

The Marchese, gently passing his arm around her waist, would fain have folded her to his bosom. A quick shudder, which seemed to convulse every limb, passed over her.

"My beautiful love looks pale!"

"'Tis nothing,—a sudden faintness. I culled these flowers for you, your favourite heliotrope is there; take them, you will not surely refuse your bride's first gift?"

The Marchese took the bouquet presented, pressed them passionately to his lips, inhaled their fragrance, and fell at the feet of Florinda a lifeless corse.

A wild, unnatural burst of laughter from the Marchesa pealed through the church.—It is well,—it is well! Victor, my beloved, thou art avenged. Now I will join thee."

Uttering these words, she took from beneath the folds of her dress a small poniard, and buried it to the hilt in her breast.

The bride and the bridegroom lay dead together!"

On searching her desk, a paper was found explanatory of the catastrophe. It is scarcely necessary to say, that "La Florinda" was the name assumed by Isabelle d'Aubigny. In the record left of her motives and actions, she stated that after the execution of Victor, she made a solemn vow to become his avenger,—but with a refined revenge, when his destroyer, De Biron, was at the height of earthly bliss. For this purpose her first aim was to captivate his heart. As the widow of Victor, she might fail in this. She was aware that he was a passionate admirer of dancing. Through the agency of that accomplishment, superadded to her beauty of person, she hoped to ensnare his affections. Her first step was to become the pupil of the most celebrated master of the day, and by dint of unremitting toil, she soon qualified herself for public exhibition. She resolved to appear in Italy, to which country Augusto de Biron had retired, to escape the strong manifestations of dislike which, after the execution of Victor d'Aubigny, followed him whenever he entered society at Paris. He was also the heir to a title and considerable estates in the Abruzzi. The death of his relative, soon put him in possession of these, and he became the Marchese di Vivaldi. At this period, Florinda, who was cognizant of all that befel him, made her debut at Naples. All Italy soon rung with her fame—and she was offered an engagement at "La Scala." She accepted it—appeared—became the idol of the public—and soon the object of her revenge howled at her feet a suppliant for her love—a suitor for her hand. She accepted him. During the life of Victor, he had never seen her, and who, that looked on her fair unruffled brow, or listened to the music of her low soft voice, could imagine that in her breast every particle of womanly softness was extirpated,—that her thoughts were only of revenge and death. It was at the altar's foot, her adored Victor had been torn from her arms; it should be at the altar's foot the expiatory sacrifice should be made,—his murderer destroyed. She procured from the East a deadly poison, the simple inhalation of which produces abrupt and certain death. Every flower in the bouquet was steeped in the deadly essence: its effects have been narrated—and thus, by one of those frightful transitions, which circumstances accomplish in human destiny, where the restraining influence of fixed religious principle is absent, Isabelle, once loving and irresolute, became a murderess and a suicide!

[The above tale gives so horrid a view of the principles of revenge, that we have thought it not unfit to be inserted in our columns. The character of an avenger is so hideous that it is scarcely possible to distort any of its wretched features. Every sentence of our Lord's discourse on the Mount is an edict from heaven against all species of revenge.—ED. PEARL.]

For the Pearl.

ON PRIMARY PUNISHMENTS.

As a member of this community I accept with pleasure the polite offer which you made to the public in the PEARL of last week of allowing a column in your periodical for the discussion of *Primary and Secondary Punishments*.

It is my opinion at the present time, and has been so for several years past, after a long and minute inquiry into the subject, and giving to it all the deliberation which its importance demands, that primary punishments are not calculated to attain the object for which they were intended. It must be remembered that since those days of darkness and superstition in which our criminal code was first called into existence, a wonderful and mighty change has taken place throughout all ranks and classes of society. I do not blame our feudal ancestors who enacted these despotic records, for they might be, and no doubt were, well suited to the era which gave them birth, but I cannot hold the same lenient opinion with regard to those able and talented gentlemen, who have successively been at the head of the administration. One great hindrance to the repeal or modification of these laws, although since their original formation they have undergone many improvements, has been the pertinacity which our English lawyers invariably display when any change in the constitution of the country is required. So extremely anxious indeed have they been to maintain and defend that noble fabric, and so susceptible of any, the least interference with its foundation or superstructure, that in the excess of their zeal, they have worked its greatest injury by incurring the charge of an adherence to principles, without examining

into their truth. Be this as it may, however, and whether I have assigned the proper reason for it or not, the fact is uncontrovertible, that, whilst improvement in the arts and sciences, and in all the liberal accomplishments and acquirements of the age, has progressed with the growth of civilization—and whilst the spread of education among the lower and middling classes, has been diffusing its genial influence, and introducing a new spirit for the thirst of information and the possession of knowledge, the laws of the country have, in too many instances, been totally neglected, and present to us the anomaly, of a highly refined people being governed by regulations, which were instituted for the control of uncivilized and barbaric chiefs.

I think it is pretty generally admitted in the present day, from the deductions which are to be drawn from those countries where capital punishments do not obtain, that they are no longer a necessary feature of our criminal code. If this be not the case, how is it that in Prussia, Russia, Denmark, Norway, etc. the crime of murder is of such rare occurrence when placed in comparison with England or France? Surely the Emperor Nicholas does not pretend to assert that his subjects are more enlightened than the people of Britain? But independently of this, let us take our stand on higher ground; and consider the moral effect which the spectacle of a fellow being dangling in the air has upon the public mind. It is notorious that in all the densely populated cities and large towns, where the commission and punishment of capital crimes are so frequent, immense numbers of individuals congregate at the place of execution, to witness the last act of the law performed on the delinquent. And who are the persons that compose these mobs? Are they not the very dregs and outcasts of society, wretches destitute of all sense of shame and decency? Any person who has ever been present at such an exhibition can prove the truth of what I assert. The object of public executions, as I take it, is to deter offenders from the commission of crimes. If not, external corporeal punishment is only a species of revenge, a spirit which is far removed from the genius of the English Constitution.

A celebrated writer upon this subject says "that the public exhibitions of criminal punishment, have in all places, in all countries, and upon all classes who witness them, a demoralizing influence, is evident to every reflecting man, whose situation may have afforded him frequent opportunities of judging. Do we not find that in proportion as men are accustomed to witness the torments and sufferings of others, they gradually lose those feelings of dread and horror which they formerly felt at the exhibition of punishment, and at length are led to regard with admiration, the firmness with which it is borne, and to extol the contempt of death and suffering, manifested by the miserable victim of the laws. Such is the hardening and depraving tendency of public punishment, that I have known those very crowds who, around the place of execution would weep and lament on first beholding the culprit, yet, upon a reprieve arriving would return home dejected, that they had come so far to see a man suffer, and had been disappointed."

Assuming then that capital punishments do not accomplish their object, the difficulty presents itself of discovering and substituting another method, which will afford the desired effect. On the subject there will be many opinions, and perhaps an effective remedy will not be found, until numerous theories have been introduced and put in practice. It is the opinion of many learned men that the *Penitentiary* system is the *sine qua non* to be obtained; from these gentlemen, however, I most respectfully beg to differ, as I do also from those who would transport all the murderers and felons in the country to our foreign possessions. If we are tired of such characters at home, I cannot exactly perceive the equitable right which we have to chain them like scarecrows to our brother colonists.

The Penitentiary system may answer very well for juvenile delinquents in the first stages of crime, but it will not meet the almost numberless variety of cases of old and practised offenders. In place of giving a man opportunity of having his mind employed by any process of labour, I would substitute **SECRET AND SOLITARY CONFINEMENT**. I lay it down as a fact, that a man's conscience is his strongest accuser. It is a worm which gnaws upon his soul continually. Then, would it not be better instead of allowing criminals to mix and talk with ruffians whose only conversation is about the crimes they have committed and the nefarious plans by which they have respectively plundered the public, to place them in separate rooms where the light was either totally excluded, or, environed by high walls, for a period corresponding to the heinousness of the offence? This mode of punishment, as far as the criminal is concerned, I am certain would be preferred, for besides being compelled to think on his transgressions, the secrecy of his punishment would hold out an inducement of amendment for the future. He would here be able to repent of his former practices, if he chose to do so, and it is not impossible that at the end of his imprisonment, in the place of being turned out upon society a miserable wretch, shunned by all who are good and virtuous, having no fears to deter him from offending again, and no motives to respect either the lives or property of mankind, he might once more be received within the pale of society, and again become, what perhaps he may have been before, an honest citizen of the world.

R. R.

From the Oriental Annual for 1839.

THE FABLE OF THE MOUSE AND THE SANIAS.

"You have all of you heard of the celebrated town and temple of Saniaskotta, in Rungpoor. That sacred place derives its name from the hero of my story, who was a Sanias of high repute, a most holy man, and a powerful worker of miracles.

"Before I proceed with my tale, I shall inform you how it happened that the place was thus named after the Sanias, in order that you may be sensible of his exceeding sanctity. After a life of rigid devotion to his religion, and of the severest penance and pilgrimage, this holy Sanias suddenly withdrew from the world, and none were informed of the time or manner of his departure. Hundreds of years afterwards, however, when only the tradition of his holiness remained, it happened that a Raja of the place was building new works upon the fort; and, while digging the foundation, the workmen were suddenly surprised by a loud outcry from beneath the solid earth; and on looking narrowly at the spot whence they had withdrawn their tools, they found marks of blood; and seeing the earth move, and hearing the voice continue its complaint, they cleared the spot and found that they had wounded the head of a man who was lying in the earth. This proved to be the very Sanias who, hundreds of years before, had lived above ground at that place: all the intervening years he had spent in meditation; and still so much was he bent upon the mysteries of his own thoughts, that instead of desiring to see the daylight, he requested the workmen to cover him up again. He was immediately obeyed; and, instead of building the new fortifications, the Raja ordered the present temples to be erected over the spot, and also the House of Mendicants and other religious buildings, which to this day bear the name of Saniaskotta.

"Now it was during the lifetime of this extraordinary saint that the circumstances of my tale occurred. That reverend man was one morning, soon after sunrise, seated upon the earth under the broad-spreading shade of a superb tamarind tree, around the trunk of which he had built his hut; and while he was ruminating upon the fruits of his own wisdom, and preparing spiritual food for his daily disciples, a little mouse, mangled and almost dead, fell before him from the talons of a kite, who, having carried him into the tree, was about to devour him. 'Behold,' cried the good man, 'even the smallest and poorest of God's creatures are worthy of our sympathy and protection; what shall I do to comfort this poor mouse?' Then taking up the miserable little animal, he caressed it, and took so much care of it, that in a few minutes it began to revive; then he gave it rice to eat, and soon restored it to its full strength and sleekness. In gratitude for these fond services, the mouse became exceedingly well attached to the Sanias, and felt that, in return for so much kindness, he was ready at any time to lay down his life for his benefactor; and would on no account depart from him, but continued daily to partake of his rice, and to receive other marks of his favour.

"It happened that, upon one occasion, while the mouse was playing about his patron's cottage, a large and very ferocious black cat came prowling by, who, perceiving the mouse, was preparing to spring upon and devour that poor little animal. By good fortune, however, the Sanias was seated reading in front of his door, and quickly discovered the jeopardy of his favourite. His heart was immediately enlarged with compassion; and in order to rescue the mouse, he in a moment of time transformed him into a cat superior in size and strength to his enemy; so that the black cat becoming terribly alarmed, remained not to contemplate this wonderful transfiguration, but fled in the fear of annihilation.

"Exulting in his increased bulk and newly-acquired strength, and sensible of the great peril from which the Sanias had rescued him, the cat failed not to exhibit an increased degree of affection towards his protector; and the Sanias in return showed that he regarded the animal with fondness, as a signal mark of his power and skill. Thus, when he beheld the cat exposed to danger by the attack of a fierce dog, he hesitated not to repeat his spell, and at once changed him into a larger and more powerful dog than the assailant; and by this means was he a second time delivered by the Sanias from threatening destruction. Not very long after this new instance of the devout man's supernatural power and his benevolence of heart, the dog was attacked by a fierce buffalo; and the Sanias again befriended him, as he had done before, by converting him into a beast of the same genus, but of more formidable appearance, so that his antagonist again fled in fear of him. And again for the same reason, did the Sanias transform the buffalo into a rhinoceros, and the rhinoceros into an elephant.

"Then the elephant became over-elated at the extraordinary good fortune which had befallen him, in being changed from so weak and helpless a creature as a mouse into an elephant of incomparable strength; and thus rejoicing in his newly-acquired might, he wandered to and fro, displaying his terrible prowess in various acts of mischief and desolation, until the neighbours, becoming fearful as well as angry, exclaimed, 'Who is this elephant, that he should thus lay waste our gardens and vineyards, and destroy our cattle? Is he not the miserable mouse whose life the Sanias saved again and again? and now his usurp-