

POETRY.

From the Aberdeen Observer.

THE MAID OF MONA.

'Twas deep midnight, and droar and dark,
The clouds had closed o'er Albert's bark,
And not one star with friendly ray
Shone out to light his homeward way ;
Yet, Albert's heart is glad to-night,
For hopes he, with the morning light,
To greet, with welcome's sweetest smile,
The fairest maid of Mona's Isle.

On, on they sweep before the blast,
With straining sheet and stooping mast ;
A few leagues more, and he shall stand
Again upon his native land ;
A few hours more and he shall clasp,
In mutual love's entwining grasp—
Hope of his travel and his toil—
The fairest maid of Mona's Isle.

Now, streaming like a comet star,
A beacon blazes from afar,
And shoots a bright and trembling line
Athwart the dark and heaving brine ;
And, burns it by his sheltering cove,
The wonted watch-fire of his love ?
And, sits she on the cliff the while,
The fairest maid of Mona's Isle ?

The gallant crew have found a grave
Beneath the cold unconscious wave !
A rival kindled on the steep
The light that doomed him to the deep,
When sickness bowed her lovely head
Who erst that beacon fired and fed.—
A maniac now, through ruthless guile,
The fairest maid of Mona's Isle !

MISCELLANY.

SHOOTING STARS.

The French Board of Longitude issues every year a publication similar, in many respects, to the 'Nautical Almanack' published in England; but the French 'Annuaire,' in addition to the astronomical and statistical tables which it publishes, contains notices which, though of a scientific character, may be perused with interest by the general reader. We translate the following observations on shooting Stars from the 'Annuaire' of 1836.

These phenomena, which have often been considered as unworthy of investigation, and regarded simply as atmospheric meteors originating in the inflammation of a quantity of hydrogen gas, have, in consequence of recent observations, become objects of greater attention among men of science. Previous theories limited their place in the heavens to our own atmosphere; but from observations made at Breslau, and other places, by Professor Brands and several of his pupils, the height of some shooting stars has been calculated at 500 English miles; and the rate at which they move, not less than 36 miles in a second, which is nearly double the rate of the earth's motion round the sun. If a reduction be made to one half of this rate per second, in order to allow for the illusion occasioned by the motion of the earth, the real motion would be eighteen miles per second, which, with the exception of the earth, would still be more rapid than that of any of the principal bodies of our system. In the attempts which have been made to ascertain the apparent direction in which shooting stars usually move, it has been ascertained, that although they become ignited in our at-

mosphere, they come from beyond it. It is singular that their general direction should be contrary to that in which the earth moves in its annual orbit; and it is much to be desired that the inferences already deduced should be corrected or confirmed by a greater number of observations.

The means of accounting for the extraordinary appearance of luminous projectiles observed in America in the nights of November 12th and 13th, 1833, are not very satisfactory, unless it be assumed that, besides the planetary bodies which revolve round the sun, there are myriads of smaller bodies which only become visible at the moment when they come within our atmosphere and assume the meteoric appearance; and that these asteroïdes (to use the term which Herschell formerly applied to Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and Vesta) move in groups; and that they move singly also. A careful observation of shooting stars is the only means of enlightening us on this curious subject.

The shooting stars in America, to which allusion has been made, were observed in 1833. They succeeded each other at such short intervals that it was impossible to count them; and the most moderate calculations fixed their numbers at hundreds of thousands. They were so numerous, and showed themselves in so many quarters of the heavens at the same time, that the attempts to estimate them were only rough guesses. At the Observatory at Boston their number was considered to equal one half of the flakes which fill the air in an ordinary fall of snow.

As the phenomena continued more than seven hours, the number of shooting stars visible in the vicinity of Boston, was upwards of 240,000; and it should be recollected that the basis of the calculation was made when the intensity of the phenomenon was diminishing. It was visible along the whole eastern coast of North America, from the Gulf of Mexico to Halifax, from nine o'clock in the evening to sunrise, and in some places in full daylight, at eight o'clock in the morning. All these meteors came from the same point, constellation of Leo, and those which were seen elsewhere was the effect of the earth's movement which caused an apparent alteration in the position of this star. The above facts are certainly very curious, but the following are not less so.

The shooting stars observed in the United States appeared in the nights of the 12th and 13th of November. In 1799 a similar phenomenon was observed in America by M. de Humbolt, in Greenland by the Moravian Brethren, and in Germany by various individuals; and the periods of its appearance was also the nights of the 12th and 13th of November. In 1832, in Europe and some parts of Asia the phenomenon was witnessed and the date was still the nights of the 12th and 13th of November. This identity of dates induces us to urge upon our young seamen the task of observing with attention the appearances in the firmament between the 10th and the 15th of November. Since my report has been read to the Academy, M. Berard, one of the most intelligent officers of the French marine, has favored me with the subjoined extract from the journal of the brig Loiret, which he commands:

"The 13th of November, 1831, at four o'clock in the morning, the sky being perfectly cloudless, and a copious dew falling, we have seen a number of shooting stars and luminous meteors of great dimensions. During upwards of three hours more than two per minute were seen. One of these meteors which appeared in the zenith left an immense train from east to west like a luminous band, and in it many of the colours of the rainbow were distinctly visible; its breadth was equal to one half of

the moon's diameter, and the light which it gave did not disappear for 6 minutes. We were on the coast of Spain, near Carthagena."

On the 13th of November, 1835, a large and brilliant meteor fell near Bellej, in the department of Ain, and set fire to a farm yard. In the same night of the 13th of November, a shooting star, larger and more brilliant than Jupiter, was observed at Lille by M. Delezenne. It left on its passage a shower of sparks precisely similar to those which follow a sky-rocket.

The facts which we have now given confirm more and more the existence of a zone composed of myriads of small bodies, whose orbits come within the limits of the earth's ecliptic every year between the 11th and 13th of November. This is a new planetary world which begins to open to us. It is almost unnecessary to state how highly important it is to ascertain if other masses of asteroïdes do not come within the earth's ecliptic at other points than that which it reaches about the 12th of November. It is desirable to make observations between the 20th and 24th of April, as well as in November; for in 1843, on the 22d of April, I believe, from one o'clock in the morning till three, shooting stars were seen in all directions in such great numbers, in Virginia and Massachusetts, as to be compared to a shower of sky-rockets. Messier states that on the 17th of June, 1777, towards noon, he saw in the space of five minutes, a very large number of black globules pass over the sun's disc. Were not these globules also asteroïdes?

A HINT TO THE WORKING CLASSES.—If a man at 21 years of age began to save 4s a week, and put it to interest every year, he would have:—

At 31 years of age	£150	15	11
At 41	371	7	7
At 51	735	14	11
At 61	1229	5	2
At 71	2296	0	4

When we look at these sums, and when we think how much temptation and evil might be avoided in the very act of saving them, and how much good a man in humble circumstances may do for his family by these sums, we cannot help wondering that there are not more savers of 4s. a week. He who saves this sum may not only pay his own way, but he may help the afflicted, and subscribe to various benevolent societies. In short, he may show mercy to thousands in this world, and he may help them on their way to a better.

NEW PLAN OF REFORM.—That peers should be forty years of age, and fathers, before they are suffered to become members of the senate; that representatives be twenty five years of age, and fathers, before they are suffered to become legislators; and that every man of twenty five years of age, a father, and established in any work or trade, for a term of years, be voters. This is the scheme of reformation suggested by a state doctor in a journal of Wednesday.

ROAD TO RUIN.—According to the Cincinnati 'Mirror,' a man who was hanged lately in a neighbouring state for burglary and murder, confessed under the gallows that his career of crime began by ordering a newspaper without paying for it!

AGENTS
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