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## LITERATURE.

*Bentley's Miscellany.* April. R. Bentley, New Burlington-street.

The contents are of an interesting and varied character, displaying no ordinary amount of talent. The lover of the sentimental as well as of the lively will find much to interest him. "The Note Book of a Coroner's Clerk" abounds in genuine humour, and well deserves perusal. Maxwell's Incursion into Connemara displays all the curious witticism for which the domestic sayings and doings of the Irish are so remarkable. "The Mirror of the French Republic" gives an insight into French manners which will afford some curious scenes in Parisian life. We also notice with pleasure "Para; or Adventures on the Amazon;" and "Memoirs of Chateaubriand." We extract the following from "Sir James Brooke and the Pirates"—it is from an account of the latest expedition to Bruné. The many extraordinary tales about the Upas tree are well known, and the following will give some real information on the subject:—

"In the evening I proceeded, in company with an officer of the expedition, to enjoy a cruise up the river in a canoe, to visit the upas tree, and to obtain a view of the town. We landed at a burying ground, and were there met by a Malay, who earnestly warned us not to approach the deadly tree. We, however, continued our course, and forced our way through the tangled bushes to its base. It has a noble stem, rising some thirty-five feet without a branch, and then spreading out with foliage of the richest green; its base is about eighteen feet in circumference; the colour of its bark a light brown. The story even of the poison of the tree is very much exaggerated. Many men were wounded in the expedition against the pirates, with the sumpitans, but none, the Rajah tells me, felt any ill consequences, the arrow being immediately withdrawn and the wound dressed. Under and around the upas are numerous graves crowded together, and a small shed, in which are some more important tombs, one rather large, and with something like a marble head. I dare say the Malays still give full credit to the stories related of the fabulous upas in Java, which extends its fatal influence for miles around, and the road to which is covered with the skeletons of the wretches employed to obtain its poison. The real method of preparing this deadly drug, for which the people of Eastern Java are celebrated, is little known in Europe, as well as the ingredients which they mix up with the upas juice, the alum, the onions, and the garlic, the pepper, and the capsicum seed, and the cause which produces the commotion in the liquor, and sends the capsicum seed a first and a second time whirling round rapidly in a circle is still a mystery, but the ceasing of all perceptible activity within is a sign that the poison is perfect, and may be efficiently employed in tinging the points of the small darts thrown through the sumpitans or any other weapons."

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