

POETRY.

VIOLA.

From the Italian.

She had a form, but I might talk till night
(Young as the sun is now upon our watch)
Ere I had told its beauties:—it was slight
Ev'n as yon willow, and, like its soft stem,
Fell into thousand motions, and all lovely.
But for her cheek, look on those streaks of rose
Tinting the white clouds o'er us, now and then
A flash of deeper crimson lighting up
Their wreaths like wind-kiss'd lilies;
And now and then a long, rich, ebon tinge
Floating between them.—There I think I see
Still, tho' she's in the grave, the cheek I loved,
With the dark tress that veil'd it. When I sat
Beneath her eye, I felt its splendor on me
Like a bright spell.—'Tis not the diamond's ray,
Nor vesper star-light, nor aught beautiful
In this ascending sun, or in this world,
Can bring me back its image;—'twas a soul
That has no portraiture on earth, a beam
As we have heard of angels, where no lips
Are wanted to give utterance to the thought;
Her eye was radiant thought.—Yet when her voice
Spoke to me, or at evening o'er her lute
Breath'd some old melody, or closed the day
With her due hymn to the Virgin, I have turn'd
Ev'n from the glory of her eye, to weep
With sudden keenness of delight. Those tears
On earth I weep no more—She's in the grave.

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRIES.

[Continued.]

"The habits of the *Beaver* are equally well authenticated, and, being more easily observed, are vouched by a greater number of witnesses. These animals as if to enable them to live either on land or in water, have two web feet like those of ducks or water dogs, and two like those of land animals. When they wish to construct a dwelling place or rather a city, for it serves the whole body, they choose a level place with a stream running through it; they dam up the stream so as to make a pond, and perform the operation as skilfully as we could ourselves. They drive into the ground, stakes of five or six feet long in rows, waiting each row with twigs, and puddling or filling the interstices with clay which they ram close in, so as to make the whole solid and water tight. This dam is constructed on the truest principles; for the upper side next the water slopes, and the side below is perpendicular; the base of the dam is 10 or 12 feet thick; the top or narrow part two or three, and it is sometimes as long as 100 feet. The pond being thus formed and secured, they make their houses round the edge of it; they are cells, with vaulted roofs and upon piles; they are made of stones, earth, and sticks; the wall are two feet thick, and plastered as neatly as if the trowel had been used. Sometimes they have two or three stories for retreating to in case of floods, and they always have two doors one towards the water, and one towards the land. They keep their winter provisions in stores, and bring them out to use; they make their beds of moss; they live on the bark of trees, gums, and crawfish. Each house holds from twenty to thirty, and there may be from ten to twenty-five houses in all. Some of their communities are therefore larger than others, but they are seldom fewer than two or three hundred inhabitants. In working they all bear their shares; some gnaw the trees and branches with their teeth to form stakes and beams; others roll the pieces to the water; others diving make holes with their teeth to place the piles in; others collect and carry stones and clay; others beat and mix the mortar; and others carry it on their broad tails, and with these beat it and plaster it. Some superintend the rest, and make signals by sharp strokes with the tail, which are carefully attended to; the beavers hastening to the place where they are wanted to work, or to repair any hole made by the water, or to defend themselves, or make their escape when attacked by an enemy.

"The fitness of different animals, by their bodily structure to the circumstances in which they are found, presents an endless subject of curious inquiry and pleasing contemplation. Thus the *Camel* which lives in sandy deserts has broad spreading hoofs to support him on loose soil; and an apparatus in his body by which water is kept for many days, to be used when no moisture is to be had. As this would be useless in the neighbourhood of streams or wells, and as it would be equally so in the desert, where no water is to be found, there can be no doubt that it is intended to assist in journeying across the sand from one watered spot to another. There is a singular and beautiful provision made in this animal's foot, for enabling it to sustain the fatigue of journeys under the pressure of its great weight. Besides the yielding of the bones and ligaments or bindings which gives elasticity to the foot of the deer and other animals, there is in the camel's foot between the horny sole and the bones, a cushion, like a ball, of soft matter almost fluid, but in which there is a mass of threads extremely elastic, interwoven with the pulpy substance. The cushion thus easily changes its shape when pressed, yet it has such an elastic spring, that the bones of the foot press on it uninjured by the heavy body which they support, and this huge animal steps as softly as a cat.

"Nor need we flee to the desert in order to witness an example of skilful structure in the foot; the *Horse's* limbs display it strikingly. The bones of the foot are not placed directly under the weight; if they were in an upright position, they would make a firm pillar, and every motion would cause a shock. They are placed slanting or oblique and tied together by an elastic binding on their lower surfaces, so as to form springs as exact as those we make of leather or steel for carriages. Then the flatness of the hoof which stretches out on each side, and the frog coming down in the middle between the quarters, adds greatly to the elasticity of the machine. Ignorant of this, ill informed farmers nail the shoe too far back, fixing the quarters, and causing permanent contraction—so that the contracted hoof loses its elasticity; every step is a shock; inflammation and lameness ensue.

"The *Rein deer* inhabits a country, covered with snow the greater part of the year. Observe how admirably its hoof is formed for going over that cold and light substance, without sinking in it, or being frozen. The under side is covered entirely with hair, of a warm and close texture; and the hoof, altogether, is very broad, acting exactly like the snow shoes which men have constructed for giving them a larger space to stand on than their feet, and thus to avoid sinking. Moreover, the deer spreads the hoof as wide as possible when it touches the ground; but, as this breadth would be inconvenient in the air, by occasioning a greater resistance while he is moving along, no sooner does he lift the hoof, than the two parts into which it is cloven fall together, and so lessen the surface exposed to the air, just as we may recollect the birds doing with their bodies and wings. The shape and structure of the hoof is also well adapted to scrape away the snow and enable the animal to get at the particular kind of moss (or *Lichen*) on which he feeds. This plant unlike others, is in its full growth during the winter season; and the rein deer accordingly thrives from its abundance, notwithstanding the unfavourable effects of extreme cold upon the animal system." (To be continued.)

From the London Morning Chronicle.

EXECUTION IN FRANCE.—We had an execution here last Monday. Honore

Frances Ulbach, a waiter in a wine shop, had murdered a shepherdess, Aimée Nillot, last May: he was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death in July; in August he appealed from the sentence of the Court of Assize to the Court of Cassation; his appeal was rejected, the sentence of the Court below was confirmed, and the day of his execution finally fixed for the 10th of September. Ulbach was a young man, only twenty one years of age, and had committed the murder through resentment at the girl's rejection of his courtship, the extreme beauty and youth (she was scarcely fifteen years old) had given extensive publicity and much interest to the trial, and ultimately of the murderer, particularly among women. On the day of execution, the fatal spot, the Place de Greve, was filled at an early hour with groups of the populace.

As the time approached, four o'clock (the hour of execution) the populace flocked towards the spot through every avenue; and when every place from which a glimpse of the guillotine could be caught was so thronged that it could contain no more, the surplus of the crowd moved to the palace of Justice, whence the criminal was to proceed to the Place de Greve, after the collar of his shirt is cut off, and after the performance of the other ceremonies of a legal kind. The court yard of this building—the flight of steps to the Hall—the bridge of St. Michael—and the quay Pelletie, thro' which the procession was to pass, were literally covered (every foot of ground) with the populace. A few minutes before four a body of mounted police moved from the yard of the Palace of Justice, followed by a cart in which sat Ulbach, by his side a priest holding a small crucifix, and on a bench behind them, the executioner with his face uncovered, and a sword in his hand. Ulbach was a low sized, thin, boyish looking man, pale faced, black haired, and of a poor and even contemptible appearance; his head on which was abundant hair, was bare, over his shoulders an old brown cloak was flung, and buttoned about his neck, the sleeves hung empty on each side. He leaned forward as he sat, and appeared to give attention to the exhortation of the priest. After the cart came another body of mounted police; and in this order they moved very slowly through the streets, which were lined at intervals with foot police. Just as the clock of the Hotel de Ville struck four, a legal officer of the Court that condemned the prisoner arrived in a carriage at the Place de Greve, for the purpose of superintending and witnessing officially the execution of the sentence.—About a minute past four, the cart containing Ulbach entered the semicircle space in front of the scaffold. He descended near the ladder followed by the priest and executioner; the men in colored clothes who were standing by the scaffold awaiting his coming, instantly surrounded him, and enclosed him for a minute from the public view. When he appeared next, his hands were bound behind his back at the wrists: two assistants helped or rather thrust, him up the steps of the ladder, and ascended the platform with him.

After they had mounted the Platform, and while they were at the margin, the assistants unbuttoned his coat and threw it aside; they then stripped from his shoulders his shirt, which appeared to have been thrust loosely on them. They led him forward to the end of the bench, placed him so that he stood quite close in contact with the upright board, the upper end of which reached to the bottom of his throat, they strapped him to the board with two belts that were attached to the board; the belts confined his arms a few inches below the shoulders

and buckled to his back. In the course of his operation he neither moved voluntarily nor did he resist; but remained quite passive, and exhibited altogether the appearance of helpless, hopeless, wretchedness. He was scarcely tied to the board, when at a quick and sudden touch from one of the executioners, the board was changed from its upright position to an horizontal, and Ulbach, who was standing at the end of the bench, lay the next moment flat on his face on the board, and the board on the bench, two of the executioners pushed the board along the bench, until they placed the neck on the cavity of the under transverse board, then lowered the corresponding board on the back of the neck, fastening it so that it kept the head immovable, the face looking down into the box into which the head was to fall. The principal executioner, standing at the side of the guillotine, unwound from a peg a cord, which by its fixed tension, held the axe suspended. The crowd stood with uncovered heads and silent, not a word, not a buzz, not a sob of pity, not a murmur of horror, such as attends the fatal moment of public executions in England—

"Horror in all his native pomp was here,
Mute and magnificent without a tear."

The executioner let the cord slack—the axe descended and sunk into the groove of the board upon and through the neck, and the head fell almost at the same moment, and tumbled into the box. The assistant instantly sprang forward, and seizing the extended legs, held them down on the bench, to prevent the muscular convulsion of the body, that would have followed the stroke which deprived it of life. After a minute they loosed their hold, removed the upper board from the neck, drew out the plank on which the headless trunk lay motionless and lifeless, unbuckled the straps that bound it to the plank, raised one side of it, opened the basket, and let the body slide down into the basket. They then drew out the box from under the bench, placed it on the bench, and opened the lid, which had a hole sufficient to admit the fallen head; the interior of the box was bathed in blood; within it appeared the head and some saw dust; the executioner threw both head and dust into the basket, on the body, closed the basket, and lowered it from the scaffold into the cart. The cart moved surrounded by the mounted police; the foot police broke up their line; the crowd thronged round the scaffold. Ulbach had arrived at the foot of the ladder one minute after four—he was standing alive on the platform the next minute—was dead the third minute—and the whole of the horrible affair was over at five minutes past four.

PUNNING PREACHER.—A field-preacher, who had been a painter, observed in the usual harangue "that youth might be compared to a *comma*, manhood, to a *semicolon*, old age to a *colon*; to which death puts a *period*."

The N. B. ROYAL GAZETTE, is published every TUESDAY, by GEO. K. LUGRIN, Printer to the KING'S Most Excellent Majesty; at his Office in Queen Street, over Mr. SLOOT'S Store, Fredericton, where Blanks, Handbills, &c. can be struck off at the shortest notice.

The price of this Paper is Sixteen Shillings per annum (exclusive of Postage)—the whole to be paid in advance.

Advertisements not exceeding Fifteen Lines will be inserted for Four Shillings and Sixpence the first and One Shilling and Sixpence for each succeeding insertion. Advertisements must be accompanied with Cash and the insertions will be regulated according to the amount received.

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