

THE RING.

ANECDOTE OF THE POLISH WAR.

“The night which followed the battle of Praga was by no means a quiet one at Warsaw. Groups of human beings, some bearing torches, others poignards, were tumultuously assembled opposite to the palace of the ex-imperial police. A thousand confused voices, including every sound, from the deep bass of the athletic full grown patriot, to the high treble screams of women and children, demanded in chorus of frightful discord the death of an individual.

“In the midst of the principal group, the string of a broken† lamp dangled loose from the lamp-post ; and children in rags with wild and ferocious countenances, were laughing, swinging, and playing with it, and ever and anon converting the end of it into a slip knot. The moon shed its cold white beams upon the livid features of a poor spy, bound, encircled, and half smothered by the pressure of the dense crowd thirsting for his blood, which had come thither to reek their vengeance upon him. Overcome and motionless, he was in that state which is neither life or death. He looked at the crowd without appearing to comprehend their meaning ; the string was ready, and the knot slipped ; the brawny hands of an extempore hangman were upon him.

“Die ! die ! thou vile traitor ! Praga is burnt, the lancers are biting the sod, and Poland is bleeding ; whilst thou and thine, those whom thou lovest and servest, would inflict chains and pestilence upon us ! Not a single cry of mercy is raised in thy behalf ; not a regret nor a complaint uttered at thy doom. Even the women pity thee not. Therefore must thou die, and on this very spot, in front of the palace of the Russian Police ;

† At Warsaw the lamps which light the streets are suspended with thick hempen strings as at Paris,