

LITERATURE.

ELISE DE VAUX.

BY FANNY FERN.

"Well, doctor, what do you think of her? She has set her heart upon going to that New Years' Ball, and it will never do to disappoint her, poor thing!"

The blunt old doctor bit his lip impatiently, and striking his gold-headed cane in no very gentle manner upon the floor, said—

"Think! I think it would be perfect insanity for her to attempt it. I won't be answerable for the consequence."

"Pshaw! my dear sir; she has had a dozen attacks before, quite as bad, and—"

"And that is the very reason she should be more cautious now, madam. Good morning—good morning! Heaven save me from these fashionable mothers," he muttered, as he banged the door to behind him. "She'll kill the girl, and then her death will be laid at my door—ugh! it would be a comfort if one could meet a sensible woman occasionally!"

Elise was sitting in bed, propped up by pillows, when her mother entered. If youth, grace and beauty could bribe the destroyer, or turn aside his unerring aim, then had she been spared. Her cheek was marble pale, and rested wearily on one little hand; the eyes were closed as if sleeping, and from the other hand a few choice flowers had escaped and lay scattered upon the snowy counterpane.

"Oh! is that you, mamma? I hope you have made that stupid doctor give you something that will set me up. I feel such a deadly sinking—from want of nourishment, I fancy. Do pray see what you can get for me. I hope Dr. Wynn didn't presume to interfere about my going to the ball, because I intend to go, dead or alive; and mamma, while my lunch is getting ready, just bring me my dress, and let me see if Jeannet has placed the trimmings where they should be, and have a *ruche* placed around the wrist of my kid gloves; and mamma, don't forget to send Tom to Anster's for that pearl spray I selected for my hair; and by the way, just hand me that mirror; I'm afraid I'm looking awfully pale."

"Not now," said the frightened mother, "you are too weary. Wait till you have had some refreshment;" and the pale beauty sank back on her pillow, crushing a wealth of dark ringlets, and closed her eyes wearily, in spite of her determination to be well.

A ring at the door! (a bright flush came to her cheek.) "That's Vivian, mamma. Tell him—tell him (and a sharp pain through her temples forced her to pause;) tell him I'm better, and he may call for me at ten to-morrow night; and mamma, hand him this;" and she drew a little perfumed note from beneath her pillow, with a rose-bud crushed in its folds.

"Draw aside the curtain, Jeannet! Oh! we shall have a nice evening for the dance; now hand me my dressing-gown. Mamma, that medicine is perfectly miraculous—I never felt better. Heaven knows where I should have been, had you not called in a better councillor than Dr. Wynn. He would like me for a patient a year, I dare say; but I knew better than to line his pockets that way;" and she skipped gaily across the floor to a large fauteuil, and called Jeannet to arrange her hair.

"Softly—softly, Jeannet! My head isn't quite right, yet. There, that will do," said Elise, as the skillful French woman bound tress after tress in complicated glossy braids around her well-formed head. "Now place that pearl spray a little to the left, just over my ear.—Pretty, is it not mamma?"

"Here, Jeannet!" and she extended the dainty foot for its silken hose and satin slipper.

"Rest awhile now, Elise," said her mother, as she looked apprehensively at the bright crimson spot on her cheek, that grew deeper every moment, and contrasted so strikingly with the marble paleness of her brow. "I'm afraid you are going beyond your strength."

"Mamma, what are you thinking about? Look at me! and see how well I look. Besides, I'd go to this ball to-night, if it cost me my life. Mabel has triumphed over me once; she shall not do it a second time. Besides,

there is really no danger; I feel wild with spirits to-night, and anticipate a most brilliant evening," and she clasped the pearl pendants in her small ears; and the light fleecy dress fell in soft folds about her graceful person, and upon her fair arm placed *his* gift and taking in her hand the rich bouquet, every flower of which whispered hope to her young heart, she held up her cheek with a bewitching smile, and said—

"Now kiss me, mamma, and say that you are proud of me."

And now, Jeannet, with officious care, draws the rich opera cloak about her shoulders, and with a thousand charges from mamma "to beware of the draughts, partake sparingly of ices, and not fatigue herself with dancing," the carriage wheels roll away from the door, freighted with their lovely burden.

"Elise de Vaux here!" said a tall, queerly girl, attired in black velvet; and she curled her pretty lip with ill-concealed vexation. "I thought her dying, or near it;" and as Elise glided gracefully past in the dance, every eye following her, and every tongue eloquent in her praise, Mabel's cheek paled with anger.

"How radiant she is! how dazzling! Sickness has but enhanced her beauty, and how proudly Vivian bears her through the waltz! Every step they take is on my heart-strings. This must not, shall not be! Courage, coward heart!" and, mastering her feelings with a strong effort, she joined the dancers. Excitement and exercise soon brought the rose to her cheek, and her eyes grew wildly brilliant, and, had Vivian not been magnetized past recall, his eye would have been caught by the dazzling vision.

All eyes were fixed upon the rival belles, and amid the voluptuous swell of music, the flashing of lights, the overpowering sweetness of myriad flowers, and the rapid whirling motion of the dance, every brain and heart were dizzy with excitement.

"Heavens! that is not Elise de Vaux," said a nephew of Dr. Wynn. "What mad folly! My uncle told me if she came, it would be at the price of her life. How surpassingly beautiful she is!"

Still on—they whirled! the dancers! till the stars grew pale, and the sweet flowers drooped in the heated atmosphere.

"No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet, To chase the glowing hours with flying feet."

"What unearthly beauty!" said an old gentleman to a young man, upon whose arm he was leaning, as Elise glided past. "Who is she?"

"Elise de Vaux," said the young man, mechanically, his eyes riveted to her figure.

"Do you know what you are saying?" said he, tapping him gently on the arm.

"Yes, Elise de Vaux."

"Well, why do you look at her so wildly? Has Cupid aimed a dart at you out of those lovely blue eyes?"

"Good God!" said the young man, leaping forward, as a piercing shriek came upon the air. "Make room! help! throw up the windows!" and Elise was borne past, gasping, senseless, to the cool night air.

Aye, Vivian! Kneel at her side, chafe the little jewelled hands, put back the soft hair from the azure-veined temples, press the pulseless wrist, listen for the beaten heart—IN VAIN!—Elise is dead!

And in the arms of him for whom she had thrown away her young life, she was borne to her home. The diamond sparkled mockingly on the clay cold fingers, the pearls still lingering amid her soft ringlets, the round symmetrical limbs still fair in their beautiful proportions. The heart she coveted was gained—the dear bought victory was won.

From the N. Y. Spirit of the Times.

"DRAWING" A BADGER.

BY JOHN SMITH, JR.

While in the town of Bristol, during my last visit to England, my attention was one day attracted to a number of persons who were gathered around a long barrel which stood on end nearly before the door of an ale-house, known as the "Seven Stars,"—a house, as I after-

wards discovered, well patronized by the apprentices of mechanics, and members of "the fancy."

Being desirous of seeing as much as possible of the manners, customs, &c. of the mother country, (although I never intended to write a "book,") my curiosity induced me to stop, and upon so doing, I found they were examining a fine large badger, which, as I was told by the proprietor who was present, was to be baited on the afternoon of the following day.

As I was perfectly verdant in such matters—indeed had never seen the animal before—curiosity overcame my disgust at such an exhibition, and I determined to be present at the so-called sport. Accordingly, on the following afternoon I was punctually upon the spot, where I found a large crowd, many persons of which had brought their dogs, and were already betting pretty freely upon the prowess of their respective animals.

The appointed hour had now arrived, and the badger was removed to the stable-yard of the inn, whither the crowd of men and dogs had already proceeded, and the landlord appeared in person to superintend the interesting ceremonies which were to follow.

A stout stick of oak was now placed firmly upon two uprights, and the barrel of the "baitee" brought close to it, and laid with its sides upon the ground, while a cloth of some coarse material was thrown over its mouth. The dog destined to take off the wire edge of the badger was now brought up, and released from his chain; the cloth was removed from the entrance of the den, and the animal, a fine Scotch terrier, rushed boldly in, and after a short scuffle, was drawn out by the legs by his owner, bringing the badger with him. The animals had each a firm hold of the other, and were now thrown over the stick before mentioned, and were suffered to hang until strangulation compelled them to release their gripe, when the "baitee" was returned to his den, and ten minutes allowed him to recruit for the next encounter.

Nearly an hour had thus passed, and some four or five dogs had participated in the combat, but, with one exception, none had displayed the game and endurance of the first; they had been severely torn by the sharp teeth and powerful claws of the persecuted badger, and evinced no signs of a desire to undertake a second attempt. At this moment a rusty-looking individual, who sported a shocking bad hat, walked up to the barrel, followed by a large, lank and mangy-looking cur, remarking,

"Why, gents, your dogs don't seem worry hanxious to have a turn with this 'ere badger. Now, here's Towser, I don't say he's anything hextra, but he can fetch that hanimal out, hanyow."

During these remarks of the owner, his dog had been smelling around the entrance of the barrel, and appeared to be perfectly satisfied that he had no business with the badger; and when the cover was removed from the den, and the "individual" endeavored to "sic" him on, he displayed signs of the most unqualified disapprobation, and, sticking his caudal appendage between his legs, sought protection behind the carcass of the said individual, and commenced barking furiously, illustrating the truth of the proverb, "Cases timidi vehementius latrant."

This cowardly conduct on the part of the dog excited the scorn and laughter of the bystanders, who were by no means sparing of their jibes and jeers at both dog and owner.—But these the individual bore with great calmness, and when the cries of "Blast that dog!"—"Take him away!"—"He wouldn't fight a rat," &c. had ceased, he observed—

"Look here, gents, perhaps you think Towser's afeared, or maybe you 'pect he can't bring the hanimal hout. Now, if any gentleman would like to bet he won't bring him out of the barrel, why, let 'im put up 'is money, and I'm his man."

As the cowardice of the dog was very evident, and as the owner appeared to have the wherewithal, many of the crowd, supposing they had caught a greenhorn, were very willing to bet; and the individual was soon accommodated to the extent of his pile, and the stakes placed in the hands of the landlord.

"Now, gents," said the owner of the pugnacious brute, removing his coat, "look out for sport, for I tell you Towser's going to fetch that 'ere Badger hout, so stand clear, and give the dog a fair shake."

After some persuasion Towser was once more induced to approach the den, and the owner observing—"Now, gents, the badger's a-comin'," took the cowardly brute in his arms and rammed him violently, *siern foremost*, down the barrel—an operation of some little difficulty on account of the dog's bulk. No sooner had the nether extremities of the animal come in contact with his persecuted adversary, than the teeth and claws of the latter were firmly fixed in the posteriors of the astonished dog, which, with a "Ki-yi! ki-yi! ki-yi!" burst out of the barrel, bringing the badger not only from his den, but into the very midst of the spectators, who were almost suffocating with laughter.

"There, gents," said the individual, when the shouts of laughter had somewhat ceased, and the badger had been choked from his hold of the afflicted Towser, which was now sedulously examining his wounds, and occasionally giving vent to a howl of pain, "I told you he'd fetch 'im hout, and he's done it."

With this remark the owner of Towser resumed his coat, and having secured the stakes, departed, followed by his dog, whose straddling gait and attentions to his wounds seemed to indicate a serious affection for his "latter end." Although the "sport" was still continued, I thought I had seen enough, and left, most certainly a wiser man, for I had learned a "new way of drawing a badger."

New Bull Fight Incident.

A few years ago the inhabitants of Seville read with surprise in the advertisements of an approaching bull-fight, this unusual notice:—"when the third bull shall have attacked the picadors, and receives three pairs of banderillas, a young peasant, by whom he has been brought up, will appear in the circus. He will approach the bull, caress it, and after removing the banderillas one after another, will lie down between his horns."

The announcement of so singular a feat attracted an immense crowd to the amphitheatre. The third bull appeared, an animal with splendid horns, and very brave; he slew four horses, received the banderillas, and became furious. Then, contrary to custom, all the toreros retired from the ring leaving the bull stamping about, and shaking the bloody darts that hung from his neck. All at once a long whistle was heard. The bull paused and listened. It was repeated. He approached the barrier; and a young man leapt into the ring calling the bull by his name, "Mosquito! Mosquito!" The animal knew its master, came to caress him, and was appeased. The peasant gave him his hand to lick, and with the other began to scratch it behind his ears; an operation which seemed to afford the poor brute much pleasure; he then gently removed the banderillas which annoyed the neck of Mosquito, made it go down on its knees, and placed his head between his horns. The grateful bull seemed to listen with pleasure to a pastoral melody sung by the master. The admiration of the multitude, hitherto suppressed by surprise, burst forth with Andalusian violence, and shook the building. Hearing this phrenzied applause, which had accompanied all his sufferings, the bull, till then under a charm, appeared to awake and return to reality. He suddenly arose, bellowing; and the peasant tried to escape. But it was too late. The animal, as though furious at being betrayed, tossed the young man into the air, received him again on his horns, gored him, trampled on him, crushed him to pieces, in spite of the efforts of the toreros. The junction was suspended; and, a phenomenon in Spain, the horrid public quitted the circus in silence.

PURGATORY VS. MATRIMONY.—By the way the "ghost of the departed" reminds me of Joe Kelly's ghost coming to his wife. "Molly," says he, "I'm in purgatory at present." "And what sort of a place is it?" says she. "Faith, it's a sort of a half-way house between you and heaven," says Joe, "but I stand it mighty aisy after leaving you."