

Literature, &c.

STORY OF A TEAR.  
FROM THE FRENCH.

IMAGINE yourself, good reader, to be present in one of the crowded green rooms of the city of Paris. Many persons are there assembled—actors, actresses, managers, dramatists, and dramatic critics. Jest and story are passing in abundance, and all seem to be animated and merry. Yet a grave story sometimes flows from the lids of those who are there met together, and it would be injustice to say that it did not meet with sympathy from, or was unappreciated by, the talkative party to which it was addressed. One such story we shall relate, as it was told in that temple of merriment.

A new performer was complaining of her inability to present herself below to the public without the most distressing agitation. Some of those encouraged the poor beginner, but the majority expressed an opinion of a different kind. "Such tremors are incurable," said the latter class, "nature has made us originally either bold or timid." "Yes," said others, who concurred in the sentiment expressed, "just as she has made us cold or ardent, grave, or gay. We remain what we were made at first. Show us an aspiring man cured of his ambition, or a miser converted."

Some of those who listened to these observations exclaimed against them as having a tendency to make men materialists or fatalists. One individual, however, gave the last remark a more decided answer. "You ask for a converted miser," said he; "I can show you one. There is such a being among us now; it is myself." The person who said this was a popular dramatist, noted for his generosity of feeling. "What!—you a miser?" said some of those who heard him, "nonsense!—it is impossible." "Not so," answered he calmly; "I speak but the truth. I was a miser, though now thoroughly cured, I hope, of the failing." "And pray what operated a cure upon you?" returned one of the auditors. "Listen, and I will tell you," answered he; "it was an infant's tear." All present crowded round him immediately, and heard from his lips the following story.

"The incidents which I am about to relate," said the dramatist, "occurred 1834. I had just then given to the theatre of the Porte Saint Martin one of my pieces—that which brought me the greatest share of fame and emolument. Two letters were sent to me at this period. One was from the manager of the Marseilles theatre, informing me that he was anxious to bring out my new piece there, but that, on rehearsal, such difficulties had been met with, as to be desirable that I should be present myself, previous to production of the drama. The remuneration for my trouble was to be left to my own decision. The second letter also was from Marseilles. It ran in these terms:—'Sir, the wife and daughter of your brother are dying of want. Some hundreds of francs would save them, and I doubt not but you will visit relations so near to you, and make arrangements for their preservation and future comfort.' This letter was signed by Dr. Lambert of Marseilles.

I have already said to you that I was a miser, in the worst sense of the word, and it is an avowal which my later conduct barely allows me to make without shame. The letter of the physician did not move my pity, but it renewed certain angry feelings which had formerly existed toward my sister-in-law in my mind. Some few years before this time, my brother, an honest sailor, who fell a prey to the element he loved so well, had written to me, announcing his intention to marry the daughter of a fisherman, a girl who brought to him the dowry of an excellent heart, two pretty eyes, and a total want of money. I was proud and miserly, and I answered him, saying that, "since he chose to marry a girl without a shilling, he might be happy if he could; but that he was doing a very foolish and degrading action." I had the brutality to advise him to break with the girl if he yet had it in his power. He, like a true hearted and worthy man, wedded the girl he loved according to his promise. My sister-in-law was a Breton, proud and honest. She never forgot my letter, and despised the sender. When she lost her husband, and was thrown into poverty and distress it was long ere she could bring her mind to listen to the thought of petitioning for aid from one of such a disposition as I had evinced. But the sight of her girl, her only child, wasting away from sheer want, and the reflection that the poor thing must otherwise be cast helpless upon the world, made her at length disclose her connexion with me to the benevolent physician who attended her. The result was the letter I have alluded to.

The prospect of emolument being very great it may be imagined that I was not disinclined to visit the Marseilles theatre. I answered the manager's immediately, and followed it in person without delay. When I reached Marseilles, the first person whom I saw was the surgeon who had written to me. He was in waiting for me at the principal hotel there. As I had not answered his request for money, the good man had said, in his simplicity, "he will be here in person," and day after day he had looked for me. The words with which he saluted me were these:—You have lost no time, sir. Doubtless you thought, and justly, that death might come in the way if delays took place. Ah! I am glad to see you, it is a proof of your unwearied kindness to your relatives." What could I do? My purpose had been to visit Marseilles for the theatre alone; but there was a degree of touching simplicity in the doctor's manner, which had more effect in preventing me disclosing the truth than would have been produced by any attack on me for my

negligence. I felt it impossible to avow to such a man the real and sole purpose of my visit to Marseilles, and accordingly, instead of going straight to the theatre as intended, I walked away with the doctor to my sister-in-law's.

I found her in a most wretched hovel, scarcely penetrated by a single ray of the sun. Near the bed of the poor sufferer stood an object which drew my first attention. This was her little girl, with large black eyes, beautiful curling locks, and a countenance finely formed and intelligent, while marked with a degree of grave resignation, the result of the precocious habitude of suffering. How interesting that creature seemed to me! I felt at first as if I could have taken her fondly into my arms; but sordid avarice suddenly interposed, and struck me with the thought that if I allowed myself to be moved, I must assuredly harass myself with new and heavy duties which might press on me for life. I involuntarily shrunk back at this base suggestion of the demon within me. The physician saw the movement, and, good man, he attributed it to pity. "The sight of this misery touches you, sir," said he; but the physician must look closely into the ills he would cure. It is you who must be the physician here. Come nigh your relative."

When my sister-in-law noticed my approach she made an effort to raise herself. There was upon her faded countenance a mixture of sadness and pride, which told me plainly that it had cost her much to apply to me. She descended to no crouching entreaty, but raising her finger, which trembled with weakness and emotion, she pointed to her little girl, and said in low touching tones, "See that sweet angel, that gift of heaven! She will soon have no mother!"

Equally true and disgraceful it is, that this appeal did not counteract or wipe away the miserly fears which had beset me. I answered even in cold tones, "Why entertain such fears? You are young, you have a good physician. You despair unnecessarily." Any other man would have added, "You have a brother in law, too, who will give you every comfort in his power." I added no such words. My only thought was how to escape from the threatened burden in the easiest manner. Meanwhile the little girl had been gazing on me with eyes which seemed to indicate that even she felt the want of cordiality in the relative who had come to her mother's side. At length, while I stood in my uneasy uncertainty, she came close to me, and said, "Sit down upon the bed, for you are too tall to let me kiss you if you stand." I sat down, and the child climbed upon my knee. The Breton closed her eyes, and uplifted her hands, as if praying in aid of the child's possible influence.

Alas! feeling that my danger increased, I but hardened my heart the more, and clung more closely to the idol whom I worshipped. My brow even contracted a frown, and there was a drop of perspiration upon it as I gazed upon the child. She, however, was not deterred from kissing me. "Will you be my papa!" said she, "I shall love you well. How like you are to my dead papa! He was good, good, are you good also?" The touching eloquence of this infantine appeal is indescribable. I felt its influence, and it moved me—to what? to untwine the arms of the child rudely from my neck, and set her down upon the floor. The effect of this repulse upon the child was striking and instantaneous. She cast upon me a glance, in which surprise, disappointment and fear were mingled, and a TEAR, gathering in her beautiful eye, rolled slowly down her cheek. Her silent sorrow did what her endearments had utterly failed to do. A sudden revulsion in my feelings took place. As by an enchanter's wand, the utter brutality of my avaricious self-love was laid before me in all its nakedness. I shuddered at the spectacle, and yielding instantaneously to the better feeling awakened, I hastily took up the child, and exclaimed, laying my hand upon her head. "Before Heaven and thy mother, I promise to be a father unto thee, and never shall a child be so tenderly cherished as I shall cherish thee."

Ah, had you seen the Breton when these words were uttered. Such an excitement was produced, that the physician and myself were alarmed for her life at the instant. But joy seldom kills. "Brother, brother," murmured she, as soon as she was able to speak. "I had done you wrong." It may be guessed that such an avowal could not but be gratifying to me. I hastened to check such an unmerited flow of gratitude, by addressing myself to the medical man on the subject of my sister-in-law's removal to a better dwelling. He readily undertook to look out for such a place, a thing which, as a stranger in Marseilles, I could not do.

For three months after that period I occupied a delightful cottage near Marseilles with my sister in law and her child. To the Breton these months were months of unalloyed happiness, though, in spite of all care, she slowly sunk into the grave. To me that period was also a memorable one. The alteration of my sentiments being confirmed by the happiness I tasted from the hour of the change, became a new being. When my sister in law died, my niece was left, of course with me. Since that time she has never been from my side. Of her joys I have made my joys, of her life my life. Ah! I owe her so much. That tear of hers—precious pearl of my heart—has been to it what the dew drop of morn is to the unopened flower—expanding it for the entire day of existence."

From Captain Maryatt's Monsieur Violet.  
MONSTERS OF WESTERN AMERICA.

In the marshes, as soon as the rider feels his horse sinking, the first movement, if an experienced traveller, is to throw himself to the

saddle, and endeavour to wade or swim to the canebrakes, the roots of which give to the ground a certain degree of stability. In that case his fate is probably sealed, and he is in imminent danger of the "cawana." This is a hideous and terrible monster, with which, strange to say, the naturalists of Europe are not yet acquainted, though it is too well known to all the inhabitants of the streams and lagoons tributary to the Red River. It is an enormous turtle, or tortoise with the head and tail of the alligator, not retractile, as is usual among the different species of this reptile, the shell is one inch and a half thick, and as impenetrable as steel. It lies in holes in the bottom of muddy rivers or in the swampy canebrakes, and measures often ten feet in length, and six in breadth over the shell, independent of the head and tail which must give often to this dreadful monster the length of twenty feet. Such an unwieldy mass is not, of course, capable of any rapid motion; but in the swamps I mention, they are very numerous, and the unfortunate man or beast going astray, and leaving for a moment the small patches of solid ground, formed by the thickest clusters of the cane, must of necessity come within the reach of one of these powerful creature's jaws, always extended and ready for prey. Cawanas of a large size have never been taken alive, though often in draining the lagoons, shells have also been found measuring twelve feet in length. The planters of Upper Western Louisiana have often fished to procure them for scientific purposes; but, although they take hundreds of the smaller ones, they could never succeed to drag on shore any of the large ones after they had been hooked; these monsters bury their claws, head, and tail so deep in the mud, that no power short of steam can make them relinquish their hold.

The "gar" fish is also a most terrible animal, I have seen it more than once seizing its prey and dragging it down with the rapidity of an arrow—One day while I was residing at Captain Finn's, upon the Red River, I saw one of those monsters enter the creek of transparent water. Following him from curiosity I soon perceived that he had not left the deep water without an inducement, for just above me there was an alligator devouring an otter. As soon as the alligator perceived his formidable enemy he thought of nothing but his escape to the shore; he dropped his prey, and began to climb; but he was to slow for the gar fish, who, with a single dart, closed upon him with extended jaws, and seized him by the middle of the body. I could plainly see through the transparent water, and yet I did not perceive that the alligator made the least struggle to escape from the deadly fangs. There was a hissing noise, as that of shells and bones crushed, and the gar fish left the creek with his victim in his jaws, so nearly severed in two that the head and tail were towing on each side of him—Besides these, the travellers through rivers and bays has to fear many other enemies of less note, and but little if at all known to naturalists. Among these is the mad-vampire, a kind of spider leech, with sixteen short paws round a body of the form and size of the common plate. The centre of the animal [which is black in any other part of the body] has a dark vermilion round spot, from which dart a quantity of black suckers, one inch and a half long, through which they extract the blood of animals; and so rapid is the plebotomy of this ugly reptile, that though not weighing more than two ounces in its natural state, a few minutes after it struck on, it will increase to the size of a beaver hat, and weigh several pounds. Thus leeches in a large stream, a horse will often faint before he can reach the opposite shore, and he then becomes a prey to the gar fish. If the stream is but small, and the animal is not exhausted he will run madly on shore, and roll to get rid of his terrible blood sucker, which however, will adhere to him till one or the other of them dies from exhaustion. In crossing the Eastern Texas bayous, I used always to descend from my horse to look if the leeches had stuck. The belly and the breast are the parts generally attacked; and so tenacious are these mud vampires that the only means of removing them is to pass the blade of a knife under them, and cut them off.

Sketch of a Lecture delivered by J. Augustine Smith, M. D., before the Lyceum of Natural History, in the city of New York, December 9, 1842.

DIFFERENT RACES OF MEN.

Dr. SMITH, December 9, closed the series of Lectures on Geology which he has been delivering at the Lyceum of Natural History. His main subject was the differences perceived in many particulars, between men inhabiting different portions of the Earth's surface. The first general difference remarked by scientific men between different species of animals was the fact that in the various grades the head was placed upon the neck in a different position. In man, for instance, the head is directly above the neck, and so nicely balanced that it vibrates with equal ease in any direction—As we descend to the lower animals we find the neck more and more behind and upon a level with the head, until we find that in birds it is directly behind it.

Soon after this was made known, it was remarked by a painter that, in painting portraits of negroes, the only difference between their heads and those of white men, as represented at that day, was in the color. But he perceived that this did not in fact represent negroes; and his observation led him to the construction of the facial angle, which, although it measures directly only the projection of the forehead, is always found to indicate the capacity of the skull. This angle is defined by the intersection of two lines: one drawn from the lower part of the ear to the nostril, supposed to be horizontal; and the other from the nostril to the fore-

head. Now in the different animals, the angle included between the two lines thus drawn is found to vary, in adults of our race, averaging 85°, though in children of three or four years old it often reaches 90°, and becoming more and more acute as we descend to the lower animals. So generally has it been understood that this angle measures the capacity of the skull, and therefore the powers of the intellect, that the ancient Greeks, in their representations of gods and heroes, made it 100°, and thus was the portrait of Alexander painted when he was deified.

It was for a long time supposed that man had a larger brain than any other animal: but it was soon found that he excelled in this by the elephant and the whale. Then it was believed that its size in proportion to that of his body was the greatest, but it was soon ascertained that, while the brain of man is in bulk to his body as 1 to 30, that of the Canary bird is to its body as 15 to 30; and yet the bird is not remarkable for its sagacity. The proportion of an alligator's brain to his body is that of 1 to 1000, and yet Audubon tells us that this creature has an ordinary amount of intellect. The true anatomical difference between man and other animals is, that his nervous system is more entirely collected in a mass than theirs.

The face in man is smaller in proportion to the size of his head, than that of any other animal. It bears the proportion of about one to four, while if we descend, the proportion becomes much greater, and in the horse it is enormous.

Anatomists divide mankind into different classes. Some French authors distribute them into 12 or 15 different races, while others make only six. Dr. Smith said he had contented himself with four, while Cuvier had but two, namely, those who are white and those who are not white. Dr. S. said he followed essentially the differences of the globe; and maintained that there were four races of men, the Asiatic, the Caucasian, the American, the Asiatic, and the African.

The Caucasian is the race to which we belong; and it might justly be said to stand at the head of all the races of the earth, possessing the highest intellectual power, the elements of all improvement, and by far the most mental and moral strength of them all. The hair of the race is long, and of different colours in different individuals; the eyes are also of different hues; the skin is thin, and the complexion more beautiful than that of any other; and we have physically fewer points or projections about us—the cheek bones not being prominent, and the whole frame being rounded off in the finest style. The Caucasian race has included all the most distinguished nations of the earth, the Phœnicians, the Jews, the Arabs, Greeks and Romans; and even on opening the mummies of Egypt, the Caucasian, with the African and Asiatic was found among them.

Of the other races, fewer words are necessary. The Asiatics are by no means as well made: the face being broader, the cheek bones higher, their bodies more feeble, and their intellect of moderate power.

The Indians of our Continent are very strongly marked; their hair is long and harsh, their physical powers are upon a small scale, and they are, in intellect, by no means the equals of the Caucasian race.

Last of the four came the negroes—the Ethiopian race. Their colour and the character of their hair are well known, as well as the thickness of their lips. They inhabit the torrid parts of Africa, and their mental powers are upon an inferior scale.

Coming to a more particular description of these races, the facial angle in the Caucasian race is.....85 degrees.  
Asiatic.....78 "  
American Indian.....73 "  
Ethiopian.....70 "  
Orang Outang.....67 "

As we descend to the inferior animals, as already said, this angle becomes more and more acute; and in the duck, &c., is of only a few degrees. This rule, though it will not hold good as regards individuals, is always true with respect to different races. The intellect of a race is always in proportion to the obtuseness of this angle; and if we take a thousand individuals who have large heads, and another thousand whose heads are small—all belonging to the same race and receiving the same education, the large heads will have more intelligence, as a general thing, than the small ones, though this will not hold true of the heads of the different individuals of either class. The dimensions of the Caucasian head are 87 cubic inches;

Of the Asiatic.....82 "  
The Mongolian and Malay.....81 "  
The American Indian.....80 "  
The Ethiopian.....78 "

The senses vary in the opposite direction. They are more developed in the African than in the Caucasian race. The negroes' taste is better and far more uniform—all negroes disliking mutton for instance; their smell is better, and so of their other senses.

As a general thing the amount of intellect is indicated by the bulk of brain in the front part of the head; but this must not be regarded as affording ground for the theory of Phrenology,—since the posterior part of the African's head is smaller than ours, and yet his passions and senses are stronger. As to the moral qualities being always located between the animal and intellectual, we have no evidence that this is the fact. There are some fifteen or sixteen circumstances in which the anatomical structure of the Ethiopian differs from that of the Caucasian race; and in every instance they approximate to the inferior animals. There is not the slightest doubt that the anatomical structure of the negro is less favorable than ours. Dr. Smith said that it was his decided impression that in intellect they are much inferior to us, though in many moral qualities they are our superiors.