

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the London Punch.

THE RUSSIAN LOCHINVAR.

The big-booted Czar had his eye on the East,
For treaties and truces he cares not the least,
And save his good pleasure he conscience hath none,
He talks like the Vandal and acts like the Hun.
So faithless in peace, and so ruthless in war,
Have ye'er heard of King like the big-booted Czar?

He stayed not for speech, but with sabre and gun,
He rushed into Turkey, though cause there was none;

But when he got near to the Old Iron Gate,
He found certain reasons which urged him to wait.
For down by the Danube stood Omar Pasha,
Prepared to encounter our big-booted Czar.

So he drew up his legions—serf, vassal, and thrall,
His footmen, and horsemen, and cannons, and all,
Than out spake bold Omar, his hand on his sword,
In an attitude fitting an Ottoman Lord,
"O come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to see St. Sophia, you big-booted Czar?"

"I've long asked your homage, my suit you denied,
And my holy region you've scorned and defied,
So now I've come down with this army of mine,
The right and the wrongs of the case to define,
And you have not a chance, for the Mussulman star
Must pale when it looks on the flag of the Czar."

He flung down his challenge, the Turk took it up,
(Remarking on slips 'twixt the lip and the cup,
And deigned to his logic the briefest reply,
"That the claim was unjust, and its proof was a lie."
And he brought up some thousands of swords, as a
bar.

To further advance by the big-booted Czar.

So before Oltenitza the battle took place,
And the Russian thought proper to right about
face.

For the guns of Stamboul had a manning boom.

And the bombshell sent flying the Dannonburgh
plume,

And the Cossacks all grumbled "Twere better by
far,

To eat tallow at home than dine out with the
Czar."

One hint would not do, nor one word in his ear.

The despot commands, and his men persevere,

So again to the breezes their standards are flung,

And Kalafat echoes the war-trumpet tongue,

And the Ottoman, charging, has scattered afar

The ill-fated troops of the big-booted Czar.

There was wild disarray in the rear and the van,

The Moslem they rode, and the Cossacks they ran,

There was racing and chasing—'twas pleasing to
see

The Russ as well beat as a Russian can be.

May this, and much worse, be all fortune of war

That awaits the old pirate, the big-booted Czar.

From fait's Edinburgh Magazine.

THE ASSASSIN OF THE PAS DE
CALAIS.

About twenty years ago, much excitement
was caused throughout a large district of
the north-east of France, by a series of re-
markable crimes, which were committed
upon the high-road which runs from Calais,
through St. Omer, to Arras.

The first of the outrages which attracted
so much public attention was attended with
singular circumstances. At five o'clock one
morning, some early-rising inhabitants of
St. Omer were surprised to see a well-known
and highly esteemed neighbour riding into
town in his *toupe*, or gig, as if he had been
travelling all night and were just returning
home. It was Alexis Bribault, the notary.
His horse seemed jaded and tired, and was
jogging doggedly along with his head low
down, his ears flapping forward, and his
long tail dropping listlessly betwixt his
weary legs. There was something very
strange in the appearance of M. Bribault,
which caused every one to turn and look at
him as he rode steadily and slowly on. He
was deadly pale, his mouth rigidly shut, and
his eyes wide open, with a fixed stare, which
either denote intense abstraction of mind, or
mental alienation. The hand which held the
reins had dropped carelessly upon his knee;
he seemed to have completely forgotten that
he was riding in his *toupe*, and that there
was a horse before him. His hat, which had
evidently fallen in the dirt, was slouched
upon his head, but in such a manner, as not
to interfere with a full view of his counte-
nance. Although it was summer, a large
neckerchief was tied in a wide fold over his
throat and chin, and the great travelling-
cape, which in fine weather was always
strapped up in front of the gig was now thrown
over his shoulders. It was strange; but
perhaps M. Bribault had found it cold during
the night, or had been seized with indispo-
sition on the road. His appearance al-

together was certainly remarkable and alarm-
ing.

As the gig passed along before the great
cage of a shop of Perrin, the bird merchant,
some half dozen carrion crows which he kept
began to croak, and manifest such sudden
and unanimous excitement that Perrin him-
self was amazed.

"Hola!" exclaimed Perrin, with serious
wonder, as he looked up and down the street
and all around. "There is fresh blood spilt
somewhere near!"

His knowledge of the instincts and habits
of the birds was correct. It was quickly ob-
served that the slow-moving gig left behind
it a trail of drops of blood.

This discovery was no sooner made than
several townspeople ran after the vehicle,
stopped the horse and demanded of M. Bri-
bault what had happened. He did not speak
but still stared fixedly before him. He look-
ed as if he had been frightened to death—as
if he were sitting up in a state of immova-
ble torpidity. They prepared to carry him
into the house of a physician, but found that
he was firmly bound to the gig. They
opened the cape and saw with horror that
blood was streaming, fast and thick, down
his breast. A short, broad piece of wood had
been ingeniously fastened, in an upright
position, to the back of the gig, and to this
the unfortunate man had been firmly tied
with a strong cord, which was wound round
his body and the stake, in a certain doubly
spiral manner, curiously, ingenious and ef-
fectual, for the purpose of keeping him up-
right upon his seat, notwithstanding the
motion of the gig. Over all the cape had
been thrown. They undid the widely-folded
handkerchief which concealed his throat
and chin. In this, on either side, small
pieces of wood had been inserted, which had
kept his head in position. As they removed
the well-contrived bandage, the head fell
back with appalling listlessness, and a
frightfully torn, mangled and bleeding throat
was exposed to view. M. Bribault was dead.

He had gone the preceding day to collect the
rents of certain property of which he had the
superintendence, and had been expected to
return the same evening. On his way home
he had been waylaid, murdered, robbed of
every farthing, and sent going in the manner
above described, his trusty horse finding the
way to his master's dwelling. It was found
by the sums which M. Bribault had received,
that the robber or robbers had made a booty
of four thousand francs, all in specie. Ac-
cording to the evidence of a physician, the
lacerations in the throat of the unfortunate
man had been inflicted by the teeth of some
animal, most probably those of a dog. Such
was the first of this series of crimes. Instant
measures were taken for the detection and
apprehension of the criminal or criminals, but
without any result.

The second outrage was also distinguished
by remarkable circumstances. Colin Festin
was the proprietor of a large farm, some
twelve miles from St. Omer, towards Arras,
and was a man of considerable wealth. One
morning, about two months after the murder
of M. Bribault, a peasant who was going to
work on M. Festin's farm, observed his mas-
ter seated upon a bank at some distance from
the side of the road, leaning his back against
a tree, and smoking with an air of profound
abstraction. As M. Festin had always been
an early riser, and was known to be fondly
attached to his pipe; the peasant took no
special notice of him, but went on towards
the farm, to proceed with his work. He
found that Madame Festin was already up
and about. She asked him, with some anx-
iety, if he had seen his master. He told her
he had, and pointed out to her where M.
Festin was sitting smoking. It was a good
way off, but they could plainly perceive him
sitting with his back against a tree and a
pipe in his mouth. Madame Festine said
that her husband had been seized with a
violent toothache early in the night, and had
taken into his head to walk up and down the
road and smoke, in the hope of obtaining re-
lief, and she had been alarmed by his not re-
turning. Reassured by seeing him sitting
yonder in apparent tranquility, she went
back into the house, and as it was yet very
early, betook herself to bed for another hour.
Meanwhile, the peasants going hither and
thither about the farm-yard, looked frequen-
tly towards the figure sitting so quietly under
the tree, and observed with surprise that M.
Festin never once altered his position in the
whole course of an hour; and though the pipe
was still in his mouth, there was no smoke.—
Doubtless, he had smoked himself to sleep.—
As the sun was now rising high, and the
heat becoming oppressive, the labourer, fear-
ing his master might sustain injury from
sleeping unprotected in the sunshine (for
though beneath a tree, the foliage did not
shield him), went to rouse him. A slight
examination proved to the horror-stricken
man that his master was dead; that he had
been murdered, and afterwards planted
against the tree, with his pipe in his mouth,
as discovered.

His throat was lacerated just as M. Bri-
bault's had been, but the wound had been
covered over with a coarse, strong pitch

plaster, his neckerchief had been turned in-
side out, and arranged so as to conceal var-
ious marks, as of teeth, and the clots of
blood which stained it, and tied carefully
around his neck, and his coat had been but-
toned for the sake of hiding the blood which
had fallen upon his breast and the upper part
of his *culottes*. All the money which M.
Festin carried upon his person, which, how-
ever, was but of small amount, had been
stolen by the murderer. About fifty yards
from the spot where the body was placed
there were marks on the road as of a scuffle
having taken place there, and round about
were the prints of the paws of a large dog.
Some endeavour, had evidently been made
to efface these marks, so that, beside the paw-
prints around, nothing was distinct.

Immense excitement was raised in the
rural district by these two crimes, perpetrat-
ed in such close proximity of place and time
but all efforts to discover the criminals
proved fruitless, and shortly a third outrage
of a still more extraordinary and infamous
description, gave new strength and stimulus
to the general alarm and excretion.

The Villagers of Monterre, on entering
the church one morning to cross them-
selves and say a prayer, according to
the custom of good Roman Catholics, were
surprised to behold the Abbé Viérou seated
behind the altar, at the side of the altar, clad
in the grandest robes of his holy office, having
his back to the congregation, his gaze fixedly
directed on the crucifix, and his hands
clasped as if in prayer. Many went in, re-
peated a *pater*, counted beads, crossed them-
selves, and came out, not daring to disturb
the apparent devotion of the father. At
length a young priest entered hurriedly at the
altar door, protracted himself before the
cross in a hasty and agitated manner, then
went over towards the Abbé Viérou, spoke to
him, touched him, and found that he was
dead. With a loud voice, and in great excite-
ment, he proclaimed the fact to the horror-
stricken people. It appears that, on entering
the church through the sacristy, he found
that the lock of the door had been picked and
broken and there were stains of blood upon
the door and upon the ground. Much
alarmed he proceeded onward, examining the
place as he went. In the robe-room all was
disorder; the robes had been moved and dis-
arranged, the floor was covered with blood,
the cupboard had been opened and a basin
and sponge taken therefrom—the former was
filled with water so deeply stained that it
looked like blood, and the latter appeared like
a lump of clotted gore. The Abbé's cossack
was on the floor; it looked as if it had been
drawn along the ground and trampled upon;
it was torn all down the back; there were
numerous rents about the breast and neck,
and it was well-nigh saturated with blood.—
The robes worn by the Abbé at grand mass
on the occasion of the high fêtes of the
church had been taken away.

On examination, it was found that the ill-
fated priest had been deprived of his life in
a similar manner as had the victims in the
two former cases. The throat had been torn
and lacerated in the same singular and fatal
way, and the wounds were covered over with
a large piece of coarse pitch-plaster. The
face and hands of the murdered man had
been washed; he had been arrayed in his
best robes of office, and carefully placed in
the chair below the altar, where he was dis-
covered as described. He had solemnised the
day before, a marriage betwixt some wealthy
parties of the neighbourhood, and had gone
to the residence of the bride's father, where
he had spent the remainder of the day, and
received the priest's fees, and some handsome
'offerings' to the church; and as he was re-
turning with these, he had been waylaid, rob-
bed, and murdered. The impious and sacrile-
gious associations which augmented the
enormity of this crime, raised the excite-
ment to an almost unprecedented extent.—
Nothing else was talked of for a long time.
The cleverest police-agent from Paris were
called to the assistance of those of the local-
ity, and every possible effort made, with un-
flinching earnestness and industry, but still
the course of justice was defeated.

Various other outrages, still perpetrated
with the same extraordinary combination of
secrecy, audacity, and horrible originality,
occurred in various parts of the same district
and at various intervals of time within a pe-
riod of a year and a half—all obviously be-
longing to the same series, directed by the
same diabolical genius, and perpetrated by
similar means. The above instances, how-
ever, are all that need be cited here, as we
are not engaged in depicting the 'Night-
side of Nature,' nor in compiling a compa-
nion volume for the 'Newgate Calendar,' or a
recueil from the *Gazette des Tribunaux*.

It happened during this time that one of
the diligences running from Calais to Paris,
through St. Omer, broke down shortly after
leaving the latter place, to which the con-
ductors were obliged to take it back in order
that it might be repaired. As the damage
was but of slight nature, it was not expected
that any serious delay would be incurred in
consequence. The passengers, who all for-
tunately escaped without any serious injury,

were accommodated with a room in a house
by the wayside, where they were to wait until
the vehicle should be repaired and brought
to the door. Among them was a young Eng-
lishman, named Charles Ferrers, who was on
his way to Paris, where he intended passing
a year or two. Knowing but little French,
and being the only Englishman in the com-
pany, this gentleman became tired of being
cooped up in a close room with a party of
foreigners, who were all engaged in eager
conversation with one another whilst he was
silent and alone, and resolved to walk on
awhile, until the diligence should overtake
him. Having inquired of the conductor the
road the coach would take, he went out,
the conductor assuring him that the vehicle
would pass and take him up before he had
proceeded far.

Busied with his own thoughts, the young
Englishman walked forward in a meditative
mood, little heeding any one who passed, or
any feature of the road. In this fashion he
went on, until he became conscious of having
proceeded a considerable distance, perhaps
more than two miles, from St. Omer. The
evening was advancing, and shortly it would
be dusk. In some anxiety he feared he had
taken the wrong road, and studiously en-
deavoured to recall the instructions of the
conductor, in conjunction with the course he
had followed. However, as he could not re-
member having passed a single cross-road or
turning, the way from St. Omer having been
an unbroken and almost straight line, he
speedily became reassured, and continued to
walk forward, though now at a sauntering
pace, and with an ear attentively listening
for a sound of wheels. Being a student and
lover of botany, he was attracted presently
by a large bunch of curious mosses growing
on a bank at the road-side, and went to ex-
amine them. Behind this bank was a thick
grove of trees, of considerable extent, and
stretching some distance across the country.
Whilst stooping, thus engaged, he became
conscious of the sound of hard breathing, as
of some creature on the bank above him;
and, looking up, perceived a large wolf-dog
on the top of the bank, standing in an at-
titude of fierce watchfulness, its large red eyes
fixed upon him, its mouth open, and its long
thin tongue quivering betwixt its jaws like a
flake of dull fire. Besides the hostile bearing
of the brute, there was something sufficiently
fierce and alarming in its appearance to
make the startled Englishman draw back
and clutch his walking-stick with a firmer
grasp. The creature was of great size and
strength, and the hair that covered its gant
body was in an extremely rough and disorder-
ed state, especially around its neck, and from
the top of its head a large patch had been
torn off, recently, and with great violence,
as the bare bald place was still marked with
the blood which had flowed where the hair
had been wrenched out by the roots. Ferrers
had heard of the recent outrages, when in
England, and it is not surprising that the
remembrance of them now flashed across his
mind with panic-stricken force. Involun-
tarily he began to move backward towards
St. Omer, regretting his own thoughtlessness
in coming so far alone in a country so no-
toriously infested, and cursing the delay of
the tardy diligence. As he moved away, the
dog followed, springing from the bank and
trailing after his footsteps with a crouching
crawling gait, very singular and ominous.
It appeared to the frightened Ferrers that
the animal only awaited a signal from its
master or masters, who might be lying con-
cealed close by amidst the trees, to fasten
upon him and tear him by the throat as
other victims had been torn. He looked
fixedly at the brute, as he retreated cautious-
ly, and step by step, but found he could not
engage or fascinate its eyes with his own,
as he might have done, he thought, had it
been merely obeying the instincts of its own
nature. It did not look towards him all the
time, and seemed to avoid encountering his
glance, but crouched after him steadily, its
long mouth open, its fangs displayed, its
tongue still quivering betwixt its jaws; and
though turning its head from side to side,
maintaining so close a surveillance over him,
that the least movement of the stick was im-
mediately followed by a low growl. The
creature was evidently acting in obedience
to severe training; its ferocity was not
awakened, its passions were not roused, and
though it pursued him in a manner so sinis-
ter and threatening, it had still the appear-
ance of a dog acting under fear of the whip.

In this curious fashion Ferrers retreated
some fifty paces. At that distance from the
spot where he received the first alarm, some
large trees on the right—the side from which
the dog had issued—threw their branches far
across the road, deepening into dark gloom
the dusk of the evening. Ferrers, whose ap-
prehensions, founded upon the frightful sto-
ries of robbery and murder which he had
heard, had already excited his nerves to a
most painful tension, winced and trembled on
finding himself at this point, of which the
solitude and obscurity were in such desperate
keeping with his fears. He paused, and
again tightened his grasp around the stout
staff he carried. As he stopped, the dog's