

POETRY

SHOOTING STARS.

Translated from Beranger.

'Shepherd! they say that a star presides
Over life!—'Tis a truth my son!
But its secrets from men the firmament hide,
Except for some favoured one.'

'Shepherd! they say that a link unbroken
Connects our fate with some favourite
star;
O! what may yon shooting light betoken
That fall, falls, and is quenched afar?'
The death of a mortal, my son, who held
In his banqueting hall high revel;
And his music was sweet, and his wine ex-
cellent,
And life's path seemed long and level;
No sign was given, no word was spoken,
When his pleasure death came to mar.'

'But what does yon milder light betoken,
That falls, falls, and is quenched afar?'
'Tis the kneel of beauty; it marks the close
Of a pure and gentle maiden;
And her cheek was warm with its bridal
rose,
And her brow with its bride-wreath laden:
The thousand hopes young Love had woven
Lie crushed and her dream is past.
But what can yon rapid light betoken,
That falls, falls, and is quenched so fast?'
'Tis the emblem, my son, of quick decay;
'Tis a rich lord's child newly born;
The cradle that holds an inanimate clay,
Gold, purple, and silk adorn;
But the panders prepared through life to
haunt him
Must seek some one else in his room.'

'Look now! what can mean yon dismal
phantom
That falls, falls, and is lost in gloom?'
'There my son! I can see the guilty thought
Of a haughty statesman fall,
Who the poor man's comforts sternly sought
To plunder or to curtail.
See! his former sycophants have cursed
Their idol's base endeavour.'

'But watch the light that now has burst,
Falls falls, and is quenched for ever!'
'What a loss, O my son, was there,
Where shall hunger now seek relief?
The poor, who are gleaners elsewhere,
Could reap in his field full sheaf!
On the evening he died, his door
Was thronged with a sweeping crowd!
Look, shepherd! there's one star more
That falls, and is quenched in a cloud!'

'Tis a monarch's star. But oh! preserve
Thy innocence, my child!
Nor from thy fixed condition swerve,
But there shine calm and mild.
Of your star, if the sterile ray
For no useful purpose shone,
At your death 'See the star,' they'd say,
It falls! falls! is past and gone!'

A MASQUERADE AT THE NORTH POLE.

"About this period notice was given that a grand Venetian carnival or masquerade would be held on board the Fury, to commence at six in the evening, and sanctioned by authority. It was also stated in the programme, that all the musical talent in the country was engaged for the occasion, and every attention would be paid on the part of the stewards to promote the conviviality of the evening—and no one to be admitted except in character or domino—and no bad characters eligible. This notice was pasted up in the most conspicuous part of the ship, with a lively sketch appended to it of a blind fiddler, a la Cruikshank, led by a tottering old woman, with the sorry remnant of a soldier's coat upon her back, and a round hat—no mean resemblance of Liston as Moll Flaggon, but infinitely less portly and swaggering, for in this sketch the feebleness of old age and meekness of poverty were apparent in the curved form and lank visage of the fiddler's wife.

"Novelty has more or less its charms every where and for every one—from London to its antipodes and back again. On the present occasion, its influence in facilitating our ways and means, was singularly successful. Masks and caps made of paper, wigs made of oakum, false hips and bustles, false fronts, and false calves; bonnets shawls, gowns, and petticoats, were eagerly sought after, and as ingeniously contrived. In fact, the lower deck, every evening presented a more than usual scene of busy animation, patching, darning, and transforming old clothes; making livries out of red and green baize, lawyer's out of black bunting, and ladies' stays of good stiff number one canvass—paste, putty, vermilion, and ivory-black, with features of mystery and cunning, some working dexterously with smiles or self-sa-

tisfaction, others perplexed and embarrassed in their schemes, and all equally anxious to disguise as much as possible the dress in which they hoped to disguise themselves.

"A masquerade in the Polar regions! Who ever heard of such a thing? It was as little thought of when we left England, as our attending the carnivals of Venice during our absence; and had the idea then occurred to us, we should have thought the first as improbable as we knew the second to be impossible. In amateur plays, the difficulty of disguising one's self, and the still greater difficulty of casting the characters, may have suggested this kind of amusement; but I should have deemed it impossible to evade the lynx-eyed scrutiny of my companions, when the few places of concealment which a ship affords are considered.—With respect to habiliments, those who found it difficult to contrive a dress suitable to the character they wished to appear in, naturally regretted they had not had a hint of the affair before we left England; and those who complained most were on the female side of the question; and this was also natural, as the difficulty to do justice to the bust seemed at first insurmountable. This perplexing affair, however, like many others, was conquered with sailor-like ingenuity.

"At last the eventful evening arrived, and no schoolboys ever broke loose from the trammels of their pedagogue with more searching anticipation of Christmas enjoyments than did our seamen. The arrangements on board the Fury were too good to pass unnoticed, every thing was so well adapted for the purpose for which it was designed. A rough sign over a raised platform, at the extreme end of the central part of the fore-castle, exhibited the jolly sailor just landed from his voyage of discovery, with a well-filled purse in one hand, and a long pipe in the other. He had his blooming wife under his arm, and the Hecla and Fury were visible in the back-ground. It is almost needless to add, that the jolly-faced landlady of the jolly sailor did ample justice to the good humour which rallied round her. At the farther end of the quarter-deck, another rude sign announced that the celebrated Swiss giantess, lately exhibited at most of the Courts in Europe, patronized by His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence, and never before seen in the Polar regions, to which she had been imported at very considerable risk and expense, might be viewed by the public for the trifling sum of one shilling; children admitted for half-price, and an excellent band in attendance. Walk up, ladies and gentlemen, walk up, and see the wonderful Swiss giantess! A ludicrous group of Greenwich and Chelsea pensioners enjoying themselves over some of Barclay, Perkins and Co's. entire, was naturally caricatured by one of our officers, in a transparency opposite the Jolly Sailor, and in the centre of the room. The orchestra was fitted up, in which the performers were instrumental in enlivening the scene. A reception room was prepared on the lower-deck for rheumatic or frost-bitten amateurs, or fashionable dandizettes, whose curtailed garments were not proof against the harsh climate of the Polar regions.

"The characters began to assemble at six o'clock and the busy scene of merry-making was soon at its meridian. The first who appeared was an elderly gentleman, whose dress, although somewhat the worse for wear, bespoke respectability, and whose pertuke announced him a strict observer of old times. He regretted the indisposition of one of his carriage horses, owing to the badness of the roads, and deplored the uncivilized state of the country, not affording the common convenience of a sedan chair, or even a jarvey. This character was admirable throughout, and not recognized, until the close of the evening, to be Sir Edward Parry's steward, A lady of distinction in an evening ball dress of light blue silk, with flounces of cut paper to imitate Brussels point, was followed by her servant, a native of Africa, in livery—green baize turned up with silver—the embroidered parts a little tarnished—were by captain Hopper and Mr Brozier. A strolling fiddler, whose admirably constructed crutch supplied the loss of his left leg, which he had left on the plain of Waterloo, and whose military attire presented a sorry remnant of the uniform of the regiment he had served in—solicited alms for the support of nine starving children—and his wife received the charity of the benevolent in an old hat—exceedingly well supported by Sir Edward Parry and Mr Halse. The next group which appeared, excited marked attention, and many were the efforts made to discover who they were; but they were secure in the success of their impene-trable disguise. It consisted of a hawking umbrella mender, with his wife and daughter, as itinerant ballad singers—the latter so sensitively tenacious of her charms, that she constantly appealed to her mother, under whose cloak she constantly endeavoured to hide herself, to protect her delicate frame from the rough overtures of the men. The produce of a small basket of tape thread and needles, helped to support this indigent family; and the style of their dialogue was in perfect keeping with their appearance. I never saw a better group than this—and I

once paid an exorbitant sum for seeing many worse. There was a great deal of low wit and good humour in their individual parts, which was well supported by Lieutenant Snerer and two of the Hecla's seamen.

"A miserably clad old soldier, whose exertion in keeping a pathway across the street clean, for the convenience of the public, which by the by, he had previously strewed dirt over, to their no small annoyance, that he might have something to sweep,—went off eclat by Lieutenant Ross. And a wandering Jew, whose promisory notes were issued with characteristic caution, by seaman of the Fury. A dialogue between a Scotch laird and a southern middleman on the value of land, the breed of black cattle, and the average market prices, was inimitably kept up by two of our sailors. There was a clown, whose buffoonery in descending on the wonderful merits of the Swiss Giantess, was worthy a disciple of Grimaldi himself. He was quick at repartee, and yet he acknowledged himself as great a fool as any of the company. We had also a country practitioner in medicine who was excellent; and a widow of one of the seamen of the last expedition, who made many appeals in a pathetic tone in behalf of her infant which she carried in her arms—urging its weak state, for it was not yet weaned.—'Rest thee babe,' in a shrill squeaking voice, with a strong nasal twang, quieted the sleeping infant. Watchmen, riotous sailors, with more money than wit, chimney sweepers, young ladies upon the dedatable principle, and a recruiting party, filled up the amusements of the evening, with a number of songs in character. Each man had three tickets, which entitled him to three glasses of rum or brandy punch; and the Jolly sailor before alluded to, was the rallying point throughout the evening and so well attended, that the land-lord and his wife, who by the by, were capital in their station, had no sinecure. Precisely at ten o'clock the company retired—the sailors well pleased with their evening's sport, and the officers to discuss the merits of a good supper, and the various characters who had exhibited on the occasion."

HOUSES OF TRIPOLI.—The houses of Tripoli never exceed one story. You first pass through a sort of hall or lodge, called by the Moors a skiffer, with benches of stone on each side. From this a staircase leads to a grand apartment, termed a gulphor, which possesses a convenience, not allowed in any other room, that namely, of having windows of the street. This chamber is held sacred to the master of the mansion.—Here he holds his levees, transacts business, and enjoys convivial parties. None, even of his own family, dare enter it without his particular leave; and though such a restriction may seem arbitrary, yet a Moorish female in this one instance may be said to equal her lord in power: as, if he finds a pair of lady's slippers at the door of her apartment, he cannot go in,—he must wait till they are removed. Beyond the hall or lodge is the courtyard, paved in a style of elegance proportioned to the fortune of the owner. Some are done with brown cement, resembling finely polished stone; others are executed in black or white marble; while those of the poorer class display nothing more expensive than pounded clay. The houses, whether large or small, in town or in country, are built on the same plan. The court is used for receiving female parties entertained by the principal wife, upon the celebration of a marriage, or any other feast, and also in cases of death, for the performance of such funeral services as are customary prior to the removal of the body to the grave. On these occasions, the pavement is covered with mats or Turkey carpets, and is sheltered from the heat of the weather by an awning extended over the whole yard, for which the Moors sometimes incur great expense. Rich silk cushions are laid round for seats; the walls are hung with tapestry, and the whole is converted into a grand saloon. The court is surrounded with a cloister supported by pillars over which a gallery is erected of the same dimensions, enclosed with a lattice work of wood. From the cloister and gallery, doors open into large chambers not communicating with each other, and which receive light only from this yard. The windows have no glass, but are furnished with jealousies of wood curiously cut, admitting only a faint glimmering light, and precluding all intercourse even by looks. The tops of the houses which are flat, are covered with plaster or cement, and surrounded by a parapet about a foot high, to prevent anything from immediately falling into the street. Upon these terraces the inmates enjoy the refreshing sea-breeze, so luxuriant after a parching day, and are here constantly seen at sunset offering their devotions to Mahomed: for let a Moor be where he may, when he hears the marabout pronounce the evening prayer, nothing induces them to pass that moment without prostrating himself to the ground—a circumstance surprising to Europeans, if they happen to be in company, or even walking through the streets.—Edinburgh Cabinet Library.

ARAB ROBBERS.—The frontiers of Tripoli

and Egypt are, as might be expected, extremely unsettled, being beyond the reach of either government, and affording a retreat to the thieves, the outlaws, and malcontents of both. Pitching their tents in the neighbourhood of the gulf, they make incursions into the adjoining districts, and plunder every one who has the misfortune to fall in their way. They are ever on the watch for the caravans and pilgrims who traverse the desert on their journey to Mecca; and this is the only route used by the people of Morocco, who are said of all Moslem to be the most fervently devoted to the prophet. It might seem, indeed, that the equipage of a penitent would not hold out any temptation to these rapacious freebooters; for, wrapped up in a tattered cloak, without shoes or head-dress, and carrying no provisions besides a bag of barley-meal, he might appear rather an object of compassion than of plunder, even in the eyes of an Arab. But it is well known that under this semblance of extreme poverty, the hajjis often conceal a quantity of gold-dust, which being brought from the interior of Africa to Fez, is thence conveyed as an article of commerce to the holy city. The hope of seizing this valuable booty subjects every traveller to the misery of being stripped and narrowly examined; and it is related that a few years ago an uncle of the Moorish Emperor, though escorted by 3,000 men, was assailed by this horde of marauders and pillaged of all his treasures.

THE WIG.—Some years ago, when debating societies were the rage, I was occasionally in the habit of attending them, and remember being present at a very riotous one, when a mischievous wag, ran off into the street, threw it away, and cried "stop thief!" The company followed, the watchman rattled, and the president, wandering in search of his property, was taken up for stealing his own wig, and passed the rest of the night in the watch-house.

AN OLD SCHOOLFELLOW.—At the time I attended at the Charter-House, a gentleman, who had called there to see his son, remained some time in the school-room whilst I was given a lesson, and seemed to eye me very much. When I had finished, he said to me, "It is a long time, Mr. Angelo, since we last met." Not having the least recollection of his person, I requested the favour of his name, when he mentioned our fighting at Eton, and that, after a long battle, I had beaten him. "Then," I replied, "you must be Dick Harding." This must have been more than fifty years previous to the time when he mentioned the circumstance.

MARVELLOUS CURE OF THE TOOTHACH.

A friend who has recently returned from India, relates that he received a perfect cure for the toothach, in a very remarkable way. He had occasion to land on the Isle of Bourbon at the time of his being afflicted with a tormenting toothach; and a handkerchief being tied about the head, his appearance excited the curiosity of the natives, who approached him, and inquired by signs and gestures the nature of his complaint. Having been satisfied on this point, they made him understand that they could cure him if he would consent to their method; which he did with great willingness as he was maddened with pain, and willing to make any experiment to gain relief. They first kindled a fire on the ground with a few dry sticks, and then directed the patient to hold the fore finger of his right hand to the tooth that was affected, while they articulated a sort of jargon among themselves. When they had finished, and the sticks were all burnt, they told him to withdraw his hand and the pain would cease. He did so, when his joy and astonishment exceeded all bounds to find that the pain had actually left him!

This story may appear somewhat strange, yet I have no reason to doubt the veracity of my friend, who supposes that the artful natives burned some kind of herb in order to impregnate the air with its qualities, which being admitted into the cavity of the tooth, effectually removed the pain. He says he has never experienced a return of the complaint since.

PETER PINDER'S FEELINGS.—Doctor Wolcott told me, that when a boy, he was serving his time at an apothecary's shop in Jamaica, and that when pounding in a brass mortar, it so far hurt his feelings, that before his apprenticeship expired, he ran away; for the noise it made continually put him in mind of the poor patients, it was always "Kill'em again! kill'em again!"

FROSTY WEATHER.

A shrewd observer once said, that in walking the streets of a slippery morning, one might see where the good-natured people lived, by the ashes thrown on the ice before the doors.

In the book in which travellers who visit Mount Vesuvius usually inscribe their names, a captain of Austrian dragoons made the following curious entry, which we translate literally:—"F. N. has lit his pipe at the crater of Vesuvius—Providence and the Tuscan dragoons for ever."