

LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines.

THE DREAMER.

[The following remarkable lines are from a volume of "Poems by a Seamstress," and are said to be truly the production of a poor English girl. They are indeed beautiful, and, under the circumstances, thoroughly and thoughtfully appropriate.]

Nor in the laughing bowers,
Where, by green twining elms, a pleasant
shade
At Summer's noon is made;
And where swift-footed hours
Steal the rich breath of the enamored flowers,
Dream I. Nor where the golden glories be,
At sunset, laving o'er the flowing sea;
And to pure eyes the faculty is given
To trace a smooth ascent from Earth to Hea-
ven.

Not on the couch of ease,
With all the appliances of joy at hand—
Soft light, sweet fragrance, beauty at com-
mand;
Viands that might a god-like palate please,
And Music's soul-creative ecstasies,
Dream I. Nor gloating o'er a wild estate,
Till the full, self-complacent heart elate,
Well satisfied with bliss of mortal birth,
Sighs for an immortality on Earth.

But where the incessant din
Of iron hands, and roar of brazen throats,
Join their unmingled notes;
While the long Summer day is pouring in,
Till day is gone, and darkness does begin,
Dream I—as in the corner where I lie,
On wintry nights, just covered from the sky;
Such is my fate, and barren though it seem,
Yet, thou blind, soulless scorner, yet I dream!

And, yet I dream—
Dream what? Were men more just, I might
have been
How strong, how fair, how kindly and serene,
Glowing of heart, and glorious of mien;
The conscious Crown to Nature's blissful
scene;

In just and equal brotherhood to glean,
With all mankind, exhaustless pleasure keen;
Such is my dream.

And yet, I dream—
I, the despised of fortune, lift mine eye,
Bright with the lustre of integrity,
In unappealing wretchedness, on high,
And the last rage of Destiny defy;
Resolved alone to live—alone to die,
Nor swell the tide of human misery.

And yet, I dream—
Dream of a sleep where dreams no more shall
come,
My last, my first, my only welcome home!
Rest, unbeheld, since life's beginning stage,
Sole remnant of my glorious heritage:
Unalienable, I shall find thee yet,
And, in thy soft embrace, the past forget!
Thus do I dream.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A POLICE OFFICER.

LEGAL METAMORPHOSES.

THE respectable agent of a rather eminent French house arrived one morning in great apparent distress at Scotland Yard, and informed the superintendent that he had just sustained a great, almost ruinous, loss in notes of the Bank of England and commercial bills of exchange, besides a considerable sum in gold. He had, it appeared, been absent in Paris about ten days, and on his return but a few hours previously, discovered that his iron chest had been completely rifled during his absence. False keys must have been used, as the empty chest was found locked, and no sign of violence could be observed. He handed in full written details of the property carried off, the number of the notes, and every particular. The first step taken was to ascertain if any of the notes had been tendered at the bank. Not one had been presented; payment was of course stopped, and advertisements descriptive of the bills of exchange, as well as of the notes, were inserted in the evening and following morning papers. A day or two afterwards a considerable reward was offered for such information as might lead to the apprehension of the offenders.

No result followed; and spite of the exertions of the officers employed, not the slightest clue could be obtained of the perpetrators of the robbery. The junior partner in the firm, M. Bellebon, in the meantime arrived in England, to assist in the investigation, and was naturally extremely urgent in his inquiries; but the mystery which enveloped the affair remained impenetrable. At last a letter, bearing the St. Martin le Grand, post-mark, was received by the agent, M. Alexandre le Breton, which contained an offer to surrender the whole of the plunder, with the exception of the gold, for the sum of one thousand pounds. The sum which had been abstracted was more than ten times that amount, and had been destined by the French house to meet some heavy liabilities falling due in London very shortly. Le Breton had been ordered to pay the whole amount into Hoare's to the account of the firm, and had indeed been severely blamed for not having done so, as he received the different notes and bills; and it was on going to the chest immediately on his return from Paris, for the purpose of fulfilling the peremptory instructions he had

received, that M. Le Breton discovered the robbery.

The letter went on to state that should the offer be acceded to, a mystically-worded advertisement—of which a copy was inclosed—was to be inserted in the *Times*, and then a mode would be suggested for safety—in the interest of the thieves of course—carrying the agreement into effect. M. Bellebon was half inclined to close with this proposal, in order to save the credit of the house, which would be destroyed unless its acceptances, now due in about fourteen days, could be met; and without the stolen money and bills of exchange, this was, he feared, impossible. The superintendent, to whom M. Bellebon showed the letter, would not hear of compliance with such a demand, and threatened a prosecution for composition of felony if M. Bellebon persisted in doing so. The advertisement was, however, inserted, and an immediate reply directed that Le Breton, the agent, should present himself at the Old Manor House, Green Lanes, Newington, unattended, at four o'clock on the following afternoon, bringing with him of course the stipulated sum in gold. It was added that to prevent any possible treason, (*trahison*, the letter was written in French) Le Breton would find a note for him at the tavern, informing him of the spot—a solitary one, and far away from any place where an ambush could be concealed—where the business would be concluded, and to which he must proceed unaccompanied and on foot! This proposal was certainly quite as ingenious as it was cool, and the chance of outwitting such cunning rascals seemed exceedingly doubtful. A very tolerable scheme was, however, hit upon, and M. le Breton proceeded at the appointed hour to the Old Manor House. No letter or message had been left for him, and nobody obnoxious to the slightest suspicion could be seen near or about the tavern. On the following day another missive arrived, which stated that the writer was quite aware of the trick which the police had intended playing him, and he assured M. Bellebon that such a line of conduct was as unwise as it would be fruitless, inasmuch as if 'good faith' was not observed, the securities and notes would be inexorably destroyed or otherwise disposed of, and the house of Bellebon and Company be consequently exposed to the shame and ruin of bankruptcy.

Just at this crisis of the affair I arrived in town from my unsuccessful hunt after the fugitives who had slipped through my fingers at Plymouth. The superintendent laughed heartily, not so much at the trick by which I had been duped, as at the angry mortification I did not attempt to conceal. He presently added, 'I have been wishing for your return, in order to entrust you with a tangled affair in which success will amply compensate for such a disappointment. You know French too, which is fortunate, for the gentleman who has been plundered understands little or no English.' He then related the foregoing particulars, with other apparently slight circumstances; and after a long conversation with him, I retired to think the matter over, and decide upon the likeliest mode of action. After much cogitation, I determined to see M. Bellebon alone; and for this purpose I despatched the waiter of a tavern adjacent to his lodgings, with a note expressive of my wish to see him instantly on pressing business. He was at home, and immediately acceded to my request. I easily introduced myself; and after about a quarter of an hour's conference, said carelessly—for I saw he was too heedless of speech, too quick and frank, to be entrusted with the dim suspicions which certain trifling indices had suggested to me—'Is Monsieur le Breton at the office where the robbery was committed?'

'No; he is gone to Greenwich on business, and will not return till late in the evening. But if you wish to re-examine the place I can of course enable you to do so.'

'It will, I think, be advisable; and you will, if you please,' I added, as we emerged into the street, 'permit me to take you by the arm, in order that the official character of my visit may not be suspected by any one there.'

He laughingly complied, and we arrived at the house arm in arm. We were admitted by an elderly woman; and there was a young man—a moustached clerk—seated at a desk in an inner room writing. He eyed me for a moment somewhat askance I thought, but I gave him no opportunity for a distinct view of my features; and I presently handed M. Bellebon a card, on which I had contrived to write, unobserved, 'send away the clerk.' This was done more naturally than I anticipated; and in answer to M. Bellebon's glance of inquiry, I merely said, 'that as I did not wish to be known there as a police-officer, it was essential that the minute search I was about to make should be without witnesses.' He agreed, and the woman was also sent away upon a distant errand. Every conceivable place did I ransack; every scrap of paper that had writing on it I eagerly perused. At length the search was over, apparently without result.

'You are quite sure, Monsieur Bellebon, as you informed the superintendent, that Monsieur le Breton has no female relations or acquaintances in this country?'

'Positive,' he replied. 'I have made the most explicit enquiries on the subject, both of the clerk Dubarle and of the woman-servant.'

Just then the clerk returned, out of breath with haste I noticed, and I took my leave without even now affording the young gentleman so clear a view of my face as he was evidently anxious to obtain.

'No female acquaintance!' thought I, as I re-entered the private room of the tavern I had left an hour before. From whom came,

then, the scraps of perfumed note paper I have found in the desk? I sat down and endeavored to piece them out, but after considerable trouble, satisfied myself that they were parts of different notes, and so small, unfortunately, as to contain nothing which separately afforded any information except that they were all written by one hand, and that a female one.

About two hours after this I was sauntering along in the direction of Stake Newington, where I was desirous of making some inquiries as to another matter, and had passed the Kingslow Gate a few hundred yards, when a small discolored printed handbill lying in a haberdasher's shop window, arrested my attention. It ran thus:—'Two guineas reward.—Lost, an Italian greyhound. The tip of his tail has been chopped off, and it answers to the name of Fidele.' Underneath, the reader was told in writing to 'inquire within.'

'Fidele!' I mentally exclaimed. 'Any relation to M. le Breton's fair correspondent Fidele, I wonder?' In a twinkling my pocket-book was out, and I re-perused by the gaslight on one of the perfumed scraps of paper the following portion of a sentence, '*ma pauvre Fidele est per*.' The bill, I observed, was dated nearly three weeks previously. I forthwith entered the shop, and pointing to the bill, said I knew a person who had found such a dog as was there advertised for. The woman at the counter said she was glad to hear it, as the lady, formerly a customer of theirs, was much grieved at the animal's loss.

'What is the lady's name?' I asked.

'I can't rightly pronounce the name,' was the reply. 'It is French, I believe; but here it is, with the address, in the day book, written by herself.'

I eagerly read—'Madame Levasseur, Oak Cottage, about one mile on the road from Edmonton to Southgate.' The handwriting greatly resembled that on the scraps I had taken from M. le Breton's desk; and the writer was French too! Here were indications of a trail which might lead to unlooked-for success, and I determined to follow it up vigorously. After one or two other questions, I left the shop, promising to send the dog to the lady the next day. My business at Stoke Newington was soon accomplished. I then hastened westward to the establishment of a well-known dog-fancier, and procured the loan, at a reasonable price, of an ugly Italian hound; the requisite loss of the tip of its tail was very speedily accomplished, and so quickly healed, that the newness of the excision could not be suspected. I arrived at the lady's residence about 12 o'clock on the following day, so thoroughly disguised as a vagabond Cockney dog-stealer, that my own wife, when I entered the breakfast parlour just previous to my starting, screamed with alarm and surprise. The mistress of Oak Cottage was at home, but indisposed, and the servant said she would take the dog to her, though if I would take it out of the basket, she herself could tell me if it was Fidele or not. I replied that I would only show the dog to the lady, and would not trust it out of my hands. This message was carried up stairs, and after waiting some time outside—for the woman, with natural precaution, considering my appearance, for the safety of the portable articles lying about, had closed the street-door in my face—I was re-admitted, desired to wipe my shoes carefully, and walk up. Madame Levasseur, a showy looking woman, though not over refined in speech or manners, was seated on a sofa, in vehement expectation of embracing her dear Fidele; but my vagabond appearance so startled her, that she screamed loudly for her husband, M. Levasseur. This gentleman, a fine, tall, whiskered, moustached person, hastened into the apartment half shaved, and with his razor in his hand.

'Qu'est ce qu'il y a doré?' he demanded.

'Mais voyez cette horreur la,' replied the lady, meaning me, not the dog, which I was slowly emancipating from the basket kennel. The gentleman laughed; and reassured by the presence of her husband, Madame Levasseur's anxieties concentrated themselves upon the expected Fidele.

'Mais mon Dieu!' she exclaimed again, as I displayed the aged beauty I had brought for her inspection; 'why, that is not Fidele!'

'Not, marm?' I answered with quite innocent surprise. 'Vy, ere is her very tail;' and I held up the mutilated extremity for her closer inspection. The lady was not, however, to be convinced even by that evidence; and as the gentleman soon became impatient of my persistence, and hinted very intelligibly that he had a mind to hasten my passage down stairs with the toe of his boot, I, having made the best possible use of my eyes during the short interview, scrambled up the dog and basket, and departed.

'No female relative or acquaintance, hasn't he?' was my exulting thought as I gained the road. 'And yet if that is not M. le Breton's picture between those of the husband and wife, I am a booby, and a blind one.' I no longer in the least doubted that I had struck a brilliant trail; and I could have shouted with exultation, so eager was I not only to retrieve my, as I fancied, somewhat tarnished reputation for activity and skill, but to extricate the plundered firm from their terrible difficulties; the more especially as young M. Bellebon, with the frankness of his age and nation, had hinted to me—and the suddenly tremulous light of his fine expressive eyes testified to the acuteness of his apprehensions—that his marriage with a long loved and amiable girl depended upon his success in saving the credit of his house.

That same evening, about nine o'clock, M. Levasseur, expensively, but withal snobbishly attired, left Oak Cottage, walked to Edmon-

ton, hailed a cab, and drove off rapidly towards town, followed by an English swell as stylishly and snobbishly dressed, wigged, whiskered, and moustached as himself, this English swell being no other than myself, as prettily metamorphosed and made up for the part I intended playing as heart could wish.

[To be concluded.]

ENGLAND IN 1850.

BY M. DE LAMARTINE.

WHEN a man is strongly pre-occupied with the crises under which his country labors, every opportunity that arises, is caught at to turn to the profit of his compatriots the sights with which he is struck, and the reflections with which these sights inspire him. Called by circumstances of an entirely private nature to revisit England for some time, after an absence of twenty years, it was impossible for me not to be dazzled by the immense progress made by England during that lapse of time, not only in population, in riches, industry, navigation, railroads, extent, edifices, embellishments, the health of the capital, but also, and more especially, in charitable institutions for the people, and in the associations of real, religious, conservative, and fraternal socialism, between classes to prevent the explosions by the evaporation of the causes which produce them, to stifle the murmurs from below by incalculable benefits from above, and to close the mouths of the people, not by the brutalities of our police, but by the arm of public virtue. Very far from being afflicted or humiliated at this fine spectacle of the operation of so many really popular works, which give to England at the present moment an incontestible pre-eminence in this respect over the rest of Europe, and over us, I rejoice at it. To asperse one's neighbor is to lower oneself. The rivalries between nations are paltry and shameful when they consist in denying or in hating the good that is done by our neighbours. These rivalries on the contrary are noble and fruitful when they consist in glorifying, and in imitating the good which is done everywhere: instead of being jealousies, these rivalries become emulation. What does it signify whether a thing be English or French, provided it be a benefit? Virtues have no country, or rather they are of every country: it is God who inspires them, and humanity which profits by them. Let us then learn for one how to admire.

But I am told these practical virtues of the English to the poorer, the *proletaire*, the suffering classes are nothing but the prudence of egotism! Even if that were the case we ought still to applaud, for an egotism so prudent and so provident, an egotism which could do itself justice by so well imitating virtue, an egotism which would corrupt the people by charity and prosperity, such an egotism as that would be the most profound and admirable of policies, it would be the Machiavellism of virtue. But it is not given to an appearance of charity; egotism restricts itself, while charity diffuses itself; no doubt there is prudence in it, but there is also virtue; without doubt, old England, the veritable patrician republic under her frontispiece of monarchy, feels that the stones of her feudal edifice are becoming disjointed, and might tumble under the blast of the age if she did not bind them together every day, by the cement of her institutions in favor of her people. That is good sense, but under that good sense there is virtue; and it is impossible to remain in England for any length of time without discovering it. The source of that public virtue is the religious feeling with which that people is endowed more than many others; a divine feeling practical religious liberty has developed at the present moment, under a hundred forms, among them. Every one has a God, where every one can recognise the light of reason, and adore that God, and serve him with his brothers in the sincerity and in the independence of his faith. Yes, there is, if you will, at the same time, prudence, well understood egotism, and public virtue in the acts of England, in order to prevent a social war. Let it be whatever you like. But would to God that unhappy France would take a lesson from that intelligent aristocracy! What that she could once for all say to herself, 'I perish, I tremble, I swoon in my panics. I call at one time on the monarchy, at another on the Republic, at another on Legitimacy, now on Illegitimacy—then on the empire, now on the inquisition—then on the police now on the sabre, and then on speech to save me, but no one will save me but myself: I will save myself by my own virtue.'

I have seen England twice in my life: the first time in 1822. It was the period of the Holy Alliance, recently victorious, and proud of its victories over the spirit of conquest of Napoleon, struggled against the newly born liberalism and was only occupied in everywhere restoring ancient regimes and ancient ideas. The Government of England, held at that time by the intelligent heirs of a great man (Mr Pitt), was a veritable contradiction to the true nature of the country of liberty; it had taken up the cause of absolute sovereigns against the nations; it made of the free and proud citizen of England the support and soldier of the Holy Alliance; it blindly combated the revolution, with its spirits and institutions at home, and everywhere else. England, by no means comfortable under such a Government, hardly recognised herself; she felt by instinct that she was made to play the part of the *seide* of despotism, and of the churches, in place of the part of champion of independent nationalities, of the regulated liberty of thought which Mr