

Literature. &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the National Era.

A LAY OF THE OLDEN TIME.

Oxe morning of the first sad Fall,
 Poor Adam and his bride
 Sat in the shade of Eden's wall—
 But on the outer side.

She blushing in her fig-leaf suit,
 For the chaste garb of old;
 He, sighing o'er his bitter fruit,
 For Eden's drupes of gold,

Behind them, smiling is the morn,
 Their forfeit garden lay;
 Before them, wild with rock and thorn,
 The desert stretched away.

They heard the air above them fanned,
 A light step on the sward;
 And lo! they saw before them stand
 The angel of the Lord!

"Arise!" he said why look behind,
 When hope is all before,
 And patient hand and willing mind
 Your loss may yet restore!

"I leave with you a spell whose power
 Can make the desert glad,
 And call around you fruit and flower
 As fair as Eden had.

"I clothe your hands with power to lift
 The curse from off your soil;
 Your very doom shall seem a gift,
 Your loss a gain through Toil.

"Go cheerful as you humming-bees,
 To labor as to play!"
 White-glimmering over Eden's trees,
 The angel passed away.

The pilgrims of the world went forth,
 Obedient to the word;
 And found where'er they tilled the earth,
 A garden of the Lord.

The thorn-tree cast its evil fruit,
 And blushed with plum and pear;
 And seeded grass and trodden root
 Grew sweet beneath their care.

We share our primal parent's fate,
 And in our turn and day
 Look back on Eden's sworded gate,
 As sad and lost as they.

But still for us his native skies
 The pitying angel leaves,
 And leads through Toil to Paradise
 New Adams and new Eves.

From Chambers's Journal for January.

AN ADVENTURE ON DARTMOOR.

As I talked to the woman, and tried to find out from her whence it was likely my little companion had strayed, I heard a slight movement amongst the bed-clothes of the sick man, and glancing that way, I saw a round bullet-head, with scarcely a sprig of hair on it, rise up followed by the upper part of a body, strange to say, fully clothed in day garments, but of what hue or kind I could not discover. I took no notice; and after he had gazed at me long enough to satisfy him, the owner of the head lay down again, and all was still.

Preparatory to ensconcing myself in my corner, I took off my coat, and hung it by the fire to dry, and at my hostess's suggestion, after I had retired, I rolled myself in an old patch-work quilt which she brought me, and gave her my trousers, vest, and shirt to get dried, she promising to brush them and bring them to me in the morning. I took the precaution, however, of taking out my purse, and some letters that were in my pockets, before I gave them to her.

I did not quite like the mystery of the sick man, and thought it more discreet for me to do so.

Weary as I was, I could not sleep. I lay listening to the dash of a mountain-stream which ran by the hut, and considering what I should do in case I was unable to discover the home of the poor child; for my hostess—to whom I had proposed that she should remain there until I could find out to whom she belonged, promising to pay her for her trouble and expense—had declined the charge, saying that she must leave the house next day to go a journey; so that there would be no one to take care of the child. I was also not quite at ease about the pretended sleeper, and busied myself by forming plans for defending myself should I be attacked. How many thoughts we waste! how much care and anxiety we expend in forming plans to meet emergencies which never occur! So it was with me this night. Nothing happened, and I fell asleep, and slept quietly until broad daylight awoke me. On awaking, I saw by the height of the sun that it must be getting late; and as I heard no sound in the outer apartment, I thought I might venture to roll myself up in my quilt, and make an irruption into the room of the sleepers for my clothes.—

Gently opening the door, I peeped round the corner, and saw that the good lady and my little charge lay fast asleep; so stepping lightly towards the fireplace, I hastily gathered up the garments which hung there—just able to discern them by the glimmer of light which shone through the shutters, and slipped back to my shed, intending to rub off the dirt, and thus dress. Imagine my wrath and dismay when I found that, instead of my good shooting-jacket and brown duck-trousers, I had nothing but a full suit of the Dartmoor prison-garments, yellow on one side and brown on the other! Inspired by rage and indignation, I rolled myself again in my quilt, and sallied forth to the sleeping dame, shouting as I went for redress.—'Where is my coat? What have you done with my trousers and all my clothes?' I said as I shook her sternly by the shoulder; but I shook and screamed in vain. She was like the sleeping beauty of eastern tale, and could not be awakened. At last, however, my behaviour roused her, and she sat bolt upright in bed, and after a time her understanding gasped the truth. 'The villain! the rascal!' she exclaimed: 'that's how he serves me; that's what I get for my kindness! taking of an in, and feeding of us, and letting us creep into my son's bed when you come—and then telling lies for us!'—'That's how the dirty varmint sars me. Why, sir, he come to my door two hours after night-fall, and a lifted up the latch, and in a walk as easy as if he'd a knowed me all my days; and then he says: 'You do see where I do come from. Well, 'tw'd be a pity if I was took't, wid'—widn't? 'Twould be a pity, caus for why; before I was laid hold on, I'd knock you down and kill you!' and he up wi his fist just as thof he were a gwin to do it. 'Now you mind me!' a says: 'if you'll find me quarters for two or three days till the search is gone over, I'll gie thee these shiners; and he showed me a heap of money: but if you let on a word about me to anybody, I'll kill you, and flay you alive afterwards; so now you can choose,' he says. Says I; 'I don't want to do ye no hurt. I'd sooner ye did get off than not: for I do often think must be a hard life ye do lead up there to the prison; so you can eat and drink what I've a got; and then, if anybody do come, you can get into bed, and I'll say 'tis my sick son.'

'And so you helped him to my clothes to get off in!' I said, half inclined to laugh at the ludicrous scene in which I was an actor.

'No, sir, that I did not. I hung up your clothes to dry, and didn't know but what they was there to this minute. That rogue he've a took't um sure enough, and I thought he were sound asleep all the time!'

That the woman spoke truth, was evident.—So rejoicing that I had at all events saved my purse, I put on the hateful suit of the felon; and after partaking of the comfortable breakfast my hostess prepared for little Kitty and me and remunerating her for her trouble, I again sallied forth, much annoyed at the strange position in which I found myself, yet half amused at the absurdity of it, and laughing in my mind at what my friends and patients would think if they had a glimpse of me walking over the moor dressed in a convicted felon's garb, and leading a little bareheaded and barefooted child, of four years old, by the hand. Such a way of enjoying a holiday.

However, there was no help for it; I was in the mess, and now I must do my best to get out of it. So onward I went across the hills, in the direction of the village in which my hostess of the past night had told me I was most likely to meet with an owner for little Kitty. It was a glorious morning, and the scenery so wild and so very grand, that I longed to make some sketches: but situated as I was, this was not to be thought of. Following the moor-road on which we had entered, for about a mile across wild hills, over which lay scattered huge masses of granite, we made our way through a wilderness of heath and gorse, interspersed with extensive bogs, until at last we struck a parish road. Along the course of this road lay some cottages, one of which I entered, with the view of making inquiries about the owner of the child, but found it empty, and proceeded to the next, where were only some little children, who ran away at my approach. The third I tried was in the same case; all the doors were wide open, but the inhabitants were absent. Concluding that the people had gone to their work, I pursued my way towards a village I observed a little way before me. Here the matter was cleared up. Groups of people stood here and there in eager talk; some news of deep import had evidently reached the colony;

Old men and beldams in the street
 Do prophesy upon it dangerously—

They shake their heads;

And whisper one another in the ear,
 And he that speaks does gripe the hearer's

wrist;
 Whilst he that hears makes frightful action
 With wrinkled brows, with nods, and rolling

eyes.
 It was evident that some great excitement prevailed.

So eager were all in their talk, that—as I suddenly turned a corner into the main street where the people were assembled—none noticed me, and I had time to observe one principal group, which attracted my attention. A pretty,

very young widow stood with pale and anxious face, and weeping bitterly, by the side of an old man with long white locks; he was blind, but his face, which was turned towards me, expressed dismay and horror. Two police-officers were near, and were talking earnestly together, whilst several men and women stood around, all expressing by their gestures some strong feeling or other. It was but for a moment I had watched this group, when suddenly little Kitty broke from me, and screaming 'Mother!—mother!' sprang towards the young widow, who turned quickly round, saw the child, and with a cry of joy received her into her outstretched arms. The scene was most interesting, and I stepped forward with a joyful feeling to greet the mother, and tell her of her little one's deliverance, when, in an instant, the two policemen fell on me, seized me 'neck and crop,' as if I had been some fierce beast, collared me, and, in spite of remonstrance, thrust manacles on my hands; and then, amidst the jeers and shouts of the juveniles, the execrations of the men, and reviling of the women, I was marched off towards the village inn, where a conveyance to take me, as they said, 'back to my cell,' was to be procured. On my way, the policemen told me that I was not only charged with evading my sentence by running away, but also with *child-stealing*, and gave me to understand that 'the gentleman' whose purse and papers I had last night stolen had given notice at the Ivy bridge station of my whereabouts, and that they were on the way to Dame Foreman's cottage to apprehend me when I had presented myself, and saved them the trouble. It was in vain I assured them that I was the gentleman robbed, and their informant the escaped convict; equally in vain that I told them the history of my finding the child. 'No doubt,' they said jeeringly; 'those fine clothes and that cropped head looked like it. All escaped convicts, and other malefactors when apprehended, trumped up some story to get off, and they were not going to let me escape for any such nonsense.' I then gave my name, and demanded to be taken before the next magistrate, saying that if they did not do so, I would proceed against them the moment I was released. Whether it was that they saw reason from my words and manner to doubt whether I really was the malefactor I appeared, I cannot tell, but on this strong remonstrance they agreed that I should be taken to the squire's and examined before they proceeded further. In this resolution they were strengthened by the arrival of my little Kitty and her grateful young mother, who having heard her little one's account of the matter, came to thank me for my kindness to the poor baby. I think, indeed, that Kitty's warm demonstrations of affection did more to convince the men of office that I was not the culprit they had conceived me to be, than all my own assertions and dissentient remonstrances put together.

Matters had now begun to improve. My guardians assumed a more civil tone: and the people of the house, who had heard my story cheered me by the assurance that 'the squire was a 'cute man,' and just, and that he'd soon see how matters stood; and in compliance with my request I was at once marched up to the hall, followed by the beadle and half the parish, and within half an hour from my entering the village, I stood in the little justice room of the squire, waiting until he should be at leisure to examine me. It will well be believed that my appearance was not of the most prepossessing character. I was thin and gaunt from the effects of illness, weary and languid from the effects of the fatigue I had gone through in the last twenty-four hours. My hair had all been cut off during my fever, which gave me the true convict look; I wore the prison garb, and had neither shoes nor stockings; moreover, I was dirty and grim-looking enough to represent any amount of scoundrelship you please. Such was my appearance, when a well-dressed, rather leanish man of middle age, followed by a livery servant bearing writing materials, entered the room. He walked towards the table with a manner of judicial severity, took his seat, and without more than a cursory glance at me, received the policemen's information of the nature of the business, which was given in few words. He then looked up at me, his eye wandered over my person, then fixed on my countenance, whilst a strange flickering smile rose on his lip. Then he looked more earnestly, jumped up from his chair with a hearty laugh and outstretched hand, exclaiming: 'Dr Brightman! How d'ye do my good fellow? Why, doctor, who would ever have thought to see you in such a pickle! You, the very 'ape of ferm,' in a runaway convict's garb! Come, sit down my friend; you must dine with me to-day, and we'll soon trim you up a little. I'll be answerable for your runaway, my good fellows,' said he to the police. 'He's no convict, but my good friend Dr Brightman, of —, who helped me out of death's clutches last year; and right glad am I to help him out of yours now,' added he with a good-humoured laugh.

'Come, my friends,' I said, 'you have behaved civilly, and done no more than your duty so here's a little recompense for you out of the purse of the gentleman whom I robbed; and I gave them a sovereign, which sent them away in sufficiently good humour with me, though

they were rowing vengeance on the traitorous vagabond, who had put them on such a false scent.

'But now come, doctor,' said my friend, 'come to my dressing room, and let me fit you out a little before I present you to Lady Boughton and my daughters. But how came you not to recognise me?'

'Why, Sir John,' I replied, 'circumstances have changed your appearance as much as my own! Remember, the last time I saw you, you were a pale sick man, in night-cap and dressing-gown, just clearing out of the small-pox; it was no wonder that I did not know you; and they called you 'the squire,' so that did not help me.'

'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good,' said my dear little wife, as I finished reading the above to her. 'You know, Edward, if that vagabond convict had not played you such tricks you would not have been brought before my father, and then you know, we should never have met.'

'True, my darling,' I replied; 'and had it not been for my 'treasure-trove,' I know not where we should have found such a kind nurse for baby as her grateful mother proves, or such a sprightly playfellow for her as my poor little foundling.'

And so it was. On the memorable day of my appearance before Sir John, I was introduced to her who now sits by my side, the best and dearest of wives; and on the death of the old blind man, who I found was the father of the pretty young widow, and Kitty's grandfather, as we happened to want a nurse, we took both mother and child into our house, where they have lived ever since, and proved the best of inmates: so that, in the end, I have had little cause to regret my Adventure on Dartmoor.

VIPERS SWALLOWING THEIR YOUNG.

A curious fact once occurred to a sportsman. When he killed a viper he occasionally put it into his pocket to preserve the fat, which is considered valuable for bruises, rheumatism, &c. It so happened that one day he went into luncheon, and forgot that he had a viper in his pocket until he had occasion to use his handkerchief, when, to his dismay, he felt a lot of young vipers crawling about. This was a good lesson, and depend upon it, never repeated. I have known five cases of the bite of this venomous reptile, and in all extreme suffering. But one case I would particularly mention in the son of one of my tenants; he was then a lad of about ten years old. In his father's garden he stood watching a cat, as he thought, very intent upon a mouse under a stone. The mouse not appearing, he raised the stone, when to his horror a large viper seized him by the forefinger. He very soon became sick and faint, and his arm swelled, with extreme pain. He was taken to a medical gentleman in the neighbourhood, and after some time and much suffering, he recovered. But the most remarkable fact is this, that he has grown but little since, as if his blood had been literally poisoned by venom absorbed into his system; and, although he is now nineteen, you would not from his appearance, guess him to be more than thirteen or fourteen years of age. —Notes on Natural History.

REMINISCENCES OF WATER-LOO.

WELLINGTON said: "People ask me for an account of the action: I tell them it was hard pounding on both sides, and we pounded the hardest. There was no manoeuvring; Bonaparte kept his attacks, and I was glad to let it be decided by the troops." * * * * * The Prince Pozzo di Borgo, who dined with us, told me that he was with the duke the whole day of the 18th. It was one of those actions, he said, that depended upon the commander being continually in the hottest place. We were a great part of the time, he said, between the two armies; but the coolness of the Duke, he added is not to be described. Considerable troops of Belgians, stationed at Hougoumont, gave way. The Duke turning to me said smiling, 'Voilà, des coquins avec qui il faut gagner une bataille.' (A precious set to win a battle with!) I was so struck with this characteristic anecdote that I went to the Duke, and I asked him if it was true. He said Pozzo di Borgo had repeated his exact words. * * * * * The Hanoverian affirms that Bonaparte, after abusing him, turned to one of his generals, and exclaimed, "I have beaten these English twice to-day, but they are such beasts (*si bêtes*) that they do not know when they are beaten."

ANOTHER METAL DISCOVERY.

Dr Hoffman, following in the wake of Davy and Deville, has come forward as a discoverer of metal. In a lecture delivered by him lately at the British Royal Institution he exhibited a bright glistening mass somewhat resembling butter, and described it as ammonium—the metallic base of ammonia. This is regarded as a highly interesting chemical fact, inasmuch as it strengthens the views entertained respecting the constituents of the atmosphere, viz. that they are all metallic.