

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE BRITISH MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Instructor.

## THE JEWELS.

AN INDIAN TALE.

By Dr. George Aspinall.

'Twas to an Indian settlement  
That I, a stripling came;  
I came to track their hoary woods,  
And slay their herds of game.

I had been in the East, and a sparkling zone  
Of precious stones I wore;  
The rude squaws ne'er had seen such things  
And coveted them sore:

But they dared not steal 'twould offend  
their god;  
Though I could not choose but see  
They'd have almost given away their lives  
To have had those gems from me.

(They were pricely things, but I little  
thought  
For what a price they'd sell.  
But let me not anticipate,  
I've yet my tale to tell.)

The leader of their savage tribe  
Held out to me his hand,  
And on the prairie day by day  
I hunted with his band.

He joy'd to hear my songs, and laugh'd  
In grim, barbaric glee;  
And down beside the cocoa-grove  
His log-hut sheltered me.

A strange, dread place seem'd that chief-  
tain's hut,  
As I squatted there at night—  
Hung round with scalping-knives, and  
scalps,  
The trophies of the fight.

The fatal tomahawk gleam'd there;  
There too the native lance;  
And heron-plumes to decorate  
Their chiefs in the dance;

Gnat'd clubs, and shafted arrows keen;  
Brave bows, with stag-horn tipp'd;  
And long straight lines of supple darts,  
In deadly venom dipp'd;

Rich matings, wove of bison's coat,  
Inlaid with crimson bark;  
Stuff'd crocodiles; huge snakes made tame;  
And jaw-bones of the shark.

There rock'd the wigwam up aloft—  
Their patriarchal bed;  
And all about lay squares of paint—  
Bright blue and brighter red:

The colors these for fight or feast,  
And that the living hand  
Might smear the corpses of their dead  
For their dead man's spirit land.

The lion and the panther's hide  
Bespread the dank mud floor;  
And folds of speckled leopard's skin  
Were swung across the floor;

But the brightest piece of ornament  
Was the old chief's only child;  
Eye never rested on a form  
More beautifully wild.

Her limbs were shapely as the deer's,  
Each one a type of grace;  
And, oh! the passing loveliness  
That woo'd me in her face.

Fresh was she as young vernal buds,  
More sportive than the fawn;  
Ripe as some golden day's decline,  
And pensive as the dawn.

No mountain elk was e'er more free,  
No fond pet lamb more meek;  
And like the blush of summer fruit  
Was the glow upon her cheek.

Her tresses black as ebony,  
Swept almost to the ground;  
And her voice was as a gushing lute,  
So melodious in sound.

One eve she brought the pipe of peace,  
And handed me the bowl,  
In taking it, our glances met—  
Hers, madden'd all my soul.

From then, my one consuming hope—  
The pole star of my life—  
Was how to win this thing of joy  
And, winning, win my wife.

I met her after 'mong the pines,  
And there—the moon above,  
And the planets, our sole witnesses—  
I told her all my love.

I told her ALL—yes, every whit!  
And I ask'd if she would be  
Her white youth's bride in England's isle  
Across the gangeless sea?

She blushed, then named her father's name  
And spake of his consent;  
I answered with one burning kiss,  
Then fled from her, and went—

I went, and ask'd her of her sire,  
And waited his reply.  
The costly gems about my dress I—  
His dark, rapacious eye

Had scanned them—'Say! those jewels,  
boy!  
Speak! shall they all be mine?'  
'Give me thy jewel, and they shall.'  
'There! take her! she is thine!'

Quick—quick as thought—the orient gems  
I spurn'd them from my side,  
Then clasp'd for life, my living gem,  
My covenanted bride!

From "The Reminiscences of an Attorney,"  
in Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

## THE CHEST OF DRAWERS.

I am about to relate a rather curious piece  
of domestic history, some of the incidents of  
which, revealed at the time of their occur-  
rence in contemporary law reports, may be  
in the remembrance of many readers. It  
took place in one of the midland counties,  
and at a place which I shall call Watley:  
the names of the chief actors who figured in  
it must also, to spare their modesty or their  
blushes, as the case may be, be changed; and  
should one of those persons spite of these  
precautions, apprehend unpleasant recogniti-  
tion, he will be able to console himself with  
the reflection, that all I state beyond that  
which may be gathered from the records of  
the law courts, will be generally ascribed to  
the fancy or invention of the writer. And it  
is as well, perhaps, that it should be so.

Caleb Jennings, a shoemaker, cobbler, snob  
—using the last word in its genuine classical  
sense, and by no means according to the mo-  
dern interpretation by which it is held to  
signify a genteel sneek or pretender—he was  
anything but that—occupied, some twelve or  
thirteen years ago, a stall at Watley, which,  
according to the traditions of the place, had  
been hereditary in his family for several ge-  
nerations. He may also be said to have flour-  
ished there, after the manner of cobblers;  
for this, it must be remembered, was in the  
good old times, before gutta-percha revolu-  
tion had carried ruin and dismay into the  
stalls—those of cobblers—which in considera-  
ble numbers existed throughout the kingdom.  
Like all his fraternity whom I have ever fal-  
len in with or heard of, Caleb was a sturdy  
radical of the Major Cartwright and Henry  
Hunt school; and being withal industrious,  
tolerably skillful, not inordinately prone to  
the observance of Saint Mondays, possessed,  
moreover of a neatly furnished sleeping and  
eating apartment in the house of which the  
projecting floor, supported on stone pillars,  
overshadowed his humble work place, he  
vaunted himself to be as really rich as an es-  
tated squire, and far more independent.

There was some truth in this boast, as the  
case which procured us the honor of Mr Jen-  
nings's acquaintance sufficiently proved. We  
were employed to bring an action against a  
wealthy gentleman of the vicinity of Watley  
for a brutal and unprovoked assault he had  
committed when in a state of partial inebriety,  
upon a respectable London tradesman who  
had visited the place on business. On the  
day of trial our witnesses appeared to have  
become suddenly afflicted with an almost to-  
tal loss of memory; and we were only saved  
from an adverse verdict by the plain,  
straightforward evidence of Caleb, upon  
whose sturdy nature the various arts which  
soften or neutralise hostile evidence had  
been tried in vain. Mr Flint, who personally  
superintended the case, took quite a liking to  
the man; and it thus happened that we were  
called upon some time afterwards to aid the  
said Caleb in extricating himself from the  
extraordinary and perplexing difficulty in  
which he suddenly and unwittingly found  
himself involved.

The projecting first floor of the house be-  
neath which the humble workshop of Caleb  
Jennings modestly disclosed itself, had been  
occupied for many years by an ailing and  
somewhat aged gentleman by the name of  
Lisle. This Mr Ambrose Lisle was a native  
of Watley, and had been a prosperous mer-  
chant of the city of London. Since his re-  
turn, after about twenty years of absence, he  
had shut himself up in almost total seclusion,  
nourishing a cynic bitterness and acrimony  
of temper which gradually withered up the  
sources of health and life, till at length it be-  
came as visible to himself as it had for some  
time been to others, that the oil of existence  
was expended, burnt up, and that but a few  
weak flickers more, and the ailing man's  
plaints and griefs would be hushed in the  
dark silence of the grave.

Mr Lisle had no relatives at Watley, and  
the only individual with whom he was on  
terms of personal intimacy was Mr Peter  
Sowerby, an attorney of the place, who had  
for many years transacted all his business.  
This man visited Mr Lisle most evenings,  
played at chess with him, and gradually ac-  
quired an influence over his client which that  
weak gentleman had once or twice feebly  
but vainly attempted to shake off. To this  
clever attorney it was rumored Mr Lisle had  
bequeathed all his wealth.

This piece of information had been put in  
circulation by Caleb Jennings, who was a  
sort of humble favorite of Mr Lisle's, or, at  
all events, was regarded by the misanthrope  
with less dislike than he manifested towards  
others. Caleb cultivated a few flowers in a  
little plot of ground at the back of the house,  
and Mr Lisle would sometimes accept a few  
roses or a bunch of violets from him. Other  
slight services—especially since the re-  
cent death of his old and garrulous woman-  
servant, Esther May, who had accompanied

him from London, and with whom Mr Jen-  
nings had always been on terms of gossiping  
intimacy—had led to certain familiarities of  
intercourse; and it thus happened that the  
inquisitive shoemaker became partially ac-  
quainted with the history of the wrongs  
and griefs which greatly preyed upon, and  
shortened the life of, the prematurely aged  
man.

The subject of this every-day common-  
place story, as related to us by Jennings, and  
subsequently enlarged and colored from other  
sources, may be briefly told.

Ambrose Lisle, in consequence of an acci-  
dent which had occurred in his infancy, was  
slightly deformed. His right shoulder, I un-  
derstood—for I never saw him—grew out,  
giving an ungraceful and somewhat comical  
twist to his figure, which in female eyes,  
—youthful ones at least—sadly marred the  
effect of his intelligent and handsome counte-  
nance.

This personal defect rendered him shy and  
awkward in the presence of women of his  
own class of society; and he had attained  
the ripe age of thirty seven years, and was a  
rich and prosperous man, before he gave the  
slightest token of an inclination towards  
matrimony.

About a twelve-month previous to that  
period of his life, the deaths—quickly fol-  
lowing each other—of a Mr and Mrs Stevens,  
threw their eldest daughter, Lucy, upon Mr  
Lisle's hands. Mr Lisle had been left an or-  
phan at a very early age, and Mrs Stevens—  
his aunt, and then a maiden lady—had, in ac-  
cordance with his father's will, taken charge  
of himself and brother until they severally at-  
tained their majority. Long, however, be-  
fore that she married Mr Stevens, by whom  
she had two children, Lucy and Emily. Her  
husband, whom she survived but two months,  
died insolvent; and in obedience to the dy-  
ing wishes of his aunt, for whom he appears  
to have felt the tenderest esteem, he took the  
eldest of her orphan children to his home,  
intending to regard and provide for her as  
his own adopted child and heiress. Emily,  
the other sister, found refuge in the house of  
a still more distant relative than himself.

The Stevenses had gone to live at a re-  
mote part of England—Yorkshire, I believe  
—and it thus fell out, that till his cousin  
Lucy arrived at her new home he had not  
seen her for more than ten years. The pale,  
and somewhat plain child, as he had esteem-  
ed her, was startled to find had become a  
charming woman; and her naturally gay and  
joyous temperament, quick talents and fresh  
young beauty, rapidly acquired an over-  
whelming influence over him. Strangely  
but vainly he struggled against the growing  
infatuation—argued, reasoned with himself—  
passed in review the insurmountable objec-  
tions to such an union, the difference of age  
—he leading towards thirty seven, she barely  
twenty one: he, crooked, deformed, of re-  
served, taciturn temper—she, full of young  
life and grace and beauty. It was useless;  
and nearly a year had passed in the bootless  
struggle when Lucy Stevens, who had vainly  
striven to blind herself to the nature of the  
emotions by which her cousin and guardian  
was animated towards her, intimated a wish  
to accept her cousin Emily's invitation to  
pass two or three months with her. This  
brought the affair to a crisis. Buoying him-  
self up with the illusion which people in  
such an unreasonable state of mind create for  
themselves, he suddenly entered the sitting  
room set apart for her private use, with the  
desperate purpose of making his beautiful  
cousin a formal offer of his hand.

She was not in the apartment, but her open-  
ed writing desk, and a partly finished letter  
lying on it, shewed that she had been recently  
there, and would probably soon return. Mr  
Lisle took two or three agitated turns about  
the room, one of which brought him close to  
the writing desk, and his glance involuntarily  
fell upon the unfinished letter. Had a deadly  
serpent leaped suddenly at his throat the  
shock could not have been greater. At the  
head of the sheet of paper was a clever pen-  
and-ink sketch of Lucy Stevens and himself:  
he, kneeling to her in a lovelorn, ridiculous  
attitude, and she laughing immoderately at  
his lachrymose and pitiful aspect and speech.  
The letter was addressed to her sister Emily;  
and the enraged lover saw not only that his  
supposed secret was fully known, but that he  
himself was mocked, laughed at for his do-  
ting folly. At least this was the interpreta-  
tion of the words that swam before his  
eyes.

At that instant Lucy returned, and a tor-  
rent of imprecation burst from the furious  
man, in which wounded self-love, rageful  
pride, and long pent-up passion found utter-  
ance in wild and bitter words. Half an  
hour afterwards Lucy Stevens had left the  
merchant's house—forever, as it proved. She,  
indeed, on arriving at her sister's, sent a let-  
ter supplicating forgiveness for the thought-  
less, and, as he deemed it, insulting sketch  
intended only for Emily's eye; but he repli-  
ed merely by a note written by one of his  
clerks, informing Miss Stevens that Mr Lisle  
declined any further correspondence with  
her.

The ire of the angered and vindictive man  
had, however, begun sensibly to abate, and  
old thoughts, memories, duties, suggested  
partly by the blank which Lucy's absence had  
made in the house, partly by remembrance of  
the solemn promise he had made to her  
mother, were strongly reviving in his mind,  
when he read the announcement of her mar-  
riage in a provincial journal, directed to him,  
as he believed, in the bride's handwriting;  
but this was an error, her sister having sent  
the paper. Mr Lisle also construed this in-  
to a deliberate mockery and insult, and from

that hour strove to banish all images and  
thoughts connected with his cousin from  
his heart and memory.

He unfortunately adopted the very worst  
course possible for effecting this ob-  
ject. Had he remained amid the buzz and tri-  
mult of active life, a mere sentimental disap-  
pointment, such as thousands of us have sus-  
tained and afterwards forgotten, would, there  
can be little doubt, have soon ceased to af-  
flict him. He chose to retire from business,  
visited Watley, and habits of miserliness  
growing rapidly upon his cankered mind, ne-  
ver afterwards removed from the lodgings he  
had hired on arriving there. Thus madly  
hugging to himself sharp-pointed memories  
which a sensible man would have speedily  
cast off and forgotten, the sour misanthrope  
passed a useless, cheerless, weary existence,  
to which death must have been a welcome  
relief.

Matters were in this state with the morose  
and aged man—aged mentally and corpore-  
ally, though his years were but fifty eight—  
when Mr Flint made Mr Jennings's acquain-  
tance. Another month or so had passed  
away when Caleb's attention was one day  
about noon claimed by a young man dressed  
in mourning, accompanied by a female simi-  
larly attired, and from their resemblance to  
each other he conjectured brother and sister.  
The stranger wished to know if that was the  
house in which Mr Ambrose Lisle resided.  
Jennings said it was, and with civil alacrity  
left his stall and rang the front door bell.  
The summons was answered by the landla-  
dy's servant, who, since Esther May's death  
had waited on the first floor lodger; and the  
visitors were invited to go up stairs. Caleb,  
much wondering who they might be, return-  
ed to his stall, and from thence passed into  
his eating and sleeping room, just below Mr  
Lisle's apartment. He was in the act of ta-  
king a pipe from the mantel-shelf, in order  
to the more deliberate and satisfactory cog-  
nition on such an unusual event, when he  
was startled by a loud shout, or scream rather,  
from above. The quivering and excited  
voice was that of Mr Lisle, and the outcry  
was immediately followed by an explosion of  
unintelligible exclamations from several per-  
sons. Caleb was up stairs in an instant, and  
found himself in the midst of a strangely  
perplexing and distracted scene. Mr Lisle,  
pale as his shirt, shaking in every limb, and  
his eyes on fire with passion, was hurling  
forth a torrent of vituperation and reproach  
at the young woman, who he evidently mis-  
took for some one else; whilst she, extreme-  
ly terrified, and unable to stand but for the  
assistance of her companion, was tendering  
a letter in her outstretched hand, and uttering  
broken sentences, which her own agitation  
and the fury of Mr Lisle's invectives render-  
ed totally incomprehensible. At last the  
fierce old man struck the letter from her  
hand, and with frantic rage ordered both the  
strangers to leave the room. Caleb urged  
them to comply, and accompanied them down  
stairs. When he reached the street he ob-  
served a woman on the other side of the  
street, dressed in mourning, and much older  
apparently, though he could not well see her  
face through the thick veil she wore, than she  
who had thrown Mr Lisle into such an agi-  
tation of rage, apparently waiting for them.  
To her the young people immediately hasten-  
ed, and after a brief conference the three  
turned away up the street, and Jennings saw  
no more of them.

A quarter of an hour afterwards the house-  
servant informed Caleb that Mr Lisle had  
retired to bed, and although still in great agi-  
tation, and, as she supposed, seriously indis-  
posed, would not permit Dr Clarke to be  
sent for.

So sudden and violent a hurricane in the  
usually dull and drowsy atmosphere in which  
Jennings lived, excited and disturbed him  
greatly: the hours, however, flew past with-  
out bringing any relief to his curiosity, and  
evening was falling, when a peculiar knock-  
ing on the floor overhead announced that Mr  
Lisle desired his presence. That gentleman  
was sitting up in bed, and in the growing  
darkness his face could not be very distinctly  
seen; but Caleb instantly observed a vivid  
and unusual light in the old man's eyes. The  
letter so strangely delivered was lying open  
before him; and unless the shoemaker was  
greatly mistaken, there were stains of recent  
tears upon Mr Lisle's furrowed and hollow  
cheeks. The voice, too, it struck Caleb,  
though eager was gentle and wavering.

'It was a mistake, Jennings,' he said, 'I  
was mad for the moment. Are they gone?'  
he added, in a yet more subdued and gentle  
tone.

Caleb informed him of what he had seen;  
and as he did so the strange light in the old  
man's eyes seemed to quiver and sparkle  
with a yet intenser emotion than before. Pre-  
sently he shaded them with his hand, and  
remained several minutes silent. He then  
said with a firmer voice:

'I shall be glad if you will step to Mr Sow-  
by, and tell him I am too unwell to see him  
this evening. But be sure to say nothing else,'  
he eagerly added, as Caleb turned away in  
compliance with his request; and when you  
come back let me see you again.'

When Jennings returned, he found to  
his great surprise Mr Lisle up and nearly  
dressed: and his astonishment increased a  
hundredfold upon hearing that gentleman  
say, in a quick but perfectly collected and  
decided manner, that he should set off for Lon-  
don by the mail train.

'For London—and by night too!' ex-  
claimed Caleb, scarcely sure that he heard  
aright.

'Yes—yes, I shall not be observed in the  
dark,' sharply rejoined Mr Lisle; and you,  
Caleb, must keep my secret from everybody,