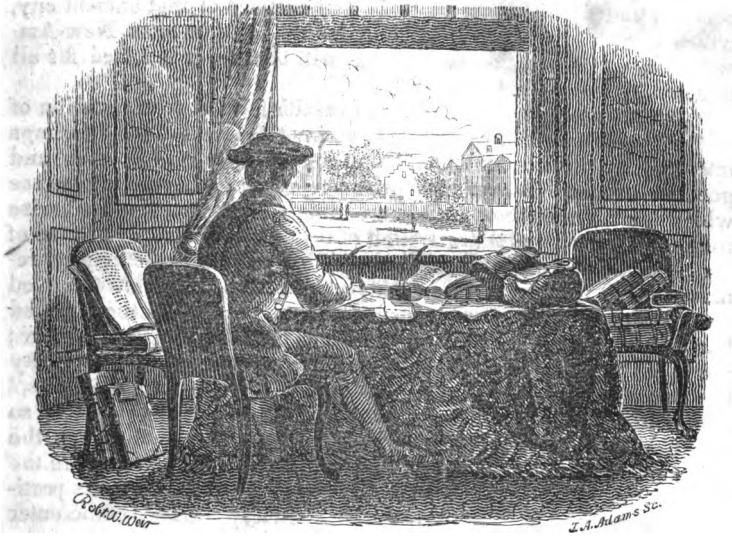


AP 2  
K58  
1.3. 11011-2

# The Knickerbocker.



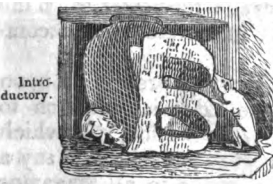
Vol. III.

JANUARY, 1834.

No. 1.

## The Resuscitation of Blebrich Knickerbocker,

(MORE ESPECIALLY THAN IN THE NAME OF THIS MAGAZINE,) BY AN AUTHENTIC FULL-LENGTH LIKENESS, LATELY DISCOVERED AND MOST HAPPILY PRESERVED BY THE PUBLISHERS IN THE SCULPTURE WHICH ACCOMPANIES THE PRESENT NUMBER, AND OF WHICH THE FOLLOWING BRIEF ARTICLE IS A SOMEWHAT LENGTHENED DESCRIPTION.



efore thine eyes, gentle reader, appearing in that well known cut which periodically represents so well our editorial dignity, to what better purpose can we apply the quill we so gradually appear to wield, than by making a few concise remarks on that illustrious personage with whom our publishers have most appropriately thought fit to commence our "National Gallery of Portraits." We will request of thee to glance thine eye from our page unto the picture, and by ever and anon referring to the lineaments there so wonderfully preserved, thou wilt be able to keep pace with our thoughts and to understand the references which we will have occasion to make.

M212900

## A CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF A BACHELOR,

## A SOUTH AMERICAN STORY,

BY TIMOTHY FLINT.

HENRY FELLOWES SELWYN had been left by his uncle one of the noblest coffee plantations on the terrace plain, that rises above Matanzas, in the island of Cuba. His uncle, Henry Fellowes, an opulent New-England merchant, had removed from the inclement winters of his native climate to that beautiful and salubrious elevation, the abode of perpetual spring, for the benefit of his declining health. His nephew and heir, accompanied by his two sisters, attended him for society. They occupied one of the most splendid establishments of the Island. In less than a year, Mr. Fellowes died, leaving this plantation, with its five hundred slaves, to his nephew, and his large American property to be equally divided between his two nieces. Henry was twenty-two, when he came in possession of this opulent establishment, intelligent, instructed, with an uncommonly fine person, and in the main an excellent heart, though with a character not a little marred by that self-complacency and vanity, which so naturally taint the heart of a man constantly surrounded by those toad eaters, who follow the steps of the rich and fortunate in every climate. He was conspicuous for one specific defect. He had moved much in the society of those young American merchants, who pursue wealth in foreign countries, and too often contract dissipated habits, and an aversion to marriage. A number of his immediate relatives had been particularly unfortunate in their domestic ties. From these circumstances, and probably from some innate mental obliquity, he had contracted a decided predilection for celibacy. The theme which rendered him most fertile in thought and eloquence, was the evils of marriage. To extinguish the embryo plans of calculating mothers, and prevent their fair daughters from breaking their hearts, the rich and accomplished young heir, when any fair scope for his wit allowed, poured forth his well committed tirade against matrimony, distinctly blazoning his purpose never to subject his own neck to this intolerable yoke. These foibles apart, few persons more warm hearted, generous, intrepid and intrinsically amiable, would be seen. His sister Julia was nineteen, handsome though masculine in her person, frank, forward, independent, a philosopher in petticoats, and a blue stocking; his sister Mary was a lovely girl two years younger, whom a finished modern education had not spoiled and who possessed in person and mind all that is attractive in female character.

The epoch of this narrative is that period in Spanish American history when the recently formed Republics in the southern hemisphere began to manifest jealousy and a persecuting spirit towards the native born Spaniards, who were suspected of attachment to the mother country, and to frame edicts to expel them from Spanish America. At this time claims belonging to the succession of Mr. Fellowes called Henry to Vera Cruz, Mexico and Acapulco: though he had been a practised traveller in the Old World, and had made the tour of Europe, he did not consider the sublime scenery and the beautiful country of Montezuma devoid of interest, merely because they were Cis-atlantic. Wishing to unite pleasure and instruction with business, he proposed to pass a year in visiting these wild regions of mountains and valleys above the clouds. Leaving his plantation in the care of his overseer, Durand Selwyn, a distant relative of the family, whom the young ladies regarded as a sort of father, he took passage from Havana for Vera Cruz.

Though coaches sometimes, even there, passed from Vera Cruz to Mexico, the noble road which now facilitates the intercourse between the two cities, the Simplon of America, had not then been constructed; and instead of finding the present rapid and comfortable conveyance in the Mexican mail coach, Henry and his mulatto servant, Girelio, performed the journey on mules. They were descending the last range of those precipices by which the mountains slope down to the great Mexican Valley, when their ears were assailed by the near discharge of fire-arms, the apparent cries of combatants, and in the intervals the most piercing female shrieks. Aware that the road was beset with banditti, whose recent exploits and atrocities had been blazoned in their hearing on the whole distance from Vera Cruz, the two travellers were well armed. Intrepid and forgetful of self, the young American spurred his mule round a point of rocks, and the scene of combat presented a coach and four, attended by many horses and mules, a couple of servants shot down, and others partly concealed by shrubs and rocks, firing upon the robbers, who, having bound the master of the cortege, a traveller apparently of wealth and distinction, to a tree, were plundering the coach, while a young lady, her face covered with blood, lay seemingly unconscious on the ground. Henry and his servant hesitated not a moment, but drawing and discharging their pistols, rushed upon the robbers, astonished by the suddenness of their attack. Their first fire brought down two of the robbers; and the resolute face of these new auxiliaries inspirited the servants with fresh confidence. The dismayed robbers, collecting such plunder as they had already secured, vaulted up the rocks, leaving the bodies of their dead companions, and disappeared among the sheltering hills. The first movement of Mr. Selwyn was to release the suffering traveller, whom the robbers had bound to a tree, from his painful position. He thence flew to the aid of the unconscious young lady. Summoning the servants to his assistance, they bore her to a spring fountain that rolled from the cliffs hard by. Cold water poured on her face produced at first a

painful respiration, low sobbing, and soon awakened consciousness. When examined, and the blood washed from her face, it appeared that she had sustained no serious injury, and that the blood had been occasioned by the hurts she had received while the robbers were mutually scrambling for her jewels. The husband, for such the person whom Mr. Selwyn had unbound proved to be, seemed advanced in years, in feeble health, and too much astonished and terrified speedily to regain calmness. His first inquiry was for his wife; and when assured by Mr. Selwyn that she was not seriously hurt, he became at once composed, though, as he told his deliverer in the warmest acknowledgments of gratitude, too weak to afford the requisite assistance to his wife. Mr. Selwyn continued to discharge it with all possible tenderness and assiduity, holding her in his arms, fanning her, and presenting volatiles to her nostrils. As she began to collect her scattered recollections, and at the same time a horrible consciousness of what had happened, her first thought was that she was still in the hands of the robbers, and she struggled to escape from the arms of him who held her. But when his gentle pressure and soothing voice induced her to glance a fearful look in his face, she intuitively comprehended that the young and handsome stranger who bent over her with such kindness and concern depicted in his countenance, could be no robber. Her next sentiment was, that she was supported in the arms of a deliverer, and was safe. She inquired with faltering accents for her husband, who had now recovered sufficient strength and composure to answer for himself. The scene of explanation, thanks and embraces that ensued, may be imagined. Some muleteers joined them. The horses that had been dispersed during the assault, were collected. The gentleman and his lady were assisted into their carriage. The bodies of the two servants, who had been killed, were disposed on mules, and the procession, accompanied by Mr. Selwyn and Girelio, moved on towards a village that was discernible at the distance of half a league down the declivity, and just on the verge of the great valley which opened to view before them.

The parties having arrived at the village, and fixed themselves in the posada, a body of soldiers was despatched by the village Alguazil in pursuit of the robbers, and arrangements made for the interment of the two servants. The traveller and his wife, having taken wine and refreshments by themselves, were now sufficiently restored to strength and calmness to request Mr. Selwyn to share their apartments with them, and in no measured terms to express their gratitude to him, as the person to whose intrepid forgetfulness of himself they felt that they owed their lives. In the effusions of such a moment, all the restraints of ceremonial etiquette were at once given to the winds, and the parties were better acquainted in an hour, on the mud floor of this miserable posada, than other circumstances would have permitted in a sojourn together for a year. Mr. Selwyn told his story of explanations, who he was, and why he was at the fortunate time and place to rescue them. He learned in turn that the delivered were the

Conde Stefano Agramente, who had been on a journey with his wife, Marcia Aurelia, to Xalapa; that they were on their return to his family mansion at the foot of Orizaba, not far from the City of Mexico; nor had the first hour of their interview elapsed, before they had received a promise from Mr. Selwyn that he would accompany him to their residence. The sad ceremony of the interment of his servants having been performed next day, and Marcia, his young and beautiful wife, having suitably patched the scratches of her fair face, replaced the jewels, of which the robbers had deprived, her, and substituted another dress in lieu of the splendid one which, had been demolished during the attack, their arrangements were once more in train, and they started from the Posada for Mexico, where the Conde had a house, though he generally resided at his country castle. A few hours installed him and his guests in one of those sumptuous establishments in Mexico, which bound the Afamada and the court of which opened upon its trees and fountains. In this place, which seemed built on the plan of the palace of an Ottoman Vizier, Mr. Selwyn found himself domesticated by promise, and an inmate in an affectionate intimacy, which, however commenced by gratitude and circumstances, soon ripened into a strong friendship on both sides. Mr. Selwyn visited every part of this strange and splendid city sometimes alone, sometimes in company with the Conde and his wife. Sometimes they rode in the beautiful environs, and every night on their return, comparisons of their thoughts and interchange of their sentiments apparently brought them into more affectionate relations with each other.

The family of the Conde sustaining the first place in the social relations of the city, Mr. Selwyn perceived that it was a distinct purpose in both the Conde and his lady at all balls and fetes, to render him favourably conspicuous, by holding up his qualities of mind and heart to admiration. It was amidst the general attention of the ladies of this society to him, that he found himself best able to interpret the character of the Conde and his wife. The Conde was turned of sixty, and though Spanish by birth, having lived much in France, and having discharged a mission from his King to that Court, he was in many respects rather French than Spanish in his habits and manners. He was polite and complaisant with the peculiar air and address common to the higher class of French of that age. In the voluptuous and rather dissolute society, of which he was now a member, he had to enact a part very difficult to fill that of husband of sixty united to a wife scarcely sixteen, and the most beautiful woman in Mexico. But possessing an elevated character, a most gentle manly deportment, and elegant manners, with a discerning mind and much talent, he was very far from appearing in company with his young and beautiful wife, in the ridiculous position which might be expected from the disparity of their circumstances and years. He had been originally of a noble figure and the most robust constitution, but a campaign in which he had served in his youth, had entailed upon him disease, which

left him at twenty in such a confined state of ill health, that he continued to live only by the most undeviating exactness of diet and regimen. For a long time he was wholly deprived of the use of his limbs. Recourse to the mineral waters of Aix-La-Chapelle, restored to him indeed the power of motion; but he was consigned, during the remainder of his life, to the most trying of all predicaments, a place in the rank, duties and estimation of the highest class, and incessant calls, that required health, spirits and strength to answer, with a more than feminine weakness in point of physical strength, and a mind of burning activity, constantly wearing upon an irritable and diseased frame. He inherited a great fortune and estate, both in the Old and New World, and had none but distant relations surviving. A female cousin of his own age, Marcia Aurelia Tencin, had been attached to him, but compelled by circumstances to unite herself to a French Officer of rank, who was killed in battle soon after their marriage, leaving his widow without fortune. In less than a year she followed her husband to the grave, leaving an infant daughter, who, on her death bed, she consigned to the care of her relative and first love, the Conde Agramente. He watched over the destinies of this child from the cradle with more than paternal solicitude. As she grew up in innocence and beauty, an unique tie united them. She saw that she owed every thing to him. The dignity, propriety and gentleness of his manners, inspired such affection as such a young lady might be expected to feel towards such a benefactor, so much her senior, and not father. He offered to espouse her, chiefly, as he assured her, that she might find in him a protector uniting the double rights of husband and father, and that she might on his decease, which would not be distant, inherit his whole fortune. She was aware that her only alternative was to accept him, or a convent. With mingled sentiments of gratitude, filial respect and esteem, she married him, and found in him at once the most indulgent and respectable of fathers. Almost immediately after their marriage, he received a mission from the King of Spain, which required him to repair to Mexico. A Patriot by principle on the breaking out of the revolutionary spirit in Mexico, he resigned his royal office. But his wealth and rank, and more than all his extraction, so odious to Mexicans of American birth, still subjected him to the jealousies and suspicions of the Patriots. His wife Marcia was one of the most amusing, joyous and intelligent children of sixteen, that ever the sport of destiny had united to a husband of sixty. Such an impress of joyous existence always shone in every trait of her fair face, that the beholder naturally caught something of her gaiety, as soon as in her presence. The perspective of life to her was a long festival. Having no painful remembrances in the past, and nothing to regret in the present or to fear in the future, the fountains at her heart having never been awakened by any deep movement of the passions, epochs were registered in her memory only by the balls in which she had danced, or the festivals in which she had been amused. Unenlightened by experience to know life as it is, and to anticipate its dark

passages, the future spread out an interminable vista, brilliant with rainbows in the sky and flowers under her feet. Her only complaint was the long interval, which sleep interposed between her amusements, and her grand philosophical effort to render this interval as short as possible. Her maxim at retiring was, 'I am going to dispatch my sleep.'—But though such a character might be deemed incompatible with much reflection, or exercise of the higher mental powers, whoever studied her deportment saw that it was guided by the most artless innocence, and that nothing but an occasion was wanting to call forth the most rigid exactions of conscience and high efforts of reflection and self control. Such were the circumstance sunder which Mr. Selwyn was domesticated in their family. The Conde felt the compatibility of his character from the first hour of his acquaintance. Apart from his gratitude, he was disposed to love young people. The elegant young American was of an order of intellect and training infinitely more resembling his own than the ignorant and dissipated Mexicans with whom he was called, daily to mix. He found in him with paternal interest a frankness of candor and spirit, which breathed the freshness of the spring-time of life, not as yet tarnished by the corrupting influence of the world. The habit of suffering, had taken nothing from the amenity of the Conde's character. His frail sensitive frame so often a prey to pains, instead of rendering him morose and peevish, indulgent towards himself and severe towards others, as habitual invalids are apt to be, contained a heart endowed with exquisite sensibility, indulgent towards others and rigid towards himself. Constrained by constant suffering to renounce the hope of living for himself, he lived for his friends, and particularly for his wife. A brief acquaintance taught him the worth of Mr. Selwyn's character: and gratitude and esteem soon ripened into a friendship, which caused him to regard his young friend almost as a son. The country, in which he resided, though dear to him was as much a foreign one, as to the young American. Acquaintance in such cases is made readily and intimately. The consciousness, that they would be sojourners together for but a short period, made him and his fair young wife solicitous to do all in their power to render his stay with them in every way agreeable. Such a disposition invests the highest society with its finished charm, and to carry its promptings with effect is the most pleasant utility of riches.

At the first view of Marcia in the interior of her charming abode or at the head of the gay society of that luxurious capital, Mr. Selwyn was somewhat astonished at a gaiety, that seemed to belong only to levity and a vivacity that might naturally have inspired her husband with distrust for her reputation, and still more with the fear, that it would offer encouragement to libertines. Still from time to time he was delighted in observing, that all these thousand piquant levities, after all, must have their origin in an ingenuous and excellent heart. Above all, he was charmed in contemplating her in her relations with her husband, there investing her gaiety with a certain restraint, studying to soothe and please him, and displaying towards him a simple affec-

tion, which bore a character of filial piety, in which the delicate attentions of lover, nurse and daughter, were delightfully mingled. It was the touching spectacle of a fair young disciple of the Aloa festival surrounding a tomb with flowers.

The young American found himself in this delightful abode forgetting mercantile pursuits, home, travels, every thing, but Marcia thus presenting an entirely new view of human nature, in the manner in which she conducted herself towards her husband, and towards him. A gaiety, a joyousness, which was as the bounding of the spring lamb upon the hills, was so chastened with innocence, so regulated by a tact of propriety, that the most severe and censorious observer could fix on nothing to blame. It is true, this amiable, gay and inexperienced young girl, little as she had observed of men and things, and little as she had felt of passion, could not but observe the sentiment which the brilliant young American felt for her. Noting the expression of this sentiment, always restrained by the severest claims of propriety, she must have been more or less than woman not to have been flattered by it. In the confiding ingenuousness of innocence, her manners soon showed the pleasure she experienced in his society. But much as he wished to find pretexts for prolonging his stay in the city, his ingenuity was exhausted in searching for any ostensible motives for doing it. It so happened, that in the latter part of the next month there was to be a famous bull fight, not far from the Conde's residence, on the plain at the foot of Orizaba. Mr. Selwyn, though he had resided some time in Cuba, had never witnessed one. In discussing this national amusement, he had incidentally spoken of it as barbarous and revolting. You will be able here, said the Conde, to judge of this spectacle, not by your prejudices, but by your eyes. Journey with us from the dissipation of this noisy city to our cool and shaded residence. Acquaint yourself with our literature from my library, and see our national manners in a bull fight, which will assemble all the splendor, gaiety and beauty of the three principal cities of Mexico. Marcia joined her entreaties to those of her husband, and it was not difficult to persuade him who had been torturing invention to find a decent pretext for prolonging his stay.

He found the journey from Mexico to the Castle Agramente so delightful, that he regretted it was so short. The Conde was sufficiently touched with the French character to love to talk. Infirmity and inability to find occupation in common pursuits had rendered him a reader, a quiet observer, and a profound thinker. His conversation, always drawn from the depths of the heart, was highly interesting. Mr. Selwyn, contrary to his habits, which inclined him to reserve, found himself in a position to think aloud. Marcia, on her part, animated the conversation by her inexhaustible vivacity, and diffused over it the infinite charm of the freshness and simplicity of her ideas. This conversation once happened to turn upon the peculiar position in which Marcia was placed, and of the motives which induced the Conde to marry her. I am sure, said he, that it was disinterested affection



for her which induced me to this step, whether she has had reason to thank me for it, is another consideration. My dear child he continued with that gentle and affectionate kindness of manner which so delightfully impressed all he said, must exalt her imagination and consider herself a virgin of the sun, or a young vestal. She is enough read in Pagan story to know that only beautiful victims were offered to the gods. Victims! exclaimed Marcia, I do not comprehend you, I am the happiest young personage living. Pray God, I may continue as happy as I have been. Suppose you had not espoused me, I should have been what? a nun, a canoness. Is it not better for me to have loved you, and found consideration, protection, and all the pleasures, which are necessary to an innocent heart, where I have found them? These words were accompanied with a look of affection towards her ancient husband, which Mr. Selwyn could have spared. But he found support in his principles against marriage by an internal reflection, that this eulogy of her husband would have been more appropriate in his absence.

Maria indulged in a habit peculiar to people of her temperament. Her domestics, her friends, even her dog and cat, had their names. Her husband she invariably called *my father*, the gayest of her acquaintances, *the pride*, the most censorious, *the benevolent*, and so of the rest. On the journey she gaily asked, and you, republican what shall I call you? You cannot be less to me, than my dog and my cat, and must have a name. He answered, a little embarrassed, that he would be satisfied with his share, if she would give him the title of friend. Not at all, that is too hackneyed and sentimental, it must be a term that implies service and loyalty. Be it so, I am named, and shall be delighted to hear you always call me, *my servant*. Good, replied her husband, laughing, I allow it only on condition, that in answering to your name, you always call her, *my master*. The young American smiled at these sallies, so different from the restraint of American Society, and saw in them only the youth and inexperience of beauty just entering the age of the persons, without knowing their intoxication or their dangers. But spell bound, as he imperceptibly was, he silently reflected, whether her manner to him so bland and flattering were those of a seductress, of one seduced, of almost infantine credulity, or studied deception; if her infinite resources to please were an endowment for her own misery, or that of others. He began to be alarmed for his own peace of mind, and to find at his nocturnal settlement with his conscience, that it became more difficult to conceal from himself the impression which she made upon him, and which the delightful intimacy of the journey they were making together, was continually fortifying and increasing. But he would have been as unworthy of our esteem as despicable in his own, if he had not been conscious of a higher sentiment, which interdicted any but right thoughts in regard to the wife of his friend. This higher principle was put to proofs sufficiently severe, during his residence at castle Agramente, but it redeemed his self-esteem by the noblest of triumphs.

The last day's drive on the journey to Castle Argamente was under the shade of such grove, and amid such scenery and such prospects actually wild, sublime, soft, and rich, as no other region on the globe, than the empire of Montezuma could furnish. The carriage and cavalcade had taken shelter under a spreading palm, from a soft pattering shower. In a few minutes the sun, now near his setting, emerged from masses of clouds, that seemed rolled together of crimson and molten brass, lightning up the sides and the snowy summits of Orizaba, as in an ocean of light. A brilliant rainbow curved round its gigantic sides, and in one point rested upon the turrets of an ancient castle, peeping from the foliage of huge palms, cypresses and holms; In all directions but that of the mountain, the eye lost itself in the immensity of the sweep of vision. Maria beckoned the young American, exclaiming, "there at last is our castle. The bow of peace now rests upon it, Oh! that I could not foresee storms. How would I thank God to live and die unmolested in those shades."

To Henry Selwyn it had the charm of being the abode of Marcia, and this would have invested any place with images of pleasure. But apart from that, what his eye took in was a spectacle to fill the heart and imagination. Ancient and hoary mountains, their sides furrowed with cataracts formed by the arrested clouds and the melted snows, an immense extent of vision showing wide regions of the solitude of pathless forests and mountains, and still lower fertile fields, flocks and herds, detached hamlets, a village surmounted by a castle that rose in the sumptuousness of aristocratic state, all these objects were grouped under the glorious pavilion of the setting sun,—light and shade in long bandeaus streamed over the deep verdure, the cliffs and the snows—the thousand gay birds of that home of the most beautiful feathered tribes were warbling their evening vesper under the dripping foliage, to the shower and the giver of showers; while the screams of condors soaring high above all in the cerulean showed that even the rough summits of the snowy mountains had inhabitants dwelling there in their lonely and savage grandeur. The young American on whose imagination and heart the scene operated, as if it had been the sublime music of the service in some cathedral, so completely yielded to the thoughts and sensations, that crowded upon him, as not to heed the numerous questions of Marcia and her husband. Leave him to his reflections, said the Conde, this silent ecstasy is the proudest testimony he can pay to the prospect from our home.

After a pause of some minutes the procession broke off from the main road at right angles to it, and under a towering shade of gigantic sycamores passed over a stone bridge, which spanned by a single arch a *Quebrada* fathomless to the eye, but which informed the ear by its deep organ tones, that great masses of water rolled in the depths. Cliffs of granite and obsidian rose height above height to summits glittering with snow and inaccessible to mortal foot. This sublime and adamantine barrier bounded the ample estate of the Conde on all sides, but the narrow arch of the *quebrada*, which was

the only accessible point to a wide and most fertile terrace plain of fifty thousand acres, rising by a gentle slope about two hundred yards up the sides of the mountain. Two hamlets and many detached stone cottages beautified this secluded spot. Pastures dotted with clumps of natural trees were redolent of white clover, and prodigious flocks and herds either grazing or ruminating in the shade, attested the pastoral abundance of the estate, while the curling smoke ascending from the white cottages completed a picture of repose and rural opulence, on which the eye delighted to dwell.

Such was the scene in which the ardent and susceptible young traveller found himself domesticated with the liveliest and most confiding girl who ever lost or won a heart. It is right here to close the first chapter of their intimacy.

---

WHEN CRUSHED THE GRASS ON GANGES' SIDE.

When crushed, the grass on Ganges' side  
The richest sweets will shed,  
As if the flowers it loved through life  
Breathed round its dying bed :

So let our fragrant hopes arise,  
When signs of parting come,  
And blessings, fondly treasured here,  
Go with us to our home!