LEAVES FROM THE JOURNAL OF A LIFE.

LEAF THE SECOND.

OF THE MAN WHO PLAYED HIS OWN GHOST.

> " Blest are those
> Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled,
> That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
> To sound what stop she please."
>
> *Hamlet.*

I FOUND myself, on the evening of a very stormy autumn day, seated in the "Groener Jager," by an abominably hot *poelle,* sipping some very sour Rhenish, eating from time to time little pieces of very black bread, and ridding myself of its taste by nibbling some still more thoroughly detestable cheese. I was forced to move round and round in this vicious circle, not by an external, but a rather severe internal pressure—an appetite of six hours' growth, acutely sharpened by a wood-land walk of twenty-four miles. Eat I had to : there was a call that would not be denied, and I eat the cheese to overcome the bread, the bread to overcome the appetite, and the wine, to wash off the memory of both, went rapidly down the throat ; but it, alas ! left a more detestable twang behind than either. So I had to begin afresh, until the grumbling inner man permitted a relaxation. Then a glorious glass of " *veritable schiedam,*" blotted out the memory of the whole abomination, and kept the stowage steady. I always have had an affection for big-bellied bottles from that day. At the particular moment of which I am treating, that love, however, like all new passions, was remarkably strong. With feelings of inexpressible delight, I grasped the long and slender neck, drew a tumbler to my hand, then elevating the Dutch abortion (beauty, I mean !) to an angle of ninety degrees, deposited a due proportion of its contents therein. Cluck, cluck, went the fluid, harmoniously, as it leapt from its prison, and pleasant in my nostrils was the aroma it sent up. Having concocted this very palatable beverage, filled my meerschaum—in short, gone through all necessary preliminaries to making myself comfortable—I, now