

A NEW LIFE-PRESERVER.

BY TOM HOOD.

"Of hair-breadth 'scapes."—Othello.

I HAVE read somewhere of a traveller, who carried with him a brace of pistols, a carbine, a cutlass, a dagger, and an umbrella, but was indebted for his preservation to the umbrella; it grappled with a bush when he was rolling over a precipice. In like manner, my friend W—, though armed with a sword, rifle, and hunting-knife, owed his existence to a wig!

He was specimen-hunting (for W— is a first-rate naturalist) somewhere in the backwoods of America, when, happening to light upon a dense covert, there sprang out upon him—not a panther or catamount—but with terrible whoop and yell, a wild Indian—one of a tribe then hostile to our settlers. W—'s gun was mustered in a twinkling, himself stretched on the earth, the barbarous knife, destined to make him balder than Granby's celebrated Marquis, leaped eagerly from its sheath.

Conceive the horrible weapon making its preliminary flourishes and circumgyrations, the savage features, made savager by paint and ruddle, working themselves up to a demoniacal crisis of triumphant malignity; his red right hand clutching the shearing knife; his left frizzle top-knot; and then, the artificial scalp coming off in the Mohawk's grasp!

W— says, the Indian catchpole was, for some moments, motionless with surprise; recovering, at last, he dragged his captive along, through brake and jungle, to the encampment. A peculiar whoop soon brought the whole horde to the spot. The Indian addressed them with vehement gestures, in the course of which W— was again thrown down, the knife again performed its circuits, and the whole transaction was pantomimically described. All Indian sedateness and restraint were overcome. The assembly made every demonstration of wonder; and the wig was fitted on, rightly, askew, and hind part before, by a hundred pair of red hands. Capt. Gulliver's glove was not a greater puzzle to the Hionhyhims.

From the men, it passed to the squaws, and from them down to the least of the urchins; W—'s head, in the meantime, frying in a mid-summer sun. At length the phenomenon returned into the hands of the chief—a venerable grey-beard; he examined it afresh, very attentively, and, after a long deliberation, maintained with true Indian silence and gravity, made a speech in his own tongue that procured for the anxious, trembling captive, very unexpected honors. In fact, the whole tribe of women and warriors dan-

ced round him, with such unequivocal marks of homage, that even W— comprehended that he was not intended for sacrifice. He was then carried in triumph to their wigwams, his body daubed with their body colors of the most honorable patterns; and he was given to understand that he might choose any of their marriageable maidens for a squaw. Availing himself of this privilege, and so becoming, by degrees, more a proficient in their language, he learned the cause of this extraordinary respect. It was considered that he had by mischance of war, been overcome and tufted; but that, whether by valor or stratagem, each equally estimable among the savages, he had recovered his liberty and his scalp.

As long as W— kept his own counsel, he was safe; but trusting his Indian Dahlah with the secret of his locks, it soon got wind among the squaws, and from them became known to the warriors and chiefs. A solemn sitting was held at midnight by the chiefs, to consider the propriety of knocking the poor wig-owner on the head; but he had received a timely hint of their intentions, and, when the tomahawk sought for him, he was on his way, with his life-preserver, toward a British settlement.

RELIGION AND PASSION.

The religion which mixes with human passions, and is set on fire by them, will make a stronger blaze than that light which is from above, which sheds a steady and lasting brightness on the path, and communicates a sober and desirable warmth to the heart. It is variable and constant; while the other, like culinary fire, fed by gross materials, is extinguished the sooner from the fierceness of its flame.

That religion which is merely seated in the passions, is not only liable to wear itself out by its own impetuosity, but to be driven out by some other passion. The dominion of violent passions is short. They dispossess each other. When religion has had its day, it gives way to the next usurper. Its empire is no more solid than it is lasting, when reason and principle do not fix it on the throne.

GOD'S ESTIMATE OF MAN.

WITH God there is no freeman but His servant; though in the gullies, no slave but the sinner; though in a palace, none noble, but the virtuous; if ever so basely descended, none rich, but he that possesseth God, even in rags; none wise but he that is a fool to himself and to the world; none happy, but he whom the world pities. Let me be free, noble, rich, wise, happy in God; I care not what I am to the world.