

LITERATURE, &c.

DESTRUCTION OF A SHARK.

ONE morning a little boy, about eight years old, happened to be washed from a catamaran which was managed by his father, who was thus early initiating him into the hardships of that mode of life which he intended him to pursue, and, before he could be rescued from the turbulent waters, a shark drew him under, and he was seen no more. The father lost not a moment, but calmly rose, and placing between his teeth a large knife, which he carried sheathed in his cummerbund, plunged beneath the lashing waves. He disappeared for some time, but after a while was occasionally seen to rise and then to dive under the billows, as if actively engaged with his formidable foe. It was a period of painful suspense to those who were anxiously watching the issue from the boats outside the surf. After a while the white foam was visibly tinged with blood, which was viewed with a sensation of horror by those who could only surmise what was going on under the water. The man was again seen to rise and disappear, so that the work of death was evidently not yet complete. After some further time had elapsed, to the astonishment of all who were assembled on the beach, for by this time a considerable crowd had collected, the body of a huge shark was seen for a few moments above the whitening spray, which was completely crimsoned, and then disappeared; an instant after, the man rose above the surf, and made for the shore. He seemed nearly exhausted, but had not a single mark upon his body, which bore no evidence whatever of the perilous conflict in which he had been so recently engaged. He had scarcely landed, when an immense shark was cast upon the beach by the billows. It was quite dead, and was immediately dragged by the assembled natives beyond the reach of the surge. It presented a most frightful spectacle, exhibiting fatal proofs of the terrific struggle which had ensued between this ravenous tyrent of the deep and the bereaved father. He had indeed taken a most signal revenge. On the body of the huge creature were several deep gashes, from one of which the intestines protruded. The knife had evidently been plunged into the belly, and drawn downward with unerring precision, presenting an immense wound nearly a yard long. There were also several deep incisions about the gills, and below the fins; in short, it is impossible to describe the fearful evidences which the monster exhibited of the prowess and dexterity of its determined aggressor, who had so boldly perilled his life to revenge the death, as it was afterwards ascertained, of his only child. As soon as the shark was drawn to a place of security, it was opened, when the head and limbs of the boy were taken from his stomach. The body was completely dismembered, and the head severed from it; the different parts, however, were scarcely at all mutilated. It would seem that, after separation, they had been immediately swallowed without being submitted to the previous process of mastication. The moment the father saw the truncated remains of the little object of his affection, the habitual coldness of the Hindoo merged in the tenderness of the parent, and he for the moment gave way to the agonies of his heart. He threw himself upon the sand, and mourned his bereavement

With sad unhelpful tears;
but soon recovering his constitutional serenity, he unrolled his dripping turban, and having placed the several remains of his child in the ragged dpository, bore them to his fragile tene-ment of bamboo and palm-leaves in order to prepare them for immediate cremation. Upon being asked to relate the particulars of his encounter with the shark, he stated, that as soon as he had plunged into the water, which he did a few moments after the child had been dragged under by his powerful enemy, he saw the monster in the act of swallowing its victim. He instantly made towards it, and struck it with his knife upon the gills.

By this time it had completely gorged its prey, and did not at all seem disposed to enter upon the encounter to which it had been so roughly challenged. Having received a second stroke in the gills, it rose towards the surface, followed by its assailant, who kept plunging the knife into various parts of its body. The monster turned several times to seize its adversary, who, dexterously evading the intended visitation by diving under it, renewed his attack with the knife. The shark's voracity had been so completely appeased by the meal which it had just made that it shewed little disposition to continue the conflict, until repeated trenchings from the formidable knife of its determined foe, roused it to desperate resistance, when it turned again upon its back, though with less avidity than these creatures are wont to do, when craving for food; but the man dived rapidly under it, and watching his opportunity, as soon as the shark regained its natural position, plunged the keen blade into its belly and drew the weapon downwards with all his strength, thus inflicting that mortal wound which the creature exhibited upon the strand. After this it made a tremendous splashing for a few moments, then sank apparently lifeless to the bottom. Seeing that the strife was at an end, the man made for the shore, as already stated, and shortly after the huge carcass was cast upon the beach.

PRESERVATION OF THE DEAD.—The vault under the tower of St. Michael, in the cathedral at Bordeaux, possesses the singular property of preserving the human corpse almost entire; six bodies are placed, standing or sitting, against the wall—a horrible and ghastly sight. Some of them are 300 years old; the skin has the appearance of leather, and many have their garments still remaining. The person who shows them, an old woman, professes to designate their various situations in life; such as a monk, a seigneur, or a mechanic, and even to dictate the disease of which each died!

FROM THE BAPTIST REGISTER.

HEALING OF THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

FRESHLY the cool breath of the coming eve
Stole through the lattice, and the dying girl
Felt it upon her forehead. She had lain
Since the hot noontide in a breathless trance,
Her thin pale fingers clasped within the hand
Of the heart-broken Ruler; and her breast
Like the dead marble, white and motionless.
The shadow of a leaf lay on her lips,
And as it stirred with the awakening wind,
The dark lids lifted from her languid eyes,
And her slight fingers moved, and heavily
She turned upon her pillow. He was there—
The same loved; tireless watcher, and she looked
Into his face until her sight grew dim
With the fast-falling tears, and with a sigh
Of tremulous weakness murmuring his name,
She gently drew his hands upon her lips,
And kissed it as she wept. The old man sank
Upon his knees, and in the drapery
Of the rich curtains buried up his face—
And when the twilight fell, the silken folds
Stirred with his prayer, but the slight hand he held
Had ceased its pressure, and he could not hear,
In the dead, utter silence, that a breath
Came through her nostrils, and her temples gave
To his nice touch no pulse; and at her mouth
He held the lightest curl, that on her neck
Lay with a mocking beauty, and his gaze
Ached with its deadly stillness.

It was night—
And softly o'er the sea of Galilee
Danced the breeze-ridden ripples on the shore,
Tipped with the silver sparkles of the moon.
The breaking waves played low upon the beach
Their constant music, but the air beside
Was still as starlight, and the Saviour's voice,
In its rich cadence so unearthly sweet,
Seemed like some just-born harmony in the air
Waked by the power of wisdom. On a rock,
With the broad moonlight falling on his brow,
He stood and taught the people. At his feet
Lay his small scrip, and pilgrim's scallop shell,
And staff, for they had waited by the sea
Till he came o'er from Gadarene, and prayed
For his wont teachings, as he came to land.
His hair was parted meekly on his brow,
And the long curls from off his shoulders fell
As he leaned forward earnestly, and still
The same calm cadence, passionless and deep,
And in his looks, the same mild majesty,
And in his mien the sadness mixed with power,
Filled them with love and wonder. Suddenly,
As on his words entrancedly they hung,
The crowd divided, and among them stood
JAIRUS THE RULER. With his flowing robe
Gathered in haste about his loins, he came
And fixed his eyes on Jesus. Closer drew
The twelve disciples to their master's side,
And silently the people shrank away
And left the haughty Ruler in the midst
Alone. A moment longer on the face
Of the meek Nazarene he kept his gaze,
And as the twelve looked on him, by the light
Of the clear moon, they saw a glistening tear
Steal to his silver beard, and drawing nigh
Unto the Saviour's feet, he took the hem
Of his coarse mantle, and with trembling hands
Pressed it unto his lips, and murmured low,
"Master! my Daughter."

The same silvery light
That shone upon the lone rock by the sea,
Slept on the Ruler's lofty capitals
As at the door he stood, and welcomed in
Jesus and his disciples. All was still;
The echoing vestibule gave back the slide
Of their loose sandals, and the arrowy beam
Of moonlight slanting to the marble floor,
Lay like a spell of silence in the rooms
As Jairus led them on. With hushing steps
He trod the winding stairs, but ere he touched
The lachet, from within a whisper came,
"Trouble the Master not—for she is dead,"
And his faint hand fell nerveless at his side,
And his steps faltered, and his broken voice
Choked in its utterance;—But a gentle hand
Was laid upon his arm, and in his ear
The Saviour's voice sank thrillingly and low,
"She is not dead—but sleepeth."

They passed in.
The spice lamps in the alabaster urns
Burned dimly, and the white and fragrant smoke
Curled indolently on the chamber walls,
The silken curtains slumbered in their folds—
Not even a tassel stirring in the air—
And as the Saviour stood beside the bed
And prayed inaudibly, the Ruler heard
The quickening division of his breath
As he grew earnest inwardly. There came
A gradual brightness o'er his calm sad face,
And drawing nearer to the bed, he moved
The silken curtains silently apart
And looked upon the maiden.

Like a form

Of matchless sculpture in her sleep she lay—
The linen vesture folded on her breast,
And over it her white transparent hands,
The blood still rosy in their tapering nails.
A line of pearl ran through her parted lips,
And in her nostrils, spiritually thin,
The breathing curve was mockingly like life;
And round beneath the faintly tinted skin
Ran the light branches of the azure veins,
And on her cheek the jet lash overlay,
Matching the arches pencilled on her brow.
Her hair had been unbound, and falling loose
Upon the pillow, hid her small round ears
In curls of glossy blackness, and about
Her polished neck, scarce touching it; they hung
Like airy shadows floating as they slept.
'Twas heavenly beautiful. The Saviour raised
Her hand from off her bosom, and spread out
The snowy fingers in his palm, and said—
"Maiden arise!"—And suddenly a flush
Shot o'er her forehead, and along her lips
And through her cheeks the rallied colour ran;
And the still outline of her graceful form
Stirred in the linen vesture, and she clasped
The Saviour's hand, and fixing her dark eyes
Full on his beaming countenance—AROSE.

FROM THE NEW-YORK ATLAS.

The American Monthly Magazine for December, 1833.
New York.

THE FALL OF MURRAY, a tale founded on a well known historical incident, is well told, and may be taken as a fair specimen of this department of the Magazine. We select the few concluding paragraphs, giving an account of Bothwell's escape after his assassination of the Regent Murray, first promising, however, that the Regent surrounded by his partisans was marching through the public street, "Defying earth and confident of heaven," while his murderer was concealed in a building, in front of which the procession was to pass:

PRECEDED by heralds in their quartered tabards, amidst the clang of instruments and the redoubled clamors of the multitude, on a gray, which had been cheaply purchased at the price of an Earl's ransom, sheathed from head to heel in the tempered steel of Milan, Murray came forth, in all but name a king. So closely did the crowd press forward, that the chargers of the knights could barely move at a foot's pace. Glencairn was at his right, and on his left, the trust of his followers, Douglas, of Parkhead. The pomp had passed unnoticed, the well-known figures had gleamed before the eyes of Hamilton, like phantoms in a troubled dream; but no sooner had his victim met his eye, than the ready rifle was at his shoulder. The Regent's face was turned towards his murderer, and full at the broad brow did the avenger point the tube—the match was kindled, the finger pressed the trigger, when, at a word from Douglas, he turned his head: the massive cerveliere would have defied a hail of bullets, and the moment for the deed was lost.—Without a moment's pause, without removing the weapon from his eye, or his eye from the living mark, he suffered the muzzle to sink slowly down the line of Murray's person. Just below the hip, where the rim of the corslet should have lapped over the jointed cushions, there was one spot at which the crimson velvet of his under garb gleared through a crevice in the plates,—a French crown would have guarded twice the space, yet on that trifling aperture the deadly aim was fixed. A broad flash was thrown upon the faces of the group, and ere the sound had followed the streak of flame, the gray dashed madly forward, with empty saddle, and unmastered rein. The conqueror had fallen in the very flush of his pride; and at the first glance, it seemed, he had not fallen singly, for so true had been the aim, and so resistless the passage of the bullet, that, after piercing through his vitals, it had power to rend the steel asunder, and slay the horse of Douglas. For a moment there was a silence—a short breathless pause—the gathering of the tempest!—a yell of execration and revenge, and an hundred axes thundered on the steel-clenched portal.

One instant the avenger leaned forth from the casement in the full view of all, to mark the death-pang of his prey. He saw the life-blood welling from the wound, he saw the death-sweat clogging his darkened brow, he saw the bright eye glaze, and the proud lip curl in the agony,—but he saw not, what he had longed to trace—remorse—terror at quitting earth—demon of gaining heaven! He turned away in deeper torment than the dying mortal at his feet, for he felt that all his wrongs were now but half avenged! The presence of his murderer leant double vigor to the arms of his pursuers,—a dozen flashes of musketry, from the crowd, glanced on his sight,—a dozen bullets whistled round his head,—but he bore a charmed life. The gate shook, crashed beneath the force of the assailants—fell, and he sprang into the saddle! He locked the sally-port behind him, darted through the lonely garden, gained the lane, and saw the broad free moors be-