

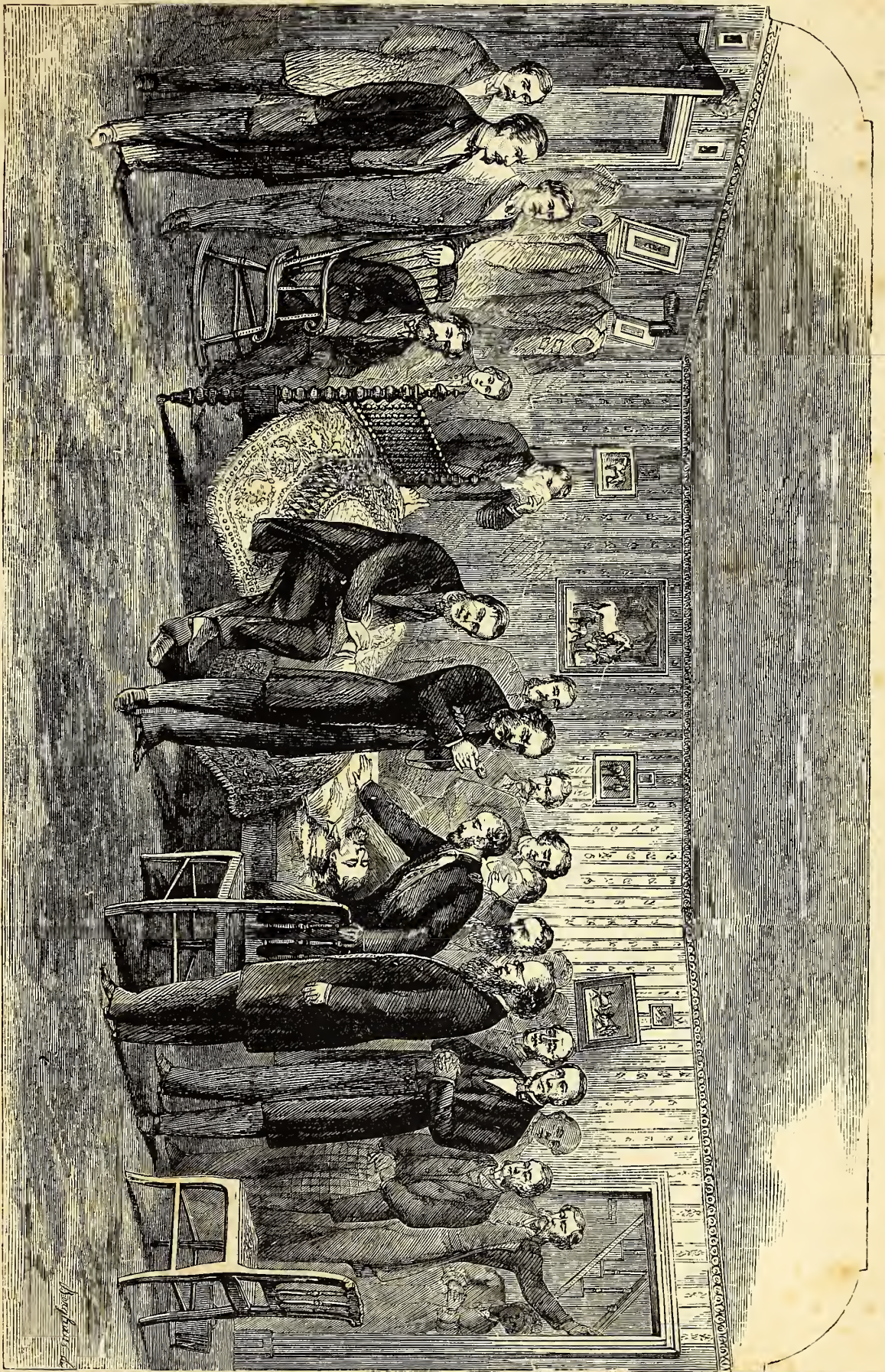
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DEATH-BED OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.—SEE NEXT PAGE.
[From an original sketch made by an artist actually present, and never before published.]

ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



THE following striking description of the assassination of President Lincoln is from Walt Whitman's forthcoming book, and, as a specimen of word-painting, is remarkable for its vivid realism. The "good gray poet" was among the audience at Ford's Theatre on that ever-memorable night when baffled treason struck its last and deadliest blow, and his narrative of what he saw and heard possesses a peculiar interest.

He thus describes the terrible scene in all its strangely contrasting phases :

The day, April 14, 1865, seems to have been a pleasant one throughout the whole land—the moral atmosphere pleasant, too—the long storm, so dark, so fratricidal, full of blood and doubt and gloom, over and ended at last by the sunrise of such an absolute national victory, and utter breaking down of secessionism—we almost doubted our own senses! Lee had capitulated beneath the apple-tree of Appomattox. The other armies, the flanges of the revolt, swiftly followed.

And could it really be, then? Out of all the affairs of this world of woe and passion, of failure and disorder and dismay, was there really come the confirmed, unerring sign of plan, like a shaft of pure light—of rightful rule—of God?

But I must not dwell on accessories. The deed hastens. The popular afternoon paper, the little *Evening Star*, had spattered all over its third page, divided among its advertisements in a sensational manner in a hundred different places, "The President and his lady will be at the theatre this evening." (Lincoln was fond of the theatre. I have myself seen him there several times. I remember thinking how funny it was that he, in some respects, the leading actor in the greatest and stormiest drama known to real history's stage through centuries, should sit there and be so completely interested and absorbed in those human jack-straws, moving about with their silly little gestures, foreign spirit, and flatulent text.)

So the day, as I say, was propitious. Early herbage, early flowers, were out. (I remember where I was stopping at the time, the season being advanced, there were many lilacs in full bloom. By one of those caprices that enter and give tinge to events without being at all a part of them, I find myself always reminded of the great tragedy of that day by the sight and odor of these blossoms. It never fails.)

On this occasion the theatre was crowded, many ladies in rich and gay costumes, officers in their uniforms, many well-known citizens, young folks, the usual clusters of gaslights, the usual magnetism of so many people, cheerful, with perfumes, music of violins and flutes—and over all, and saturating all, that vast vague wonder, *Victory*, the Nation's Victory, the triumph of the Union, filling the air, the thought, the sense, with exhilaration more than all perfumes.)

The President came betimes, and, with his wife, witnessed the play, from the large stage-boxes of the second tier, two thrown into one, and profusely draped with the national flag. The acts and scenes of the piece—one of those singularly witless compositions which have at least the merit of giving entire relief to an audience engaged in mental action or business excitements and cares during the day, as it makes not the slightest call on either the moral, emotional, æsthetic, or spiritual nature—a piece ("Our American Cousin") in which, among other characters, so called, a Yankee

certainly such a one as was never seen, or the least like it ever seen in North America, is introduced in England, with a varied fol-de-rol of talk, plot, scenery, and such phantasmagoria as goes to make up a modern popular drama—had progressed through perhaps a couple of its acts, when in the midst of this comedy, or tragedy, or nonsuch, or whatever it is to be called, and to offset it or finish it out, as if in nature's and the great muse's mockery of these poor mimes, comes interpolated that scene, not really or exactly to be described at all (for on the many hundreds who were there it seems to this hour to have left little but a passing blur, a dream, a blotch)—and yet partially to be described, as I now proceed to give it.

There is a scene in the play representing a modern parlor, in which two unprecedented English ladies are informed by the unprecedented and impossible Yankee that he is not a man of fortune, and therefore undesirable for marriage-catching purposes; after which, the comments being finished, the dramatic trio make their exit, leaving the stage clear for a moment. There was a pause—a hush as it were. At this period came the murder of Abraham Lincoln! Great as that was, with all its manifold train circling round it, and stretching into the future for many a century, in the politics, history, art, etc., of the New World, in point of fact the main thing, the actual murder, transpired with the quiet and simplicity of any commonest occurrence—the bursting of a bud or pod in the growth of vegetation, for instance.

Through the general hum following the stage pause, with the change of positions, etc., came the muffled sound of a pistol shot, which not one hundredth part of the audience heard at the time—and yet a moment's hush—somehow, surely a vague, startled thrill—and then, through the ornamented, draperied, started and striped space-way of the President's box, a sudden figure, a man raises himself with hands and feet, stands a moment on the railing, leaps below to the stage (a distance of perhaps fourteen or fifteen feet), falls out of position, catching his boot-heel in the copious drapery (the American flag), falls on one knee, quickly recovers himself, rises as if nothing had happened (he really sprains his ankle, but unfelt then)—and so the figure, Booth the murderer, dressed in plain black broadcloth, bare-headed, with a full head of glossy, raven hair, and his eyes, like some mad animal's, flashing with light and resolution, yet with a certain strange calmness, holds aloft in one hand a large knife—walks along not much back from the footlights—turns fully toward the audience his face of statuesque beauty, lit by those basilisk eyes, flashing with desperation, perhaps insanity—launches out in a firm and steady voice the words, *Sic semper tyrannis*—and then walks with neither slow nor very rapid pace diagonally across to the back of the stage, and disappears. (Had not all this terrible scene—making the mimic ones preposterous—had it not all been rehearsed, in blank, by Booth, beforehand?)

A moment's hush, incredulous—a scream—the cry of murder—Mrs. Lincoln leaning out of the box, with ashy cheeks and lips, with involuntary cry, pointing to the retreating figure, "He has killed the President!" And still a moment's strange, incredulous suspense—and then the deluge!—then that mixture of horror, noises, uncertainty—the sound, somewhere back, of a horse's hoofs clattering with speed—the people burst through chairs and railings, and break them up—that noise adds to the queerness of the scene—there is inextricable confusion and terror—women faint—quite feeble persons fall, and are trampled on—many cries of agony are heard—the broad stage suddenly fills to suffocation with a dense and motley crowd, like some horrible carnival—the audience rush generally upon it—at least the strong men do—the actors and actresses are all there in their play costumes and painted faces, with moral fright showing through their rouge—some trembling—some in

tears—the screams and calls, confused talk—redoubled, trebled—two or three manage to pass up water from the stage to the President's box—others try to clamber up—etc., etc., etc.

In the midst of all this, the soldiers of the President's Guard, with others, suddenly drawn to the scene, burst in—some two hundred altogether—they storm the house, through all the tiers, especially the upper ones, inflamed with fury, literally charging the audience with fixed bayonets, muskets, and pistols, shouting, "Clear out! clear out!—you sons of b——!" Such the wild scene, or a suggestion of it rather, inside the play-house that night.

Outside, too, in the atmosphere of shock and craze, crowds of people, filled with frenzy, ready to seize any outlet for it, came near committing murder several times on innocent individuals. One such case was especially exciting. The infuriated crowd, through some chance, got started against one man, either for words he uttered, or perhaps without any cause at all, and were proceeding at once to actually hang him on a neighboring lamp-post, when he was rescued by a few heroic policemen, who placed him in their midst and fought their way slowly, and amid great peril, toward the station-house. It was a fitting episode of the whole affair. The crowd rushing and eddying to and fro—the night, the yells, the pale faces, many frightened people trying in vain to extricate themselves—the attacked man, not yet freed from the jaws of death, looking like a corpse—the silent, resolute half-dozen policemen, with no weapons but their little clubs, yet stern and steady through all those eddying swarms—made, indeed, a fitting side-scene to the grand tragedy of the murder. They gained the station-house with the protected man, whom they placed in security for the night, and discharged in the morning.

And in the midst of that night pandemonium of senseless hate, infuriated soldiers, the audience, and the crowd—the stage, and all its actors, actresses, its paint-pots, spangles, and gas-lights—the life-blood from those veins, the best and sweetest of the land, drips slowly down, and death's ooze already begins its little bubbles on the lips.

Such, hurriedly sketched, were the accompaniments of the death of President Lincoln. So suddenly, and in murder and horror unsurpassed, he was taken from us. But his death was painless.

The illustration on page 369, representing the death-bed of President Lincoln, possesses a singular interest from the fact that it is engraved from the only sketch taken by an eye-witness of the melancholy event it commemorates. The circumstances of its production are peculiar. The artist—a gentleman who had formerly been in the employ of Mr. Frank Leslie—was at that time in Washington, and resided near the house of Mr. Peterson, to which the dying President was taken, and in a rear room of which he breathed his last.

This gentleman heard of the assassination almost immediately after it occurred, and at once hastening to the house of Mr. Peterson, with whom he was well acquainted, gained admission, remained until the last, and, amid all the excitement and confusion of those terrible hours, instinctively seized his pencil and made the sketch in question—the original of our picture.

No other engraving of the martyr-President's death-bed can possess a title of the interest that naturally attaches to this, which has never before been published. To it the future historical painter must turn for information, if he would truthfully depict the last scene of that dreadful drama, so disastrous and far-reaching in its unhappy consequences. No other artist having been present at the death-scene, all other attempts to delineate it must necessarily have been largely imaginative, and our picture, therefore,

possesses very great historical value. The following description of the death-scene will serve to show with what fidelity the artist has depicted it:

As soon as the discovery was made that the President was shot, the surgeon-general and other physicians were immediately summoned, and their skill exhausted in efforts to restore him to consciousness. An examination of his wounds, however, showed that no hopes could be given that his life would be spared.

Preparations were at once made to remove him, and he was conveyed to a house immediately opposite, occupied by Mr. Peterson, a respectable citizen of that locality. He was placed upon the bed, the only evidence of life being an occasional nervous twitching of the hand and heavy breathing. He was entirely unconscious, as he had been ever since the assassination. At about half-past eleven the motion of the muscles of his face indicated as if he were trying to speak, but doubtless it was merely muscular. His eyes protruded from their sockets and were suffused with blood. In other respects his countenance was unchanged.

At his bedside were the Secretary of War, Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Interior, Postmaster-General and Attorney-General; Senator Sumner, General Todd, cousin to Mrs. Lincoln; Major Hay, M. B. Field, General Halleck, Major-General Meigs, Rev. Dr. Gurley, Drs. Abbott, Stone, Hatch, Neal, Hall, and Lieberman, and a few others. All were bathed in tears; and Secretary Stanton, when informed by Surgeon-General Barnes, that the President could not live until morning, exclaimed, "Oh, no, General; no—no;" and with an impulse, natural as it was unaffected, immediately sat down on a chair near his bedside, and wept like a child. Senator Sumner was seated on the right of the President, near the head, holding the right hand of the President in his own. He was sobbing like a woman, with his head bowed down almost on the pillow of the bed on which his illustrious friend was dying. In an adjoining room were Mrs. Lincoln, and her son, Captain Robert Lincoln; Miss Harris, who was with Mrs. Lincoln at the time of the assassination, and several others.

At four o'clock the symptoms of restlessness returned, and at six the premonitions of dissolution set in. His face, which had been quite pale, began to assume a waxen transparency, the jaw slowly fell, and the teeth became exposed. About a quarter of an hour before the President died, his breathing became very difficult, and in many instances seemed to have entirely ceased. He would again rally and breathe with so great difficulty as to be heard in almost every part of the house.

The surgeons and the members of the Cabinet—Senator Sumner, Captain Robert Lincoln, General Todd, Mr. Field, and Mr. Rufus Andrews—were standing at his bedside when he breathed his last. Senator Sumner, General Todd, Robert Lincoln, and Mr. Andrews, stood leaning over the headboard of the bed, watching every motion of the beating breast of the dying President. Robert Lincoln was resting himself tenderly upon the arm of Senator Sumner, the mutual embrace of the two having all the affectionateness of father and son. The surgeons were sitting upon the side and foot of the bed, holding the President's hands, and with their watches observing the slow declension of the pulse, and watching the ebbing out of the vital spirit. Such was the solemn stillness for the space of five minutes that the ticking of the watches could be heard in the room.

At twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock, in the morning, April 15th, gradually and calmly, and without a sigh or a groan, all that bound the soul of Abraham Lincoln was loosened, and the eventful career of one of the most remarkable of men was closed on earth.

The room, into which the most exalted of mortal rulers was taken to die, was in the rear part of the dwelling, and

at the end of the main hall, from which rises a stairway. The dimensions of the room are about ten by fifteen feet, the walls being covered with a brownish paper, figured with a white design. Some engravings and a photograph hung upon the walls. The engravings were copies of "The Village Blacksmith," and "Stable and Barnyard Scenes"; the photograph was one taken from an engraved copy of Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair." The furniture of the apartment consisted of a bureau covered with crochet, a table, several chairs of simple construction, adapted for sleeping-rooms, and the bed upon which Mr. Lincoln lay when his spirit took its flight. The bedstead was a low walnut, the head-board from two to three feet high. The floor was covered with Brussels carpeting, which had been considerably used. Everything on the bed was stained with the blood of the Chief Magistrate of the nation.

The 12th day of February, 1876, was the sixty-sixth anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The 14th day of April, now close at hand, will be the eleventh anniversary of his death. Both dates should be suitably commemorated, for our brief history, as a nation, records no grander figure, no nobler model for the emulation of youth, than that of the flat boatman, lawyer, statesman, Chief Magistrate, and martyr—Abraham Lincoln.

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The Princess Shepherdess.

A FAIRY STORY.

ONCE upon a time there was a very good king, who had the happiness to have a queen who was equally admirable. They were both under the protection of a very powerful fairy, who promised them a daughter of such matchless beauty, virtue, and accomplishments, that all the princes of the earth would strive to win her for a bride. When she was born there was fine music ringing through the air, and it was remarked that the roses appeared a month earlier, and remained in full bloom till the very last day of Autumn—a compliment paid to this charming princess, who was called Rosalie.

Up to her tenth year she grew more beautiful every day, when suddenly the good king, her father, was thrown from his horse, and killed on the spot. This had such a terrible effect upon the queen that she took to her couch, and rapidly passed away from a world that was insupportable since the lover of her youth had been taken away from her.

As she was bidding her daughter Rosalie farewell, the good fairy, who was named the Queen of Bonheur, suddenly appeared at her bedside, and said:

"My dear queen, I have always been a friend to you and

yours from your infancy, and have come now to take charge of this beautiful daughter of yours, who will be exposed to great perils till she has reached her sixteenth year, when she will be exposed to the perilous ordeal of being loved by a wicked giant who dwells in a neighboring kingdom. I have come now to tell you that I will take charge of the Princess Rosalie, and bring her up as a shepherdess, while your old ministers can govern the kingdom in her name."

The queen tenderly embraced her weeping daughter, and joined the Kingdom of the Blest.

The next morning Rosalie found herself in a most beautiful cottage, covered with roses, passion-flowers, and honeysuckles. But, instead of royal robes, she was dressed as a shepherdess. On her table was a pretty ivory crook, and a pretty little glass for her to drink her milk from.

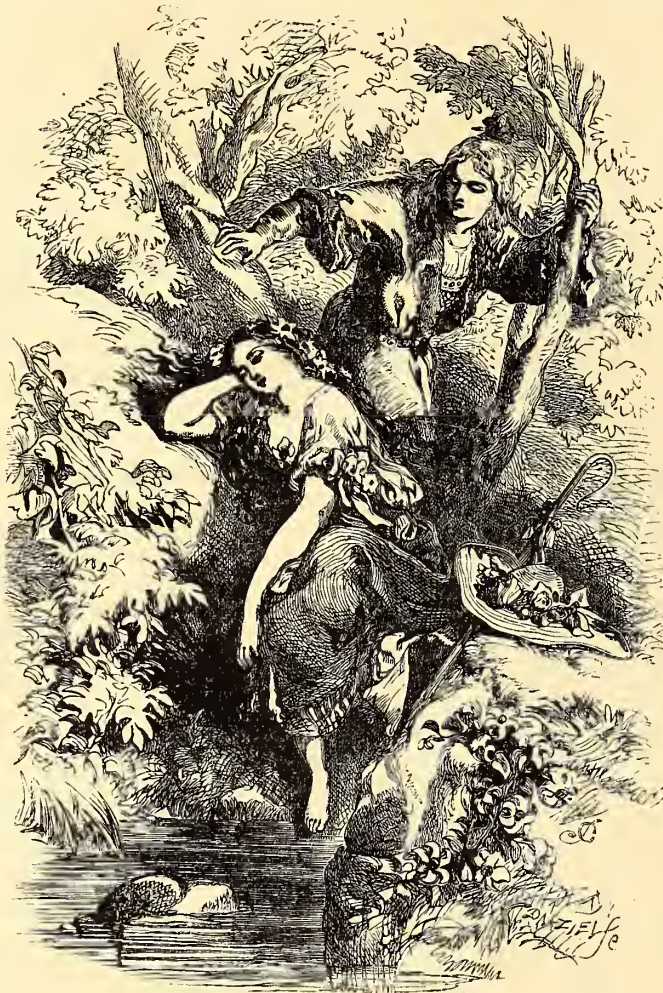
As though led by instinct, she went into the neighboring meadow and found a flock of sheep. They gambled around her as though they had known her from their tenderest days. Here she remained in that calm peacefulness which is the chief charm of rural seclusion, and three years passed as though it were a dream.

One morning, in the sultry month of July, she retired to a pleasant spot to rest awhile. Here she felt overpowered by the warmth of the day, and gradually slid into slumber. While she slept, the prince of that kingdom beheld her. He had been hunting since dawn, and had outstripped his companions. He was astonished at the marvelous beauty of the lovely creature before him, and remained rooted, as it were, to the spot. Hearing the faint baying of the hounds at a distance, and fearing to rudely disturb the slumber of the enchanting girl before him, he hastily retraced his steps, and advanced with all speed to where the sounds of his approaching courtiers seemed to come from.

When he had regained their company, he set spurs to his horse, and was soon in his own palace.

At the evening banquet his conduct was so strange and indifferent, that his parents, who tenderly loved him, inquired in vain what ailed him; but he quieted their apprehensions by assuring them that he had overfatigued himself in the chase.

Seizing the first opportunity, he retired to his own apartment; but it was not to sleep; the image of his unknown divinity rose before him. He paced his room till day broke, when ever-wearied nature asserted her sway, and he fell into a short but profound slumber. He dreamed that he was a shepherd, and that the fair object of his thoughts was his companion. He was pressing her milk-white hand, and



THE PRINCESS SHEPHERDESS.—"HE WAS ASTONISHED AT THE MARVELOUS BEAUTY OF THE LOVELY CREATURE BEFORE HIM, AND REMAINED ROOTED, AS IT WERE, TO THE SPOT."