

## THE GAME OF CHESS.

BY FREDERIC B. PERKINS.

THE belief in supernatural influences has prevailed in all ages and countries. Even in this enlightened nineteenth century, and in spite of science, the superstition lurks secretly in the public mind. People, indeed, no longer nail horse-shoes over the door to keep off witches, but they crowd to awe-struck circles to hear mediums converse with spirits. There are tens of thousands of persons, and in the most intellectual portions of the country too, who firmly believe that departed friends can be summoned back to earth, and the secrets of the grave extorted from the "rapping" spirits of the dead.

This is not the place to discuss how far these things are the result of a morbid condition of the nervous system, or whether indeed, as the greatest of dramatists and poets has said, "there are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamt of" even by philosophy. Mesmerism, clairvoyance, biology, certainly throw new light on the constitution, or diseases of the mind. Our purpose is to narrate a series of events, which happened in an illustrious Italian house, bearing upon this curious and engrossing subject. These strange facts some persons may explain psychologically, while others will insist on their supernatural origin. For ourselves, we shall give no opinion, but leave the reader to draw his own conclusions, whether the main actor was insane, was under a delusion, or really had to do with supernatural powers.

High up in the Appenines stands a grim castle, the last princely owner of which, immuring himself from the world, spent his days in playing chess alone in his hall. Rumor went that no visible antagonist played against him, and that even his favorite page, Alessandro, whenever the chess-board was brought out, fled from the apartment. Stony, perpendicular, cold and impregnable, upon the brow of an angry rock, stood the castle. As stony, perpendicular, cold and impregnable, it was said, sat the count within, overhanging the wide table in his hall, with beetling brows and cruel eyes, like the black castle, whose gloomy battlements and red-mouthed culverins frowned over the campagna below.

The count, who had long borne the reputation of being one of the best players in Italy, like all  
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persons who pride themselves on their skill at this game, never touched a piece till he had determined where to put it. There he sat, gazing steadily upon the chess-men, except when, ever and anon, he moved a piece, when he would look up, for a moment, to where his adversary ought to have been, as if to read the effect in his face. No word ever passed his lips, yet at intervals he would frown, and at intervals smile grimly, as though listening, or replying to his adversary. A spectator would have doubted whether he imagined an opponent, and himself performed both parts of the conversation, as he did of the game; or whether some shadowy being of the Powers of the Air did actually sit opposite to him, invisible to everybody but the count, and exchange words, in the pauses of the game, unheard by all except the unhappy nobleman.

We have said that the page, Alessandro, between whom and the count some invisible tie seemed to exist, invariably fled from the hall, in terror, whenever the chess-board was brought out. His master often frowned at this, and, at last, ordered the lad, one day, to be bound to a chair. The youth trembled and turned pale, but neither wept nor entreated. His face, however, soon assumed a strange, tranced expression, while his muscles relaxed so that he seemed to lose all control over them. As the game progressed, he became agitated by evident emotion. He stared frightfully across the board to the further side of the table. He often seemed about to speak, but the words always died on his tongue in the very moment of utterance. His limbs quivered; he breathed convulsively; and at last, just as the count placed a knight in a commanding position, intending the piece to remain there during the development of a powerful combination of moves which he had conceived—just as the count had done this, we say, and looked up with a sneering and sinister smile, as if to defy his adversary, just then Alessandro respired a long sigh, and as if becoming suddenly aware of the presence of some overpoweringly evil and gigantic existence, crouched down shuddering, terror taking away his senses and his strength. The sigh aroused the count, who, alarmed for the consequences, hastily summoned a servant and gave the youth into his

charge; after which, without other apparent discomposure, he sat down quietly again to his game.

This had commenced after a fashion frequent with the count; a method to which a general similarity is found in the opening known at present as the "easy game." The count had moved first; and having preserved his attack by judicious play, had at the point where Alessandro's sudden fainting fit (if such it were) occurred, conducted his game well nigh to a successful termination. His adversary's king was much crowded in the corner to which he had retired by castling on his own side. The count's two castles bore heavily across the board; for, by a manœuvre not uncommon in a high style of play, he had contrived, after two or three unexpected moves, to castle his own king suddenly upon the queen's side, and thus to open a quick and violent assault upon the citadel of his foe. The knight of which mention was made, was planted by the count at his king's bishop's sixth square, while his adversary's pawn just opposite had not moved at all, although the two neighboring ones had. The count's pawns, on the same side, being also well forward, victory seemed certain. It was after long pauses, and with a still and restrained expression of deep-felt triumph, that the count moved his adversary's men, as if at the direction of some one indicating the pieces and squares. His own answering moves were made promptly and decidedly; and in truth, after no very protracted course of play, the count sat erect in his chair, and gazed across the wide table with the angry pleasure which comes from victory over one who has before been conquering himself. "Mate in three," said he, quietly, and he drew a long sigh of relief and delight. The mate was given; and the count arose and walked about the dreary hall with quick and heavy steps. With head bent upon his breast, and hands crossed behind him, he walked and mused. Then suddenly he stopped, stepped to a window, took a small volume from a cabinet, and entered upon one of its pages a single mark. The page was nearly covered with similar marks, disposed upon the two sides of a line dividing it in the middle. Having accomplished this, he sat down within the deep recess of the window, and remained long in profound meditation.

His thoughts must have been disagreeable; for more than once he looked up and out into the gloom of the large room with an expression betokening deep and quick anger, or a mixture of that passion with fear. But the fear and the anger soon faded out, and his noble and hand-

some features settled back into their usual lines, revealing impassible determination and glowing energy, but yet shadowed by some intangible gloom; as if his daily thoughts were relieved upon a deep back-ground of dusky sorrow, and the Past was a spectre that forever haunted him.

The count meditated long, and at last, with a quick and resolved air, summoned a servant and commanded him to bring Alessandro. The youth shortly appeared, assisted by the messenger, for he was too weak to walk alone. In consideration of this, the count bade him to sit, and after the departure of the serving-man, expressed regret that what he called "a hasty experiment," should have ended so unluckily.

"I intended no harm," he said, "and really wrought you none, as you will find. But tell me," he added, fixing his eyes on the lad, "what was the cause of so violent an indisposition?"

The youth trembled and grew faint. But the count reassured him, even putting on, whether by constraint and pretence, or from real affection, a demeanor of sympathy and soothing kindness. He then poured out, with his own hands, a cup of wine for the lad.

"I cannot clearly explain," said the page, at last; "but I felt sure," said he, hesitatingly, "that there was some one else in the room, and some one who meant evil to us both. This frightened me, because I could see no one. And then a singular feeling came over me; and just as you moved the knight, which was——"

He paused, and seemed trying to remember. The count assisted him.

"Just before you fainted."

"Fainted?" asked Alessandro. "I did not faint. Oh, yes; I remember now. It was dreadful to see so far, and so much."

He spoke slowly and dreamily, and seemed relapsing into the same condition of apparent torpor, to which he alluded. But the count, looking at him steadily, cried,

"Sit up, sir, and don't be a fool. Tell me, precisely, what were your feelings."

The energy of the count seemed to pass into Alessandro, as that of the magnetizer does into his subject. The page raised his head, looked steadily at the count, and answered firmly,

"I saw that you had played many games, and were to play more. I saw that in somewhat more than half of them you had won. There came also a feeling of apprehension lest of the remaining games you should lose too many; and it began to appear that something dreadful would happen if you should. Then I tried to see with whom you were playing; but it appalled me to look, even though I felt I could not

see. Just at that point some one caught hold of me; the dream faded, and I found that they were taking me out of the hall. There is one thing more, I understood the game better than before, and I saw that at the third move before the decisive move of the knight, the game might have been decided the other way; and I felt as if it was by purpose, and not by error, that you were allowed to win."

The count's face changed but little during this recital. But it evidently required all his self-control not to show any external signs of the agitation he felt. A keener observer than the weak and wearied Alessandro would have noticed the dimness that once or twice came into his eyes, the contraction of his eye-brows, the compression of his lips, the grip of his hand upon the arm of his chair, and the unnaturally long respirations, like struggling billows of excitement chained down by a giant effort.

"Those are singular dreams," said the count, at last. "You may retire, however, for the present."

Alessandro left the room. No sooner had the door closed behind him, than his master started upright and again strode up and down the hall. Again, as before, was he shaken and tried, but by mightier gusts and whirlwinds of some hidden passion. After an hour, however, he grew more calm, when he sent again for Alessandro.

"Alessandro," he said, "I think you told me that you saw how I might have been beaten?"

"Yes, my lord," said the youth.

"Come to the board, then, and show me how."

The page hesitated, "I fear I cannot do it, now," said he, "the knowledge came to me without my seeking it; it was as if it were shown to me in a picture, and it was taken away when I woke up."

"But sit down," commanded his imperious master. "You must and shall show me the variation." And he looked at him from his deep, glowing eyes with an intensity of gaze which few men could have withstood, and which decomposed the slender and feeble Alessandro too much to permit him to object. The count hastily rearranged the chess-men, and replayed the last game, up to the point of inquiry.

"Now, Alessandro," said he, sternly, and promptly, "tell me that other move which would have mated me without remedy." And again he gazed steadily upon the youth.

Alessandro turned pale, and muttered something inaudibly, looking, however, into the count's deep eyes without flinching.

"But you must and shall," said the nobleman, in a tone of quiet resolve, "if you never come

out of your fainting fit. There was nobody here before, but you and me, in spite of your dreams. And if you saw anything then, I made you see it, and I can do the same again. At least"—and here the count seemed rather to reflect than to converse—"at least you must have got all those other notions out of my mind, for they are there, and have been there, these twenty years—a goodly and lovely company to haunt a bearded man, forsooth!"

Then he addressed the youth again,

"I must, and will have it. And if you can tell me that, you must help me play the remaining games. For if you can teach me the flaw in the strongest attack I have ever made, you will be a valuable assistant in the remainder of the match."

Alessandro turned paler yet, and sat still a moment. Then, with a struggling utterance, and as if against strong resistance, he spoke.

"Second player," said he, "king to rook's square."

The count examined the move. There seemed at first nothing remarkable about it. But after careful analysis, he satisfied himself that it might be so followed up as utterly to frustrate the attack which he had thought irresistible; and to reverse the actual result of the game.

"It certainly is so," said he, at last. "It certainly does appear that my page is a better chess-player than I, who play on even terms with the great Italian masters. This will ensure me the match—though I felt sure enough before. Let me see."

He arose and took his memorandum book, and counted the two sets of marks. "What an enormous contest!" said he, still talking to himself. "A thousand games! Well. It will be worth the winning." Then he computed carefully. "Three hundred and seventy-eight against two hundred and ninety. One hundred and twenty-three to win. I shall do it. At least I and Alessandro will."

Next day the count and his page sat down to play chess, in consultation, against the invisible foe, if such there were. The page, with less agitation than he had before shown, seemed to fall into a half dreaming state, and sat still. The count, however, consulted him with implicit reliance during great part of the game. But the words of the youth seemed to be uttered with increasing reluctance. Gradually a painful expression of perplexity settled in his face. At last the nobleman found himself hopelessly beaten by virtue of a move recommended by his young auxiliary. His rage was immediate and intense. He shook the youth violently,

calling him a false deceiver, and bidding him wake up; but neither threats nor violence hastened Alessandro's revival. Slowly and feebly the lad recovered, and looked languidly upon the count.

"By the golden nails in the holy house of Loretto!" cried the latter. "By the beloved heart of our lady! if it were not for your youth you should feed eagles upon the mountains there! Now, in the fiend's name, what is the cause of this deception? If you make not out your case, woe be to you!"

But Alessandro answered quietly and slowly, as if his faculties were still partially benumbed,

"I did only as I could. You forced me to see, and then mixed error in my mind, so that I could not. You know that you hid the truth from me. For the woman and the priest signified it while I was asleep; but you drove them away, and said there were no such persons. And that was not true. The falsehood of those words darkened my mind, and I could see nothing at all."

At these words, strange to say, the count's anger faded out. He sat in silence for a time; then suddenly aroused himself and curtly dismissed Alessandro; after which he relapsed into painful meditations, nor was it till the next day that he required again the attendance of the page. Then having summoned the lad, he addressed him in a sullen and distempered manner; as one who is obliged, though bitterly enraged and distressed at the necessity, to communicate information disgraceful or dangerous to the giver.

"Alessandro," said he, "I shall tell you the whole truth, though I never thought to do it. But your aid in this match I *must* have; for you will——" He broke off: then resumed. "Understand, then, that you are my son—my only child. I married your mother in my youth. Her brother was a priest; and he united us. She was very beautiful. And she loved me well. But I had hoped that I could change her quiet nature, and induce her to share in my own rude pleasures. I soon found, however, that the occupations which I loved pained her, and that in preference to pursuing them she would sit and read in old books. Chess was the only one of my pursuits in which she took any interest; and in playing it, when we were together—which was not often—we passed much time, so that, at last, she became a better player than myself. I was wroth at this, and made desperate efforts to overcome her; but it was in vain. Her deep meditative mind was always too much for my angry and ill-regulated one; while she, not seeing, or not understanding my wrath, laughed and triumphed in innocent joy. And I——" the

count stopped, struggled fiercely to choke down some passion within, mastered himself and proceeded—"I grew to hate her—I left her alone; I plunged in war and tumults, until sickness came upon the fair flower I had walled up here; and she gave birth to you and died. Then, in an agony of remorse, I shut myself up. While in this condition, wild with grief, her brother, a foolish priest, came to reproach me—to reproach me, and with bitter words to charge me with baseness and murder—and all this while I was gnawing my heart with sorrow! In a sudden phrenzy I sprang at his throat." He stopped again, as if almost choked with emotion: then added. "He died, and ever since the priest and the lady are with me."

Great drops of sweat broke out on his forehead, and he paused once more. But soon he resumed more calmly,

"It is an old saying in my family, preserved from the time of the coming over of the Greeks of the Lower Empire, that my house is to become extinct in a baron, its head, who shall slay his wife and his heir. But my wife I did not slay," he added, with a wild laugh, "and you are only my page. For I have disinherited you since you were my only child, that there might be no risk of my fulfilling the old prophecy by killing you; and I have made Roberto, the seneschal, my heir, under a limitation to transfer the estate to you at his own death, and to render over to you what sums and matters you shall require between my death and his. So you are my son, but not my heir. Yet none of my household know of these things, except the old man; for those who served me in those days I dismissed, and procured other retainers. And as for the games of chess which I daily play, and which you must now help me play, I play them for a great wager. I play them for my life, with a strong and wicked spirit who gained a right over me by the neglect by which I killed my wife—of which my wife died—I don't mean that, of course—after which—I should say—my wife died; and by my murder of the priest, her reproving brother. The spirit came to me in my deepest sorrow, while I brooded over those two misfortunes, and threatened me and exulted over me; and proved to me that I was due to him. But he said that I might free myself, if I played a thousand games of chess with him, and won; and I must beat him in five hundred and one, or he retains his right. But if I do so beat him he gives it up, and I am pure and free from my sin. So you must help me, because you *can* help me."

The count ceased; and his deep eyes shone with a glare like that of insanity. Directly,

enjoining his son not to reveal what he had said, he abruptly dismissed him for that day.

It is not necessary to trace in detail the successive games which the count and his son played. For some time the success of the joint players might seem to justify the wisdom of the count's confidence. The truthfulness of the relation between them, as now explained, seemed at first to have restored the youth's marvelous insight. Yet this expectation soon began to fade. It was easy to see, after some time had elapsed, that not only did the youth grow more and more weak, pale and sickly in appearance, but that likewise he grew less and less skilful at the game. When the count irritably commented on this, the lad, in the apathetic manner which had now become ordinary to him, replied, that at first he became able to see in consequence of the commands of the count; and that then he *could* see; but that afterward the commands of the count not only opened his eyes to the conduct of the game, but to results beyond, and thoughts unutterable; in other words, that the influence of the count now not only furnished power to see, but also the things to be seen.

Thus the partnership of the youth had latterly operated to the disadvantage of the count, since, without assisting him, it had tended, through his confidence in the youth's decisions, to fortify his trust in his own perspicacity, and continually to make his moves hasty and ill-digested. In this way, at the end of a few weeks, the young man's aid, instead of materially assisting his father in his play, had thrown him materially back, so that now, instead of being nearly one hundred games in advance of his opponent, the count had but a meagre excess of some thirty or forty.

Daily, now, the count played, but alone again. For the health of his son had faded away, as some delicate flower fades under the unwholesome shadow of a poison tree; and the count, beginning to fear for the youth's life, had ordered him no more to be present when the chess-board was brought out. Yet it was not without misgivings that the count surrendered the presence of his son. He played now, in daily doubt and dread, nay, in daily increasing agitation, and often and more often, he lost. His own rugged strength, under the approaching crisis, began to fail. He grew meagre and gloomy, hunted no more, never even went out, but sat all day brooding over the bitter memories in his soul. The inextricable tangle, as it seemed to him, of his present embarrassments; the dreadful future ensured to him in the event of the loss of the match; the wasting life of his only child, whom,

now that he had spoken to him as to a son, he began to regard with a fathomless depth of affection; the impending extinction of his family, if his son should die—all these hovered about him, as he paced up and down the hall, or sat silently in the shadowed window-seat. In consequence his power as a player began to fail. Sometimes, in spite of resolutions to the contrary, deliberately formed before he sat down, his moves would be dictated by sudden anger. Instead of calculating coolly and long how to counteract a threatened attack, he would, on such occasions, hastily adopt some unstudied and inefficient plan of defence, and would then move a piece rapidly and violently, as if the mere momentum would physically tell upon the array of the adversary, like the stroke of a broadsword.

An occasional return of his old power of self-mastery, however, gave him a few games from time to time. But on the whole, he lost steadily, until at last he had won just five hundred games. Four hundred and ninety-nine were scored against him. The final game only remained to be played, the eventful game which was to determine the result of the long contest.

It was a wild and stormy afternoon, in mid-winter. A fierce tempest of wind, varied with occasional angry dashes of sleet, came shrieking drearily over the higher ranges of the Apennines, blackening all the rugged landscape, and especially the dark, old walls of the castle. Within the hall one could scarcely see. The feudal architects did not provide for light, as much as for safety; and even in the sunniest of summer days, this apartment was but a dreary room—a reservoir almost subterranean, whose cold and stagnant air was hardly stirred at all, was scarcely warmed by the slender pencils of light which the narrow and deep-set windows admitted. Now, it was doubly and trebly dreary. Doubly, by reason of the atmospheric gloom without, and the unsteady light of the torches which flickered and streamed about in the draught. Trebly, by the supernatural radiation of sorrow from the awful presence of the haggard count. For who would not feel an appalling sympathy with the tall man, pacing the chill and ghostly room, with lowered head and nervous step, in silent misery, and doubtful and gathering terror, feeling that the spirits of dead men hovered near; that more fearful beings were hastening to claim him; that his own reckless and hard-hearted folly had thus flung him headlong upon billows of sorrow, surging higher and higher; that now, in weakness of body, from illness or watching, and worse, in weakness of soul, from the wearing discouragement of many defeats, and even from

the very consciousness of the magnitude of the issue, he must go down into a conflict whose result was veiled in angry clouds, upon whose mysterious shade even, not to mention the things hidden within, his conscience admonished him not to dare to look.

Long, in doubt, and in fear, he walked, and at last, with a sullen and boding desperation, he sat down at the chess-table. He sprang up again in hideous fear, at seeing that his adversary's pawn, the king's pawn, was already moved two squares out. Perhaps he had moved it himself, while passing up and down, past the table; but if he had, he had entirely forgotten it, and it seemed to him a tangible and exultingly defiant initiative, assumed by his invisible opponent, by way of triumphing in advance. The count put forth his hand to replace the pawn, intending at first to resume his promenade, and to see whether it would again be moved out; but he dared not, lest it should be. He reseated himself, therefore, and moved in reply.

The game approached a crisis. The count had played well and carefully, restricting himself, by unremitting efforts, to a line of operations slow enough for safety. Again and again he put forth his hand, and withdrew it just as his fingers were closing on the piece, as he suddenly saw some consequence overlooked before. As the attack which the count, true to his bold nature, had urged powerfully upon his opponent, converged within closer and closer limits, the burden of the occasion weighed heavier and heavier upon him. Upon combinations requiring for their success the coolest and clearest calculation, he could now bestow only the unsteady and fitful attention of a mind weakened by internal conflicts, harassed by fearful bodings, and dispirited by long defeat. Even the very importance of the time oppressed him, and weighed him down. As every answering move, therefore, of his opponent was indicated to him, he studied its consequences with secret fear at his heart; and only by desperate internal exertions was he able to preserve the aggressive feeling proper to an assailant. Such being the case, it was with keen and bounding delight that the count at last saw that a series of moves had become possible, which would either mate his adversary or deprive him of his queen, the most valuable of his pieces. This would decide the game, the match, and the future. Trembling with irrepressible excitement, the count examined the position. He had an alternative line of play, safe but unenterprising, which would certainly protract the game to a considerable length, and which would not immediately decide its termination. But the

present plan was speedy and sure. Again and again he developed the variations springing from the key move—the move which it was now his turn to make. There could be no error. Either mate, or queen lost, was the necessary result, for the adversary. Something of the old, free, triumphant feeling came back to the count, illuminated his flushed and agitated features, blazed again in his large, hollow eyes. He sat upright for a moment, and closed his eyes, to abstract himself for a last, thorough re-examination of the combinations. The storm, which he had not heard since sitting down, had momentarily fallen into silence. Afar off, it raved and drove hither and thither among the hills, and its distant anger sounded faintly upon the ears of the lord of the castle, sitting there alone. But dead and heavy stillness was close around his walls, although, as he bent over the table for the last inspection preparatory to his decisive move, a long, low, wailing blast seemed to creep past the foot of the fortress, like a forerunner of the returning tempest. With certainty accumulating every moment, the count followed out all the trains of play; and the low, moaning breath of the blast without rose higher and wilder around the black old walls. Higher, wilder, until in one long, unending shriek, the wind swept past the solid building and away into the vast fields of air, with a persistent and fearfully sustained scream, which even drew the count's attention, for a moment, away from his game, as the torches flared and flickered suddenly in their small orbs of thick, yellow light, and the castle almost vibrated in the wind. Fierce sheets of rain drove through the thickened air, hissing and spattering against the building. The count moved, and with a long sigh, such as one draws when resting in certainty after long doubt, he sat upright again, and with an expression upon his face which would have been a smile, had not so much wrath and fear mingled in it, he looked determinedly again to the further side of the table. As he did so his countenance changed, and he trembled in his chair. For then, singularly coincident in time with the unsaid triumph which elated the count, came a quick and vivid lightning stroke, and close thereafter a heart-appalling thunder-clap; a fearful one, which burst forth in one unendurable, immeasurable pang of sound, and then rolled and re-echoed far away among distant mountains and over the level country southward. The count looked again at the chess-board. As he did so the expressions of exultation, of impatience, of wrath, quickly fled from his face. Only frightful fear remained. An answering move, which, by

some inconceivable oversight, had escaped him, absolutely ensured his destruction. A door opened. The old seneschal hurried in and stood with fearful eyes before his lord. "Sir count," said he, "your son is dead."

The count looked steadily at the speaker, as if running over the words in his mind and estimating their meaning. Then his lips moved; but it was only after several ineffectual efforts that he succeeded in saying, "You may go."

The seneschal left the hall. The count lifted his hand toward the board; it fell heavily among the golden chess-men. His head sank down upon it. He was dead.

For he *had* slain his wife and his son. And the game, and the match, and the life of the count, were all ended as the storm without died sullenly away, and the torches burned quietly and alone within their thick, smoky, yellow orbs of light in the solitary hall.

## TEAR-DROPS FROM THE HEART.

BY LILY MAY.

THEY come 'mid scenes of gladness,  
Like April's sunny rains;  
The same, as when deep sadness  
The heart's wild joy refrains;  
For of our every sorrow  
And joy they claim a part;  
Affection's light they borrow,  
Those tear-drops from the heart.

Oft when my heart beats lightest,  
When Pleasure reigns supreme,  
And youthful hopes are brightest;  
I wake, as from a dream,  
And all such themes must banish,  
E'en bid those hopes depart,  
Which, as they quickly vanish,  
Wring tear-drops from the heart.

I feel them softly stealing  
When loved ones are away;  
'Twould crush each finer feeling  
Were I to bid them stay;  
But, oh! when sad and lonely,  
And none are near to see,  
They flow then, and then only,  
All unrestrained and free.

It is not grief unbroken,  
No deep and sullen woe,  
No words unfitly spoken,  
That causes them to flow;  
But deep and hidden feeling,  
That knows not where to cling;  
To find the balm of healing,  
Affection's meed should bring.  
  
When gayest friends are round me,  
And sprightly jests are flung  
From those who fain would sound me,  
To know what depth they're sprung,  
Although my words fall lightly,  
They know not whence they start;  
Though if they'd judge them rightly,  
'Twould be fresh from the heart.

Oh! bitter drops of sorrow  
I would not bid ye stay;  
Affection's smiles ye borrow  
To scatter gloom away;  
Oh! words of careless sounding,  
With meanings pure and deep;  
Wherever Truth's abounding,  
There still your revels keep.

## THE BLIND BOY.

BY MARY MORTIMER.

THE breeze waves o'er the yellow fields,  
The brooklet murmurs by,  
And sunbeams shed their radiance bright  
Upon my rayless eye.

They shine with dazzling beauty rare  
Upon a world of light;  
I feel their rays, and bless their power  
While I am veiled in night.

I cannot see the light they shed  
Upon the field and lake;

Their silvery splendor in the East,  
When morn's first beams awake.

Or when upon the Western sky,  
Its fading tints of gold  
Proclaim the flight of dying day,  
And evening shadows roll'd.

Altho' upon my rayless eyes  
The sunlight may not fall;  
I see through Faith's unclouded light  
The God who made them all.