

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Harpers American Magazine.

A TERRIBLY STRANGE BED.

THE most difficult likeness I ever had to take, not even excepting my first attempt in the art of Portrait painting, was a likeness of a gentleman named Faulkner. As far as drawing and coloring went, I had no particular fault to find with my picture; it was the expression of the sitter which I had failed in rendering—a failure quite as much his fault as mine. Mr Faulkner, like many other persons by whom I have been employed, took it into his head that he must assume an expression, because he was setting for his likeness; and, in consequence, contrived to look as unlike himself as possible, while I was painting him. I had tried to divert his attention from his own face, by talking with him on all sorts of topics. We had travelled a great deal, and felt interested alike in many subjects connected with our wanderings over the same countries. Occasionally, while we were discussing our traveling experiences, the unlucky set look left his countenance, and I began to work to some purpose; but it was always disastrously sure to return again, before I had made any great progress—or, in other words, just at the very time when I was most anxious that it should not re-appear. The obstacle thus thrown in the way of the satisfactory completion of my portrait, was the more to be deplored, because Mr Faulkner's natural expression was a very remarkable one. I am not an author, so I can not describe it. I ultimately succeeded in painting it, however; and this was the way in which I achieved my success:

On the morning when my sitter was coming to me for the fourth time, I was looking at his portrait in no very agreeable mood—looking at it, in fact, with the disheartening conviction that the picture would be a perfect failure, unless the expression in the face represented were thoroughly altered and improved from nature. The only method of accomplishing this successfully, was to make Mr Faulkner, somehow insensibly forget that he was sitting for his picture.—What topic could I lead him to talk on, which would entirely engross his attention while I was at work on his likeness?—I was still puzzling my brains to no purpose on the subject, when Mr Faulkner entered my studio; and shortly afterward an accidental circumstance gained for me the very object which my own ingenuity had proved unequal to compass.

While I was 'setting' my pallet, my sitter amused himself by turning over some portfolios. He happened to select one for special notice, which contained several sketches that I had made in the streets of Paris. He turned over the first five views rapidly enough; but when he came to the sixth, I saw his face flush directly; and observed that he took the drawing out of the portfolio, carried it to the window, and remained silently absorbed in the contemplation of it for full five minutes. After that he turned round to me, and asked very anxiously if I had any objection to part with that sketch.

It was the least interesting drawing of the series—merely a view in one of the streets running by the backs of the houses in the Palais Royal. Some four or five houses were comprised in the view, which was of no particular use to me in any way; and which was too valueless, as a work of Art, for me to think of selling it to my kind patron. I begged his acceptance of it at once. He thanked me quite warmly; and then seeing that I looked a little surprised at the odd selection that he had made from my sketches, laughingly asked me if I could guess why he had been so anxious to become possessed of the view which I had given him?

'Probably'—I answered—'there is some remarkable historical association connected with that street at the back of the Palais Royal, of which I am ignorant.'

'No'—said Mr Faulkner—'at least, none that I know of. The only association connected with the place in my mind, is a purely personal association. Look at this house in your drawing—the house with the water pipe running down it from top to bottom. I once passed a night there—a night I shall never forget to the day of my death. I have had some awkward travelling adventures in my time; but that adventure! Well, well! I suppose we begin the sitting. I make but a bad return for your kindness in giving me the sketch, by thus wasting your time in mere talk.'

He had not long occupied the sitter's chair (looking pale and thoughtful), when he returned—involuntarily, as it seemed—to the subject of the house in the back street. Without, I hope, showing any undue curiosity, I contrived to let him see that I felt a deep interest in every thing he now said. After two or three preliminary hesitations, he at last, to my great joy, fairly started on the narrative of his adventure. In the interest of his subject he soon completely forgot that he was sitting for his portrait—the very expression that I wanted, came over his face—my picture proceeded toward completion, in the right direction, and to the best purpose. At every fresh touch, I felt more and more certain that I was now getting the better of my grand difficulty; and I enjoyed the additional gratification of having my work lightened by the recital of a true story, which possessed, in my estimation,

all the excitement of the most exciting romance.

This, as nearly as I can recollect is word for word, how Mr. Faulkner told me the story:—

Shortly before the period when gambling houses were suppressed by the French Government, I happened to be staying at Paris with an English friend. We were both young men then, and lived, I am afraid, a very dissipated life, in the very dissipated city of our sojourn. One night, we were idling about the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal, doubtful to what amusement we should next betake ourselves. My friend proposed a visit to Frascati's; but his suggestion was not to my taste. I knew Frascati's, as the French saying is, by heart; had lost and won plenty of five-franc pieces there, merely for the fun of the thing, until it was 'fun' no longer; and was thoroughly tired, in fact, of all the ghastly respectabilities of such a social anomaly as a respectable gambling house. 'For Heaven's sake'—said I to my friend—'let us go somewhere where we can see a little genuine, blackguard, poverty stricken gaming, with no false gingerbread glitter thrown over it at all. Let us get away from fashionable Frascati's, to a house where they don't mind letting in a man with a ragged coat, or a man with no coat, ragged or otherwise.'

'Very well,' said my friend, 'we needn't go out of the Palais Royal to find the sort of company you want. Here's the place just before us; as blackguard a place, by all reports, as you could possibly wish to see.'

In another minute we arrived at the door, and entered the house, the back of which you have drawn in your sketch.

When we got up stairs, and had left our hats and sticks with the doorkeeper, we were admitted into the chief gambling room. We did not find many people assembled there. But, few as the men were who looked up at us on our entrance, they were all types—miserable types—of their respective classes.—We had come to see blackguards; but these men were something worse. There is a comic side, more or less appreciable, in all blackguardism—here there was nothing but tragedy; mute, weird tragedy. The quiet in the room was horrible. The thin, haggard, long haired, young man, whose sunken eyes fiercely watched the turning up of the cards, never spoke; the flabby, fat faced, pimply player, who pricked his piece of pasteboard perseveringly to register how often black won, and how often red—never spoke, the dirty, wrinkled old man, with the vulture eyes, and the darned great coat, who had lost his last sous, and still looked on desperately, after he could play no longer—never spoke. Even the voice of the croupier sounded as if it were strangely dulled and thickened in the atmosphere of the room. I had entered the place to laugh; I felt that if I stood quietly looking on much longer, I should be more likely to weep. So, to excite myself out of the depression of spirits which was fast stealing over me, I unfortunately went to the table, and began to play. Still more unfortunately, as the event will show, I won—won prodigiously; won incredibly; won at such a rate, that the regular players at the table crowded round me; and staring at my stakes with hungry, superstitious eyes, whispered to one another that the English stranger was going to break the bank.

The game was *Rouge et Noir*. I had played at it in every city in Europe, without however, the care or the wish to study the Theory of Chances—that philosopher's stone of all gamblers! And a gambler, in the strict sense of the word, I had never been. I was heart whole from the corroding passion for play. My gambling was a mere idle amusement. I never resorted to it by necessity, because I never knew what it was to want money. I never practised it so incessantly as to lose more than I could afford, or to gain more than I could coolly pocket, without being thrown off my balance by my good luck. In short, I had hitherto frequented gambling tables—just as I frequented ball rooms and opera houses—because they amused me, and because I had nothing better to do with my leisure hours.

But, on this occasion, it was very different—now, for the first time in my life, I felt what the passion for play really was. My success first bewildered, and then, in the most literal meaning of the word, intoxicated me. Incredible as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that I only lost, when I attempted to estimate chances, and played according to previous calculation. If I left every thing to luck, and staked without any care or consideration, I was sure to win—to win in the face of every recognised probability in favor of the bank. At first, some of the men present ventured their money safely enough on my color; but I speedily increased my stakes to sums which they dared not risk. One after another they left off playing, and breathlessly looked on at my game. Still, time after time, I staked higher and higher; and still won. The excitement in the room rose to fever pitch. The silence was interrupted, by a deep, muttered chorus of oaths and exclamations in different languages, every time the gold was shovelled across to my side of the table, the imperturbable croupier dashed his rake on the floor in a (French) fury of astonishment at my success. But one man present preserved his self possession; and that man was my friend. He came to my side, and whispered in English, begged me to leave the place, satisfied with what I had already gained. I must do him the justice to say, that he repeated his warnings and entreaties several times; and only left me and went away, after

I had rejected his advice (I was to all intents and purposes gambling drunk) in terms which rendered it impossible for him to address me again that night.

Shortly after he had gone, a hoarse voice behind me cried: 'Permit me, my dear sir, permit me to restore to their proper place two Napoleons which you have dropped.—Wonderful luck, sir!—I pledge you my word of honor as an old soldier, in the course of my long experience in this sort of thing, I never saw such luck as yours—never. Go on, sir—*Sacre mille bombes!* Go on boldly and break the bank.'

I turned round and saw, nodding and smiling at me with inveterate civility, a tall man dressed in a frogged and braided surtout. If I had been in my senses I should have considered him, personally, as being rather a suspicious specimen of an old soldier. He had goggling, bloodshot eyes, mangy moustaches, and a broken nose. His voice betrayed a barrack room intonation of the worst order, and he had the dullest pair of hands I ever saw—even in France. These little personal peculiarities exercised however, no repelling influence on me. In the mad excitement, the reckless triumph of that moment, I was ready to 'fraternize' with any body who encouraged me in my game. I accepted the old soldier's offered pinch of snuff; clapped him on the back, and swore he was the honestest fellow in the world; the most glorious relic of the Grand Army that I ever met with. 'Go on,' cried my military friend, snapping his fingers in ecstasy—'Go on, and win! Break the bank—*Mille tonnerres!* my gallant English comrade, break the bank.'

And I did go on—went on at such a rate, that in another quarter of an hour the croupier called out: 'Gentlemen, the bank has discontinued for to night.' All the notes and all the gold in that 'bank,' now lay in a heap under my hands; the whole floating capital of the gambling house was waiting to pour into my pockets.

'Tie up the money in your pocket handkerchief, my worthy sir,' said the old soldier, as I wildly plunged my hands into my heap of gold. 'Tie it up, as we used to tie up a bit of dinner in the Grand Army; your winnings are to heavy for any breeches pockets that ever were sewed. There, that's it—shovel them in, notes and all. *Credie!* what luck!—Stop, another Napoleon on the floor! *Ah! sacre petit polisson de Napoleon!* have I found thee at last? Now then, sir—two tight double knots each way with your honorable permission, and the money's safe. Feel it, feel it fortunate sir! hard and round as a cannon ball—*Ah, bah!* if they had only fired such cannon balls at us at Austerlitz—*nom d'une pipe!* if they only had. And now, as an ancient grenadier, as an ex-brave of the French army, what remains for me to do? I ask what? Simply this: to entreat my valued English friend to drink a bottle of champagne with me, and toast the goddess Fortune in foaming goblets before we part.'

Excellent ex-brave! Convivial ancient grenadier! Champagne by all means! An English cheer for an old soldier! Hurrah! hurrah! Another English cheer for the goddess Fortune! Hurrah!

'Bravo! the Englishman; the amiable, gracious Englishman, in whose veins circulates the vivacious blood of France! Another glass? *Ah, bah!*—the bottle is empty! Never mind! *Vive le vin!* I, the old soldier, order another bottle, and half a pound of *bon-bons* with it.'

No, no, ex-brave; never—ancient grenadier! Your bottle last time; my bottle this! Behold it! Toast away! The French Army!—the great Napoleon!—the present company! the croupier! the honest croupier's wife and daughters—if he has any! the ladies generally! Every body in the world.

By the time the second bottle of champagne was emptied, I felt as if I had been drinking liquid fire—my brain seemed all a flame. No excess in wine had ever had this effect on me before in my life. Was it the result of a stimulant acting upon my system when I was in a highly excited state? Was my stomach in a particularly disordered condition? Or was the champagne particularly strong?

'Ex-brave of the French Army,' cried I, in a mad state of exhilaration. I am on fire! how are you? You have set me on fire! Do you hear; my hero of Austerlitz? Let us have a third bottle of champagne to put the fire out.' The old soldier wagged his head, rolled his goggle eyes, until I expected to see them slip out of their sockets; placed his dirty forefinger by the side of his broken nose; solemnly ejaculated 'Coffee!' and immediately ran off into an inner room.

The word pronounced by the eccentric veteran, seemed to have a magical effect on the rest of the company present. With one accord they all rose to depart. Probably they had expected to profit by my intoxication; but finding that my new friend was benevolently bent on preventing me from getting dead drunk, had now abandoned all hope of thriving pleasantly on my winnings. Whatever their motive might be, at any rate they went away in a body. When the old soldier returned, and sat down again opposite to me at the table, we had the room to ourselves. I could see the croupier, in a sort of vestibule which opened out of it, eating his supper in solitude. The silence was now deeper than ever.

A sudden change, too, had come over the 'ex-brave.' He assumed a portentously solemn look; and when he spoke to me again, his speech was ornamented by no oaths, enforced by no finger snapping, enlivened by no apostrophes, or exclamations.

'Listen, my dear sir,' said he, in myster-

ously confidential tones—'listen to an old soldier's advice. I have been to the mistress of the house (a very charming woman, with a genius for cookery!) to impress on her the necessity of making us some particularly strong and good coffee. You must drink this coffee in order to get rid of your little amiable exaltation of spirits, before you think of going home—you *must*, my good and gracious friend! With all that money to take home to night, it is a sacred duty to yourself to have your wits about you. You are known to be a winner to an enormous extent, by several gentlemen present to night, who, in a certain point of view, are very worthy and excellent fellows; but they are mortal men, my dear sir, and they have their amiable weaknesses! Need I say more? Ah, no, no! you understand me!

Now, this is what you must do—send for a cabriolet when you feel quite well again—draw up all the windows when you get into it—and tell the driver to take you home only through the large and well lighted thoroughfares. Do this; and you and your money will be safe. Do this; and to-morrow you will thank an old soldier for giving you a word of honest advice.'

Just as the ex-brave ended his oration in very lachrymose tones, the coffee came in, ready poured out in two cups. My attentive friend handed me a cup, with a bow. I was parched with thirst, and drank it off at a draught. Almost instantly afterwards, I was seized with a fit of giddiness, and felt more completely intoxicated than ever. The room whirled round and round furiously; the old soldier seemed to be regularly bobbing up and down before me, like the piston of a steam engine. I was half deafened by a violent singing in my ears; a feeling of utter bewilderment, helplessness, idiocy overcame me. I rose from my chair, holding on by the table to keep my balance; and stammered out, that I felt dreadfully unwell—so unwell, that I did not know how I was to get home.

'My dear friend,' answered the old soldier; and even his voice seemed to be bobbing up and down, as he spoke—'My dear friend, it would be madness to go home in your state. You would be sure to lose your money; you might be robbed and murdered with the greatest ease. I am going to sleep here: do you sleep here, too—they make up capital beds in this house—take one; sleep off the effects of wine, and go home safely with your winnings, to-morrow—to-morrow, in broad daylight.'

(To be continued.)

From the London Working Man's Friend.

THE CAP OF LIBERTY.

There are some peculiar ceremonies which, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, survive the passage of time, and are found, even in modern days, as freshly engraved on the memory, and earnestly guarded by popular prejudice, and as acceptable to the spirit of a free nation, as is the remote centuries of antiquity. Amongst these, the use of that symbol of freedom, 'the cap of liberty,' stands foremost. In early times none but the free claimed the privilege of wearing a cap of this kind, and none dared to exercise it but one so entitled to enjoy it. Woe to the slave who had the imprudent hardihood to be seen covered! for the lash, the chain, and the brand soon made him repent of his neglect or his folly, whichever it might have been.

In all countries the slaves were obliged to appear bareheaded, and whenever the day came that freedom was the reward of faithful servitude, one of the ceremonies used in the manumission of the slave was the placing of a cap on the head by the former master. Thus the cap or hat became the symbol of liberty, and was the standard around which the spirit of patriotism rallied in many a revolution. When the mandate of the tyrannical Gessler compelled the hardy sons of Switzerland to salute a bat placed upon a pole, as a mark of submission, the spirit of the nation was roused, the tyrant paid forfeit with his life for his insulting order, and the hardy mountaineers obtained that liberty which has since been so intrepidly preserved; and, accordingly, the arms of the united cantons of Switzerland have a round hat for a crest, as emblematical of that liberty so nobly struggled for.

In England the cap, with the word liberty inscribed on it in letters of gold, is used as a symbol of the constitutional liberty of the nation, and Britannia sometimes bears it on the point of her spear. This, however, is not always the case, as the figure of Britannia is often represented with the trident of Neptune uncapped in her left hand, while with her right she offers the olive-branch of peace to the world.

In France, in the beginning of the revolution of 1789, the cap of liberty was hoisted as the symbol of freedom; but, when the bloody tragedies of the remorseless Directory filled France with terror and dismay, there were but few that regarded the cap of liberty with a favourable eye. It was during this melancholy period that the red cap was adopted, from the following circumstances:—For many years the kings of France sent those condemned for crimes and serious political offences to the galleys at Marseilles, and there, chained to the oar, they dragged out a wretched and abandoned existence, in the polluted atmosphere of a society stained with crimes of the deepest dye. However when the revolution opened the prison doors, and burst the chains of the galley slaves, the red cap worn by the liberated convicts was elevated as the standard of freedom, and borne by them as they marched in hundreds to Paris, the ready tools of the wicked men who then held the reins of