

LITERATURE, &c.

The British Magazines,

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A POLICE OFFICER.

X. Y. Z.

The following advertisement appeared in several of the London Journals in the year 1832:—'If Owen Lloyd, a native of Wales, and who, it is believed, resided for many years in London as a clerk in a large mercantile establishment, will forward his present address to X. Y. Z., Post Office, St Martin's-le Grand, to be left till called for, he will hear of something greatly to his advantage.'

My attention had been attracted to this notice by its very frequent appearance in the habit of reading, and from professional habits of thinking, I had set it down in my own mind as a trap for some offender against the principles of *meum* and *tuum*, whose presence in a criminal court was very earnestly desired. I was confirmed in this conjecture by observing that, in despair of Owen Lloyd's voluntary disclosure of his retreat, a reward of fifty guineas, payable by a respectable solicitor of Lothbury, was ultimately offered to any person who would furnish X. Y. Z. with the missing man's address. 'An old bird,' I mentally exclaimed on perusing this paragraph 'and not to be caught with chaff, that is evident.' Still more to excite my curiosity; and at the same time bring the matter within the scope of my own particular functions, I found on taking up the Police Gazette, a reward of thirty guineas for the apprehension of Owen Lloyd, whose person and manners were minutely described. 'The pursuit grows hot,' thought I, throwing down the paper, and hastening to attend a summons just brought me from the superintendent; and if Owen Lloyd is still within the four seas, his chance of escape seems but a poor one.

On waiting on the superintendent, I was directed to put myself in immediate personal communication with a Mr Smith, the head of an eminent wholesale house in the city.

'In the City?'
'Yes; but your business with Mr Smith is relative to the extensive robbery at his West-end residence a week or two ago. The necessary warrants for the apprehension of the suspected parties have been, I understand, obtained, and on your return will, together with some necessary memoranda, be placed in your hands.'

I at once proceeded to my destination, and on my arrival, was immediately ushered into a dingy back room, where I was desired to wait till Mr Smith, who was just then busily engaged, could speak to me. Casting my eyes over a table, near which the clerk had placed me a chair, I perceived a newspaper and the Police Gazette, in both of which the advertisements for the discovery of Owen Lloyd were strongly underlined. 'Oh ho,' thought I; 'Mr Smith, then, is the X. Y. Z. who is so extremely anxious to renew his acquaintance with Mr Owen Lloyd; and I am the honored individual selected to bring about the desired interview. Well it is in my new vocation—one which can scarcely be dispensed with, it seems, in this busy, scheming life of ours.'

Mr Smith did not keep me waiting long. He seemed a hard, shrewd, business-like man, whose still wiry frame, brisk, active gait and manner, and clear decisive eye, indicated—though the snows of more than sixty winters had passed over his head—a yet vigorous life, of which the morning and noon had been spent in the successful pursuit of wealth and its accompaniment—social consideration and influence.

'You have, I suppose read the advertisements marked on these papers?'

'I have, and of course conclude, sir, that you are the X. Y. Z.'

'Of course conclusions,' rejoined Mr Smith with a quite a perceptible sneer, 'are usually very silly ones: in this instance especially so. My name, you ought to know, is Smith: X. Y. Z., whoever he may be, I expect in a few minutes. In just seven or eight minutes,' added the exact man of business; 'for I, by letter, appointed him to meet me here at one o'clock precisely. My motive in seeking an interview with him, it is proper I should tell you, is the probability that he, like myself, was a sufferer by Owen Lloyd, and may not therefore object to defray a fair share of the cost likely to be incurred in unkenning the delinquent, and prosecuting him to conviction; or, which would be far better, he may be in possession of information that will enable us to obtain completely the clue I already almost grasp. But we must be cautious: X. Y. Z. may be a relative or a friend of Lloyd's, and in that case, to possess him of our plans would answer no purpose but to afford him an opportunity of baffling them. Thus much premised, I had better at once proceed to read over to you a few particulars I have jotted down, which you will perceive, throw light and color over the suspicions I have been within these few days compelled to entertain. You are doubtless acquainted with the full particulars of the robbery at my residence, Brook Street, last Thursday fortnight?'

'Yes; especially the report of the officers, that the crime must have been committed by persons familiar with the premises, and the general habits of the family.'

'Precisely. Now, you must have your memorandum book ready.'

'Quite so.'

'You had better write with ink,' said Mr Smith, pushing an inkstand and pens towards me. 'Important memoranda should never, where there is a possibility of avoiding it, be written in pencil. Friction, thumbing, use of any kind, often partially obliterates them, creating endless confusion and mistakes. Are you ready?'

'Perfectly.'

'Owen Lloyd, a native of Wales, and, it was understood, descended from a highly respectable family there. About five feet eight; but I need not describe his person over again. Many years with us, first as junior, then as head clerk; during which his conduct, as regards the firm was exemplary. A man of yielding, irresolute mind—if indeed a person can be said to really possess a mind at all who is always changing it for some other person's—incapable of saying 'No' to embarrassing, impoverishing requests—one in short, Mr Waters, of that numerous class of individuals whom fools say are nobody's enemies but their own, as if that were possible.'

'I understand; but I really do not see how this bears upon—'

'The mission you are directed to undertake? I think it does, as you will presently see.—Three years ago, Owen Lloyd having involved himself, in consequence of the serious defect of character I have indicated, in large liabilities for pretended friends, left our employment; and to avoid a jail, fled, no one could discover whither. Edward Jones, also a native of the principality, whose description, as well as that of his wife, you will receive from the superintendent, was discharged about seven years since from our service for misconduct, and went we understood to America. He always appeared to possess great influence over the mind of his considerably younger countryman Lloyd. Jones and his wife were seen three evenings since by one of our clerks near Temple Bar. I am of opinion, Mr Waters,' continued Mr Smith removing his spectacles, and closing the note book, from which he had been reading, 'that it is not only the first step in crime, or criminal imprudence; which feeble-minded men especially long hesitate or boggle at; and I now more than suspect that, pressed by poverty, and very possibly yielding to the persuasions and example of Jones—who, by the way, was as well acquainted with the premises in Brook Street as his fellow-clerk—the one honest, ductile Owen Lloyd, is now a common thief and burglar.'

'Indeed!'

'A more minute search led to the discovery, the day before yesterday; of a pocket-book behind some book-shelves in the library. As no property had been taken from that room—though the lock of a large iron chest, containing coins and medals, had been evidently tampered with—the search there was not at first very rigorous. That pocket-book—here it is—belonged, I know, to Owen Lloyd when in our service. See, here are his initials stamped on the cover.'

'Might he not have inadvertently left it there when with you?'

'You will scarcely think so after reading the date of the five pound note of the Hampshire County Bank, which you will find within the inner lining.'

'The date is 1831.'

'Exactly, I have also strong reason for believing that Owen Lloyd is now, or has been lately, residing in some part of Haropshire.'

'That is important.'

'This letter,' continued Mr Smith; and then passing for a brief space in some embarrassment, he added—'The commissioner informed me, Mr Waters that you were a person upon whose good sense and discretion, as well as sagacity and courage, every confidence might be placed. I therefore feel less difficulty than I otherwise should in admitting you a little behind the family screen, and entering with you upon matters one would not willingly have brained in the public ear.'

I bowed and he presently proceeded.

'Owen Lloyd, I should tell you, is married to a very amiable, superior sort of woman, and has one child, a daughter named Caroline, an elegant, gentle-mannered, beautiful girl, I admit, to whom my wife was much attached, and she was consequently a frequent visitor in Brook Street. This I always felt was very imprudent, and the result was, that my son, Arthur Smith—only about two years her senior; she was just turned of seventeen when her father was compelled to fly from his creditors—formed a silly, boyish attachment for her. They have since, I gather from this letter, which I found yesterday in Arthur's dressing room, carried on, at long intervals, a clandestine correspondence, waiting for the advent of more propitious times—which, being interpreted,' added Mr Smith a sardonic snarl, 'means of course my death and burial.'

'You are in possession, then, if Miss Caroline Lloyd is living with her father, of his precise place of abode?'

'Not exactly. The correspondence is, it seems, carried on without the knowledge of Owen Lloyd; and the girl states in an answer, it should seem, to Arthur's inquiries, that her father would never forgive her if, under present circumstances, she discloses his place of residence—we can now very well understand that—and she intreats Arthur not to persist, at least for the present, in his attempts to discover her. My son, you must understand, is now of age, and so far as fortune is concerned, is, thanks to a legacy from an aunt on his mother's side, independent of me.'

'What post mark does the letter bear?'

'Charing Cross. Miss Lloyd states that it will be posted in London by a friend; that friend being, I nothing doubt, her father's confederate, Jones. But to us the most important part of the epistle is the following line:—'My father met with a sad accident in the forest some time ago, but is now quite recovered.' The words 'in the forest' have, you see, been written over, but not so entirely as to prevent their being, with a little trouble, traced. Now, coupling this expression with the Hampshire Bank note, I am of opinion that Lloyd is concealed somewhere in the New Forest.'

'A shrewd guess, at all events.'

'You now perceive what weighty motives I have to bring this man to justice. The property carried off I care comparatively little about; but the intercourse between the girl and my son must at any cost be terminated.'

He was interrupted by a clerk, who entered to say that Mr William Lloyd, the gentleman who had advertised as X. Y. Z. desired to speak to him. Mr Smith directed Mr Lloyd to be shewn in; and then snatching up the Police Gazette, and thrusting it into one of the table drawers, said in a low voice, but marked emphasis, 'a relative, no doubt by the name; be silent, and be watchful.'

A minute afterwards Mr Lloyd was ushered into the room. He was a thin, emaciated, and apparently sorrow stricken man, on the wintry side of middle age, but of mild courteous, gentlemanly speech and manners. He was evidently nervous and agitated, and after a word or two of customary salutation, said hastily, 'I gather from this note, sir, that you can afford me intelligence of my long-lost brother Owen: where is he?' He looked eagerly round the apartment, gazed with curious earnestness in my face, and then again turned with tremulous anxiety to Mr Smith. 'Is he dead. Pray do not keep me in suspense.'

'Sit down sir,' said Mr Smith, pointing to a chair. 'Your brother, Owen Lloyd, was for many years a clerk in this establishment.'

'Was—was!' interrupted Mrs Lloyd, with greatly increased agitation: 'not now then—he has left you.'

'For upwards of three years. A few days ago—pray do not interrupt me—I obtained intelligence of him, which, with such assistance as you may possibly be able to afford, will perhaps suffice to enable this gentleman'—pointing to me, 'to discover his present residence.'

I could not stand the look which Mr Lloyd turned upon me, and turned hastily away to gaze out of the window, as if attracted by the noise of a squabble between two draymen which fortunately broke out at the moment in the narrow, choked up street.

'For what purpose, sir, are you instituting this eager search after my brother? It cannot be that—No, no—he has left you, you say, more than three years; besides, the bare suspicion is as wicked as absurd.'

'The truth is, Mr Lloyd,' rejoined Mr Smith after a few moments reflection, 'there is great danger that my son may disadvantageously connect himself with you—with your brother's family—may, in fact, marry his daughter Caroline. Now I could easily convince Owen'—

'Caroline,' interjected Mr Lloyd, with a tremulous accent, and his dim eyes suffused with tears—'Caroline!—ay, truly her daughter would be named Caroline.' An instant after, he added, drawing himself up with an air of pride and some sternness: 'Caroline Lloyd is a person, sir, who by birth, and, I doubt not, character and attainments, is a fitting match for the son of the proudest merchant of this proud city.'

'Very likely,' rejoined Mr Smith, dryly; 'but you must excuse me for saying that, as regards my son, it is one which I will at any cost prevent.'

'How am I to know,' observed Mr Lloyd whose glance of pride had quickly passed away, 'that you are dealing fairly and candidly with me in this matter?'

In reply to this home thrust, Mr Smith placed the letter addressed by Miss Lloyd to his son in the hands of the questioner, at the same time explaining how he had obtained it. (To be concluded).

From the London People's Journal.

THE BALANCE OF EMPLOYMENT.

ITS POLITICAL AND MORAL NECESSITY.

By Clara Walbey.

Among the remarkable, the distinguishing features of the present age, may be observed an extensive shading off of the once bold and harsh outlines of parties and creeds, which no longer stand forth in stern relief, in the reflected light of Truth, like distinct detached edifices broadly defined in the pallid radiance of illuminated Night; for day has at length broken upon us, though veiled, as yet, by a floating mist that, as it obscures the brilliance of spiritual beauty, conceals also the hideousness of moral deformity—rendering almost imperceptible the boundaries of principles, opinions, and political faith, while its wreathing convolutions and fluctuations of density give a phantasmagoric versatility to the world's aspect. Where are now the stern, unyielding spirit, the strict belief, the unwearied and sanguinary persecutions of the dark ages? Bigotry and intolerance still exist, and even flourish; but they are wont now to mask themselves with plausibility and hypocritical charity when daring to speed their pusillanimous and even-

omed shafts amidst the innocent and unsuspecting. There is a want of moral consistency, courage and independence; a want of unanimity, and conviction of its desirability, in different persuasions; and a want of well-chosen, well-directed, well-apportioned employment among the people, their legislators, and all the political, commercial, and social machinery of the State. Here we may see a noble mind, a mighty intellect, shattered by unceasing and prostrating mental exertion—there the pampered sons of fortune languishing, literally dying, for want of necessary occupation and objects of interest. In a dark and close counting-house in the city one commercial clerk may be seen, striving to perform the proper labor of three or four; and in the superb saloons of Ministerial offices several idling over employment that could scarcely rationally suffice for one. Again: we may often see agriculturalists, professional men, and tradespeople shuffling hard to meet the demands of exorbitant rents and taxation, while an enormous standing army is fed, clothed, and exercised at the expense of the country, without producing any fiscal recompense. Innovations may often be perilous, especially to those who subsist on the national fund, and reform a matter of difficulty; yet let but experiments be tried, with the sincere wish of ameliorating the condition of the nation, and Improvement will not linger behind while Wisdom and Zeal bear the standard of Reform. In the ancient records of history, do we not read of aqueducts, bridges, and other public edifices of inimitable beauty and prodigious extent being erected by warrior-bands, when unrequired in their desolating, destructive trade (war is worthy no loftier expression)—then what might not the disciplined thousands of a British army effect if their combined and often slumbering power were usefully directed?

And why, also, might not the floating engines of war be applied to peaceful purposes in periods of peace, or, at least, some portion of them. Were it not better that these should be appropriated to the transport of merchandise and passengers, instead of loitering away their time at different stations, demoralizing, by the fatal opportunities of idleness, both officers and crew. There could be nothing derogatory to the true dignity of the royal fleet in this. Idleness is always morally undignified, as well as enervating to the faculties, while useful occupation, if not pursued to excess, ever improves and strengthens the tone of body and mind; and thus, indeed, would the brave fleet of England become yet more efficient in the hour of peril; and thus might the burden of taxation—that mighty subjugator of spirit and enterprise—be materially diminished.

But let us turn to the prisons and union houses; each of these should, as far as practicable, support itself by means of the disposable force at its command. This would, of course, be difficult in proportion to the fluctuations of available strength, especially with regard to the prisons. At the same time the benefits that would accrue from a superior system ought, certainly, to stimulate the trial, when united with the stern responsibilities of the incarcerated in the present plan, which are evident, if we consider that every hour, passed without occupation for mind or body, probably rivets more securely the fetters of indolence, and weakens the desire of reformation, except in extraordinary instances of mental reflection and energy; while every fresh attempt at useful employment increases the satisfaction derived from it, by all but the most confirmed vicious; distracts the thoughts from objectionable and sinful subjects, and may lay the foundation of an after life of productive industry. Even labor that returns no absolute profit is better than none, adapted to the capabilities of the pauper or criminal; while simply to teach an art or trade might, in some cases be sufficient to restore to the pale of respectability the person initiated. It is undispensible that solitary, unemployed confinement enervates deplorably the material structure of the frame, and the far more delicate organization of the mind, if prolonged for any length of time; and is the idle conversational intercourse of the uneducated and often ill-disposed refugees of the union houses, or of the degenerate proficient in crime, likely to originate less mischievous moral results? What is requisite in the management of men and women, as well as children, is, not the annihilation, by ill-judged severity, of their natural energies—thus rendering them the almost irresistible machines of circumstances—but the direction of their divinely-bestowed capabilities into their proper channels. Is it more merciful to deprive a fellow creature of life than of the powers of mind, leaving him the spirit of adversity and the tool of wickedness? With respect to the fulfilment of the idea, would it not be a possible supposition, that a farm, under the superintendence of an economical and intelligent farmer, might be worked through the agency of the inmates of each union house in the country, and the proceeds appropriated to their support? Why might not any casual deficiency of force be supplied by hired labor, as in private buildings? Among the innumerable divisions of civilized industry, some might, it is conceived, be found adaptable also to prison-life, though it would indubitably be difficult, even with a system of rewards and punishments, to interest the criminals in their work sufficiently to render it of value; but time and a wise perseverance can effect far more than the indifferent or indolent can even imagine.

We may frequently perceive a similar neglect or overburdening of time in private establishments as well as in public institutions or commercial offices. Sometimes an unfortunate governess is compelled to perform everything within, and without the limits of