

now indeed my heart sunk within me, for I found that my left ankle had sustained a severe sprain by the violence of the fall, and escape seemed impossible. I discovered that I was entering upon a level heath, which greatly lessened the chance in my favour; for had the ground continued to be irregular, the death of the dog would have completely baffled my foes as to the direction I had taken. From the distance already traversed, it was quite clear that I had taken a different route from that which I pursued on discovering the cottage; but I felt a sort of conviction that I had unwittingly made a circle, and was coming near the spot where I had left Tommy the preceding night. Still this was only conjecture; but I now found from my increasing lameness, that the struggle must soon be determined. Every moment the holloa of the smugglers smote louder on the ear; and such was the force of my imagination, that their very feet trod upon my heart, although the sound was not yet audible. It is a hard thing to die unprepared—we cling to life instinctively—and recoil with awe and error from that vast and mysterious change.

But I resolved to sell my life dearly. I had yet one pistol undischarged, and I almost resolved to make a stand, and no longer protract a struggle which was worse than death. At this instant a dark mass indistinctly appeared before me on the waste! The light had now become exceedingly feeble, and I magnified almost every little bush into a foe;—but now I could not be mistaken—it was Tommy. The animal must have recognised me, for he suffered me to approach almost without stirring. It was not long before the cries of my pursuers melted away in the distance. After riding hard for about an hour I slackened my speed, and when day broke obtained some information at a farm house which enabled me to reach my friend Rawlinson's welcome shelter, just as he was sitting down to breakfast. Here, my dear Perceval, I must pause, and give both you and myself breathing time before entering upon my adventures—and wild adventures they were—at "THE STATION."

Ever yours,

CHARLES VYVYAN.

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## THE DEATH OF M. G. LEWIS, ESQ.,

ON BOARD THE SIR GODFREY WEBSTER.

BY A FELLOW PASSENGER.

As no particulars respecting the last moments of this highly talented and eccentric individual have ever yet appeared before the public eye, the writer of the following recollections of the event is in hopes that they may not prove altogether unacceptable to the literary world; particularly as even little things relative to the fate of genius have always been considered worthy of interest.

It was erroneously asserted, many years back, that the late Matthew George Lewis (otherwise known by the title of Monk Lewis) died of sea-sickness on his passage to England from the Island of Jamaica,—but the malady that carried him off was of a far more awful description. It was the yellow fever, which had been raging for a long time at Black River, where he embarked the first of May, in the year 1818, on board the ship *Sir Godfrey Webster*, commanded by Captain —, who now trades to India with the *Coromandel*. For some days previous to Mr. Lewis's decease, the weather

had been blowing a strong gale, which subsiding all at once into a dead calm, left the vessel as it were spell-bound in the dog latitudes. Here the heat became intolerable; and this change in the atmosphere visibly affected Mr. Lewis's general health and spirits. He grew restless and impatient, continually pacing up and down the deck, and spouting forth Italian and German poetry in a wild and impassioned tone of voice, accompanied with violent gestures. On the 13th of May, these serious symptoms rapidly increased in him, and becoming every hour worse and worse, at six o'clock the following morning he expired in the greatest bodily and even mental agony; for such was his delirium, that loud and bitter groans and fearful imprecations burst from his lips whilst suffering the last pangs. It seemed as if that same fatal affection for atheistical sentiments which had at an earlier period pervaded his compositions, as it had done those of many other talented



men of his day, had again taken hold of his imagination in the form of those delirious ravings; for, previous to this dreadful crisis, his manners and conversation had been utterly free from levity of any description. But the scene before us could not fail to produce in some of even the most unreflecting, a deep conviction of the Almighty's displeasure against the sin of "forgetting our Maker in the days of our youth!" And though the dying man, forgiven his early transgressions, might be unconscious of the spectres his words conjured up, *we* in a manner saw them, to tremble and be warned.

It is very much to be regretted that the remains of this accomplished gentleman (and perhaps too celebrated an author) were not preserved and brought home to be buried in the sepulchre of his family; the dust of genius being in some measure sacred to the soil from which it sprung. But, on the contrary, the corpse of the deceased was carried on deck, almost as soon as the last breath had departed; and being rolled up in the ship's colours, it was laid on the stern, where it remained until a slight shell of deal boards was nailed together by one of the carpenters.

Into this humble coffin the body was then carefully fastened down by the lid, and four eighteen-pounders attached to it, in order to sink it; a common white sheet, such as sailors use in their hammocks, was finally wrapped round the whole,—why or wherefore, it is difficult to guess. Captain — then proceeded to read over the burial service, several of the passengers and most of the crew being present; after which, in obedience to his commands, the deceased was committed to the deep. At the first plunge, the coffin disappeared entirely; but rising again, the sheet that had been fastened round it became partially disarranged, and the air introducing itself between its folds, inflated them, and buoyed the coffin up, so that it floated on the surface of the waters, just like a boat with its sails full set. It was first observed by a few of the passengers, from a window in the front cabin, where suddenly to their surprise and terror, they beheld this novel and spectre-like object borne up by the swell of the sea almost on a level with themselves. Never shall I forget the thrilling sensation caused by so appalling an apparition—imagination can scarcely picture any thing more horrible, coming as it did so unexpectedly. I was at that time a mere child, almost an infant, but such impressions pass not away! Around

the vessel that coffin-bark danced like a fearful mockery; then heaving heavily over the surf, as if unwilling still to part from the living world, it bent its course towards the shores of the Havanna; and was soon lost to the straining sight of the awe-struck spectators: whether it arrived at those shores, or was swallowed up in the whelming waves, we have never been able to ascertain.

The impression that Mr. Lewis made on my parents was that of a very reserved yet very kind-hearted man; he appeared to feel for the sufferings of any occasionally indisposed person on board, and particularly for my eldest sister, who almost fell a victim to the same fatal disorder which terminated his career. Before it manifested itself in him, he used to come frequently, and rap at the door of our berth, and ask after her health in the gentlest tones, never forgetting to accompany such enquiries with some little gift for the fevered invalid; such as a shaddock or a bottle of soda-water—articles of which he had brought on board a plentiful supply. He also possessed an old-fashioned piano, bound with brass bands for travelling; and often did he while away the dreary hours ever attendant on a long sea-voyage, by his exquisite touch on that instrument.

When we were passing the islands of the Cayman, some of the natives came alongside of our vessel in their boats, with parrots, shells, and live turtles, for sale—he purchased several of the latter, intending to present one to the Prince of Wales, and another to the Duchess of York.

Though his general manner was serious, yet he would sometimes relax; and become animated even to gaiety,—on one occasion when sitting down to dinner, he observed (probably owing to some mistake of the steward) that there were four dishes of kid on the table, all, however, dressed differently,—“What!” exclaimed he, without moving a muscle of his face, and drawing his words out in a most ludicrous tone—“Is this all that we're to have? kid at the top, kid at the bottom, kid at the side, and kid in the middle! Why, it's kid all over!” This caused a great deal of laughter, particularly as they were almost the first words some of the persons present had heard him utter; and there was such a comic surprise expressed in his manner of delivering them. During Mr. Lewis's stay in Jamaica he had been made the subject of many a strange anecdote; among others it had been reported that he was in the habit of giving dinner parties to his own black slaves, presiding in person at



the head of the table, and conversing with them in the most familiar manner (always remembering to place his driver at his right-hand side); besides which condescension, it was said that he constantly shook hands with the negroes, when visiting them at work in the fields. This may be true, or it may be only a fable; but if true, how far he was right or wrong in so doing, it will be difficult for any one to pronounce; and, besides, is not to be gravely considered, since who can account for the freaks of genius?

Before I close this little article I must not forget to mention, that the subject of the preceding anecdote expired in the arms of

the same person who was afterwards present at Lord Byron's death; and of whom his lordship speaks in his journal with the highest praise, as forming one of the most faithful servants of his household. His name was Baptista or Tita (for short). He was a Venetian by birth, and certainly his attention and devotion to Mr. Lewis during his fatal illness and in his last moments, fully deserve a similar tribute here; and with pleasure the writer bears witness to the unchangeable character of a dutiful servant, a humble friend, faithful unto death.

J. A. P.

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### THE POET'S PRAYER.

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Nor rank, nor power, nor wealth is mine,  
 To catch the worldly eye,  
 And never for such toys as these  
 My heart hath heaved a sigh;  
 The boon I ask is more divine,  
 And worthier far to move  
 An ardent spirit's deep desire,  
 Its true and earnest love.

I seek not length of days—I feel  
 It is our part to be  
 In life or death obedient still  
 To His all-wise decree;  
 But long or short howe'er 'tis mine  
 To walk these mortal spheres,  
 I pray my soul may never own  
 The chill of selfish years.

Oh! may the golden thoughts and dreams  
 Which youth's wild spirit knows,  
 Still burn undimmed as time flows by  
 On to life's latest close;  
 Grant, Heaven 'mid all the chance and  
 change  
 Revolving seasons bring,  
 The same young green romantic mind  
 Eternal in its spring!

Say not though brightly now and warm  
 My young fresh fancies glow,  
 And fast and free as mountain streams  
 Thought's sparkling currents flow;

Cold time can steal the vernal hue,  
 Even from the sunniest heart,  
 And from his visions rudely waked  
 The dreamer soon must start.

I cannot think that souls which burn  
 With feelings warm as mine,  
 Can ever live to find in age  
 Their halcyon fires decline;  
 For in themselves where'er they go,  
 In calm or wintry weather,  
 Some charm of youth they seem to bear,  
 Whose bloom no time can wither!

And oh! what titles, power, or gold,  
 With this can once compare—  
 That talisman of endless spring  
 A few blest spirits wear;  
 Their's is the true nobility,—  
 Mind's treasures, and mind's power,  
 The whole world's wealth were all too small  
 To purchase for one hour!

Then grant me, Heaven! as summer's sun  
 And winter's blasts are seen  
 To fall upon the ivy's leaves,  
 Still beautiful and green;  
 Oh! grant mid all the chance and change  
 Revolving seasons bring,  
 The same young fresh romantic soul,  
 Eternal in its spring!

GERTRUDE.