

A LAMENTATION.

WHERE ancient broken wall encloses round,
 From tread of lawless feet, the hallowed ground,
 And sombre yews their dewy branches wave,
 O'er many a graven stone and mounded grave;
 Where Parish Church, confusedly to the sight,
 With deeper darkness prints the shades of night,
 In garb deranged and loose, with scattered hair,
 His bosom open to the nightly air,
 Lone, o'er a new-heaped grave poor Basil bent,
 And to himself began his simple plaint.
 " Alas, how cold thy home, how low thou art,
 Who wert the pride and mistress of my heart!
 The fallen leaves now rustling o'er thee pass,
 And o'er thee waves the dank and dewy grass,

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The new-laid sods and twisted osier tell,
 How narrow is the space where thou must dwell.
 Now rough and wintry winds may on thee beat,
 Chill rain, and drifting snow, and summer's heat;
 Each passing season's rub, for woe is me!
 Or gloom or sunshine is the same to thee.
 Ah Mary! lovely was thy slender form,
 And bright thy cheerful brow that knew no storm.
 Thy steps were graceful on the village green,
 As though thou hadst some courtly lady been.
 At Church or market still the gayest lass,
 Each youngster slacked his speed to see thee pass.
 At early milking tuneful was thy lay,
 And sweet thy homeward song at close of day;
 But sweeter far, and every youth's desire,
 Thy cheerful converse by the evening fire.
 Alas! no more thou'lt foot the village sward,
 No song of thine shall ever more be heard,
 And they full soon will trip it on the green,
 As blythe and gay as thou hadst never been.
 Around the evening fire with little care,
 Will neighbours sit and scarcely miss thee there;

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And when the sober parting hour comes round,
Will to their rest retire, and slumber sound.
But Basil cannot rest; his days are sad,
And long his nights upon the weary bed.
Yet still in broken dreams thy form appears,
And still my bosom proves a lover's fears.
I guide thy footsteps through the tangled wood;
I catch thee sinking in the boisterous flood;
I shield thy bosom from the threatened stroke;
I clasp thee falling from the headlong rock;
But ere we reach the dark and dreadful deep,
High heaves my troubled breast, I wake and weep.
At every wailing of the midnight wind,
Thy lowly dwelling comes into my mind.
When rain beats on my roof, wild storms abroad,
I think upon thy bare and beaten sod;
I hate the comfort of a sheltered home,

And hie me forth, o'er pathless fields to roam.
“ O Mary ! loss of thee hath fixed my doom,
This world around me is a weary gloom,
Dull heavy musings lead my mind astray,
I cannot sleep by night, nor work by day.

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Or wealth or pleasure dullest hinds inspire,
But cheerless is their toil who nought desire;
Let happier friends divide my farmer's stock,
Cut down my grain, and shear my little flock;
For now my only care on earth will be
Here every Sunday morn to visit thee,
And in the holy Church with heart sincere
And humble mind our worthy Curate hear;
He best can tell, when earthly woes are past,
The surest way to meet with thee at last.
I'll thus a while a weary life abide,
Till wasting time hath laid me by thy side;
For now on earth there is no place for me,
Nor peace nor slumber till I rest with thee."

Loud from the lofty spire, with piercing knell,
Solemn and awful, toll'd the parish bell,
A later hour than rustics deem it meet
That Churchyard ground be trod by mortal feet.
The wailing lover started at the sound,
And raised his head and cast his eyes around.

The gloomy pile in strengthened horror lowered,
Large and majestic every object towered;
Dun through the gloom, they shewed like forms
 unknown,
And tall and ghastly, rose each whitened stone;
Aloft the dismal screech-owl 'gan to sing,
And past him skimm'd the bat with flapping wing.
The fears of nature woke within his breast,
He left the hallowed spot of Mary's rest,
And sped his way the Churchyard wall to gain,
Then check'd his fear and stopp'd and would remain.
But shadows round a deeper horror wear;
A deeper silence falls upon his ear;
An awful stillness broods upon the scene,
His fluttering heart recoils, he turns again.
With hasty steps he measures back the ground,
And leaps with summoned force the Churchyard
 bound;
Then home, with shaking limbs and quickened
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His footsteps urges from the place of death.

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