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elder, so you are; now isn't he, Gwynnie, dearest? But, 'deed, and it's no matter which, for it's only the joy over the return that I was thinking of, so it was, and sure we'll kill the fatted calf and be merry, as they did in the parable. I feel," she added, with an absurd look of perplexity, "that my comparison is hopelessly mixed up, but then my intentions are honorable, you know."

As Bessie said this, she stole her hand toward that of Gwyn, and inserted it confidingly in his, quite in the manner of a fond young bride, who is confident of the attachment of her husband, and upon whose marriage still exists something of the bloom of the honeymoon. Gwyn, on his part, did not fail to reciprocate this tender advance, and his hand clasped hers lovingly, and the two stood thus opposite Kane, indulging in this pardonable little bit of sentimentality, or spooneyism, or whatever else the reader may choose to call it, quite regardless of his presence. Upon Kane, however, this little action, which was not unobserved by him, did not produce any unpleasant effect, but rather the opposite. It seemed to him to be a beautiful picture—the young husband, with his frank, open, gentle, and noble face; the fair young bride, with her fragile beauty, and the golden glory of her flowing hair—these two thus standing side by side, with hands clasped in holy love and tenderness.

Kane felt softened more and more, and this scene roused within his mind memories drawn from his own past; memories of a time when he, too, like Gwyn, had one who was as dear to him as this fair young creature was to his brother; memories of a time when the touch of a gentle hand stealing toward his would quicken his heart's pulsation, and send through him a thrill of rapture. Those memories had never been lost, they had lived through all the weary years, they formed a torment to him in his desolation; but never had they been roused to such life, and with such vividness, as at this moment, when Bessie made this half-unconscious movement of confiding tenderness. The happiness of Gwyn only served to remind him more poignantly than usual of all that he had lost, and a drear sense of solitude came across his soul—

> "Oh, for the touch of a gentle hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still."

The sight of his brother's happiness also had another effect. It elicited not envy, for envy was a stranger to his heart, but rather a generous sympathy, and a more tender regard both for this brother and this new-found sister. Inez was one sister, and here stood another as fair as she, and, to all outward seeming, as gentle, as pure, and as good. The sight of these two only served to strengthen his firm resolve already made, to leave his brother here in possession of that estate and title for which he, in his present mode of life, had no need, and of which his nature would not permit him to deprive him.

The loving and tender reception of Kane by these two was met on his part by a grateful reciprocity of feeling; the hearts of all of them were opened to one another; and an interchange of confidences took place, which was unreserved on the part of Gwyn, and only limited on the part of Kane by the nature of those griefs which he suffered, and which could not be lightly spoken of. He laid great stress on his wanderings, and particularly on his adventures in South Africa in search of diamonds. His allusions to this were made with the intention of letting Gwyn see that he had ample means of his own, and of communicating to him, in a delicate way, the fact that he had no intention whatever of taking any steps to deprive him of the estate.

But the chief topic of conversation referred to times far beyond this, and to things which they had in common. Gwyn had much to say about his early boyhood and his remembrances of Kane. He brought forward a thousand things which had faded out of his brother's recollection, but were recognized as Gwyn mentioned them. About these Gwyn talked with a zest, and a simple, honest delight, which was very touching. His whole tone showed that, in the days of his early life, he had looked up to this brother Kane with all the enthusiastic admiration of a generous boy. It was also quite evident that this enthusiastic admiration had lasted beyond his boyhood and into his maturer years. He seemed to have considered his brother Kane the *beau idéal* of perfect manhood, and one who was the best model for his own imitation. At the same time he regarded his own efforts to imitate him as useless, and the honest humility of his allusions to his own inferiority was almost pathetic, especially when his noble face and his chivalric sentiments were so manifest, and seemed to speak so plainly of a character and a nature which could not suffer from a comparison with even that idealized Kane which he had in his mind.

The minuteness and the accuracy of Gwyn's recollections surprised Kane, who had forgotten many of the occurrences mentioned. They referred chiefly to Kane's last year at home, when Gwyn was a little fellow and Kane a young man. The incidents were very trifling in themselves, but at the time they had appeared wonderful to the boy; and now, even when he had become a man, they seemed the most important events of his life. It was not long afterward that Kane's misfortunes had occurred, and Gwyn showed, without going into particulars, but merely by a few eloquent statements of facts, that, at the time when Kane was so desolate, there was one loving heart that was sore wrung for him, and one loyal soul that would have faced even death itself if it could have done him good.

Bessie bore herself admirably during the conversation. She did not thrust herself forward too much; nor did she, on the other hand, subside into silence. A few, well-chosen remarks, now and then thrown in, served to show that she was full of the deepest interest in all that was said, and occasional timely questions to one or the other of the brothers served to draw forth a fuller explanation of the subject to which the question referred. Moreover, all the time there was in her expressive face such eager curiosity, such profound interest, such total surrender of self to the one who might be speaking, that her very silence was more eloquent than any words could have been.

Bessie was also gentle and affectionate. Kane was her brother now. With a frankness that was charming she at once began to put herself on the footing of a sister toward him; and proceeded, not abruptly, but delicately and by degrees, to insinuate herself further into confidential terms of intercourse. At first it was Brother Kane, occasionally dropped as if by accident; then the familiar name was repeated more frequently. Then she called him simply Kane. Once, when her sympathies seemed unusually strong, she exclaimed, "O dear brother Kane! it's heart-broke you must have been about that same!" Finally, when they bade one another good night, she held forth her cheek in the most childish and innocent and sisterly manner in the world, and, as he kissed her, she said:

"Good-night, dear Kane; good-night, and pleasant dreams."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE COVENANTERS.

BY ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

["Two women, Margaret Maclachlin and Margaret Wilson, the former an aged widow and the latter a girl of eighteen, were sentenced, by James Graham, of Claverhouse, to be drowned or abjure their religion. They refused, and were carried to a spot which the Solway overflows twice a day, and were fastened to stakes fixed in the sand, between high and low water-mark. The elder sufferer was placed near the advancing flood, in the hope that her last agonies might terrify the younger into submission; but the courage of the survivor was sustained by an enthusiasm as lofty as any that is recorded in martyrology. She prayed and sung verses of psalms till the waves choked her voice."
—*Macaulay's "History of England."*]

TWO Margarets sat at close of day,
With knitting-sheath at side,
And sung and talked as women may,
And listened to the tide,
As landward turned the wild Solway,
And from his caverns cried.

Up Margery sprung, with bounding feet,
And held her bright hair back,
And listened; for a horseman fleet—
Nor whip nor spur was lack—
Came dashing through the foaming sheet,
Nor pausing on his track.

He cried, "The Graham's at the ford—
Thy lover lieth dead—
Fly, fly, from shot and sword!"
A blood-red scarf aloft he spread,
And Margery, at the word,
Knew all her doom was said.

The Solway roareth hoarse and loud—
The moon from out the wrack
Has thrust aside the murky cloud,
And gleams of steel flings back;
For on the wet sand stands a crowd
That makes the night more black.

The Solway heaves his briny tide,
And there, within its roar,
The Margarets stand them, side by side,
The Claverhouse before.
Pale is the matron, pale the bride,
But steadfast as of yore.

With scoffing jest and smiling lip,
The Graham bent his head,
And sat his horse with hand on hip:
"Repeat the prayer," he said;

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"I fain those pretty lips would sip,
Were I not soldier bred."

"Now God thee save from deadly sin!"
The aged matron spoke;
"Not e'en a worthless life to win,
Can covenant be broke:
We bow unto the truth within,
And know no other yoke.

"O daughter Margery! fear thee not—
The pang will soon be o'er.
O steadfast child! a glorious lot
To die amid this roar,
Remembering Christ, who for us wrought
Through pangs a thousand more."

The Solway fiercer breaks and roars,
The cold moon shineth clear,
And onward, as the Solway pours,
His voice is drowned, to hear
A holy hymn along his shores,
As from another sphere.

The moon looked down where mid the sea
Old Margaret's white hair shone;
The moon looked down where fair and free
Sweet Margery's locks are strown;
And strong men trembled, haunch and knee,
To hear the waters moan.

But Graham sat his champing steed,
That pawed the oozy shore,
And saw the billows in their greed
Heave landward more and more,
And whitened hair and dark sea-weed
Tell that the pang is o'er.

Nor moved he lip, nor moved he hand,
As higher, higher grew
The raging waters to the strand,
And back his horse he drew,
While Margery's voice, exultant, grand,
Swelled all the turmoil through.

The Solway roars at turn of tide
A thousand years the same;
The Solway to the cold moon cried
A deed too black to name,
On that dread night the Margarets died
Staked where the low tide came.

Ere flood of tide, aghast men note
The Solway sweeping on,
Upon his breast nor speck nor mote
To tell what hath been done—
A wild sea-bird, with open throat,
Sails over it alone.

Two ghastly shapes, at ebb of tide,
Rise slowly to the sight,
And pitying sea-weeds strive to hide
The work of yester-night.
Ah! sea and earth such wrongs must bide—
Wrongs for great God to right.

LITERATURE AS A PROFESSION.

It is a melancholy truth that, even in the nineteenth century, literature, as a profession, rarely pays. Each day makes this more clear to the observant. Yet, as regards the votaries of this fascinating and delusive craft, "the cry is, Still they come," to offer at her crowded shrine. Booksellers and editors can testify, by a painful experience, to the ever-increasing number of those who are panting to make the pen their bread-winner. It is, of course, highly to be desired that there should be many to whom gain is a secondary object—willing, for the gratification of an honest ambition, or in the ardent pursuit of some special branch of science, to forego those pecuniary prizes which are, to the bulk of mankind, the grand stimulus to exertion.

But, in the case of a very large proportion of those who follow literature as a means of livelihood, it is much to be regretted that they should not have sought their subsistence in some other field. "Aim," says Junius, in the letter to Woodfall, in which he requires emolument, "at an independence, solid, however small. No man can be happy, or even honest, without it."

While we should decline to indorse this dictum in its entirety, we are convinced of the sound, practical sense it conveys; and it is because a literary career renders the consolidation of an independence almost impossible in about nine cases out of ten, at least as concerns a married man, that we should endeavor to dissuade nine men out of ten from embarking in it. The Grub-Street poor-devil author, out at elbows and redolent of gin, is pretty much a being of the past; but he has his representatives to-day, among a far more refined order of beings, men and women, whom, perhaps, some early amateur success has flattered into the belief that there are great things in them, and that they are destined to be famous. Time goes on, yet the booksellers continue inappreciative and obdurate. At length, heart-sick and weary, the book or poem which was to have won fame is abandoned, and the victim of mistaken vocation endeavors to scrape a precarious subsistence from newspapers or magazines. The compositions of such persons often have considerable merit; and, indeed, frequently give proof of far more learning and accuracy of thought than those of others who earn their livelihood by the pen with comparative ease. The trouble is, that they cannot write what the public cares to read. It would save a great deal of suffering if a large class of would-be authors could but be persuaded that it is not enough to have ideas, and to clothe them in appropriate language, unless they, further, have the art of adaptation to popular taste.

What a painful example in point is that afforded by the well-known fate of a man of undoubted talent in a sister-profession—Haydon, the English historical painter! What chronicle of disappointed ambition tells a sadder tale than the passage in his diary wherein he refers to the crowds showering guineas into the coffers of Barnum, then exhibiting Tom Thumb, under the same roof where Haydon, in a last desperate effort to put bread into his children's mouths, was exhibiting, to a perfectly inappreciative public, his historical paintings! That he could paint excellently, no one denied—but not so as to please the popular taste. His end was suicide.

It is not, however, only those literary men who fail to please the public, who are unable to keep their heads well above water. There are certain lines even of highly-popular literature which are lamentably unremunerative—a fact of which the recent repeated appeal in aid of Mark Lemon's destitute family affords a painful indication. There is no reason to suppose that he was either reckless or extravagant; he was simply the victim of a class of abilities which threw him into an unremunerative groove of life. We have seen here, over and over again, how impossible it is, notwithstanding the number of our cities and the intense appreciation of humor characteristic of our people, to maintain a comic journal; and it is no secret that *Punch* has never been a paying publication—indeed, a glance at the small number of its advertisements is sufficient to give a notion of its failure in this respect. Mark Lemon, its editor, suffered accordingly, and his means did not suffice for saving.

When Sir Walter Scott was ruined, his friend, the able and eccentric Lord Dudley, said: "Let every man who has derived pleasure from the Waverley Novels subscribe sixpence, and Sir Walter will rise, to-morrow, richer than Rothschild." It was a "happy thought," and it is a thousand pities that it was not acted on.

We wish the same could be done for poor Mark Lemon's family, for, if every Anglo-Saxon who has laughed over *Punch* would send twenty-five cents to his widow and daughters, they would be placed in adequate comfort for the rest of their days. The queen has now given the widow and children a pension of five hundred dollars a year; but this is but scanty provision for gentlewomen. Young people intent on pursuing the path trodden by Mark Lemon will do well to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest," the lives of literary men.

LANDOR'S SHELL.

In "The Island," the feeblest, and, with the exception of the poor concluding cantos of "Don Juan," the last of Byron's poems, is the nowise notable couplet:

"The ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell,
Than breathes his mimic murmurer in the shell."

To which Byron appends the following note, written less for the purpose of explanation than to have a fling at Walter Savage Landor, whom he hated because Southey had praised him: "If the reader will apply to his ear the sea-shell on his chimney-piece, he will find in 'Gebir' the same idea better expressed in two lines. The poem I never read, but have heard the lines quoted by a more recondite reader. It is to Mr. Landor, the author of 'Gebir,' and some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr. Southey addresses his declamation against impurity." To this note some extraordinary individual, whom Mr. Murray employed to annotate the poems of Byron, appends this remarkable piece of literary information: "Mr. Landor's lines, above alluded to, are:

'For I have often seen her with both hands
Shake a dry crocodile of equal height,
And listen to the shells within the scales,
And fancy there was life, and yet apply
The jagged jaws wide open to her ear.'"