

JOHN AND JANE.

BY JOHN HODGE.

Hail wedded love!—the bard thy beauty
Hails,
Though mix'd, at times, with cock-and-hen-
like jarrings;
But calms and very pleasant after gales,
And dove-like peace much sweeter after war-
rings.

I've written—I forget the page, indeed—
But folks may find it, if they choose to
read—
That "marriage is too sweet without some
sour;
"Variety oft recommends a flower."

"Wedlock should be like punch—some sweet,
some acid,
"Then life is nicely turbulent and placid.

"A picture that is all in light—
"Lord! what a thing! a very sight!
"No—let some darkness be display'd,
"And learn to balance well with shade."

John marry'd Jane, they frown'd—they
smil'd—
New parted, and now had a child;
Now tepid showers of love, now chilling favours;
Much like the seasons of the year;
Or like a brook—now thick, now clear;
Now scarce a rill, and now a torrent flows.

One day they had a desperate quarrel
About a little small-beer barrel,
Without John's knowledge slyly tapp'd by
Jane;

For Jane, to oblige her old friend Hodge,
Thought asking leave of John was justice;
And so she wisely left the leave alone.

It happ'd that John & Jane had not two beds
To rest their angry, frowning brace of heads;
Ergo—there was but one
To rest their gentle jaws upon.

"I'll have a board between us," cry'd the
man—
"With all my spirit, John," reply'd the
wife.

A board was plac'd according to their plan;
Thus ended this barrier, at once the stile.

On the first night, the husband lay
Calm as a clock, nor once wink'd over;
Calm as a clock, too, let me say,
Jane never squinted on her lover.

Two, three, four nights, the sulky pair,
Like two still mice, devoid of care,
In philosophic silence fought repose.
On the fifth morn, it chanc'd to please
John's nose to sneeze.
"God bless you, dear!" quoth Jane, at
John's loud noise.

As John gave a sudden start;
And, popping o'er the hedge his head—
"Jane, did you say it from your heart?"
"Yes, John, I did—indeed, indeed!"
"You did!"—"Yes, John, upon my word;"
"Zounds, Jane! then take away the board!"

MISCELLANY.

For the KINGSTON GAZETTE.

RECKONER—No. 50.

MR. RECKONER,

SIR—I am a person of so much vivacity that strangers are very apt to suppose it levity, and I have sometimes observed my particular friends entertaining doubts on the subject. Yet there are few persons more addicted to serious thought than I am, for my sprightliness commonly departs with my company, and when left alone I delight in serious contemplation—Nay, I have often appeared merry in society, and yet been engrossed with some grave and interesting train of thought—the front chambers of my mind were dedicated to mirth, but the back to silent meditation. It is not my present intention to analyze this turn of mind, which tho' never mentioned by Philosophers, is not perhaps very uncommon, but only to notice one great advantage which it confers, namely, treasuring up any remark or event, which may give food for future consideration. We are all disposed at times to think

seriously, even the most thoughtless and giddy have their moments of recollection, which might be improved to the most valuable purposes. The foolish however are apt to fly from reflection with horror, they have not courage to look into themselves, not that they have been guilty of any great crime, which disturbs their conscience, but they have imbibed some sort of unaccountable horror at self-communing, something perhaps similar to that which many Ladies and Gentlemen experience at the sight of a mouse or a cat. Numbers on the other hand cherish serious thought, and indulge in pen- sive and solitary meditation, not for improvement, but because they find in it much complacent enjoyment. I was a few evenings ago in company with some young persons, who were exceedingly merry for several hours, but as it almost always happens at such meetings, we sank as if by common consent into serious conversation. Novels were mentioned—some defended the reading of them, others condemned them indiscriminately. The remarks of an elderly Gentleman pleased me very much—There are a few works of this sort and only a few, that I would put into the hands of my daughters, because they give strength to that romantic turn to which many minds of sensibility have too great a tendency already. They commonly blunt the finer issues of the soul, not only by exciting them too often, but in unworthy causes. They describe scenes which we cannot reasonably expect in common life, and they place all the merit of virtue in acting from the impulse of the moment and not from steady principle. Now all moralists know that the same feelings when not under the guidance of principle, which at one time promote generous and benevolent actions, will at another promote those which are highly pernicious. Without steadiness we have no virtue—But my principal objection to these books is that they undermine all domestic discipline. They represent the virtuous order of a family under the image of insufferable tyranny—they teach children to deceive their natural protectors, to carry on clandestine correspondences, and regardless of every filial tie, to act in direct contradiction to their parent's wishes. They cause the tear of compassion to flow for those, who have been deceiving the authors of their being, at the moment that they were receiving the strongest proofs of tenderness and affection. They think every thing is made up by making the hero and heroine after an unhappy marriage, throw themselves at the feet of their parents, and implore their forgiveness with tears. The parents are made to forgive this flagrant breach of duty, this unnatural rebellion, and the story concludes with such unanimity, that the reader becomes convinced that the conduct of the parties was throughout exceedingly proper. Now the impression which such a story leaves on a youthful mind tends to counteract all moral and religious education, to destroy the peace and happiness of families, and to lead to guilt & misery. All virtue and happiness must commence in the domestic circle, the relations of parent and child, sister and brother are the sources of all our virtues, whatever

corrupts these sources is in the highest degree destructive, and ought to be universally reprobated.—There was silence for some seconds—"Well, Sir," replied Clara, a most intelligent Lady, "all our young folks do not read novels, several of them have sense to perceive their defects—More than one of my friends were disgusted with *Ida or Atlens*, which happened to get among us, and which no person of delicacy or virtue can read without repenting. Its profligate principles, its licentious descriptions, and the antipathy shewn to religion were soon discovered, and the work was banished, and the author's stigmatized, as a corruptor of youth, whose works were to be avoided as poison. And what would you say of a young Lady, who not only read a volume of sermons carefully over in private, but was at the pains to copy one on a most awful and sublime subject." We begged to know the Lady's name, and to read the sermon. The former she declined, with the latter she complied. After reading the sermon, which contained a most awful, but yet an affecting and encouraging picture of mankind rising from the dust, and commencing a more glorious and happy life than the present, I could not help forming the most favorable opinion of the fair writer. I was lost in thought during the remainder of the evening, what a noble soul she must have—how much superior to the giddy pursuits of her sex must she be, before she could delight in the consideration of a subject like this. I clothed her in every kind of perfection, an amiable disposition, a kind, generous and benevolent heart, a pleasing address and manner, a strong understanding, and born to be loved. Where shall we find a young man deserving of similar praise. But what could have produced her predilection for a subject so very solemn? To solve this question many suppositions occurred; it must have touched some tender string—Alas! perhaps like me, she now beholds the seat vacant, which a bosom friend was accustomed to fill—it is this that makes the hopes and promises of the Gospel so estimable—it is this perhaps that carries her views beyond the present transient scene of misery and contention, to those peaceful and glorious abodes, which contain the treasure she has lost. When the passion of grief is assisted by a vivid imagination, and directed by the eyes of faith—we experience feelings which cannot be described—We are transported to the residence of the person—we lament—we behold him sitting among the blessed, his countenance full of joy. The vision fills us with inexpressible delight, we fly to embrace him, we think that we are recognized as his friend; we hear him speak—that sweet voice which was accustomed to delight our ears, once more greets them—those sentiments which used to give us so much pleasure, which roused us to virtue, and strengthened our affection, convey the same emotions to our souls. The pleasing delusion gives us the most sensible joy, and altho' we are apt to relapse into despondency when it departs, yet an impression is left that gradually soothes the soul. We have fewer ties to bind us to this world, we have a friend in Heaven expecting our arrival. This suggests

diligence and perseverance in well doing; we become afraid lest we should fall away, we redouble our exertions, and every day sees our progress in holiness. I do not know how long I should have continued in this pleasing reverie, had I not been roused by a gentle tap on the shoulder—"Come, my good Sir," said Clara, "do not grieve at finding a woman of so great merit. You are not henceforth to consider us all frivolous creatures, incapable of serious reflection. Believe me, Sir, the natural abilities of the sexes are equal. Their different education and the purposes for which they are destined in life, accounts sufficiently for the distinctions, which may be observed between them in society." In this I most cordially acquiesced, for women have been found to excel in all the arts and sciences, to equal if not surpass men in virtue & courage, and in purity of sentiment, gentleness, tenderness & affection, to have gone far beyond them.

Yours, VIVAX.

ANECDOTES.

TWO waggons travelling different ways, happened to meet at a place where the passage was so narrow as to render it difficult passing each other; a dispute consequently arose who should turn out of the road to let the other go by. One of them roared out, "If you do not turn out immediately, I'll serve you as I did the other fellow just now." This address had the desired effect: The other expecting to have some disagreeable trick served on him, should he disobey, immediately turned his team to one side of the road; but as his opponent passed him, he desired to know how he had served the other man. "Why, (said he) the stubborn rascal swore he would not turn out for me, and so I turned out for him."

A very pious gentleman, but rather worldly, made it his constant practice to call up his family before day, in order that they might attend prayers, and be ready for their labor in good season. One morning having mustered his family rather earlier than common, he commenced family duties by prayer, during which he returned thanks to the Lord that they were brought to see the light of another day. An old Negro standing by, cried out, *Top, top, vate a bit, no day yet, massa, serfin, no day yet.*

An Attorney observed a boy about nine years of age, diverting himself at play, whose eccentricity attracted his attention—"Come here, my lad," said he. The boy accordingly came, and after chatting a little, asked the Attorney what case was to be tried next—"A case between the Pope and the Devil," answered the Attorney, "and which do you suppose will gain the action?"—"I do not know," said the boy, "I guess 'twill be—a—pretty tight squeeze; the Pope has the most money, but the Devil has the most lawyers."

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