

THE OLD THREE-LEGGED STOOL.

FROM the large accession to our list of readers, since the commencement of the publication of the GARLAND, and our inability much longer to supply the demand for all the volumes which have been issued, together with other causes moving us thereunto, we have had serious thoughts of commencing another new series.

"Oh! monstrous!" exclaimed a friend at our elbow, who heard our cogitations as we repeated the sentence, to see how it would look in print, "Why, people will then call it the 'serial series,' or the 'three series,' and remind everybody who is acquainted with the locality—of the village of the Three Swans near Liverpool—the Old Swan, the Original Old Swan, and the Old Original Old Swan—capital!"

"We see nothing capital about such nonsense," we replied somewhat tartly; "nor how it applies to us, any more than to the three estates of the Realm,—the three Kingdoms,—the three Graces,—the three Gorgons,—the three Fates,—the three Kings of Cologne,—the three-e-e—"

"Muses!" interrupted our incorrigible friend.

"Well! admitting it to be the third time we have come out with something new—our appearance has on each occasion been improved—our general style and manner—aye, and matter, too—has been better, and more stately our behaviour."

"Yes; just as it is in the three ages of woman, which you seem to have forgotten, although you have reached the last."

"The three fiddle-sticks! But where were we? Oh! about our materials."

"The less you say about them the better. Your tales in prose are trash, and your poetry, as you call it, doggerel rhyme, and sometimes hardly that."

"Ye cankered suld donnerel! ye're getting serious, are ye? Now just reach us down one of the numbers at your elbow, will ye? No, not that; the other pile to your right—that's it. Nay, open it yourself, or ye'll maybe say we pick out the best. Read out. What's the first thing you see?"

"The Broken Mirror, by ———"

"Never mind who its by; it's the writings, not the writers, we're talking about. It's not by Coleridge, or Carlyle, or Kit North, we'll warrant you. If it were, you would applaud it to the echo. There, too, there is its sweet sister tale of innocence and beautiful simplicity, 'the Musk Rose,' not far off. Try again; and mind you

don't stumble upon it. Well! what have we next?"

"Marco Visconti—a Translation from the Italian."

"Just as good as original, and a well-told tale it is; we care not if all the world should hear us say so, and we are somewhat proud of our judgment too. Try again, old fellow. We think we shall soon convert you by evidence of your own furnishing. But mind that old rickety, three-legged stool, or it will be down with you, as sure as your name's Andrew Glommerhead. Now for it again. Out with it."

"It's not worth while. I was only looking at some old musty legends about hobgoblins and bargaists, and I don't know what besides."

"Give us the book. Why you're a regular born fool. These are the 'Border Legends,' praised even by Dr. Barker, who barks at everything not his own. Then, there's the next article to it—'Scenes Abroad;' find us a better one in any of the magazines in the ———"

"United States, eh?"

"No. We were not going to say the United States; but since you've put the words into our mouths, with one or two exceptions—and these are of a different order,—we do not fear a comparison with the best of their magazines. We know, and the knowledge is not confined to us, that our matter is at least equal to theirs. Trash, indeed! In the whole five thousand pages we have printed you cannot find fifty that are not good—multitudes of them are very good—tales which would not shame Blackwood or Bentley, or Fraser or Tait. Why, when we think of it, we are actually proud of what Canada can do; and are very much inclined to question the fact, or statement, that our country is in a state of literary infancy. Try again; but mind that old stool,—one of its legs is cracked—besides, you are not accustomed to be so set up on high. What have you got there?"

"Nothing particular; only some clever nonsense about 'Popping the Question in the Dark'—"

"There! we told you so. We were sure you'd be down, and a pretty smash you've made of it, with eight years of our incessant labors on your head."

"Eight!—only eight! There must have been at least eighteen, I thought, from their excessive weight."

"There ye're out again. If they have a fault