

to remain so. In the mean time her parents wondered and guessed, and the landlord was sure he would return for the portmanteau.

Day after day passed, unmarked by any thing but the petulant reveries of Almeria, and the constant and unfired conjectures of the other members of the family.

About a fortnight after the disappearance of the stranger, an elegant equipage was seen coming down the green lane that led to the Mermaid. Nothing could be more rare than the sight—all was bustle, and even Betty's discontented face brightened at this uncommon spectacle. Almeria's heart beat high—she fully believed that the stranger, the carriage, and herself, were intimately connected. It stopped at the door; the landlord stood ready to receive the contents, whatever they were. A gentleman rather advanced in years, alighted from it. "Are you," said he, "master of the house?"

"Why, so they say," returned the landlord jocosely, but perhaps my wife would tell you a different story.

The gentleman did not appear inclined to joke; he looked sad and solemn, and followed the doctor with a stately air to the little parlour where Almeria was sitting.

"I have business with you," said he, addressing the father, but turned his eyes upon his daughter. The young lady, however, kept her seat.

"I know not," said he after a pause, "why I should endeavour to make a secret of what can be none to you. A few weeks since, a young man resided here—it is to settle his accounts I come."

"Tell me," said Almeria, with a theatrical tone, "what has become of him? has no accident befallen him?"

"Happily none," replied the gentleman, "he was recognized, and is now in a place of security."

"In prison?" said Almeria, "tell me where, that I may fly to him."

"Impossible," said the gentleman, "you can do him no good—he is carefully guarded."

"He said he was friendless," said Almeria, "but I feel that my fate and his must henceforth be connected."

The gentleman looked at her with astonishment. "It is not possible," said he, "my son could have been weeks in your family, and you not have discovered his situation—Alas, young lady, I wish you a happier fate. My son a few weeks since escaped from confinement; he is lunatic!" An expression of the deepest anguish came over his face—he rose and walked the room.

"I thank you," said he at length, assuming more composure, "for your kindness to my unhappy boy—it was from himself, for on many subjects he is rational, that I learnt the particulars of his residence here, his sickness and your kind attention."

Notwithstanding the landlord and his daughter expressed much curiosity, and felt more than they expressed, the gentleman evaded all particular information. He told them his name was De Vaux, which was some satisfaction, as they had not been able to ascertain this point from the young man. Though he was not as communicative as they desired, his pecuniary recompense was perfectly agreeable to the doctor's feelings, and when he took leave, the landlord gave him a cordial invitation to call again whenever he came along that way.

It might seem incredible to those who have never been conversant with the different forms of insanity, that De Vaux should have exhibited

so few signs of mental derangement, during his residence at the Mermaid. But it was only on one subject that he was decidedly mad.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## VARIETY.

### HIGHLAND MARY.

The mother of Burns' Highland Mary, who has resided in Greenock for a long period, died there on the 27th of October, 1827, at the advanced age of eighty five years.—This venerable looking woman remembered to almost the last moment of her existence, with an affectionate regard, the one who inspired Burns' finest effusions, and was the object of his purest attachment; and it was impossible to hear her enter minutely into the particulars of her daughter's life, and the amiable qualities of her heart, without feeling convinced that Mary Campbell had something more than ordinary attraction to fascinate the mind of the poet. Were we to judge, from the appearance of the mother, whose fine black eye, and regular features, at her advanced age, gave indications of early beauty, we would say that "Highland Mary" probably had also personal charms, which would have influenced a less sensitive mind than that of Robert Burns. Among the little stores of the deceased, there was nothing to be found as mementos of our gifted bard, but the Bible, which he gave his beloved Mary on that day, when they met on the banks of the Avr, "to live one day of parting love." It is, indeed, a curiosity, and has written on the first leaf, in Burns' hand writing, the following passage of scripture, which is strikingly illustrative of the poet's feeling and circumstances:—"Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths." It is well known, that after this they never met again, and at that time could not efface the solemnity of this parting from his mind; and it is to be regretted that two letters, which he wrote after her death to the afflicted mother have been destroyed—the old woman saying, "she could never read them without shedding tears." The mother and daughter are now sleeping in the West Church-Yard—and is "Mary" to remain without a stone to tell the stranger of her place of rest?

After all, the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth. For all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of a face; and true proportions the beauty of architecture; as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fallible, truth still is the perfection.—[*Shaftsbury.*]

It is a fact not generally known, that Col. Brown, of the American Loyalists, and his lady, the originals from whom Smollett drew the characters of *Lishmahago* and *Miss Tabitha Bramble*, are still in the land of the living. They were in Plymouth recently, and are now residing in the vicinity of London. The colonel is in the 95th, and the lady in her 93d year.—[*Eng. Jour.*]

*Antiquity.*—Why is it that the mind loves to linger above and around the ruins of inanimate objects?—why does it hallow things which are desolate and wild—things which are but fragments in themselves of some mightier fragment? Why has unseemly decay a charm so far surpassing youthful strength? why has the rank weed an attraction superior to the sweet-scented garden-flower? Why is Britain in her full grown strength, and America in her youthful vigour, less interesting than Rome in her weakness, and Assyria in her desolation? It is the spell of soul that hangs over them—it is their connexion with mind, and with the operations of mind, that gives them such mastery over our feelings. It is the long line of lofty names, of bards, sages, and heroes; it is the song of genius, the volume of wisdom, and the spear of valor. What is Carthage without the recollection of her former queen and her gallant Hannibal?—what is the rock of Salamis unassociated with the name of Themistocles, the steep of Leucas without the despairing Sappho, and the Hellespont without the bridge of Xerxes, and the shriek of the drowning Leander? What were Castalia without the harp of Apollo; and the dance of the Muses, and Olympus without the thunders of "cloud compelling" Jove? It is the recollection of being, whether real or fictitious, which gives them all their interest.—The great and the powerful of old still linger there,

"Their spirits wrap the dusky mountain,  
Their spirits hover o'er the fountain;  
The meanest rill, the mightiest river  
Rolls mingling with their fame forever."

### WIT OF SIR THOMAS MOORE.

Sir Thomas Moore, one day, when his second wife (who was a very Xantippe in temper) came from shrift, she said merrily to him—"Be merry, Sir Thomas, for this day, I thank God I was well shriven, I have now left off my shrewdness."—"Yea," replied Sir Thomas, "and ready to begin afresh." An acquaintance of his having taken great pains in writing a book, which he intended to publish, brought it to Sir Thomas for his opinion. Sir Thomas having looked it over, and finding it a foolish, trifling performance, told the writer, with a grave face, that it would be worth more if it was in verse. The man, upon this, took it home, and set about turning it into verse. When he had finished it, he carried it again to Sir Thomas, who, having looked it over, said to him, "Ay, marry, it is now something; it is now rhyme, but before it was neither rhyme nor reason." When he was Lord Chancellor, he enjoined a gentleman to pay a considerable sum to a poor woman who had been oppressed by him; upon which the gentleman said he hoped his lordship would give him a long day to pay it in. "You shall have your request," said Sir Thomas; "Monday next is St. Barnabas, the longest day in the year; do you pay it then, or else you kiss the Fleet."