

# MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, O C T O B E R 3, 1805.

## Miscellany.

### THE SHRUBBERY.

YOUNG Melmoth went down in the summer to his father's seat in Westmoreland, where, being of an active disposition, and having no companions but a German flute and the works of a few favourite authors, he frequently amused himself with long excursions to examine the beauties which that romantic country affords.—He one day rambled till he had gained the banks of the Winandermere; the solemn colouring of that magnificent scene, the last gleam of sunshine fading away on the hill tops, the deep serenity of the waters, and the long shadows of the mountains thrown across them till they nearly touched the thermometer—all this concurring with the reflection of his being at a considerable distance from home, filled him with sensations that he had never before felt. As he looked around, amidst this terror and uncertainty, he espied a small farm-house peeping forth from a grove of old trees; after a short deliberation, he resolved to follow a path that seemed to lead thither, and passing through several lonely dells, shaded with beeches and over-run with wild flowers, he arrived at a wicket that opened into a shrubbery; the opposite plants intermingling their branches, cast a gloom very pleasing to the imagination, and a rivulet which ran murmuring over pebbles, or broke into cascades, now glittered through the leaves at a distance, and now meandered close by the walk. Melmoth had not advanced far in this retreat, when the shrubs, suddenly opening on one side, discovered a little stream dashing down a rough green bank in an irregular winding manner, and finely diversified by the clods of turf and stems of brush-wood that resisted its current. A feat upon the opposite side of the walk seemed to invite him to sit down and contemplate the beauties of the scene; so he accepted its offer. He had not continued long in this posture before he heard the sound of a harpsichord, accompanied by a female voice. The air was simple and pathetic, in the highest degree, and though he could not distinguish the words, the melancholy cadence with which they were uttered, concurring with the beauty of the scene, had a strange effect on him; for his constitution was naturally warm, and his feelings were always awake to music. The sounds presently ceasing, broke the chain of romantic ideas which they had inspired. He took his flute, an instrument on which he excelled, he raised it to his mouth, but the idea of alarming the stranger checked his hand, and he returned it into his pocket. He immediately rose up, and stealing along the walk, presently entered upon a circular grass-plot, planted round with evergreens, in the centre of which stood a small one temple. A myrtle had spread its branches over the front of the building, and a jessamine, which had been taught to wind up the fluted columns of the portico, hung down in festoons on each side. On the base was this inscription, 'Dedicated to Sensibility.' As this seemed to be the place from whence the sounds which still vibrated in his ear, had proceeded, Melmoth hesitated whether he should not return; but including from the silence that the person to whom he was indebted for them had retired, with a trembling and he opened the doors. The walls on the inside were frescoed, and in a niche was placed a marble urn, in which grew a sensitive plant, a beautiful emblem of the divinity of the place, contracting its leaves at the slightest touch, and shrinking from the feeblest breath of air. On the urn were these words from Sterne: 'Eternal fountain of our feelings! 'tis here I trace thee!' A harpsichord stood open on one side, and a book lay upon it. Melmoth took it up, and was the third volume of 'Emma Corbett,' and recollecting at that part in which the dying Emma, on her return from America, where she had left the remains of a husband and brother she adored, met her aged father at the door, supported by his servants, and going to attend the funeral of his brother's widow, who had died distracted. The passage affected Melmoth, and it seemed to have affected somebody else; for he thought he saw a tear upon the page; and concluded the reader had thrown down the book in a fit of enthusiasm, and struck off the beautiful combination of sounds he had just heard. He had scarcely replaced the book, when a young lady passed by the window with a basket of fruit in her hand. She was dressed in a plain white-muslin night-gown, with a bonnet of the same, and there was an elegance in her form which struck him. She presently came back, and, stooping down to bind the broken stalk of a carnation that lay in a border before the window, gave him an opportunity of examining her. Her face was beautiful, rather formed to please than to dazzle; her features had such a softness and delicacy in them that they were lost at a distance; and there was a sweetness mingled with melancholy that moved him exceedingly. Her complexion was not striking, but a pleasing

expression is superior to the finest in the world; Melmoth had never known what it was to be in love, nor did he even know then, but he thought he saw something in her countenance which made him wish to be acquainted with her.

The god of love is a gentle deity; his chains are so light that the victim is a captive when he least suspects it; and his arrows are so finely pointed, that the wound is deepest when it is felt the least. As soon as she was out of sight he left the apartment; and, turning down a dark walk on the other side, soon came to a little rocky cavity overhadowed by the brown foliage of an oak, which grew at its entrance. A feat had been hewn out of the rock on either side, and a spring which gushed from a corner of the roof at the further end, trickled down with a soft lulling sound, and running directly across the floor entered the rock on the opposite side. Melmoth sat down to indulge his reflections, when a robin, which had been drawn thither by the sound of his feet, hopped confidently in, but when it saw him it flew immediately out again. 'And will you fly from me, gentle bird?' said he, bending down and stretching out his hand; 'though I am not the fair being you took me for, I would not hurt you; indeed I would not, I would cherish you for her sake.' As he said these words he rose up, and continued his ramble till he arrived at an opening in the wood, that presented him with a distant view of the lake and its islands, the colours of which were melted into each other by the soft light of the evenings. He had scarcely fixed his eyes on the prospect, when an elderly gentleman, who was sitting upon a bench at a small distance, and whom a sudden turn in the walk had prevented him from seeing, attracted his notice. From his dress he appeared to be a clergyman. He immediately rose up; as Melmoth now saw it was too late to retire, he walked up to him with a respectful air, and acquainted him with his name and the particulars of his case, assuring him that nothing but the greatest necessity could have urged him to trespass on his grounds.—'You are welcome, Sir,' said the stranger, with a smile equally benevolent and polite, 'I have always heard your family mentioned with esteem, and shall consider your company not as an intrusion, but as an honour.' Melmoth returned a bow for his compliment, and expressed his sense of the obligation. The old gentleman and Melmoth proceeded along the walk. 'You have a sweet spot here,' said Melmoth. 'Yes, Sir,' replied the other, 'I take great delight in it; but it has received no ornaments from my taste, it owes all its beauties to my daughter, who, poor girl! since her mother's death, has been my only companion in this solitude.' The walk now brought them to a small meadow, planted with fruit-trees, and divided by the rivulet which Melmoth had seen before. The steeple of the village church rose on one side, and at the upper end stood an old brick house, the front of which was almost vegetable, from the overgrowth of the vine which covered it. 'This is my dwelling, Sir,' said the old gentleman, 'it has not much elegance in its appearance, but—' 'It has more,' interrupted Melmoth, 'the venerable air of an old house affects me much more deeply than the elegance of a modern one. It seems to breathe something of that generous spirit of hospitality which characterized our ancestors; at least, I have always connected that idea with it.'

They were now arrived at the door, and Melmoth was shewn into a room fitted up with a great degree of taste. The walls were hung with several flower-pieces cut in paper, with drawings of different views which the country around afforded. The windows looked into the orchard. It was the hour of twilight's soberest grey; the bat was taking its circles in the air, and now and then the owl hooted and flapped its wings against the casement. 'You live very retiredly here, Sir,' said Melmoth. 'Yes, Sir,' said Mr. Hartop, for that was his name; 'but my time is spent so agreeably in the discharge of my duties to my parish, and in cultivating my daughter's mind, that I do not feel the least regret at my seclusion from the world.' The door now opened, and his daughter made her appearance. 'Julia, my dear,' said her father, 'this gentleman intends to honour us with his company to-night.' Melmoth rose at her entrance, and she received him with a modest look of welcome which she always gave to her father's friends. They both sat down, and a silence ensued. Melmoth knew not what to do; when he looked up his eyes met Julia, and he cast them down again. He was soon relieved from his distress by the appearance of supper, the elegant simplicity of which charmed him. It was succeeded by a dessert. The flavour of the fruit was exquisite; Melmoth had never tasted any so fine—they were gathered by the hand of Julia. When the clock struck ten, all the servants entered. The master of the family informed his guest that it was the hour of prayer, and, upon bending knees, he poured forth the effusions of a grateful heart, with all the honest fervours of devotion.

Melmoth went to bed early, but he could not sleep, he could not chase the image of Julia from his mind. His adventure had something so romantic in it, that he almost doubted its reality; but a few hours before he did not know that such a being existed, and now his whole existence was interwoven with hers.

As soon as it was light, he went down into the garden. The shrubs and flowers, refreshed with the dew, breathed a fragrance exquisitely pleasing; and the lark soared in the air, and warbled its trembling, thrilling notes of ecstasy.

Melmoth followed the course of the rivulet in its mazes through the grove, till he descended into a hollow dingle, where it widened its stream and slept upon its rushes. The trees which overhung it reflected so deep a shade, that the light was no stronger than that of a light moon-shine; and all was rudeness, silence and solitude. Melmoth sat down upon a bank, and played a lively air upon his flute. It was a piece which himself composed, and his fancy had already drawn a little circle of fairies round him to the sound, when he was roused by the rustling of the leaves. He started up, and looking round, was saluted by Mr. Hartop and his daughter; they had been taking their morning walk, and accident had pointed it in the very same direction with his. They apologized for their interruption, and intreated him to finish the song. He took up his flute and touched a few notes of the voluntary he had heard the night before. Julia blushed. Mr. Hartop observed her confusion, and leading Melmoth to an opening, began to point out to him the beauties of the prospect. It was a little home scene in the pastoral style. In the valley ran a small river with a mill turning in its stream, and a green hill rose on the opposite side, partly covered with furze, and seamed with a winding sheep-walk. In the woodlands on the right and left, the birds were singing sweetly in concert, and the pauses of harmony were supplied by the murmurs of the water-mill, and the tinklings of the wether's bell. Melmoth stood listening to these mingled sounds with such a look of pleasure, that he communicated his feelings to his friends. Julia caught his enthusiasm, and her father smiled. It was a favourite scene of her's; she often viewed it, and as often admired it; but she had not known half its beauties till now.

'I hope your robin is well this morning,' said Melmoth to her, as they were returning to the house. 'Very well, Sir,' she replied, colouring; 'but I did not know that my little friendly visitor had the honour of your acquaintance.' 'My daughter,' interrupted Mr. Hartop, 'has a great affection for the feathered race, and they seem to return it almost with equal warmth. She has at this time a little family of black-birds under her protection, and she visits them, I believe, every morning, with the greatest anxiety for their welfare.' As he said these words, they observed a cat playing with something upon the grass-plot at a small distance, and Julia stepped up just time enough to see her favourite black-birds expire at her feet. 'Here they are,' said she, bending over them, with her hands clasped, 'here they are indeed!' as she spoke, she looked up, and her heart's soft tear was in her eye. Melmoth felt it stream over his senses. He had all the milk of human kindness in his bosom; but at that moment he felt something more than the simple impulse of humanity within him, and the impression he then received was never lost. As he turned round to conceal his emotion, he saw the cat sitting behind a shrub just by, and contemplating, with the greatest composure, on the little scene of distress she had occasioned. Resentment for a moment flushed his cheek, and he took up a stone from the walk to throw at her. 'You must not, indeed you must not,' said Julia, warmly, 'she only pursued the dictates of nature.' As she said these words, she raised her hand to his arm, which was lifted in the action; and the tears, which stood trembling upon her eye-lids, forced their way down her cheeks. Pity's finest strings were then touched, and with her soft and silver sounds the harsh, discordant notes of revenge are never in unison. Melmoth shed a tear upon the stone, and dropped it to the ground.

Mr. Hartop stood silent all the while. He looked first at the birds, then at Julia, then at Melmoth, then at the birds again; his heart was too full to allow him to speak—it ran over through his eyes.

How long this scene lasted I cannot tell; it had been in my power it should have lasted for ever—I would have fixed it on the canvas.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

### ANECDOTE.

"How can you, my Lord, prefer punch to wine?" "Because, my dear, it is so much like matrimony—such a compound of opposite qualities." "Aye, my Lord, I am the weak part, I suppose." "No, my love, you are the sweet, with a little of the wild, and no small portion of the spirit."