

LITERATURE, &c.

The following description of the re-capture of an Infant by its father and brother, which had been snatched up by a *Lammergeyer*, or Lamb-Vulture, for the purpose of carrying it to its nest close by, among the mountains of Switzerland, we extract from a review in one of our late London papers, of a new work, entitled—*The Double Trial; or The Consequences of an Irish Clearing.*

Jaques Roustane, in his way to the base of the mountain, had many opportunities of getting a shot at the destructive bird, whose speed was neither steady nor rapid, and who seemed incommoded by the flowing dress of the poor infant; but Jaques knew that the child's fate was inevitable by the fall, if the shot succeeded.

At length, as the winged monster made his pause, for the grand sweep that was to lodge himself in the confines of his rocky nest, and was hovering over the heaths, bushes, and shrubs that encircled his impenetrable domain, the anxious father, with a despairing effort, discharged his gun, with a precision and a nerve that would have done honour to his renowned countrymen, the immortal Tell. The mighty lammergeyer reeled as he received the contents; then with a strong effort lodged himself on the rock, and dropped his burden into the hollow beneath, where his nest and his young were supposed to be; there, overcome with the agony of his wound, he threw himself backward, fluttering and screaming, till, falling from one prominence to another, he fell nigh the very spot on which Jaques had taken his aim.

Jaques paused not a moment for counsel or help; but ere a neighbour had time to follow his footsteps, and without waiting to take a view of his dead enemy, and without loss of time, began the perilous ascent of mounting to the rocky nest, through all the briars, brambles, and sylvan and stony impediments of the way. His light fusée was still in his hand: this aided him in clearing his road, and at the first resting-place he paused, and drew a moment's breath, while he calmly and wisely reloaded his piece.

It is the trial that ennobles every character! What splendid virtues may not peace and prosperity shroud! It is difficult to determine which were most worthy of admiration in this unhappy peasant—his resolution, or his prudence; for though the attempt of climbing such a height, and through such obstacles, inveterate even to the most daring and practised natives of the soil, was most desperate, yet no precaution seems to have been omitted on his part—no time given to sorrow; but thought was all action and progress, and, if he did not obtain success, he did more—he deserved it. Jaques, the father, had proceeded about a third of the way towards the rocky chasm, where he supposed his poor infant to be at that moment the food of a ravenous brood of the most savage birds that prowl abroad in air or on earth, when his afflicted wife Josephine, his daughter aged sixteen, and his son Roberte, now in his twelfth year, came, exhausted and out of breath, to the base of the mountain. A few others had followed a different track; but the strength of the peasantry was labouring with staves and cords to gain the ascent which was supposed to hang over the abyss in which the lammergeyers had erected their nest. Very quickly was Jaques conscious of her presence, as he distinctly heard his wife say—'O God! preserve my husband!'—And the prayer responded with comfort to his own bosom, in sweet unison to the prayer of his heart, and gave redoubled vigour and strength to his exertions. With difficulty and earnest entreaty, could the prudent and anxious mother check the gallant attempts of her son of eleven summers, to follow his fathers dangerous and arduous course. It was obedience, not his young sense of duty, that restrained him, when the watchful Marianne cried aloud to her mother—'Look, mother, look! there is the female bird coming to attack father!' The shrieks of the dying lammergeyer had pierced through the sky to the quick ears of his distant mate. Like an arrow, she darted straight to the spot, and her eagle glance saw that he had fallen. Now with desperate revenge she urged her beak and wings against the strange figure that was approaching her gloomy sanctuary through paths never explored before. Josephine, and Marianne, and Roberte, did all that was in their power to do; they shouted with loudest and most appalling cries, and they called out to the husband and parent, now at too great a distance in the air to distinguish the purport of the sounds, to warn him against the attacks of the new foe. But it was all in vain; nothing could turn the malevolent animal of the air, now instigated by the most powerful of passions, from her course against her victim. In less time than it can take to describe the act, had she, at the first effort, stricken her talons into his loins in each side, while, with the same effort, her beak pierced his back between the shoulders, her wings all the while enclosing him, as if she would tear him from the brambled-

rock. The wretched sufferer did not dare to writhe with the pain, lest he should lose his hold, and fall headlong down the precipice. And now his young and gallant son broke from his agonized mother's controul; and, with nothing but a crooked stick, more serviceable to assist climbing than to ward off offence, began at once the same dangerous and opposing ascent towards his father; nor could his mother or his sister in the midst of such conflicting sensations, utter a word more to dissuade him from the imminent and apparently useless danger. In the meanwhile the afflicted Jaques as he received the terrible wounds, groaned, and, in the agony of pain, half-dropped his gun, which he now only retained by the muzzle. The rapacious bird was in the act of aiming a second blow with her beak at his head, when, with a simple effort for self-preservation, and with a cool and wonderful presence of mind, he cocked his gun with his toe, and pointed the muzzle with a life and death aim, between his left arm and his shoulder; almost at the same moment he pulled the trigger with another effort of the foot. The gun exploded, and, by the discharge, fell from his grasp down the rocks; but both the balls with which it had been loaded penetrated through the body of the female lammergeyer: her head dropped ineffective upon his neck, and, without a struggle or a scream, she fell from rock to rock, and reached the ground as soon as the gun, where she lay dead, with the powerful weapon of their fate in nearly a central distance between herself and her mate. With one voice, and with many a 'take care!' did the mother and daughter now encourage the boy in his attempt to reach his father, who as he lay flat in the posture in which he had received his wounds, and had discharged his weapon. Their words told Roberte of the result of the explosion that he had heard; the loss of his enemy yet in plainer terms had informed Jaques. Roberte proceeded steadily and manfully. His mother and sister watched every effort; one while giving the dictates of general caution, and at the next pointing out some place of danger, or a favorable spot to proceed. But the father soon recovered sufficiently to endeavour to persevere in his attempt; but it was all in vain—the wound between the shoulders prevented the proper use of his hands. He lay helpless and desponding. At this critical moment his son's voice, like a breath of health in a pestilential atmosphere, reached his ears. 'Father, keep close!—you have shot both the lammergeyers; and I have got the old strong crooked stick in my hand, and I shall soon reach you.—There, father, I hear the young ones cry, and we can be only about ten yards from the nest.—Sure, father, that was my brother Stephen's voice! There again! it was; and I hear voices calling to us over the brow of the mountain.'—thus, with feeling and affection, and with the good sense and courage of more advanced age, did the affectionate lad try to sustain his father's strength, and to pour the balm of hope into his mind; and at length he arrived at the spot where the father was compelled to rest.

Now, with no little exertion and care on both parts, they laboured on together, till they approached the cave of blood. After many efforts, the father contrived to fix his feet firmly upon the stump of a knotted shrub, and to hold his son by the legs, under his own arms, while Roberte made an attempt, with the stick in his hand, to reach down into the recess, never yet explored by human powers. Happily the early age of the unfledged offspring of carnage was an hindrance to their making any opposition to Roberte's efforts, as the same impediment had prevented their injuring the poor infant; and the little Stephen was at length, by entangling the crooked stick in his clothes, and by his partly grasping the same, (scarcely could Roberte tell how exactly the feat was achieved,) dragged up safe; except from the sharpness of the bird's talons through his clothes, and a few bruises that he had received when he was dropped into the nest.

The joy of the father was poured forth in an instant and audible prayer of gratitude to the Lord of life: and the mother and daughter, at the base of the mountain, were soon assured of the joyful truth by both sight and hearing; for now the mountain-top was crowded above them: though, from the overhanging brow, it was at first difficult to communicate, yet the glad tidings became known, and the shouts of their neighbours could not be misunderstood by the party beneath. But a difficult task yet remained to be performed—to descend in safety with the infant: but before the father and son could arrange any reasonable plan, the kind neighbours, who, with Mr. Harley at their head, had scaled the overhanging top, motioned them to get a little on one side, where an opening admitted the ready cords firmly entwined round stakes upon the brow. And now came down a basket, into which little Stephen was carefully deposited, and steadily drawn up. Double cords were let down, both for father and son; nor would the father leave his station till he saw his brave eldest son secure, though he was obliged to have the assistance of that son to fasten the cords properly round his own body.

A DAY ON BOARD AN INDIAMAN.—At day-light the upper deck is washed and scoured with sand and stones from stem to stern. This operation occupies the watch upon deck till seven o'clock, when the decks are dried up, the awnings and curtains spread. At half-past seven the hammocks are piped up and stowed in the nettings. The troops are paraded a few minutes before eight, (which ensures the punctual attendance of the soldier-officers at breakfast,) and some commanders parade the cadets with the troops, which is commended. Breakfast at eight, hot rolls, dried fish of various kinds, preserves, cold meats, &c. The ship's progress during the night is a constant and always interesting theme of conversation. During the forenoon, passengers lounge about the deck, and amuse themselves in watching the evolutions of the ship, or the occupations of the different tradesmen. In the waist the armourer and his mate are working at the forge, and the clang of the anvil has quite a shore-like sound. The carpenter's crew occupy a prominent place; the lee-side of the deck is devoted to sail-making and mending. In the cuddy the middys are writing their journals and working days-works. Below a fatigue party of the soldiers are cleaning their berths and accoutrements; the surgeon and his assistant are administering to the wants of the sick; and part of the crew are employed in getting water and provisions out of the hold. In this manner, every one, (except the passengers) is occupied during the forenoon. At twelve the ship's position is ascertained by observation, and the last twenty-four hours' progress is duly noted. Most of the passengers assemble at this time to learn the result and discuss the matter over a glass of wine and water and biscuit. At one the officers mess, the ship's company and soldiers dine, which clears the deck, and offers an opportunity to the passengers for an hour's exercise. At three the captain's dinner is served. It is the usual and wholesome practice in the regular Indiamen to dress for dinner. By four o'clock the tradesmen's work is put below, the decks entirely cleared, and in the cool of the evening dancing is the usual amusement. Like all other small societies, that of a ship depends very much upon the elements of which it is composed. Most people get over the mere inconvenience of being at sea by the time they reach Madiera, and to a well-composed party, there is nothing in the regulations and etiquette of a Company's ship to prevent the utmost extension of amusement and good humor. Theatricals are very common, and newspapers have been known to succeed in a large party. To a mind dependant on a variety of external objects for sources of amusement, an India voyage is dull enough; but the human mind is fertile in expedients, as may be seen by the following instances:—A number of sporting characters being met on board an Indiaman, for lack of amusement, established a shooting club, and although *Davy Jones* bagged all the pintadoes and Mother Carey's chickens, yet they kept up an incessant fire, and sometimes killed twenty or thirty head of game in a day! Bishop Heber speaking of his voyage, says, 'I find two circumstances for which at sea I was by no means prepared; that, namely we have no great time for study, and that, for me at least, there is so much which interests and occupies me, that I have no apprehensions of time hanging heavy on my hands.—Edinburgh Cabinet Library—History of British India.

THE MYSTERIES OF CREATION.—The designs of supreme intelligence in the creation and preservation of the insect world, and the regulations and appointments whereby their increase or decrease is maintained, and periodical appearance prescribed, are among the most perplexing considerations of natural history. That insects are kept in reserve for stated seasons of action, we know, being commonly made the agents of Providence in his visitations of mankind. The locust, the caterpillar, the palmer worm, the various family of blights, that poison in the spring all the promise of the year, are insects. Mildew, indeed, is a vegetable; but the wire-worm destroys the root, and strips the germs of the wheat, and hunger and famine ensue. Many of the coleopteræ remove nuisances, others again incumbrances, and worms manure the soil; but these are trite and isolated cases in the profusion of the animal world; and left alone as we are in the desert of mere reason and conjecture, there is no probability that much satisfactory elucidation will be obtained. They are not perhaps, important objects of enquiry; but when we see the extraordinary care and attention, that has been bestowed upon this part of creation, our astonishment is excited, and forces into action that inherent desire in our minds to seek into hidden things. In some calm summer's evening ramble, we see the air filled with sportive animated beings; the leaf the branch the bark of the tree, every mossy bank, the pool, the ditch, all teeming with animated life, with a profusion and endless variety of existence; each creature pursuing its own separate purpose in a settled course of action, admitting of no deviation or substitution, to accomplish or promote some ordained object. Some ap-