

LITERATURE, &c.

FROM CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

BRUNTFIELD.

A TALE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.
Concluded.

At length, accomplished with all the skill which could then be acquired in arms, glowing with all the earnest feelings of youth, Henry returned to Scotland. On reaching his mother's dwelling, she clasped him in a transport of varied feeling to her breast, and for a long time could only gaze upon his elegant person. 'My last and dearest,' she at length said, 'and thou too art to be adventured upon this perilous course! Much have I bethought me of the purpose which now remains to be accomplished. I have not been without a sense of dread lest I be only doing that which is to sink my soul in flames at the day of reckoning; but yet there has been that which comforts me also. Only yesternight I dreamed that your father appeared before me. In his hand he held a bow and three goodly shafts—at a distance appeared the fierce and sanguinary Moubray. He desired me to shoot the arrows at that arch-traitor, and I gladly obeyed. A first and second he caught in his hand, broke, and trampled on with contempt. But the third shaft, which was the fairest and goodliest of all, pierced his guilty bosom, and he immediately expired. The reverend shade at this, gave me an encouraging smile, and withdrew. My Henry, thou art that third arrow, that is at length to avail against the shedder of our blood. The dream seems a revelation given especially that I may have comfort in this enterprise, otherwise so revolting to a mother's feelings.'

Young Bruntfield saw that his mother's wishes had only imposed upon her reason; but he made no attempt to break the charm by which she was actuated, being glad, upon any terms, to obtain her sanction for that adventure to which he was himself impelled by feelings considerably different. He therefore began, in the most deliberate manner, to take measures for bringing on the combat with Moubray. The same legal objections which had stood against the second duel were maintained against the third; but public feeling was too favourable to the object to be easily withstood. The laird of Barnbogle, though somewhat past the bloom of life, was still a powerful and active man, and, instead of expressing any fear to meet this third, and more redoubted warrior, rather longed for a combat which promised, if successful, to make him one of the most renowned swordsmen of his time. He had also heard of the attachment which subsisted between Bruntfield and his niece, and in the contemplation of an alliance which might give some force to the claims of that lady upon his estate, found a deeper and more selfish reason for accepting the challenge of his youthful enemy. King James himself, protested against stretching the law of the *PER DUELLIUM* so far; but sensible that there would be no peace between either the parties or their adherents till it should be decided in a fair combat, he was fain to grant the required licence.

The fight was appointed to take place on Cramond Inch, a low grassy island in the Frith of Forth, near the castle of Barnbogle. All the preparations were made in the most approved manner, by the young Duke of Lennox, who had been the friend of Bruntfield, in France. On a level space, close to the northern beach of the islet, a space was marked off, and strongly secured by a paling. The spectators, who were almost exclusively gentlemen, (the rabble not being permitted to approach) sat upon a rising ground beside the enclosure, while the space towards the sea was quite clear. At one end, surrounded by his friends, stood the laird of Barnbogle, a huge and ungainly figure, whose features displayed a mixture of ferocity and hypocrisy, in the highest degree unpleasing. At the other, also attended by a host of family allies and friends, stood the gallant Henry Bruntfield, who, if divested of his armour, might have realized the idea of a winged Mercury. A seat was erected close beside the barras for the Duke of Lennox and other courtiers, who were to act as judges; and at a little distance upon the sea, lay a small decked vessel, with a single male figure on board. After all the proper ceremonies which attended this strange legal custom, had been gone through, the combatants advanced into the centre, and planting foot to foot, each with his heavy sword in his hand, awaited the command which should let them loose against each other, in a combat which both knew would only be closed with the death of each other. The word being given, the fight commenced. Moubray, almost at the first pass, gave his adversary a cut in the right limb, from which the blood was seen to flow profusely. But Bruntfield was enabled, by this mishap, to perceive the trick upon which his adversary chiefly depended, and, taking care to avoid it, put Moubray nearly hors de combat. The fight then proceeded for a few minutes, without either gaining the least advantage over the other. Moubray was able to defend himself

pretty successfully from the cuts and thrusts of his antagonist, but he could make no impression in return. The question then became one of time. It was evident that, if no lucky stroke should take effect beforehand, he who first became fatigued with the exertion, would become the victim. Moubray felt his disadvantage as the elder and bulkier man, and began to fight more desperately, and with less caution. One tremendous blow, for which he seemed to have gathered his last strength, took effect upon Bruntfield, and brought him upon his knee, in a half-stupified state. But the elder combatant had no strength to follow up the effort. He reeled towards his youthful and sinking enemy, and stood for a few moments over him, vainly endeavouring to raise his weapon for another and final blow. Ere he could accomplish his wish, Bruntfield recovered sufficient strength to draw his dagger, and thrust it up to the hilt beneath the breast-plate of his exhausted foe. The murderer of his race instantly lay dead beside him, and a shout of joy from the spectators, hailed him as the victor. At the same instant, a scream of more than earthly note arose from the vessel anchored near the island; a lady descended from its side into a boat, and, rowing to the land, rushed up to the bloody scene, where she fell upon the neck of the conqueror, and pressed him, with the most frantic eagerness, to her bosom. The widow of Stephen Bruntfield at length found the yearnings of twenty years fulfilled,—she saw the murderer of her husband, the slayer of her two sons, dead on the sward before her, while there still survived to her as noble a child as ever blessed a mother's arms. But the revulsion of feeling produced by the event was too much for her strength; or, rather, Providence, in its righteous judgment, had resolved, that so unholly a feeling as that of revenge should not be too signally gratified. She expired in the arms of her son—murmuring 'Nunc dimittis, Domine,' with her latest breath.

The remainder of the tale of Bruntfield may be easily told. After a decent interval, the young laird of Craighouse married Catherine Moubray; and as the King saw it right to restore that young lady to a property originally forfeited for service to his mother, the happiness of the parties might be considered as complete. A long life of prosperity and peace was granted to them by the kindness of Heaven, and at their death, they had the satisfaction of enjoying that greatest of all earthly blessings, the love and respect of a numerous family.

FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

JEAN JACQUES TARDEE.

He was a native of Paris, and emigrated to America, about the year 1816, a dentist by profession, and though possessed of many fine accomplishments of person, manners, and knowledge of languages, he yet preferred, to the steady exercise of a lucrative and useful profession, to grasp at fortune by the most iniquitous means. His first exploit was at Charleston in South Carolina. In that port was a newly built, fast-sailing vessel, and valuable pilot-boat, the most superb of that class of vessels, the grace of the harbours of America. Jean Jacques there formed the design of carrying off this vessel from the wharf, and having corrupted the negroes employed in the navigation of the boat, a night was appointed when this villain rightly judged, that once unmoored and under way, pursuit was in vain after the fastest sailing vessel in the port, and that the circumstance of a pilot-boat passing out at night, would excite no suspicions from the fortifications at the mouth of the harbour. But slight circumstances often frustrate the most skilful projects of human villainy. A mercantile gentleman of Charleston had observed Tardee in conversation with the negroes attached to this vessel, and with that watchful spirit which pervades all residents in slave countries, he communicated his suspicions to the master of the boat, when, by a separate examination of the negroes, it was discovered that the Frenchman had prevailed upon them, by promises of liberty, a large sum of money, and a share in his future adventures, to carry off the vessel to the island of Cuba. Being resolved to secure the Frenchman in his own toils, the negroes were enjoined, upon promise of forgiveness for the past, to continue apparently to carry on the plot; and accordingly, on a certain night, the master was informed that Tardee would arrive at midnight in a wherry from a neighbouring wharf, to which his baggage was already conveyed, for the purpose of eluding the vigilance of the police by night. True to the appointed time, a boat with muffled oars crept stealthily at midnight to the side of the vessel; its only tenant was Tardee, who handed up a trunk and mounted upon deck. The pilot first met him.—Tardee instantly discharged a pistol at his breast, but without effect and was soon overpowered, secured, and conveyed to the guard-house. When taken before the magistrates on the following morning, his fine address did not forsake him, and in answer to the charge he de-

scribed himself as a dentist, who, being engaged to go down to Sullivan's Island, to perform an operation upon the teeth of a lady resident there, the negroes attached to the pilot-boat had offered to convey him to the island for a small remuneration, and upon coming accordingly to the vessel, he had been met and assaulted by the owner, and was compelled, in his own defence, to fire the pistol. The plausibility of this account, and his manner, assumed as that of an injured and much-outraged man, added to the inadmissibility of the evidence of the negroes in support of the charge, had almost ensured his dismissal, when search was previously made in the trunk, from which was produced a deed of transfer of the pilot-boat, with her tackle, furniture, and negroes, to Jean Jacques Tardee, bearing the forged signature of the complainant himself, and a large and most imposing seal. At sight of this the confidence of the Frenchman deserted him: he attempted no explanation of the documents and was immediately committed to prison. It being subsequently thought that the charge of piracy could not be supported, owing to the incompleteness of any overt act, the vessel not having been unmoored, the indictment was accordingly founded upon a conspiracy to have stolen and feloniously carried away the vessel; upon which charge Tardee was arraigned, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment for a term of two years.

These occurrences brought to the remembrance of the citizens of Charleston, the melancholy circumstances of recent occurrence, in which the Captain and several of the passengers and crew of a packet-ship trading thence to the port of New-York, had been carried off by poison. This tragic occurrence had happened at sea, and a negro cook being suspected, under circumstances of extreme probability, upon the arrival of the vessel at Charleston, the unfortunate man was tried, condemned, and executed. It now, however, was remembered, that Tardee had been a passenger in the vessel at the time, that he and two fellow-passengers, having the appearance of Spaniards of fortune, had not partaken, upon pretences of religious scruples, of the food which had contained the deadly adulteration; and it was moreover known, that Jean Jacques Tardee had been a witness of a quarrel which had occurred between the Captain and the Cook upon the morning in question, when the latter had declared his intention to be revenged in consequence—a circumstance which, upon his trial, had sealed his condemnation. There now remained little doubt that Tardee and his accomplices, were the perpetrators of the murderous deed, that an artful advantage had been taken of the occurrence of the quarrel and declaration of revenge, to ensure the success of the plot for which they had embarked as passengers, and no one doubted now that the negro had died an innocent man. This is the case related by Captain Hall, of the fifteenth dragoons, in his 'Travels in North America in 1817.' He was present in Charleston at the time of the trial of the negro; and, though his impressions of the innocence of the man were not founded on any other than the favourable feeling which humanity often raises in the breast of an Englishman in the land of slavery; and, though human judgment could not unravel a design laid with such diabolical cunning, it is certain that our amiable officer was too correct in his narrative of an affair which he has treated with such power and pathos. With all this accumulation of crime upon his head, still Tardee was imprisoned but a short time, and he was added to those criminals too easily pardoned by the executive, the list of whom does undoubtedly sully the administration of justice in America. After a confinement of a few months, a remission of the remainder of his sentence was granted by the new Governor of South Carolina, and this dark demon was once again let loose upon the world.

In a few weeks he was heard of again, and this fatal and final exercise of his black art covered him with destruction. Being rejoined by the two Spauiards (mentioned as his fellow passengers in the former voyage from New-York) he had departed from Charleston for the port of New-Orleans on the Mississippi river; thence they embarked again as passengers in the brig Crawford, bound to the Chesapeake. Towards the conclusion of the voyage, poison was again administered in the food; and the captain, crew, and every human being, excepting the three passengers and the mate of the vessel, lay dead upon the deck! Tardee then assumed the command; the mate had been preserved for the purpose of navigating the vessel, and as it was not expedient to enter any of the harbours of America, and the cargo consisted of merchandise suitable to an European market, it was determined to sail for Hamburg. It was found, however, that the remaining water and provisions were insufficient for a voyage across the Atlantic, to procure a supply of which the vessel stood into the Chesapeake and Hampton Roads, opposite to a small fort and country town. Here the two Spaniards were despatched to the shore in a boat for the necessary supplies, and Tardee and the mate were now alone in the