

beds, but their voices were low and their steps cautious and noiseless.

"Tiernay—this is Tiernay," said some one reading my name from the paper over my head. Some low words which I could not catch followed, and then the surgeon replied—

"There is a chance for him yet, though the debility is greatly to be feared."

I made a sign at once to my mouth, and after a second's delay the spoon touched my lips, but so awkwardly was it applied, that the fluid ran down my chin; with a sickly impatience I turned away, but a mild low voice, soft as a woman's, said—

"Allons!—Let me try once more;" and now the spoon met my lips with due dexterity.

"Thanks," said I faintly, and I opened my eyes.

"You'll soon be about again, Tiernay," said the same voice; as for the person, I could distinguish nothing, for there were six or seven around me; "and if I know any thing of a soldier's heart, this will do just as much as the doctor."

As he spoke he detached from his coat a small enamel cross, and placed it in my hand, with a gentle squeeze of the fingers, and then saying, "au revoir," moved on.

"Who's that?" cried I, suddenly, while a strange thrill ran through me.

"Hush!" whispered the surgeon, cautiously; "hush! it is the Emperor."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TALK ABOUT THE SPIDER.

THE spider family is very numerous, no less than fifty different kinds being described by naturalists. We shall, however, only mention some of the most common. All spiders have eight legs, with three joints in each, and terminating in three crooked claws. They have eight eyes also, differently arranged according to the different species: some have them in a straight line, others in the shape of a capital V; others four above and four below; others two above, two below, and two on either side; while others, again, have them arranged in a way too complicated to be described without plates. In the fore part of the head, they have a pair of sharp crooked claws, or forceps, which stand horizontally, and which, when not in use, are hidden from view, being concealed in cases beautifully adapted for their reception, and in which they fold up, just like a clasp-knife, and there remain between two rows of teeth. When the spider bites its prey, it thrusts a small white proboscis out of its mouth, with which it instills a poisonous liquor into the wound. The abdomen, or hinder part of the spider, is separated from the head and breast by a small thread-like tube. Their outer skin is a hard polished crust.

A very curious description, sometimes found in this country, but more generally in Italy, is the hunting-spider, so called because, instead of spinning webs to entrap their prey, they pounce on them, and devour them. This spider is small

and brown, but beautifully spotted, with its hinder-legs longer than the rest. When one of these spiders sees a fly three or four yards off, it does not attack it without some deliberation as to the best means of doing so. Generally speaking, it creeps under it, and then, stealing softly up, it seldom misses its prey. If, however, on a nearer approach, it finds that it is not in a direct line, it will immediately slide down again, and the next time, making its observations more correctly, it pounces on the unsuspecting fly's back. Meantime, if the fly moves, the hunter follows its example, always taking care to face its prey. Should the fly, however, take wing, its enemy will follow it, swift as the lightning's flash, and then, moving almost imperceptibly along, she catches it by the poll, and, after quietly satisfying the pangs of hunger, carries the remainder home, to keep for a future day. The nest of these spiders is very curious: it is about two inches high, and is composed of a close and soft satin-like texture. In this are two chambers, placed perpendicularly, in which the spider reposes during the day, generally going out to hunt after nightfall. The parent hunter regularly instructs her young ones how to pursue their future avocation, and when, in teaching them, they themselves happen to miss a jump, they always run away, as if quite ashamed of themselves!

One of the largest kinds of nests to be met with in this country is that of the labyrinthic-spider, whose web most of our readers must surely have seen spread out like a broad sheet in hedges, generally in the furze, or other low bushes. The middle of this net, which is of a very close texture, is suspended like a sailor's hammock, by fine silken threads fastened to higher branches. The whole curves upward, sloping down to a long funnel-shaped gallery, nearly horizontal at the entrance, but winding obliquely until it becomes almost perpendicular. This gallery is about a quarter of an inch, is much more closely woven than the sheet part of the web, and generally descends into a hole in the ground, or else into a soft tuft of grass. Here is the spider's dwelling-place, where she may often be found resting with her legs extended, ready to catch the hapless insects which get entangled in her sheet net.

The most extraordinary nest, however, of the whole species, is that of the mason-spider, which is a native of the tropics, and is generally found in the West Indies. This nest is formed of very hard clay, colored deeply with brown oxide of iron. It is constructed in the form of a tube, about one inch in diameter and six or seven long. Their first labor is to line it, which they do with a uniform tapestry of orange-colored silken web, of a texture rather thicker than fine paper. This lining is useful for two important purposes: it prevents the walls of the house from falling down, and also, by being connected with the door, it enables the spider to know what is going on above, for the entire vibrates when one part is touched. Our readers who have not been so fortunate as to meet with this description of nest,

may very probably feel inclined to laugh at our mention of a door. It is nevertheless perfectly true that there is a door, and a most ingeniously contrived one also, and truly it may be regarded as one of the most curious things in the whole range of insect architecture. It is about the size and shape of a crown-piece, slightly convex inside, and concave on the outer side. It is composed of twelve or more layers of web, similar to that with which the inner part is lined; these are laid very closely one over the other, and managed so that the inner layers are the broadest, the others gradually diminishing in size, except near the hinge, which is about an inch long; and as all the layers are united there, and prolonged into the tube, it is necessarily the firmest and strongest portion of the entire structure. The materials are so elastic, that the hinge shuts as if it had a spring, and of its own accord. The hole in which the nest is made being on a sloping bank, one side must always be higher than the other, and it is observed that the hinge is invariably placed on the highest side, because the spider knows well, that, when so situated, the door, if pushed from the outside, will fall down by its own weight, and close; and so nicely does it fit into the little groove prepared for it, that the most attentive observer could scarcely discover where the joining was. In this safe retreat the wary spider lives, nor will the loudest knocking tempt it out of its hiding-place. Should, however, the least attempt be made to force open the door, the spider, aware of what is going on by the motion of the threads, runs quickly to the door, fastens its legs to the silk lining of the walls, and, turning on its back, pulls the door with all its might. The truth of this assertion has been tested by many entomologists, who, by lifting the door with a pin, have felt the little spider trying to prevent their entrance; the contest, of course, is not a long one, and the assailants being uniformly victorious, the spider seeks safety in flight. Should the door be entirely taken away, another will soon be put in its place. These spiders hunt their prey at night, and devour them in their nests, which are generally found scattered all over with the fragments of their repasts. A pair of spiders, with thirty or forty young ones, often live together in one nest such as we have described.

The most famous of all spiders is the tarantula. It is an inhabitant of Italy, Cyprus, and the East Indies. Its breast and abdomen are ash-colored, as are also the wings, which have blackish rings on the inner side. Its eyes are red: two of them are larger than the others, and placed in the front of its head; four others in a transverse direction near the mouth; and the remaining two close to the back. It generally lives in bare fields, where the land is fallow and soft; and it carefully shuns damp shady places, preferring a rising ground facing the east. Its nest is four inches deep, half an inch wide, and curved at the bottom, and here the insect retreats in unfavorable weather, weaving a web at the door to be secure from rain and damp. In July it casts its skin,

and lays 730 eggs, but does not live to rear them, as it dies early in the winter. Its bite is said to occasion death. First, the part bitten becomes inflamed, then sickness and faintness come on, followed by difficulty of breathing, and then by death. Music is the only cure resorted to. A musician is brought to see the patient, and tries one air after another, and at length hits upon the one which impels the sufferer to dance. The violence of the exercise brings on perspiration, which invariably cures the disorder.

A gentleman who was traveling in Italy some years ago, was very anxious to see the dance, but it being too early in the year for the spider to be found, all he could do was to prevail on a young woman who had been bitten on a previous year to go through the dance for him just as she did then. She agreed to the proposal, and at first lolled listlessly and stupidly about, while slow, dull music was played. At length the right chord was touched; she sprang up with a fearful yell, and staggered exactly like a drunken person, holding a handkerchief in each hand, and moving correctly to tune. As the music became more lively, she jumped about with great velocity, shrieking very loudly. Altogether, the scene was most painful, but was acted to perfection. The patients were always dressed in white, and adorned with red, green, and blue ribbons; their hair fell loosely over their shoulders, which were covered with a white scarf. All that we have related as to the effects of the bite, was long believed to be true; but many years ago its truth was questioned, and the result of the investigation was, that the tarantula was a harmless insect, and that the supposed injuries inflicted by it were made use of as an excuse for indulging in a dance similar to that of the priestess of Bacchus, which the introduction of Christianity had put an end to. Those who are not impostors are merely afflicted with a nervous illness, known by the name of St. Vitus's Dance: and to this saint many chapels have been dedicated.

Another curious and interesting description of spider is that called the water-diving spider. It can easily be understood that a spider would not find any difficulty in breathing under water, inasmuch as they are provided with gills. But the diving-spider is not content, as frogs are, with the air furnished by the water, but independently carries down a supply with her to her sub-marine territories. This spider, which is constantly found in the neighborhood of London, does not relish stagnant water, preferring slow-running streams, where she lives in her diving-bell, which shines like a globe of silver. This shining appearance is supposed to proceed either from an inflated globule surrounding the abdomen, or else from the space between the body and the water. When the little diver wishes to inhale a fresh supply of atmospheric air, it rises to the surface, with its body still continuing in the water, and merely the part containing the spinneret visible, and this it briskly opens and moves. It generally comes up every quarter of an hour, although it could remain in the water for many days together.

A thick coating of hair prevents its being wet, or otherwise incommoded by the water.

The diving-spider spins its cell in the water; it is composed of closely-woven, strong, white silk, and shaped like half a pigeon's egg, looking something like a diving-bell. Occasionally this nest is allowed to remain partly above water; generally, however, it is totally submerged, and is attached by a great number of irregular threads to some near objects. It is entirely closed, except at the bottom, where there is a large opening. This, however, is sometimes shut, and then the spider may be seen staying peaceably at home, with her head downward; and thus they often remain during the three winter months.

No insects are more cleanly in their habits than spiders, although the gummy substance of which their webs are composed, and the rough hairy covering of their bodies, with but few exceptions, render this an arduous task. Whenever they happen to break a thread of their web which they are unable to mend, they roll it up in a little ball, and throw it away, and they regularly comb their legs.

In concluding this brief account of the spider family, we can assure our readers, that any time they may bestow on the subject will be amply rewarded by the interest and pleasure they will derive. And, lest any should imagine that the hours thus passed are wasted or misspent, we shall close our article by giving a short history of a man whose life was saved by his knowledge of the habits of a spider.

Very many years ago, a Frenchman called Quatreman Disjouvai sided with the Dutch in a revolt against the French. For this offense he was cast into prison, where he remained for eight long years, without the most remote prospect of being set at liberty. To while away the dreary hours, he made acquaintance with some spiders who shared his solitary cell, and, having nothing to occupy his mind, he passed the greater part of his time in attentively watching their movements. By degrees he discovered that they only spun their large wheel-like webs in fine weather, or when it was about to set in; while in damp weather they generally disappeared altogether. In the month of December, 1794, when the republican troops were in Holland, a sudden and unexpected thaw set in, and so materially disarranged their general's plans, that he actually thought of withdrawing his army altogether, and accepting the money which the Dutch would gladly have given to have got rid of them. Meantime Disjouvai, who thought that any masters would be better than his present ones, ardently hoped that the French would be victorious. Shut up as he was, he contrived to hear all about their intended movements, and, knowing that the weather alone prevented it, he watched his old friends the spiders with redoubled interest. To his infinite delight, he found that a frost was just about to set in, and so severe a one, too, that it would enable the rivers and canals to bear the weight of the baggage and artillery. Somehow or other, he succeeded in

having a letter conveyed to the general, assuring him that within fourteen days a severe frost would set in. "The wish was parent to the hope;" and the commander-in-chief, believing that he really had some supernatural revelation on the subject, maintained his position. At the close of the twelfth day, the anxiously wished for frost began, and Disjouvai felt sure that now he would be set at liberty. Nor was he mistaken. The general's first act on entering the town was to go to the prison, and, thanking him personally for his valuable information, he set him free. Disjouvai subsequently became a celebrated entomologist, directing his attention principally to spiders, whose first appearance in summer he thought ought to be welcomed by sound of trumpet!

AMALIE DE BOURBLANC, THE LOST CHILD.—A TALE OF FACTS.

IN the heat of the last French war, some forty years ago, we were under the necessity of removing from the north to make our residence in London. We took our passage in one of the old Scotch smacks from Leith, and, wishing to settle down immediately on our arrival in the great metropolis, we took our servants and our furniture along with us. Contrary winds detained us long upon our passage. Although a mere child at the time, I well remember one eventful morning, when, to our horror and alarm, a French man-of-war was seen looming on the distant horizon, and evidently bearing down on us. A calm had settled on the sea, and we made but little way, and at last we saw two boats lowered from the Frenchman's deck, and speedily nearing us. This occurred shortly after the famous and heroic resistance made successfully by the crew of one of the vessels in the same trade to a French privateer. With this glorious precedent before our eyes, both passengers and crew were disposed to make no tame resistance. Our guns were loaded to the muzzle, and every sailor was bared for action. Old cutlasses and rusty guns were handed round about, and piled upon the deck. Truly, we were a motley crew, more like a savage armament of lawless buccaneers than bloodless denizens of peace. But happily these warlike preparations were needless, for a breeze sprung up, and, though we were pretty smartly chased, the favoring gale soon bore us far from danger, and eventually wafted us in safety to our destined port.

My mother was somewhat struck, during the period of our short alarm, by the fearless and heroic bearing of our servant Jane. A deeper feeling seemed to pervade her mind than common antipathy to the common foe. In fact, at various times during her previous service, when any events connected with the French war formed, as they ever did, the all-engrossing subject of discourse, Jane evinced an interest in the theme equaled only by the intense hatred toward that nation which she now displayed. On the present occasion, the appearance of the foe awakened in her bosom a thousand slumbering but bitter recollections of a deep domestic tragedy connect-