



DAYS OF ABSENCE.

Days of absence sad and dreary,
Cloath'd in sorrow's dark array,
Days of absence I am weary,
One love is far away.

Hours of bliss too quickly vanish,
When will night like you return,
When this heavy sigh be banished,
When this bosom cease to mourn.

Not till that lov'd voice can greet me,
Which so oft hath charm'd mine ear,
Not till that sweet eye can meet me,
Telling that I still am dear.

Days of absence, then will vanish,
Joy will all my pangs repay,
Soon my bosom's idols banish
Gloom but felt when he's away.

All my love is turned to sadness,
Absence pays the tender vow,
Hopes that fill'd the heart with gladness,
Memory turns to anguish now.

Love may yet return to greet me,
Hope may take the place of pain,
And one I love with kisses greet me,
Breathing love and peace again.

ON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

'Tis midnight—from the dark blue sky,
The stars, which now look down on earth,
Have seen ten thousand centurions fly,
And give to countless changes birth.

And when the pyramids shall fall,
And, mouldering mix as dust in air,
The dwellers on this altered ball
May still behold them glorious there.

Shine on! shine out! with you I tread
The march of ages, orbs of light;
A last eclipse may o'er you spread;
To me, to me, there comes no light.

Of, what concerns it him, whose way
Lies upward to the immortal dome,
That a few hairs are turning gray,
Or one more year of life has fled?

Swift years, but teach me how to bear,
To feel, and not with strength and skill,
To reason wisely, nobly dare,
And speed your courses as you will.

When life's meridian toils are done,
How calm, how rich, the twilight glow!
The morning twilight of a sun,
That shines not here—on things below.

But sorrow, sickness, death—the pain
To leave, or lose, wife, children, friends—
What then? Shall we not meet again,
Where parting comes not, sorrow ends?

The fondness of a parent's care,
The changeful trust that woman gives,
The smile of childhood—it is there,
That all we love in them still lives.

Press onward through each varying hour;
Let no weak fears thy course delay;
Immortal being, feel thy power;
Pursue thy bright and endless way.

From the Charleston Courier.

THE CONVICT.

The turnkey stood irresolute—“Here is gold for you,” said the veiled stranger—“it shall be doubled before I quit the prison, if you but admit me to a half-hour's conference with Alice Merton.” The man still hesitated. “Are you a father?” “Yes,” “I come to revoke the curse of one, gray-haired and broken-hearted. I bear a delegated blessing from the death-striken to the doomed. Will you suffer me to depart without accomplishing this mission of mercy?” “Pass on,” said the jailor in a husky voice—and placing a taper in her hand, he silently ushered her into the convict's cell. And who was she, that in her tranquil grace appeared incarnation of benevolence, and whose voice was like a “vesper melody,” when she sought to take the letter from the filial spirit? It was a being whose loty destiny had kindled envy in the bosom of a dark dissembler. It was the once confiding friend, whose holiest affections had been made the savage sport of a perfidious rival. It was the proud, the high souled *Adelaide Latimer*, who lately bent before a vengeful father, and besought him not to withhold the sacrament of nature from his suffering child. She it was that now stood weeping at a little distance from the criminal, who, unconscious of her presence, clasped her sleeping infant to her bosom, while she mournfully exclaimed, “O! Wake no more, my poor, my helpless babe!—Why will not Heaven take my innocent, while yet undreaming of its mother's taint? Alas! Upon what callous bosom will my orphan couch to-morrow eve? Would it not be well, (added she wildly,) would it not be well if I should dash my tender limbs against those iron bars that shut out hope? She arose suddenly, as if intending to pursue her horrid purpose—but *Adelaide* sprang forward, and arresting her uplifted arm, prevented its execution. Alice, transfixed with horror, glared like a maniac upon the form before her. A strange delusion seemed to possess her senses—she called feebly and tearfully on her departed mother, whose shade she fancied had been conjured from the tomb to rescue the desperate offender from this last iniquity. The little Clarence had fallen unharmed upon her bed of straw, and though terrified on being first awakened, had again sunk quietly to rest. “Is it thus we meet, Alice Merton?” Faltered out the gentle visitant, raising the taper and throwing back her veil. The prisoner started—for in those sweet tones she heard again the harmonies of childhood—they had then summed her to fairy sports and flower scenes. All the pale images time leaves undimmed upon the mirror of remembrance, now floated before her fancy in torturing contrast with her present state.

But alas! that voice had power also over the more turbulent associations of a less buoyant period—and they came thronging like the passions to the magic call of music. She riveted her dark eye sternly upon the speaker—it's lightening glance was gone—and it now resembled the blackened corse, on which the subtle fire has spent its fury. *Adelaide* fixed her unshinkingly upon the felon. There was an infant's purity in its clear blue concave—its beam seemed but a reflection caught from the Heaven to which it had so often been upturned. “What brings thee here, *Adelaide Latimer*? By what caprice of taste hast thou resigned the luxury of adulation for a descent on depravity? But I bethink me now, thou hast a faintly reputation, and perhaps in some ecstatic vision mayst have dreamed thy pious rhetoric would move the malefactor, although the man of God had failed to do it. Superfluous concession!—The seed of righteousness can never vegetate within a bosom seared as mine has been. My father's curse, like the red desert blast, prostrated me in my pilgrimage, and shed a desolating influence over every human feeling. Away! No whining valedictory, no mockery of lip contrition awaits the hawking, biring, scandal mongers. The bride of Clement *De la Mere* scorns to abase herself before her haughty rival.” A blush, that brilliant traitor that o'er master's pride flushed to the cheek of *Adelaide*, but receded as suddenly to the heart, whose guarded secret it had thus betrayed.

With a powerful effort, however, she regained her composure, and thus addressed the delinquent, “Alice, thou art no longer the accursed? The dreadful interdict that barred thee from communion with the holy, exist no more. My purpose here was not to taunt thee for thy past transgressions, but to bestow a blessing in thy father's name.” The criminal uttered a convulsive cry, and sunk at the feet of her injured and magnanimous friend. *Adelaide* knelt beside her, and applied the restoratives with which she had come provided. She soon revived and burying her face in her hands, wept long and bitterly. Those tears seemed to dispel the mists that veiled the light of another world from her view. She threw her fettered arms around *Adelaide's* neck, and in an agony of remorse repeatedly exclaimed—“My God! my gracious God! bless her, and pardon me! But oh! why came he not to his condemned and erring child?—Would not his gray hairs have been far more touching orators than all the ghostly counsellors that ever preached a crusade against evil morals? Why on the eve of execution, comes he not to mitigate its horrors, and foretoken, by his presence, that my Heavenly Father will not exclude the felon from his kingdom?” “Perhaps,” answered *Adelaide*, “perhaps his spirit is even now pleading for thee before the last tribunal—it was but fluttering on the verge of eternity when I left him.” “My father dead!” shrieked the unfortunate convict—“Oh God! endue me now with strength to burst my chains, that I may cling one moment to his corpse, and gasp out my repentance. My child,” continued she, straining him to her breast—the brand no longer darkens the young brow; the curse revoked effaces the hereditary blight that would have marred thy future bold aspirations—but thou hast lost the only one on earth whose kind adoption might have redeemed thy tarnished name from my transmitte ignominy.” *Adelaide* bent down to soothe the afflicted infant, whose fingers becoming entangled in her ringlets, were so tenacious of their grasp, that she could not release herself without leaving some of the hair in his hand. The benign enthusiast regarded this little incident as a token that destiny designed to intermingle, through her means, some golden threads in his dark web of fate. She caught him in her arms, and exclaimed with energy—“there is no orphanage for thee sweet boy, while *Adelaide* has power to shield and cherish thee. Yes! thou shall be a succor for every severed bond—and never shall thou know thy parent was aught else than guiltless.” “Stay!” said Alice, with drawing her son, while her whole frame quivered with emotion, “You are yet ignorant of the flagrant wrong inflicted by this mother. Your noble conduct has subdued the fiend within me—it cannot longer wrestle with an angel. Necessity demands that in reverting to the past I must be brief. Knwo, then, that when your love for Clement *De la Mere* was confided to me, I was aware that you were idolized by him; for, observing our friendship, he had been unreserved in his communications on that subject. You little dreamt, however, how far beyond the bounds of female delicacy my unsolicited affection went for that fatal being. Neither was he suspicious of my feelings. Under these circumstances, I determined to supplant you, if possible. For this purpose, I assumed the mask of frankness; feigned even to violate your confidence, that he might be spared the mortification of a rejection; assured him your heart was pre-occupied, and finally succeeded in convincing him, that his pursuit was hopeless. The sympathy I manifested for his sufferings (for he was almost frantic,) in sensibly increased his esteem for me, and as it to impose upon himself the necessity of forgetting you, in a moment of grateful excitement he offered me his hand. We married. But alas! my impious temper, so artfully suppressed before my triumph was achieved, now boldly shook off all restraint. Our hapless union was constantly clouded by domestic tempests. It was during one of these, more violent than usual, that I sarcastically imputed his infidelity to his un-

mastered affection for you; and tauntingly way exemplified in the second course— But if an old man may be permitted, before he leaves you, to speak his thoughts freely, I am really afraid that the position which you have witnessed in the last course will, if we continue it, deprive us of those advantages which our ancestors earned by the sweat of their brows, and which our fathers by their industry and good management, have transmitted to us. Young people I advise you to be merry this evening, but to think seriously to-morrow on the lesson I have given you to day.”

VANITY OF DRESS.

The ridiculous and ruinous passion for over-dressing or dressing beyond their station, which now universally prevails, especially among females, and which has been for many years an increasing mania, never received a better rebuke than was once bestowed by the celebrated *Dean Swift*.

It would be well for society at large if the folly and vanity so generally displayed in regard to apparel, were continually exposed to similar sarcasms; the consequences would be that individuals would return to the exercise of common sense, and would appear in such attire only as becomes their respective stations; a proper distinction

would be visible between the grades of the community, every one would receive that respect and attention due to their true and known designation—the hateful, ruinous seeds of pride and vanity, naturally inherent in human minds, would not, in

the young, be incited to that disgusting ex-

pansiveness and visible development,

which now so generally appear; and per-

sons of the middle and lower ranks of society would no longer be urged to that absurd

imitation of the follies or extra-

gances that distinguish their wealthier fel-

low-creatures, (in whom such things are

excusable and even beneficial to the com-

munity, which now renders them ridicu-

lous and even obnoxious to the severest

ceasur. May the time speedily arrive

when, with every individual of both sex-

s, the question respecting apparel shall no

longer be, “What is fashionable?” but,

“What will become my station, age, and

character? moreover, what will become

me as a meek and lowly follower of ‘Jesus

Christ the righteous?’” The following is

the anecdote referred to:

The *Dean* having once honored a *Mr. Reilly*, a tradesman, with his company to dinner, and observing that person's wife dressed in a very expensive manner for the

occasion, he pretended not to know her; and, after having conversed for some time with *Reilly*, he inquired, with great gravity, when she should have the pleasure of seeing his wife? Being informed that she

was in the room and sitting opposite to him, he said, “That Mrs. *Reilly*! impossible!

—I have heard that she is a prudent

woman, and as such would never dress her-

self in silks, and ornaments, fit only for

fonctionables! No! Mrs. *Reilly*, the trades-

man's wife, would never wear any thing

better than plain stuff, with other things

suitable to it.” *Mrs. Reilly* happening to

be a woman of sense, and taking the hint,

immediately withdrew, changed her dress

as speedily as possible, and, in a short

time, returned to the parlor in her common

apparel. The *Dean* then saluted her in

the most friendly manner, taking her by

the hand and saying, “I am heartily glad

to see you, *Mrs. Reilly*. This husband of

his friends and acquaintances in a hand

the old of both sexes (persons of the first

class of the place) to an entertainment

at his own house. They assembled with

great expectations, but to their no small

surprise, saw a long oak table, on which

were placed platters of buttermilk, pickled

herring, and cheese. The rest of

the cheer was made up with butter and

rye bread—and cans of table beer at hand

for those who chose to drink. The com-

pany secretly cursed the gentleman's hu-

man, but on account of his great age, and

still greater merit, they restrained their

resentment, and appeared contented with

the homely fare. The old gentleman see-

ing the joke take, was unwilling to carry

it too far; and, at a signal given to the

servants, cleared the table, and produced

a second course. The rye bread was

changed to household brown, the table

beer into strong ale, and the mean food in

to good salted beef and boiled fish. The

guests now grew better pleased, and the

master of the feast more pressing in his

invitations. After he had given them

time to taste the second course, a third

was served up in due form, followed by

half a dozen servants in gaudy liveries,

whilst a profusion of soups, tame and wild

fowl—in a word, all that the art of a

modern cook could produce, courted the

taste and renewed the appetite of the

whole company. To this were added gen-

erous Burgundy, sparkling Champaign, &c.

and that nothing might be wanting that

could please the sense, as soon as a desert

was brought in, a concert of a variety of

instruments was heard in the next room.

Healths went round, mirth increased, and

the old gentleman seeing nothing but the

departure of him and the gravest of the

company was waited for to give a loose to

joy and pleasure, rose up and thus ad-

dressed the company: “Ladies and gen-

lemen, I thank you for the favor you have

done me by honoring me with your com-

pany. It is time for one of my age to

withdraw, but I hope those who are dis-

posed for dancing will accept of a ball

which I have ordered to be prepared for

you. Before the fiddles strike up give me

leave to make a short reflection on this en-

tertainment, which might otherwise ap-

pear whimsical and even