

"Well, this contains his life and adventures, his conduct since he's been in prison, his conversation with his friends, the chaplain, the turnkey; several of his supposed love-letters to his sweetheart Emily, and a ballad called 'The Sorrowful Lamentation of J. B. R., and his Last Farewell to Emily S., he being ordered for Execution at Norwich Castle on Saturday next.'"

"But," said Harry, "how do you know, sir, the history of that bad man's life, and what he has said, and done, and written in prison?"

"Oh," said Jack-o'-Lantern, smiling, "we are not over nice or exact. Some few leading matters we take from the newspapers, but for all interesting personal details, and striking private anecdotes, I draw on my fancy."

"And the love-letters to Emily S., sir?" said Mercy.

"Oh, I've written them out of my own head," said Jack, "or, rather, from some I have by me. All love-letters are alike, as I dare say you'll say, my girl, when you read R—'s in my broadsheet, and compare them with those you've got in your box from your own young man. It's very odd," he added, "where this manuscript can have got to. If this hadn't been Christmas-eve, it must have been finished and set up by this time."

"It's to have three illustrations:—First, The criminal dreaming that he is about to commit a crime, tossing to and fro on his bed; Emily looking at him with terror.

"Second, R— standing over his victim—a pistol at his feet; his wife, with three ostrich feathers on her head, a low dress, a necklace, a very small waist, and a train, falling wounded into the arms of her maid, in a mob cap, very short petticoats, and an apron.

"Third, The convict in the condemned cell, writing farewell verses to Emily, inclosing his picture, and a lock of his hair—an absurdity; as, of course, it was closely shorn on coming into the prison;" and his thoughts, let us hope, very differently occupied.

(To be continued.)

CHINESE CUSTOMS.

THE striking contrarieties of Chinese customs in comparison with our own is amusingly given in the following extract from a work published at Macao:—"On landing at Macao, the first object that attracted my notice was a military mandarin, who wore an embroidered petticoat, with a string of beads round his neck, and who, besides, carried a fan; it was with some dismay I observed him mount on the right side of his horse. On my way to the house my attention was drawn to several old Chinese, standing on stilts, some of whom had grey beards; and nearly all of them huge goggling spectacles; they were delightedly employed in flying paper kites, while a group of boys were gravely looking on, and regarding the innocent occupation of their seniors with the most serious and gratified attention. Desirous to see the literature of so curious a people, I looked in at a bookstore. The proprietor told me that the language had no alphabet, and I was somewhat astonished, on his opening a Chinese volume, to find him begin at what I had all my life previously considered the end of the book. He read the date of the publication, 'The fifth year, tenth month, twenty-third day.' 'We arrange our dates differently,' I observed; and begged that he would speak of their ceremonials. He commenced by saying, 'When you receive a distinguished guest do not fail to place him on your left hand, for that is the seat of honour; and be cautious not to uncover the head, as it would be an unbecoming act of familiarity.' Hardly prepared for this blow to my established notions, I requested he would discourse of their philosophy. He reopened the volume, and read with becoming gravity. 'The most learned men are decidedly of opinion that the seat of human understanding is the stomach!' On arriving at my quarters, I thought that a cup of Young Hyson would prove refreshing, feeling certain that, in this at least, I should meet with nothing to surprise me; imagine my astonishment when I observed that the favourite leaf that the Chinaman was about to infuse, looked different to any I had ever seen, it being, in colour, a dull olive, having none of the usual bloom on its surface. I remarked on its appearance, when my attendant quietly said, 'We never use painted tea ourselves, but as the foreign merchants will pay a better price for it when the brown leaves are made of one uniform colour, we of course have no objection to cover them with powders, especially as it makes the common withered look like the best tea.' On drinking the infusion made from the pure uncoloured leaf, I at once resolved to become a convert to this fashion, leaving the other Chinese customs for future consideration."

THE EMPTY CUP.

I HAD a tiny silver cup,
A jewel rich and rare;
And I said: 'No maid shall drink from my cup
But the lassie with the golden hair;
The loveliest lass in all the land—
In a land of maidens fair.

LULLIE was the lassie's name;
The lass with the love-lit eye
That thrilled my heart to its very core
Whene'er I passed her by:
The maiden true, whose eyes of blue
Would shame the azure sky.

I met her at the crystal spring,
Where the sparkling waters flow,
In the blush and bloom of summer-time—
In the morning's rosy glow:
When the birds were warbling up above,
And the flowers were glad below:

When all above sweet notes of love
Did greet the rosy morn,
And the loving breeze sighed through the trees,
And kissed the growing corn,
At that radiant hour rich thoughts of love
In my own lone heart were born.

LULLIE stood by the musical spring,
In a halo of light arrayed,
And if ever a fairy walked the earth,
LULLIE, the beautiful maid,
Was a fairy then, as the zephyrs soft
With her golden tresses played.

I kneeled and filled my jewelled cup
From the bubbling, silvery stream,
And gave it to her lily-hand,
As I saw the love-light beam
From her radiant eyes, more glorious far
Than the starlet's nightly gleam:

And I said, as she placed it to her lip,
"LULLIE, the cup is thine;
If thou drink that draught, a token it is
Thou wilt love for ever mine:
If thou sip the tiniest, sparkling drop,
It shall quench my thirst with thine."

With a beautiful grace she turned her head,
I scarcely dared look up:
I felt that my face was burning red,
And I scarcely dared look up:
"Look! look!" with a modest blush, she said,
And I saw the empty cup!

BALLOONS AND BALLOONING.

BALLOONS are going up. People are beginning to look upon them more seriously as means of locomotion—aerial machines, which may yet be docile in the hands of a skillful steersman.

In the advance of mankind, all things—even apparent obstacles—promote incessant progress. Expressions of doubt in every form, the host of sceptical and envious men, favour those improvements which they gainsay; plagiarists extend their influence, while they render their effects popular: everything conduces to progress and advancement.

Balloonng seems a strange phantasy. Odd, indeed, it looks for a man to leave the earth and go right up thirty thousand feet above it. Amongst the oldest of traditions are stories of attempts to imitate the flight of birds: Dædalus flew across the Ægean; Archytas, the Greek, invented a wooden dove, which flew as cleverly as one of Nature's own construction; Cyrano, of Bergerac, entertained a project for travelling across the sky to the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars; Roger Bacon directed his attention to the same object, and is said to have invented a machine which enabled men to fly; Albert, of Saxony, maintained the practicability of aerial navigation; Mendoza, of Portugal, and Schott, of Germany, occupied themselves with similar speculations; Cardan, Fabry, and the rest of the alchemists, showed that the rarefaction of air by heat would be of advantage in making a flying machine; Bishop Wilkins set the philosophers laughing by proposing a chariot capable of traversing the air; the Jesuit, Lana, proposed a balloon made of very thin copper-plate, from which all the air should be excluded, and which would, consequently, be lighter than the atmosphere; but "he felt assured that God would never allow an invention to succeed which might so readily be made use of to disturb civil government." Father Guzman was less scrupulous and less doubtful; he constructed a machine, in the form of a bird, with tubes and bellows to supply the wings with air, but gravitation was too much for him, earth claimed her own, and the bird would not fly.

The discovery of hydrogen introduced a new era in

the history of ballooning. In 1782 two brothers, named Montgolfier, paper manufacturers, of Annonay, near Lyons, made the first balloon. It was a huge paper bag filled with hydrogen gas, but they found that the hydrogen tore the paper, and were disposed to abandon their plan. It appears that they were under the impression that the clouds owed their buoyancy to the influence of electricity, and that electricity diminished the weight of bodies to which it was applied. They therefore determined upon lighting a fire under a balloon, not to rarefy the inclosed air, but to increase the electricity of the vapour in the interior.

A curious anecdote is related of Joseph Montgolfier. During his investigations, he had frequent intercourse with the printers of Avignon for publishing his papers. The widow Guichard, of one of these printers, with whom he often lodged during his stay at Avignon, having one day observed a thick smoke issuing from his room, had the curiosity to go in, and was much surprised to see Montgolfier gravely employed in filling a shapeless paper bag, by means of the smoke from a chafing-dish. The operator seemed thwarted by the balloon, then filled with smoke, rising one moment, and then awkwardly falling on one side the next; thus he was obliged to hold the balloon in the position which he thought most facilitated the entrance of the smoke, while with the other he threw wet straw on the chafing-dish. The widow Guichard smiling at his distress, said with simplicity, "Eh! why don't you fasten the balloon to the chafing-dish?" This exclamation was like a ray of light to Montgolfier; in fact, the secret lay there—it was only necessary to fasten the chafing-dish to the balloon.

After many efforts, the brothers constructed a balloon in the form of a spherical globe, thirty-three feet in diameter, and capable of containing 22,000 cubic feet. It was made of canvas with double paper, and weighed rather more than five hundred pounds. Under the opening, at the bottom, a fire of straw was lighted, which soon introduced 22,000 cubic feet of heated air, which was consequently much lighter than the air. This then had, of course, a great tendency to rise, and having no resistance to contend against, except that which was made by the weight of the balloon itself, as soon as it became so light that its own weight, joined to that of its covering, was less than that of an equal volume of the external air, the balloon majestically rose, although Montgolfier had mistaken the agency which he employed. The first public ascent took place at Annonay, June, 1783. Another trial at Versailles was equally successful, when a sheep, a duck, and a cock, were attached to the balloon, and were found uninjured, some hours afterwards, a few miles from the royal residence. Still later, Pilatre des Roziers and the Marquis d'Avlande ascended in a basket attached to the balloon, to the height of three hundred feet. The balloon, however, was fastened to the earth by ropes.

M. Charles at last conceived the idea of making the balloon of silk, and inflating it with hydrogen gas. He discovered that silk would retain the vapour that was put into it—that hydrogen was five times lighter than the common air, that the balloon might easily be filled, and that the security to aerial voyagers would be wonderfully increased. People had been afraid to go up in fire balloons, the risk was so imminent, for high above the earth balloons had taken fire, and the unfortunate travellers had been precipitated back to the world they came from. But, now that safety was so much greater, that the necessity of carrying up lighted fuel was done away with, ascents were made in rapid succession. Some took up wings, and a rudder; others, oars, but found them of no use. During three years, 1783-4-5, the number of ascents made in France was truly astonishing. In one or two of the voyages the Channel was crossed with great rapidity.

The first balloon experiment in England was made by Count Zambecari, on the 25th of November, 1783, from the Artillery-ground, London. In September, 1784, Vincent Lunardi ascended, accompanied by a cat, a dog, and a pigeon, and safely descended at Standon. Several other aerial voyages were made by this individual, and many engravings of his ascents were published at the time.

To elevate a balloon in the air was one great point gained; but it did not follow that aerial navigation was possible. Sails and oars occurred to the inventors as the appropriate machinery for moving balloons in the air, but they were found utterly impracticable. Roziers endeavoured to work out the idea, but his balloon burst, and he perished; Major Mooney's experiment ended almost as fatally—his balloon burst, and for five hours he was immersed in the German Ocean. M. Blanchard invented a machine which he



THE BROTHERS MONTGOLFIER, INVENTORS OF THE FIRE-BALLOON.

declared would answer the desired purpose; it was a cumbersome flying ship, with more elaborate machinery than a steam engine. On the 2nd of March, 1784, he ascended from the Champs de Mars, displaying a banner inscribed with *Sic itur ad astra*; he crossed the Seine at an immense height, and returned safely. In 1785 he guided his balloon over the British Channel (in French *La Manche*), and was therefore styled by the wits "Don Quichote de la Manche." He ascended afterwards from the principal cities of Europe, was everywhere welcomed with triumph, and was the theme of innumerable epigrams, but never established that he had any other power over the winds than that derived from his weather-wise shrewdness. In 1796 he went to New York, and made there his forty-sixth aerial voyage.

The system of wings or sails was tried with divers variations by his successors, but no one was able to make them the masters and not the slaves of the winds. A much later and perhaps more promising attempt is that of M. Transon. His object was to avail himself of the aerial currents moving in different directions, and he had therefore connected with his principal balloon others of smaller size, which he sent up to higher altitudes, and all together forming a free system in the air would move in the direction of the current into which the balloonist threw the largest quantity of his superficial surface. This method has not yet been abandoned, and it is possible that a team may thus be established, the vehicle remaining constantly at a given altitude, and the horses rising or falling from current to current, aiming always to keep a true general direction. The demonstration furnished by the late American aerial voyage from St. Louis to Lake Ontario of the existence of different altitudes, which may be made available for direction, will lead to the discovery of the true method of aerial navigation, and we shall, at last, see ingenuity triumphant, and sail through the air, as we sail on the waters, to New York or Australia.

THE ROMANCE OF A POOR YOUNG MAN.

(Translated from the French.—Copyright.)

October 12th.

It is two days since I became well enough to leave my retirement, and visit the chateau. I had not had a chance of seeing Mlle. Marguerite since the moment we parted at Elven tower. She was alone in the drawing-room when I entered; on recognising me she made an involuntary movement, as if to rise; then she remained motionless, and her countenance was suddenly dyed a becoming purple. It was contagious, for I felt that I, too, blushed up to the eyes.

"How do you do, sir?" she said, giving me her hand; and she uttered these simple words in a tone so gentle and humble—so tender, alas!—that I could have wished to throw myself on my knees before her. But I was obliged to reply to her in a tone of cold politeness. She looked at me sorrowfully, then lowered her large eyes with a resigned air, and resumed her work.

Almost at that moment her mother sent for her to go to her grandfather, whose state was becoming very alarming. For several days he had been unable to speak or to move; paralysis had got almost entire possession of him. The last gleams of mental activity were extinct; sensation and pain alone remained. They could not doubt that the old man's death was at hand, but life was too strongly entrenched in that energetic heart to leave it without obstinate struggling. The doctor had predicted that the conflict would be a long one. Still, at the first appearance of danger, Mme. Laroque and her daughter had lavished their attentions and watchings, with the passionate self-denial and the unreserved devotedness which are the peculiar virtue and glory of their sex. In the evening of the day before yesterday, they had succumbed to weariness and feverishness, and Dr. Desmaretz and I offered to take their places beside

M. Laroque during the ensuing night. They consented to take a few hours' rest. The doctor, who was himself very weary, soon told me he was going to lie down on a bed in the room adjoining. "I am no good here," he said; "all is over. You see he doesn't even suffer any longer, poor man! it is a condition of stupor that is quite painless. Awakening from it will be death. So we can make ourselves easy. If you notice any change, call me; but I don't think any change will take place before the morning. Meanwhile, I am fainting with sleepiness, absolutely!" He gave a loud yawn, and went out of the room. His language, in the presence of the dying man, shocked me. He is an excellent man, nevertheless; but to pay death the respect which is its due, we must not only see the senseless matter which it destroys, but we must believe in the undying principle which it sets free.

Left alone in the chamber of death, I took a seat near the foot of the bed, from which the curtains had been turned back, and tried to read by the light of a lamp which stood on a little table near me. The book fell from my hands. I could think of nothing but the strange combination of events which, after so many years, gave to this guilty old man the grandson of his victim as the witness and guardian of his last sleep. Then, amid the profound stillness of the time and place, in spite of myself, I thought of the scenes of tumult, and violence, and blood, of which the lifetime of this dying man had been so full. I sought for the distant impression of them on the countenance of this suffering aged man, on the large features which stood forth in pale relief against the shade, like a plaster mask. I saw there nothing save the seriousness and premature repose of the grave. At intervals I approached the pillow, to assure myself that the breath of life still dilated his weakened breast.

At length, towards the middle of the night, an irresistible drowsiness took possession of me, and I fell asleep, my forehead resting on my hand. I was sud-