

LITERATURE, &c.

TRAITS OF THE HUNGARIANS.

The Hungarian Noble is one of the best bred gentlemen in Europe: full of fire and spirit, but much disposed to display and extravagance—so much so, I am told, that with few exceptions, all their estates are mortgaged to Jews, who feed their wants, while they absorb the substance. They are excessively national, and are fond of vaunting themselves before their neighbours, the Austrians, whom they look upon as a fat and contented race, without character and ambition. The Hungarian peasant has the look of a savage—with wild uncombed hair hanging in profusion over his brow and on his shoulders; wrapped in a coarse white cloth, half coat half mantle; with immense white trowsers reaching to the knees, half trowsers, half kelt; and great jack boots—he is as desperate a looking personage as you would desire not to meet in a lonely road. I forgot his mustachios, which every peasant wears long and lanky. The very beggars wear mustachios, and I started when, at the first place where we changed horses, some poor devils came demanding alms, their upper lips bristling with as much hair as would serve a troop of the Horse Guards (Blue.) The condition of the peasantry is much inferior to that of Austria, but every day efforts are made to improve it, and an amelioration begins to be visibly felt.

The costumes of Hungary are beautiful, and I know no sight more brilliant than that of a noble, in full dress, attended by his servants in their richly braided and gilded suits. The form is strictly national, and is never varied from, though some gentlemen go to an expense which they cannot well afford. First, there is the tight pantaloons embroidered in gold; then the small yellow boot, reaching just above the ankle, with a fall lined with rich fur; then the frock, stiff with gold, and fastened from the waist to the throat with precious stones; then for great occasions, the scarlet pelisse or mantle, and half Spanish hat with a chained loop. Gird a fine young Hungarian with his sword, and set him down in the hall of his ancestors, and I will stake my existence there is no such gallant cavalier in any other part of Europe. On state days, every Peer attends the Chamber thus habited, but at other times he wears a close dark green frock, but always his sabre—and I allow you to picture to yourself, in these degenerate days, what the meeting of the Upper Chamber at Presburgh must be, when you see it composed of these high-minded men, each ready to speak his right, and with his sword by his side, equally prepared to defend it. The House of Peers until lately debated in Latin, and it now begins to adopt the custom of the Commons, who speak the Hungarian: the President, however, always speaks in Latin, and in either house any person has the right so to address himself. How little do we think, in England, that, within ten days' ride of London, there is a city where all the public business is transacted in a language, which, however deeply studied, is seldom familiar to the tongues of our learned Muftis. I was told that the peasantry in some places speak Latin, but I did not meet an instance of it; but every gentleman does, and, if he has any difficulty in explaining himself to a stranger, always resorts to it as a language common to well-educated men."

THE PASHA.—However familiar this title may be to European ears, its real meaning and derivation are scarcely familiar even to the 'erudite few.' The word itself is compounded of the Persian 'pai shaw,' or the shah's foot and is a standing memorial of a designations which, according to Xenophon, Cyrus bestowed on his officers of state, calling them his feet, hands, eyes, and ears. Those entrusted with domestic affairs were styled 'the eyes,' the secret emissary was termed 'the ear,' the tax-gatherer 'the hands,' the warrior 'the foot,' and the judge, as mouth-piece of the law, the 'tongue of equity.' Of so remote an institution as this is the name of the present Turkish Pashas, who, in their several capacities of Governor, General, and Vizier or Minister, are oppositely styled the 'feet of their master.'

TORTOISE-SHELL.—The following singularly barbarous process of obtaining the tortoise-shell is abstracted from an Indian newspaper, called the Singapore Chronicle:—This highly-prized aquatic production, when caught by the Eastern islanders, is suspended over a fire, kindled immediately after its capture, until such time as the effect of the heat loosens the shell to such a degree that it can be removed with the greatest ease. The animal, now stripped and defenceless, is set at liberty, to re-enter its native element. If caught in the ensuing season, or at any subsequent period, it is asserted that the unhappy animal is subjected to a second ordeal of fire, rewarding its captures, this time, however, with a very thin shell. This, if true, shows more policy, and skill than tenderness in the method thus adopted by the islanders; it is a questionless proof, too, of very singular fact in natural history.

USE OF FORKS.—A foreigner remarks, in his work on Great Britain, that an Englishman may be discovered any where if he be observed at table, because he places his fork upon the left side of his plate; a Frenchman by using the fork alone without the knife; and a German by planting it perpendicularly into his plate; and a Russian by using it as a toothpick. Holding the fork is a national custom, and nations are characterised by their peculiarity in the use of the fork at table. An affectation of the French usages in this respect seems now to be gaining ground in the country.

THE BRAVE.

WHERE have the valiant sunk to rest,
When their sands of life were numbered:
On the downy couch? on the gentle breast
Where their youthful visions slumbered?

When the mighty passed the gate of death,
Did Love stand by, bewailing?
No—but upon War's fiery breath
Their blood-died flag was sailing.

Not on the silent feverish bed,
With weeping friends around them,
Were the parting prayers of the valiant said,
When Death's dark angel found them.

But in the stern and stormy strife,
In the flush of lofty feeling,
They yield to Honour the boon of life,
While the battle's bolts were pealing;

When the hot war-steed, with crimsoned mane,
Trampled on breasts all stained and gory,
Dashed his red hoof on the reeking plain,
And shared in his rider's glory.

Or seek the brave in their ocean grave,
'Neath the dark and restless water;
Seek them beneath the whelming wave,
So oft deep-died with slaughter.

There lie the gallant and the proud,
The eagle-eyed and the lion-hearted,
For when the trump of fame rung loud,
When body and soul were parted.

Or seek them on fields where the grass grows deep,
Where the vulture and raven hover;
There, the sons of the battle in quiet sleep,
And widowed Love goes there to weep,
That their brief and bright career is over!

J. G. BROOKS.

A SAILOR'S STORY.

AND they did give way too. They were a set of as stout oarsmen as ever manned a frigate's first cutter; but they never showed themselves afore as they did that night. The boat fairly jumped out of the water every clip, and the foam that she dashed off from her bows formed a long white streak in her wake, as bright and dazzling as the trail of a Congreve rocket. You may think it wasn't many minutes before they reached the shore, going at that rate as if the devil had sent 'em an end. Merry steered her right head on, and never cried 'rowed of all,' till she struck the sandy beach with such force that she ran up high and dry, pitching the two bow-oarsmen, who had got up to fend off, about half a cable's length from her. At the first grating of the keel upon the gravel, he leaped ashore, and, without stopping to say one word to the men, darted off like a wounded porpoise, running with all speed up the bank. For two or three minutes, the boat's crew looked at each other with their eyes stretched wide open, like the mouth of a dying fish, as much as to say, what the devil's all this? At length they began to consult together in a low, grumbling tone, as they were afraid to hear themselves speak, and Bill Williams, who was coxswain of the cutter, was the first to offer a suggestion that met the approval of the rest. 'Only hark,' said he, 'how his feet go, clatter-clatter-clatter, as fast as the flopping of a jib-sheet in the wind. I'm fear'd, my hearties, that Mr. Terry's runnin' 'mongst the breakers, and if you'll stay by the boat, I'll give chase—and, if so needs be, lend him a lift.'

The proposal of the honest coxswain was relished by all, and he, accordingly, set off in the same direction that his young officer had taken. But Bill Williams, though he could run about a ship's rigging like a monkey in mischief, was no match for Merry in a land-chase. His sea legs wasn't used to such business, and he went pitching and heaving a-head like a Dutch logger afore the wind, and seemed, at every step, to be watching for the weather roll.

In the meantime, Merry linked it off like a Baltimore clipper going large. He had proceeded perhaps about a mile from the boat, along the road which he had struck out directly after leaving the beach, and instead of shortening sail, appeared to be crowding more and more canvass all the time, when, all of a sudden, he luffed up and hove to, on hearing the clatter of an approaching carriage. The noise of the wheels sounded nearer and nearer, as they came rattling along the rough road, and it wasn't long before the quick trampling of the horses' feet, and the clacking of their shoes against the stones, indicated that they were near at hand. The place where Merry had paused was about midway of a steep hill, and if he had chosen a spot it couldn't have been better suited to his purpose. The road, which had been rough and uneven from the first, was at

this point broken into deep gullies by recent heavy rains, rendering, apart from the difficulty of the ascent, extreme caution necessary in passing with a vehicle. On one side, a steep wooded bank rose to a considerable height; and on the other, the surface of the ground gradually descended to the water, which was not quite excluded from view by a few scattering trees that occupied the immediate space. Behind one of these trees, that grew close to the road-side, and threw a deep shadow over it, Merry, gritting and grinding his teeth, crouched down, like a young shark watching for his prey. The carriage had already gained the foot of the hill, and was slowly labouring up, when a deep gruff voice cried out to the driver from within, bidding him drive faster. At the sound of that voice, Merry's eyes fairly flashed fire. The black, with instinctive obedience, cracked his whip, and was about to make more effectual application of it, when a figure suddenly sprang from the road side, and, seizing the reins, commanded him to halt! The command, however, was scarcely necessary. The jaded horses had reached a short level stage in the ascent, and not even the sound of the whip had elicited any indication that they intended shortly to leave it. Merry, with a sailor's quick eye, perceiving this favourable circumstance, in an instant was at the side of the carriage, within which, a voice of a very different tone from that which last issued thence, was earnestly beseeching succour.

'Help! for Heaven's sake, help! save me from a ruffian!' cried a female in imploring accents. The last words were scarcely articulate, and were uttered with a smothered sound, accompanied with a noise of struggling, as if the ruffian was endeavouring to hold the lady still, and to silence her cries by pressing his hand upon her mouth.

The incentive of this well-known voice seemed hardly wanting to add more fury to the rage of Merriville. Choking with mingled emotions, he called to the ruffian to hold off his hand, and, with an effort of desperate strength, tearing open the door, the fastenings of which he did not understand, he seized the inmate by the collar, and dragged him to the ground.

'Scoundrel!—ruffian!' he cried, 'I have you in the toils, and dearly you shall rue this night's violence.'

'Mr. Terry!—I command—you shall suffer for this—a court martial!' and various similar broken ejaculations were uttered by the wretch, who violently struggled to get loose from the strong grasp in which he was held. Merriville, though not of a robust constitution, yet possessed much muscular strength. In the present contest, every fibre received tenfold vigour from the energy of the feelings that raged within him, and made him an overmatch for the guilty being who writhed within his arms. The faces of both were inflamed and convulsed with mighty passions, though of a widely and obviously different character; for the rage of the one, though fierce as ten furies, had yet something noble and commanding in it, while that of the other seemed kindled by a demon. The captain (for it's useless to tell you that it was he) struggled hard, but was evidently becoming exhausted. In the excess of his emotion, he had bitten his lip nearly in twaine; and the blood which, in their tossing to and fro, had been smeared over the faces and clothes of both, gave additional wildness to their appearance.

The female, who by this time had recovered from the swoon into which she fell when the voice of Merriville first reached her ear, now screamed as she saw the blood with which he was so profusely stained, and, imagining him to be mortally wounded, she sprang from the carriage, and tottered towards him across the road. A sudden movement of the combatants, at the same moment, changed their position in such a way as to bring the back of Merriville towards the approaching figure, and, at this instant, his antagonist, having succeeded in releasing his arm from his grasp, hastily drew a pistol from his pocket, cocked, and fired it. The ball whizzed through the air, only slightly grazing the neck of the intended victim; but a piercing shriek from the lips of the female, heard above the loud report, announced that it had done more fatal execution in another quarter. As if by mutual consent, both parties ceased from their struggle for a moment, and rushed towards her. She staggered two or three steps forward, mumbled a few scarcely audible words, among which the name of Merriville was the only intelligible sound, and fell bleeding to the earth. In the meanwhile the horses, which had been scared by the near and loud report of the pistol, pranced suddenly round, and dashing down the hill, were soon lost to sight. Poor Merriville, with a groan of agony which he could not, which he did not seek to repress, bent over the form which lay stretched and pale before him, and raising it partly from the ground, gazed for a stupid moment in utter consciousness of all things else, upon the features of her still lovely face. The ball had passed directly through the heart, from which life had already bubbled out in a crimson tide, though a few darker droops continued to ooze from the livid orifice of the wound. Merriville whispered her name, but she answered not. In vain he leaned his ear to her lips, or bent his eyes upon them, till the hot tearless balls seemed bursting from their sockets—no sound, no motion, made reply. He laid his hand upon her heart—but its pulse was still. He looked into her eyes—but they returned not, as they were wont, an answering look; their light had gone out—the spirit had departed from its house of clay—she was dead, quite dead! As this fact impressed itself upon his brain, a maddening consciousness of the cause seemed slowly to return: his eyes rolled up till the balls were nearly hid, his face became of a livid darkness, and his teeth were clenched together, like those of one in mortal agony. Suddenly starting up, he turned quickly round, and with his arms extended, and his fingers curved like the talons of an eagle, he sprang wildly towards his guilty commander. The motion seemed to have been anticipated, for the wretch had prepared himself with another pistol, which, as his antagonist approached, he deliberately aimed at him, and fired.