire him to withdraw himself quietly, but for ever; and such an intimation, I found, had in fact been conveyed to him from an authority which it was impossible to resist. Seeing that my informant was determined not to be explicit, I did not press for a disclosure, which, if made, would, in all probability, only have given me pain, and that the rather, as my old friend the Doctor had recently obtained a valuable living from Lord M——, only a few miles distant from the market town in which I resided, where he now was, amusing himself in putting his grounds into order, ornamenting his house, and getting everything ready against his grandson's expected visit in the following autumn. October came, and with it came Frederick: he rode over more than once to see me, sometimes accompanied by the Doctor, between whom and myself the recent loss of my poor daughter Louisa had drawn the cords of sympathy still closer.

More than two years had flown on in this way, in which Frederick S—— had as many times made temporary visits to his native country. The time was fast approaching when he was expected to return and finally take up his residence in England, when the sudden illness of my wife's father obliged us to take a journey into Lancashire, my old friend, who had himself a curate, kindly offering to fix his quarters at my parsonage, and superintend the concerns of my parish till my return. — Alas! when I saw him next he was on the bed of death!

My absence was necessarily prolonged much beyond what I had anticipated. A letter, with a foreign postmark, had, as I afterwards found, been brought over from his own house to my venerable substitute in the interval, and barely giving himself time to transfer the charge he had undertaken to a neighbouring clergyman, he had hurried off at once to Leyden. His arrival there was, however, too late. Frederick *was dead!* — killed in a duel, occasioned, it was said, by no ordinary provocation on his part, although the flight of his antagonist had added to the mystery which enveloped its origin. The long journey, its melancholy termination, and the complete overthrow of all my poor friend's earthly hopes, were too much for him. He appeared too — as I was informed by the proprietor of the house in which I found him, when his summons at length had brought me to his bedside — to have received some sudden and

unaccountable shock, which even the death of his grandson was inadequate to explain. There was, indeed, a wildness in his fast glazing eye, which mingled strangely with the glance of satisfaction thrown upon me as he pressed my hand;— he endeavoured to raise himself, and would have spoken, but fell back in the effort, and closed his eyes for ever. — I buried him there, by the side of the object of his more than parental affection — in a foreign land.

It is from the papers that I discovered in his travelling case that I submit the following extracts, without, however, presuming to advance an opinion on the strange circumstances which they detail, or even as to the connexion which some may fancy they discover between different parts of them.

The first was evidently written at my own house, and bears date August the 15, 18—, about three weeks after my own departure from Preston.

It begins thus:—

“Tuesday, August 15 — Poor girl! — I forget who it is that says, ‘the real ills of life are light in comparison with fancied evils;’ and certainly the scene I have just witnessed goes some way towards establishing the truth of the hypothesis. — Among the afflictions which flesh is heir to, a diseased imagination is far from being the lightest, even when considered separately, and without taking into the account those bodily pains and sufferings which —so close is the connexion between mind and matter — are but too frequently attendant upon any disorder of the fancy. Seldom has my interest been more powerfully excited than by poor Mary Graham. Her age, her appearance, her pale, melancholy features, the very contour of her countenance, all conspired to remind me, but too forcibly, of one who, waking or sleeping, is never long absent from my thoughts;— but enough of this.

“A fine morning had succeeded one of the most tempestuous nights I ever remember, and I was just sitting down to a substantial breakfast, which the care of my friend Ingoldsby’s housekeeper, kind-hearted Mrs. Wilson, had prepared for me, when I was interrupted by a summons to the sick bed of a young parishioner whom I had frequently seen in my walks, and had remarked for the regularity of her attendance at Divine worship. — Mary Graham is the elder of two daughters, residing with their mother, the widow of an attorney, who, dying suddenly in the prime of life, left his family but slenderly provided for. A strict though not parsimonious economy has, however, enabled them to live with an appearance of respectability and comfort; and from the personal attractions which both the girls possess, their mother is evidently not without hopes of seeing one, at least, of them advantageously settled in life. As far as poor Mary is concerned, I fear she is doomed to inevitable disappointment, as I am much mistaken if consumption has not laid its wasting finger upon her; while this last recurrence, of what I cannot but believe to be a most formidable epileptic attack, threatens to shake out, with even added velocity, the little sand that may yet remain within the hourglass of time. Her very delusion, too, is of such a nature as, by adding to bodily illness the agitation of superstitious terror,

can scarcely fail to accelerate the catastrophe, which I think I see fast approaching.

“Before I was introduced into the sick-room, her sister, who had been watching my arrival from the window, took me into their little parlour, and, after the usual civilities, began to prepare me for the visit I was about to pay. Her countenance was marked at once with trouble and alarm, and in a low tone of voice, which some internal emotion, rather than the fear of disturbing the invalid in a distant room, had subdued almost to a whisper, informed me that my presence was become necessary, not more as a clergyman than a magistrate;— that the disorder with which her sister had, during the night, been so suddenly and unaccountably seized, was one of no common kind, but attended with circumstances which, coupled with the declarations of the sufferer, took it out of all ordinary calculations, and, to use her own expression, that ‘malice was at the bottom of it.’

“Naturally supposing that these insinuations were intended to intimate the partaking of some deleterious substance on the part of the invalid, I inquired what reason she had for imagining, in the first place, that anything of a poisonous nature had been administered at all; and, secondly, what possible incitement any human being could have for the perpetration of so foul a deed towards so innocent and unoffending an individual? Her answer considerably relieved the apprehensions I had begun to entertain lest the poor girl should, from some unknown cause, have herself been attempting to rush uncalled into the presence of her Creator; at the same time, it surprised me not a little by its apparent want of rationality and common sense. She had no reason to believe, she said, that her sister had taken poison, or that any attempt upon her life had been made, or was, perhaps, contemplated, but that ‘still malice was at work — the malice of villains or fiends, or of both combined; that no causes purely natural would suffice to account for the state in which her sister had been now twice placed, or for the dreadful sufferings she had undergone while in that state;’ and that she was determined the whole affair should undergo a thorough investigation. Seeing that the poor girl was now herself labouring under a great degree of excitement, I did not think it necessary to enter at that moment into a discussion upon the absurdity of her opinion, but applied myself to the tranquillising her mind by assurances of a proper inquiry, and then drew her attention to the symptoms of the indisposition, and the way in which it had first made its appearance.

“The violence of the storm last night had, I found, induced the whole family to sit up far beyond their usual hour, till, wearied out at length, and, as their mother observed, ‘tired of burning fire and candle to no purpose,’ they repaired to their several chambers.

“The sisters occupied the same room; Elizabeth was already at their humble toilet, and had commenced the arrangement of her hair for the night, when her attention was at once drawn from her employment by a half-smothered shriek and exclamation from her sister, who, in her delicate state of health, had found

walking up two flights of stairs, perhaps a little more quickly than usual, an exertion, to recover from which she had seated herself in a large armchair.

“Turning hastily at the sound, she perceived Mary deadly pale; grasping, as it were convulsively, each arm of the chair which supported her, and bending forward in the attitude of listening; her lips were trembling and bloodless, cold drops of perspiration stood upon her forehead, and in an instant after exclaiming in a piercing tone, ‘Hark! they are calling me again! It is — *it is the same voice*; — Oh no! No! — Oh my God! Save me, Betsy — hold me — save me!’ she fell forward upon the floor. Elizabeth flew to her assistance, raised her, and by her cries brought both her mother, who had not yet got into bed, and their only servant girl to her aid. The latter was despatched at once for medical help; but from the appearance of the sufferer it was much to be feared that she would soon be beyond the reach of art. Her agonised parent and sister succeeded in bearing her between them and placing her on a bed: a faint and intermittent pulsation was for a while perceptible; but in a few moments a general shudder shook the whole body; the pulse ceased, the eyes became fixed and glassy, the jaw dropped, a cold clamminess usurped the place of the genial warmth of life. Before Mr. I—— arrived everything announced that dissolution had taken place, and that the freed spirit had quitted its mortal tenement.

“The appearance of the surgeon confirmed their worst apprehensions; a vein was opened, but the blood refused to flow, and Mr. I—— pronounced that the vital spark was indeed extinguished.

“The poor mother, whose attachment to her children was perhaps the more powerful as they were the sole relatives or connections she had in the world, was overwhelmed with a grief amounting almost to frenzy; it was with difficulty that she was removed to her own room by the united strength of her daughter and medical adviser. Nearly an hour had elapsed during the endeavour at calming her transports; they had succeeded, however, to a certain extent, and Mr. I—— had taken his leave, when Elizabeth, re-entering the bedchamber in which her sister lay, in order to pay the last sad duties to her corpse, was horror struck at seeing a crimson stream of blood running down the side of the counterpane to the floor. Her exclamation brought the girl again to her side, when it was perceived, to their astonishment, that the sanguine stream proceeded from the arm of the body, which was now manifesting signs of returning life. The half frantic mother flew to the room, and it was with difficulty that they could prevent her in her agitation from so acting as to extinguish for ever the hope which had begun to rise in their bosoms. A long drawn sigh, amounting almost to a groan, followed by several convulsive gaspings, was the prelude to the restoration of the animal functions in poor Mary: a shriek, almost preternaturally loud, considering her state of exhaustion, succeeded; but she did recover, and with the help of restoratives was well enough towards morning to express a strong desire that I should be sent for — a desire the more readily complied with, inasmuch as the strange expressions and declarations she had made since her restoration to consciousness had filled her sister with the most horrible suspicions. The nature of these suspicions was such as would at any other time, perhaps, have raised a smile upon my lips; but the distress, and

even agony of the poor girl, as she half hinted and half expressed them, were such as entirely to preclude every sensation at all approaching to mirth. Without endeavouring, therefore, to combat ideas, evidently too strongly impressed upon her mind at the moment to admit of present refutation, I merely used a few encouraging words, and requested her to precede me to the sick-chamber.

“The invalid was lying on the outside of the bed partly dressed, and wearing a white dimity wrapping gown, the colour of which corresponded but too well with the deadly paleness of her complexion. Her cheek was wan and sunken, giving an extraordinary prominence to her eye, which gleamed with a lustrous brilliancy not unfrequently characteristic of the aberration of intellect. I took her hand; it was chill and clammy, the pulse feeble and intermittent, and the general debility of her frame was such that I would fain have persuaded her to defer any conversation which, in her present state, she might not be equal to support. Her positive assurance that until she had disburdened herself of what she called her ‘dreadful secret,’ she could know no rest either of mind or body, at length induced me to comply with her wish, opposition to which in her then frame of mind might perhaps be attended with even worse effects than its indulgence. I bowed acquiescence, and in a low and faltering voice, with frequent interruptions occasioned by her weakness, she gave me the following singular account of the sensations which, she averred, had been experienced by her during her trance:—

“This, sir,’ she began, ‘is not the first time that the cruelty of others has, for what purpose I am unable to conjecture, put me to a degree of torture which I can compare to no suffering, either of body or mind, which I have ever before experienced. On a former occasion I was willing to believe it the mere effect of a hideous dream, or what is vulgarly termed the nightmare; but this repetition, and the circumstances under which I was last *summoned*, at a time, too, when I had not even composed myself to rest, fatally convince me of the reality of what I have seen and suffered.

“This is no time for concealment of any kind. It is now more than a twelvemonth since I was in the habit of occasionally encountering in my walks a young man of prepossessing appearance and gentlemanly deportment. He was always alone, and generally reading; but I could not be long in doubt that these rencounters, which became every week more frequent, were not the effect of accident, or that his attention, when we did meet, was less directed to his book than to my sister and myself. He even seemed to wish to address us, and I have no doubt would have taken some other opportunity of doing so, had not one been afforded him by a strange dog attacking us one Sunday morning in our way to church, which he beat off, and made use of this little service to promote an acquaintance. His name, he said, was Francis Somers, and added that he was on a visit to a relation of the same name, resident a few miles from X—. He gave us to understand that he was himself studying surgery with the view to a medical appointment in one of the colonies. You are not to suppose, sir, that he had entered thus into his concerns at the first interview; it was not till our acquaintance had ripened, and he had visited our house more than once

with my mother's sanction, that these particulars were elicited. He never disguised from the first that an attachment to myself was his object originally in introducing himself to our notice; as his prospects were comparatively flattering, my mother did not raise any impediment to his attentions, and I own I received them with pleasure.

“Days and weeks elapsed; and although the distance at which his relation resided prevented the possibility of an uninterrupted intercourse, yet neither was it so great as to preclude his frequent visits. The interval of a day, or at most of two, was all that intervened, and these temporary absences certainly did not decrease the pleasure of the meetings with which they terminated. At length a pensive expression began to exhibit itself upon his countenance, and I could not but remark that at every visit he became more abstracted and reserved. The eye of affection is not slow to detect any symptom of uneasiness in a quarter dear to it. I spoke to him, questioned him on the subject; his answer was evasive, and I said no more. My mother too, however, had marked the same appearance of melancholy, and pressed him more strongly. He at length admitted that his spirits were depressed, and that their depression was caused by the necessity of an early, though but a temporary, separation. His uncle and only friend, he said, had long insisted on his spending some months on the Continent with the view of completing his professional education, and that the time was now fast approaching when it would be necessary for him to commence his journey. A look made the inquiry which my tongue refused to utter. ‘Yes, dearest Mary,’ was his reply, ‘I have communicated our attachment to him, partially at least; and though I dare not say that the intimation was received as I could have wished, yet I have, perhaps, on the whole, no fair reason to be dissatisfied with his reply.’

“The completion of my studies, and my settlement in the world, must, my uncle told me, be the first consideration; when these material points were achieved, he should not interfere with any arrangement that might be found essential to my happiness; at the same time he has positively refused to sanction any engagement at present, which may, he says, have a tendency to divert my attention from those pursuits, on the due prosecution of which my future situation in life must depend. A compromise between love and duty was eventually wrung from me, though reluctantly; I have pledged myself to proceed immediately to my destination abroad, with a full understanding that on my return, a twelvemonth hence, no obstacle shall be thrown in the way of what are, I trust, our mutual wishes.’

“I will not attempt to describe the feelings with which I received this communication, nor will it be necessary to say anything of what passed at the few interviews which took place before Francis quitted X—. The evening immediately previous to that of his departure he passed in this house, and, before we separated, renewed his protestations of an unchangeable affection, requiring a similar assurance from me in return. I did not hesitate to make it. ‘Be satisfied, my dear Francis,’ said I, ‘that no diminution in the regard I have avowed can ever take place, and though absent in body, my heart and soul will still be with you.’ — ‘Swear this,’ he cried, with a suddenness and energy which

surprised, and rather startled me; ‘promise that you will be with me *in spirit*, at least, when I am far away.’ I gave him my hand, but that was not sufficient. ‘One of these dark shining ringlets, my dear Mary,’ said he, ‘as a pledge that you will not forget your vow!’ I suffered him to take the scissors from my workbox and to sever a lock of my hair, which he placed in his bosom. — The next day he was pursuing his journey, and the waves were already bearing him from England.

“I had letters from him repeatedly during the first three months of his absence; they spoke of his health, his prospects, and of his love, but by degrees the intervals between each arrival became longer, and I fancied I perceived some falling off from that warmth of expression which had at first characterised his communications.

“One night I had retired to rest rather later than usual, having sat by the bed-side, comparing his last brief note with some of his earlier letters, and was endeavouring to convince myself that my apprehensions of his fickleness were unfounded, when an undefinable sensation of restlessness and anxiety seized upon me. I cannot compare it to anything I had ever experienced before; my pulse fluttered, my heart beat with a quickness and violence which alarmed me, and a strange tremour shook my whole frame. I retired hastily to bed, in hopes of getting rid of so unpleasant a sensation, but in vain; a vague apprehension of I knew not what occupied my mind, and vainly did I endeavour to shake it off. I can compare my feelings to nothing but those which we sometimes experience when about to undertake a long and unpleasant journey, leaving those we love behind us. More than once did I raise myself in my bed and listen, fancying that I heard myself called, and on each of those occasions the fluttering of my heart increased. Twice I was on the point of calling to my sister, who then slept in an adjoining room, but she had gone to bed indisposed, and an unwillingness to disturb either her or my mother checked me; the large clock in the room below at this moment began to strike the hour of twelve. I distinctly heard its vibrations, but ere its sounds had ceased, a burning heat, as if a hot iron had been applied to my temple, was succeeded by a dizziness — a swoon — a total loss of consciousness as to where or in what situation I was.

“A pain, violent, sharp, and piercing, as though my whole frame were lacerated by some keen-edged weapon, roused me from this stupor — but where was I? Everything was strange around me — a shadowy dimness rendered every object indistinct and uncertain; methought, however, that I was seated in a large, antique, high backed chair, several of which were near, their tall black carved frames and seats interwoven with a latticework of cane. The apartment in which I sat was one of moderate dimensions, and from its sloping roof, seemed to be the upper story of the edifice, a fact confirmed by the moon shining without, in full effulgence, on a huge round tower, which its light rendered plainly visible through the open casement, and the summit of which appeared but little superior in elevation to the room I occupied. Rather to the right, and in the distance, the spire of some cathedral or lofty church was visible, while sundry gable-ends, and tops of houses, told me I was in the midst of a populous but unknown city.

“The apartment itself had something strange in its appearance; and, in the character of its furniture and appurtenances, bore little or no resemblance to any I had ever seen before. The fireplace was large and wide, with a pair of what are sometimes called andirons, betokening that wood was the principal, if not the only fuel consumed within its recess; a fierce fire was now blazing in it, the light from which rendered visible the remotest parts of the chamber. Over a lofty old-fashioned mantelpiece, carved heavily in imitation of fruits and flowers, hung the half length portrait of a gentleman in a dark coloured foreign habit, with a peaked beard and mustaches, one hand resting upon a table, the other supporting a sort of a baton, or short military staff, the summit of which was surmounted by a silver falcon. Several antique chairs, similar in appearance to those already mentioned, surrounded a massive oaken table, the length of which much exceeded its width. At the lower end of this piece of furniture stood the chair I occupied; on the upper, was placed a small chafing dish filled with burning coals, and darting forth occasionally long flashes of various coloured fire, the brilliance of which made itself visible, even above the strong illumination emitted from the chimney. Two huge, black, japanned cabinets, with clawed feet, reflecting from their polished surfaces the effulgence of the flame, were placed one on each side the casement window to which I have alluded, and with a few shelves loaded with books, many of which were also strewn in disorder on the floor, completed the list of the furniture in the apartment. Some strange looking instruments, of unknown form and purpose, lay on the table near the chafing-dish, on the other side of which a miniature portrait of myself hung, reflected by a small oval mirror in a dark coloured frame, while a large open volume, traced with strange characters of the colour of blood, lay in front; a goblet, containing a few drops of liquid of the same ensanguined hue, was by its side.

“But of the objects which I have endeavoured to describe, none arrested my attention so forcibly as two others. These were the figures of two young men, in the prime of life, only separated from me by the table. They were dressed alike, each in a long flowing gown, made of some sad coloured stuff, and confined at the waist by a crimson girdle; one of them, the shorter of the two, was occupied in feeding the embers of the chafing dish with a resinous powder, which produced and maintained a brilliant but flickering blaze, to the action of which his companion was exposing a long lock of dark chestnut hair, that shrank and shrivelled as it approached the flame. But, O God!—that hair! — and the form of him who held it! that face! those features! — not for one instant could I entertain a doubt — it was He! Francis! — the lock he grasped was mine, the very pledge of affection I had given him, and still, as it partially encountered the fire, a burning heat seemed to scorch the temple from which it had been taken, conveying a torturing sensation that affected my very brain.

“How shall I proceed? — but no, it is impossible — not even to you, sir, can I — dare I — recount the proceedings of that unhallowed night of horror and of shame. Were my life extended to a term commensurate with that of the Patriarchs of old, never could its detestable, its damning pollutions be effaced from my remembrance; and oh! above all, never could I forget the diabolical glee

which sparkled in the eyes of my fiendish tormentors, as they witnessed the worse than useless struggles of their miserable victim. Oh! why was it not permitted me to take refuge in unconsciousness — nay, in death itself, from the abominations of which I was compelled to be, not only a witness, but a partaker! But it is enough, sir; I will not further shock your nature by dwelling longer on a scene, the full horrors of which, words, if I even dared employ any, would be inadequate to express; suffice it to say, that after being subjected to it, how long I knew not, but certainly for more than an hour, a noise from below seemed to alarm my persecutors; a pause ensued — the lights were extinguished — and, as the sound of a footstep ascending a staircase became more distinct, my forehead felt again the excruciating sensation of heat, while the embers, kindling into a momentary flame, betrayed another portion of the ringlet consuming in the blaze. Fresh agonies succeeded, not less severe, and of a similar description to those which had seized upon me at first; oblivion again followed, and on being at length restored to consciousness, I found myself as you see me now, faint and exhausted, weakened in every limb, and every fibre quivering with agitation. — My groans soon brought my sister to my aid; it was long before I could summon resolution to confide, even to her, the dreadful secret, and when I had done so, her strongest efforts were not wanting to persuade me that I had been labouring under a severe attack of nightmare. I ceased to argue, but I was not convinced: the whole scene was then too present, too awfully real, to permit me to doubt the character of the transaction; and if, when a few days had elapsed, the hopelessness of imparting to others the conviction I entertained myself, produced in me an apparent acquiescence with their opinion, I have never been the less satisfied that no cause reducible to the known laws of nature occasioned my sufferings on that hellish evening. Whether that firm belief might have eventually yielded to time, whether I might at length have been brought to consider all that had passed, and the circumstances which I could never cease to remember, as a mere phantasm, the offspring of a heated imagination, acting upon an enfeebled body, I know not—last night, however, would in any case have dispelled the flattering illusion — last night — last night was the whole horrible scene acted over again. The place — the actors — the whole infernal apparatus were the same;— the same insults, the same torments, the same brutalities — all were renewed, save that the period of my agony was not so prolonged. I became sensible to an incision in my arm, though the hand that made it was not visible; at the same moment my persecutors paused; they were manifestly disconcerted, and the companion of him, whose name shall never more pass my lips, muttered something to his abettor in evident agitation; the formula of an oath of horrible import was dictated to me in terms fearfully distinct. I refused it unhesitatingly; again and again was it proposed, with menaces I tremble to think on — but I refused; the same sound was heard — interruption was evidently apprehended — the same ceremony was hastily repeated, and I again found myself released, lying on my own bed, with my mother and my sister weeping over me. — O God! O God! When and how is this to end! — When will my spirit be left in peace? — Where, or with whom shall I find refuge?’

“It is impossible to convey any adequate idea of the emotions with which this unhappy girl’s narrative affected me. It must not be supposed that her story

was delivered in the same continuous and uninterrupted strain in which I have transcribed its substance. On the contrary, it was not without frequent intervals, of longer or shorter duration, that her account was brought to a conclusion: indeed, many passages of her strange dream were not without the greatest difficulty and reluctance communicated at all. — My task was no easy one; never, in the course of a long life spent in the active duties of my Christian calling — never had I been summoned to such a conference before!

“To the half-avowed, and palliated, confession of committed guilt, I had often listened, and pointed out the only road to secure its forgiveness. I had succeeded in cheering the spirit of despondency, and sometimes even in calming the ravings of despair; but here I had a different enemy to combat, an ineradicable prejudice to encounter, evidently backed by no common share of superstition, and confirmed by the mental weakness attendant upon severe bodily pain. To argue the sufferer out of an opinion so rooted was a hopeless attempt. I did, however, essay it; I spoke to her of the strong and mysterious connection maintained between our waking images and those which haunt us in our dreams, and more especially during that morbid oppression commonly called nightmare. I was even enabled to adduce myself as a strong, and living, instance of the excess to which fancy sometimes carries her freaks on these occasions; while by an odd coincidence, the impression made upon my own mind, which I adduced as an example, bore no slight resemblance to her own. I stated to her, that on my recovery from the fit of epilepsy, which had attacked me about two years since, just before my grandson Frederick left Oxford, it was with the greatest difficulty I could persuade myself that I had not visited him, during the interval, in his rooms at Brazenose, and even conversed both with himself and his friend W——, seated in his arm-chair, and gazing through the window full upon the statue of Cain, as it stands in the centre of the quadrangle. I told her of the pain I underwent both at the commencement and termination of my attack — of the extreme lassitude that succeeded; but my efforts were all in vain; she listened to me, indeed, with an interest almost breathless, especially when I informed her of my having actually experienced the very burning sensation in the brain alluded to, no doubt a strong attendant symptom of this peculiar affection, and a proof of the identity of the complaint; but I could plainly perceive that I failed entirely in shaking the rooted opinion which possessed her, that her spirit had, by some nefarious and unhallowed means, been actually subtracted for a time from its earthly tenement.”

* * * * *

The next extract which I shall give from my old friend's memoranda is dated August 24th, more than a week subsequent to his first visit at Mrs. Graham's. He appears, from his papers, to have visited the poor young woman more than once during the interval, and to have afforded her those spiritual consolations which no one was more capable of communicating. His patient, for so in a religious sense she may well be termed, had been sinking under the agitation she had experienced; and the constant dread she was under, of similar sufferings, operated so strongly on a frame already enervated, that life at length seemed to hang only by a thread. His papers go on to say, “I have just seen poor

Mary Graham — I fear for the last time. Nature is evidently quite worn out; she is aware that she is dying, and looks forward to the termination of her existence here, not only with resignation but with joy. It is clear that her dream, or what she persists in calling her ‘subtraction,’ has much to do with this. For the last three days her behaviour has been altered; she has avoided conversing on the subject of her delusion, and seems to wish that I should consider her as a convert to my view of her case. This may, perhaps, be partly owing to the flippancies of her medical attendant upon the subject, for Mr. I—— has, somehow or other, got an inkling that she has been much agitated by a dream, and thinks to laugh off the impression — in my opinion injudiciously; but though a skilful, and a kind-hearted, he is a young man, and of a disposition, perhaps, rather too mercurial for the chamber of a nervous invalid. Her manner has since been much more reserved to both of us: in my case, probably because she suspects me of betraying her secret.”

* * * * *

“August 26th — Mary Graham is yet alive, but sinking fast; her cordiality towards me has returned since her sister confessed yesterday, that she had herself told Mr. I—— that his patient’s mind ‘had been affected by a terrible vision.’ I am evidently restored to her confidence. — She asked me this morning, with much earnestness, ‘What I believed to be the state of departed spirits during the interval between dissolution and the final day of account? — And whether I thought they would be safe, in another world, from the influence of wicked persons employing an agency more than human?’ — Poor child! — One cannot mistake the prevailing bias of her mind — Poor child!”

* * * * *

“August 27th — It is nearly over; she is sinking rapidly, but quietly and without pain. I have just administered to her the sacred elements, of which her mother partook. Elizabeth declined doing the same; she cannot, she says, yet bring herself to forgive the villain who has destroyed her sister. It is singular that she, a young woman of good plain sense in ordinary matters, should so easily adopt, and so pertinaciously retain a superstition so puerile and ridiculous. This must be matter of a future conversation between us; at present, with the form of the dying girl before her eyes, it were vain to argue with her. The mother, I find, has written to young Somers, stating the dangerous situation of his affianced wife; indignant, as she justly is, at his long silence, it is fortunate that she has no knowledge of the suspicions entertained by her daughter. I have seen her letter, it is addressed to Mr. Francis Somers, in the Hogewoert, at Leyden — a fellow student then of Frederick’s. I must remember to inquire if he is acquainted with this young man.”

* * * * *

Mary Graham, it appears, died the same night. Before her departure she repeated to my friend the singular story she had before told him, without any material variation from the detail she had formerly given. To the last she

persisted in believing that her unworthy lover had practised upon her by forbidden arts. She once more described the apartment with great minuteness, and even the person of Francis's alleged companion, who was, she said, about the middle height, hard featured, with a rather remarkable scar upon his left cheek, extending in a transverse direction from below the eye to the nose. Several pages of my reverend friend's manuscript are filled with reflections upon this extraordinary confession, which, joined with its melancholy termination, seems to have produced no common effect upon him. He alludes to more than one subsequent discussion with the surviving sister, and piques himself on having made some progress in convincing her of the folly of her theory respecting the origin and nature of the illness itself.

His memoranda on this and other subjects are continued till about the middle of September, when a break ensues, occasioned, no doubt, by the unwelcome news of his grandson's dangerous state, which induced him to set out forthwith for Holland. His arrival at Leyden was, as I have already said, too late. Frederick S—— had expired, after thirty hours' intense suffering, from a wound received in a duel with a brother student. The cause of quarrel was variously related; but according to his landlord's version it had originated in some silly dispute about a dream of his antagonist's, who had been the challenger. Such, at least, was the account given to him, as he said, by Frederick's friend and fellow-lodger, W——, who had acted as second on the occasion, thus acquitting himself of an obligation of the same kind due to the deceased, whose services he had put in requisition about a year before on a similar occasion, when he had himself been severely wounded in the face.

From the same authority I learned that my poor friend was much affected on finding that his arrival had been deferred too long. Every attention was shown him by the proprietor of the house, a respectable tradesman, and a chamber was prepared for his accommodation; the books and few effects of his deceased grandson were delivered over to him duly inventoried, and, late as it was in the evening when he reached Leyden, he insisted on being conducted immediately to the apartments which Frederick had occupied, there to indulge the first ebullitions of his sorrow before he retired to his own. Madame Müller accordingly led the way to an upper room, which, being situated at the top of the house, had been, from its privacy and distance from the street, selected by Frederick as his study. The Doctor entered, and taking the lamp from his conductress motioned to be left alone. His implied wish was of course complied with; and nearly two hours had elapsed before his kindhearted hostess reascended, in the hope of prevailing upon him to return with her and partake of that refreshment which he had in the first instance peremptorily declined. Her application for admission was unnoticed; she repeated it more than once without success; then, becoming somewhat alarmed at the continued silence, opened the door and perceived her new inmate stretched on the floor in a fainting fit. Restoratives were instantly administered, and prompt medical aid succeeded at length in restoring him to consciousness. But his mind had received a shock from which, during the few weeks he survived, it never entirely recovered. His thoughts wandered perpetually; and though, from the very slight acquaintance which his hosts had with the English language, the greater part

of what fell from him remained unknown, yet enough was understood to induce them to believe that something more than the mere death of his grandson had contributed thus to paralyse his faculties.

When his situation was first discovered, a small miniature was found tightly grasped in his right hand. It had been the property of Frederick, and had more than once been seen by the Müllers in his possession. To this the patient made continued reference, and would not suffer it one moment from his sight. It was in his hand when he expired. At my request it was produced to me. The portrait was that of a young woman in an English morning dress, whose pleasing and regular features, with their mild and somewhat pensive expression, were not, I thought, altogether unknown to me. Her age was apparently about twenty. A profusion of dark chestnut hair was arranged in the Madonna style above a brow of unsullied whiteness, a single ringlet depending on the left side. A glossy lock of the same colour, and evidently belonging to the original, appeared beneath a small crystal, inlaid in the back of the picture, which was plainly set in gold, and bore in a cipher the letters M. G. with the date 18—. From the inspection of this portrait I could at the time collect nothing, nor from that of the Doctor himself, which also I found the next morning in Frederick's desk, accompanied by two separate portions of hair. One of them was a lock, short, and deeply tinged with grey, and had been taken, I have little doubt, from the head of my old friend himself; the other corresponded in colour and appearance with that at the back of the miniature. It was not till a few days had elapsed, and I had seen the worthy Doctor's remains quietly consigned to the narrow house, that while arranging his papers previous to my intended return upon the morrow, I encountered the narrative I have already transcribed. The name of the unfortunate young woman connected with it forcibly arrested my attention. I recollected it immediately as one belonging to a parishioner of my own, and at once recognised the original of the female portrait as its owner.

I rose not from the perusal of his very singular statement till I had gone through the whole of it. It was late, and the rays of the single lamp by which I was reading did but very faintly illumine the remoter parts of the room in which I sat. The brilliancy of an unclouded November moon, then some twelve nights old, and shining full into the apartment, did much towards remedying the defect. My thoughts filled with the melancholy details I had read, I rose and walked to the window. The beautiful planet rode high in the firmament, and gave to the snowy roofs of the houses and pendant icicles, all the sparkling radiance of clustering gems. The stillness of the scene harmonised well with the state of my feelings. I threw open the casement and looked abroad. Far below me the waters of the principal canal shone like a broad mirror in the moonlight. To the left rose the Burght, a huge round tower of remarkable appearance, pierced with embrasures at its summit; while a little to the right and in the distance, the spire and pinnacles of the Cathedral of Leyden rose in all their majesty, presenting a *coup d'œil* of surpassing though simple beauty. To a spectator of calm, unoccupied mind the scene would have been delightful. On me it acted with an electric effect. I turned hastily to survey the apartment in which I had been sitting. It was the one designated as the study of the late Frederick S—. The sides of the room were covered with dark wainscot; the

spacious fireplace opposite to me, with its polished andirons, was surmounted by a large old-fashioned mantelpiece, heavily carved in the Dutch style with fruits and flowers; above it frowned a portrait, in a Vandyke dress, with a peaked beard and mustaches; one hand of the figure rested on a table, while the other bore a marshal's staff, surmounted with a silver falcon; and — either my imagination, already heated by the scene, deceived me — or a smile as of malicious triumph curled the lip and glared in the cold leaden eye that seemed fixed upon my own. The heavy, antique, cane-backed chairs — the large oaken table — the bookshelves, the scattered volumes — all, all were there; while, to complete the picture, to my right and left, as half-breathless I leaned my back against the casement, rose on each side a tall, dark, ebony cabinet, in whose polished sides the single lamp upon the table shone reflected as in a mirror.

* * * * *

What am I to think? Can it be that the story I have been reading was written by my poor friend here, and under the influence of delirium? Impossible! Besides they all assure me that from the fatal night of his arrival he never left his bed — never put pen to paper. His very directions to have me summoned from England were verbally given during one of those few and brief intervals in which reason seemed partially to resume her sway. Can it then be possible that——? W——? where is he who alone may be able to throw light on this horrible mystery? — No one knows. He absconded, it seems, immediately after the duel. No trace of him exists, nor, after repeated and anxious inquiries, can I find that any student has ever been known in the University of Leyden by the name of Francis Somers.

“There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy!”

* * * * *

It was during the “Honey (or, as it is sometimes termed, the “Treacle,) Moon,” that Mr. and Mrs. Seaforth passed through London. A “good-natured friend,” who dropped in to dinner, forced them in the evening to the theatre for the purpose of getting rid of him. I give Charles’s account of the Tragedy, just as it was written, without altering even the last couplet — for there would be no making “Egerton” rhyme with “Story.”

THE TRAGEDY

Quæque ipse miserrima vidi.—VIRGIL.

Catherine of Cleves was a Lady of rank,
She had lands and fine houses, and cash in the Bank;
She had jewels and rings,
And a thousand smart things;
Was lovely and young,
With a *rather* sharp tongue,
And she wedded a Noble of high degree
With the star of the order of *St. Esprit*;
But the Duke de Guise
Was, by many degrees,
Her senior, and not very easy to please;
He’d a sneer on his lip, and a scowl with his eye,
And a frown on his brow, — and he look’d like a Guy, —
So she took to intriguing
With Monsieur St. Megrin,
A young man of fashion, and figure, and worth,
But with no great pretensions to fortune or birth;
He would sing, fence, and dance
With the best man in France,
And took his rappee with genteel *nonchalance*;
He smiled, and he flatter’d, and flirted with ease,
And was very superior to Monseigneur de Guise.

Now Monsieur St. Megrin was curious to know
If the Lady approved of his passion or no;
So without more ado,
He put on his *surtout*,
And went to a man with a beard like a Jew,
One Signor Ruggieri,
A Cunning-man near, he
Could conjure, tell fortunes, and calculate tides,
Perform tricks on the cards, and Heaven knows what besides,
Bring back a stray’d cow, silver ladle, or spoon,
And was thought to be thick with the Man in the Moon.
The Sage took his stand
With his wand in his hand,
Drew a circle, then gave the dread word of command,

Saying solemnly — “*Presto!* — *Hey, quick!* — *Cock-a-lorum!*!”
When the Duchess immediately popp’d up before ‘em.

Just then a Conjunction of Venus and Mars,
Or something peculiar above in the stars,
Attracted the notice of Signor Ruggieri,
Who “bolted,” and left him alone with his deary. —
Monsieur St. Megrin went down on his knees,
And the Duchess shed tears large as marrow-fat peas,
When — fancy the shock, —
A loud double knock,
Made the Lady cry “Get up, you fool!—there’s De Guise!”—
’Twas his Grace, sure enough;
So Monsieur, looking bluff,
Strutted by, with his hat on, and fingering his ruff,
While, unseen by either, away flew the Dame
Through the opposite key-hole, the same way she came;
But, alack! and alas!
A mishap came to pass,
In her hurry she, some how or other, let fall
A new silk *Bandana* she’d worn as a shawl;
She used it for drying
Her bright eyes while crying,
And blowing her nose, as her Beau talk’d of dying!

Now the Duke, who had seen it so lately adorn her,
And he knew the great C with the Crown in the corner,
The instant he spied it, smoked something amiss,
And said, with some energy, “D—— it! what’s this?”
He went home in a fume,
And bounced into her room,
Crying, “So, Ma’am, I find I’ve some cause to be jealous!
Look here! — here’s a proof you run after the fellows!
— Now take up that pen, — if it’s bad choose a better, —
And write, as I dictate, this moment a letter
To Monsieur — you know who!”
The Lady look’d blue;
But replied with much firmness — “Hang me if I do!”
De Guise grasped her wrist
With his great bony fist,
And pinched it, and gave it so painful a twist,
That his hard, iron gauntlet the flesh went an inch in, —
She did not mind death, but she could not stand pinching;
So she sat down and wrote
This polite little note:—

“Dear Mister St. Megrin,
The Chiefs of the League in
Our house mean to dine

This evening at nine;
I shall, soon after ten,
Slip away from the men,
And you'll find me upstairs in the drawing-room then;
Come up the back way, or those impudent thieves
Of Servants will see you; Yours

CATHERINE OF CLEVES.”

She directed and sealed it, all pale as a ghost,
And De Guise put it into the Twopenny Post.

St. Megrin had almost jumped out of his skin
For joy that day when the post came in;
He read the note through,
Then began it anew,
And thought it almost too good news to be true. —
He clapp'd on his hat,
And a hood over that,
With a cloak to disguise him, and make him look fat;
So great his impatience, from half after Four
He was waiting till Ten at De Guise's back-door.
When he heard the great clock of St. Genevieve chime,
He ran up the back staircase six steps at a time.
He had scarce made his bow,
He hardly knew how,
When alas! and alack!
There was no getting back,
For the drawing-room door was bang'd to with a whack;—
In vain he applied
To the handle and tried,
Somebody or other had locked it outside!
And the Duchess in agony mourn'd her mishap,
“We are caught like a couple of rats in a trap.”

Now the Duchess's Page,
About twelve years of age,
For so little a boy was remarkably sage;
And, just in the nick, to their joy and amazement,
Popp'd the Gas-lighter's ladder close under the casement.
But all would not do, —
Though St. Megrin got through
The window, — below stood De Guise and his crew.
And though never man was more brave than St. Megrin,
Yet fighting a score is extremely fatiguing;
He thrust *carte* and *tierce*
Uncommonly fierce,
But not Beelzebub's self could their cuirasses pierce:
While his doublet and hose,
Being holiday clothes,

Were soon cut through and through from his knees to his nose.
Still an old crooked sixpence the Conjuror gave him
From pistol and sword was sufficient to save him,
But, when beat on his knees,
That confounded De Guise
Came behind with the “fogle” that caused all this breeze,
Whipp’d it tight round his neck, and, when backward he’d jerk’d him,
The rest of the rascals jump’d on him and Burked him.
The poor little Page, too, himself got no quarter, but
Was served the same way,
And was found the next day
With his heels in the air, and his head in the water-butt;
Catherine of Cleves Roar’d “Murder!” and “Thieves!”
From the window above
While they murder’d her love;
Till, finding the rogues had accomplish’d his slaughter,
She drank Prussic acid without any water,
And died like a Duke-and-a-Duchess’s daughter!

MORAL.

Take warning, ye Fair, from this tale of the Bard’s,
And don’t go where fortunes are told on the cards,
But steer clear of Conjurors,— never put query
To “Wise Mrs. Williams,” or folks like Ruggieri.
When alone in your room, shut the door close, and lock it;
Above all, — KEEP YOUR HANDKERCHIEF SAFE IN YOUR POCKET!
Lest you too should stumble, and Lord Levenson Gower, he
Be call’d on, — sad poet! — to tell your sad story!

* * * * *

Confound not, I beseech thee, reader, the subject of the following monody with the hapless hero of the tea-urn, Cupid, of “Yow-Yow”-ing memory. Tray was an attached favourite of many years’ standing. Most people worth loving have had a friend of this kind; Lord Byron says he “never had but one, and here he (the dog, not the nobleman,) lies!”

THE CYNOTAPH

Poor Tray charmant!
Poor Tray de mon Ami!
Dog-bury and Vergers.

Oh! where shall I bury my poor dog Tray,
Now his fleeting breath has passed away? —
Seventeen years, I can venture to say,
Have I seen him gambol, and frolic, and play,
Evermore happy, and frisky, and gay,
As though every one of his months was May,
And the whole of his life one long holiday —
Now he’s a lifeless lump of clay,
Oh! where shall I bury my faithful Tray?

I am almost tempted to think it hard
That it may not be there, in yon sunny churchyard,
Where the green willows wave
O’er the peaceful grave,
Which holds all that once was honest and brave,
Kind, and courteous, and faithful, and true;
Qualities, Tray, that were found in you.
But it may not be—yon sacred ground,
By holiest feelings fenced around,
May ne’er within its hallow’d bound
Receive the dust of a soul-less hound.

I would not place him in yonder fane,
Where the mid-day sun through the storied pane
Throws on the pavement a crimson stain;
Where the banners of chivalry heavily swing
O’er the pinnacled tomb of the Warrior King,
With helmet and shield, and all that sort of thing.
No!—come what may,
My gentle Tray
Shan’t be an intruder on bluff Harry Tudor,
Or panoplied monarchs yet earlier and ruder,
Whom you see on their backs,
In stone or in wax,
Though the Sacristans now are “forbidden to ax”
For what Mister Hume calls “a scandalous tax;”

While the Chartists insist they've a right to go snacks. —
No! — Tray's humble tomb would look but shabby
'Mid the sculptured shrines of that gorgeous Abbey.
Besides, in the place They say there's no space
To bury what wet-nurses call "a Babby."
Even "Rare Ben Jonson," that famous wight,
I am told, is interr'd there bolt upright,
In just such a posture, beneath his bust,
As Tray used to sit in to beg for a crust.
The epitaph, too,
Would scarcely do:
For what could it say, but, "Here lies Tray,
A very good kind of a dog in his day?"
And satirical folks might be apt to imagine it
Meant as a quiz on the House of Plantagenet.

No! no! — The Abbey may do very well
For a feudal "Nob," or poetical "Swell,"
"Crusaders," or "Poets," or "Knights of St. John,"
Or Knights of St. John's Wood, who once went on
To the CASTLE OF GOODE LORDE EGLINTONNE.
Count Fiddle-fumkin, and Lord Fiddle-faddle,
"Sir Craven," "Sir Gael," and "Sir Campbell of Saddell,"
(Who, as poor Hook said, when he heard of the feat,
"Was somehow knock'd out of his family-seat:")
The Esquires of the body
To my Lord Tomnoddy;
"Sir Fairlie," "Sir Lamb,"
And the "Knight of the Ram,"
The "Knight of the Rose," and the "Knight of the Dragon,"
Who, save at the flagon,
And prog in the wagon,
The newspapers tell us did little "to brag on;"

And more, though the Muse knows but little concerning 'em,
"Sir Hopkins," "Sir Popkins," "Sir Gage," and "Sir Jerningham,"
All *Preux Chevaliers*, in friendly rivalry
Who should best bring back the glory of Chi-valry. —
— (Pray be so good, for the sake of my song,
To pronounce here the ante-penultimate long;
Or some hyper-critic will certainly cry,
"The word 'Chivalry' is but a 'rhyme to the eye.'"
And I own it is clear
A fastidious ear
Will be, more or less, always annoy'd with you when you
insert any rhyme that's not perfectly genuine.
As to pleasing the "eye,"
'Tisn't worth while to try,
Since Moore and Tom Campbell themselves admit "Spinach"

Is perfectly antiphonetic to “Greenwich.”) —
 But stay! — I say!
 Let me pause while I may —
 This digression is leading me sadly astray
 From my object — A grave for my poor dog Tray!

I would not place him beneath thy walls,
 And proud o’ershadowing dome, St. Paul’s!
 Though I’ve always consider’d Sir Christopher Wren,
 As an architect, one of the greatest of men;
 And, — talking of Epitaphs, — much I admire his,
 “*Circumspice, si Monumentum requiris;*”
 Which an erudite Verger translated to me,
 “If you ask for his monument, _Sir-come-spy-see!_—”
 No! — I should not know where To place him there;
 I would not have him by surly Johnson be; —
 Or that queer-looking horse that is rolling on Ponsonby; —
 Or those ugly minxes
 The sister Sphynxes,
 Mix’d creatures, half lady, half lioness, *ergo*,
 (Denon says), the emblems of *Leo* and *Virgo*;
 On one of the backs of which singular jumble,
 Sir Ralph Abercrombie is going to tumble,
 With a thump which alone were enough to despatch him,
 If the Scotchman in front shouldn’t happen to catch him.

No! I’d not have him there, — nor nearer the door,
 Where the man and the Angel have got Sir John Moore,†
 And are quietly letting him down through the floor,
 By Gillespie, the one who escaped, at Vellore,
 Alone from the row; —
 Neither he, nor Lord Howe
 Would like to be plagued with a little Bow-wow.
 No, Tray, we must yield,
 And go further a-field;
 To lay you by Nelson were downright effront’ry; —
 — We’ll be off from the City, and look at the country.

It shall not be there,
 In that sepulchred square,
 Where folks are interr’d for the sake of the air,
 (Though, pay but the dues, they could hardly refuse
 To Tray what they grant to Thuggs, and Hindoos,
 Turks, Infidels, Heretics, Jumpers, and Jews,)

Where the tombstones are placed In the very _best taste_,
 At the feet and the head
 Of the elegant Dead,
 And no one’s received who’s not “buried in lead:”

For, there lie the bones of Deputy Jones,
Whom the widow's tears, and the orphan's groans
Affected as much as they do the stones
His executors laid on the Deputy's bones;
Little rest, poor knave!
Would Tray have in his grave;
Since Spirits, 'tis plain,
Are sent back again,
To roam round their bodies,—the bad ones in pain, —
Dragging after them sometimes a heavy jack-chain;
Whenever they met, alarm'd by its groans, his
Ghost all night long would be barking at Jones's.

Nor shall he be laid
By that cross Old Maid,
Miss Penelope Bird,—of whom it is said
All the dogs in the parish were ever afraid.
He must not be placed
By one so strait-laced
In her temper, her taste, and her morals, and waist.
For, 'tis said, when she went up to Heaven, and St. Peter,
Who happened to meet her,
Came forward to greet her,
She pursed up with scorn every vinegar feature,
And bade him "Get out for a horrid Male Creature!"
So, the Saint, after looking as if he could eat her,
Not knowing, perhaps, very well how to treat her,
And not being willing, — or able, — to beat her,
Sent her back to her grave till her temper grew sweeter,
With an epithet — which I decline to repeat here.
No, — if Tray were interr'd
By Penelope Bird,
No dog would be e'er so be "whelp" 'd and be-"cur" r'd—
All the night long her cantankerous Sprite
Would be running about in the pale moon-light,
Chasing him round, and attempting to lick
The ghost of poor Tray with the ghost of a stick.

Stay! — let me see! — Ay — here it shall be
At the root of this gnarled and time-worn tree,
Where Tray and I Would often lie,
And watch the bright clouds as they floated by
In the broad expanse of the clear blue sky,
When the sun was bidding the world good b'ye;
And the plaintive Nightingale, warbling nigh,
Pour'd forth her mournful melody;
While the tender Wood-pigeon's cooing cry
Has made me say to myself, with a sigh,
"How nice you would eat with a steak in a pie!"

Ay, here it shall be!—far, far from the view
Of the noisy world and its maddening crew.
Simple and few, Tender and true
The lines o'er his grave. — They have, some of them, too,
The advantage of being remarkably new.

Epitaph.

Affliction sore
Long time he bore,
Physicians were in vain! —
Grown blind, alas! he'd
Some Prussic Acid,
And that put him out of his pain!

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† NOTE

In the autumn of 1824, Captain Medwin having hinted that certain beautiful lines on the burial of that gallant officer might have been the production of Lord Byron's Muse, the late Mr. Sydney Taylor, somewhat indignantly, claimed them for their rightful owner, the late Rev. Charles Wolfe. During the controversy a third claimant started up in the person of a *soi-disant* "Doctor Marshall," who turned out to be a Durham blacksmith, and his pretensions a hoax. It was then that a certain "Doctor Peppercorn" put forth *his* pretensions, to what he averred was the only "true and original" version, viz.:—

Not a *sous* had he got, — not a guinea or note,
And he look'd confoundedly flurried,
As he bolted away without paying his shot,
And the Landlady after him hurried.

We saw him again at dead of night,
When home from the Club returning;
We twigg'd the Doctor beneath the light
Of the gas-lamp brilliantly burning.

All bare, and exposed to the midnight dews,
Reclined in the gutter we found him;
And he look'd like a gentleman taking a snooze,
With his *Marshall* cloak around him.

"The Doctor's as drunk as the d——," we said,
And we managed a shutter to borrow;
We raised him, and sigh'd at the thought that his head
Would "consumedly ache" on the morrow.

The Ingoldsby Legends

We bore him home, and we put him to bed,
And we told his wife and his daughter
To give him, next morning, a couple of red
Herrings, with soda-water. —

Loudly they talk'd of his money that's gone,
And his Lady began to upbraid him;
But little he reck'd, so they let him snore on
'Neath the counterpane just as we laid him.

We tuck'd him in, and had hardly done
When, beneath the window calling,
We heard the rough voice of a son of a gun
Of a watchman "One o'clock!" bawling.

Slowly and sadly we all walk'd down
From his room in the uppermost story;
A rushlight we placed on the cold hearth-stone,
And we left him alone in his glory!!

Hos ego versiculos feci, tulit alter honores. — VIRGIL.

I wrote the lines — ... owned them — he told stories!

THOMAS INGOLDSBY