

VARIOUS

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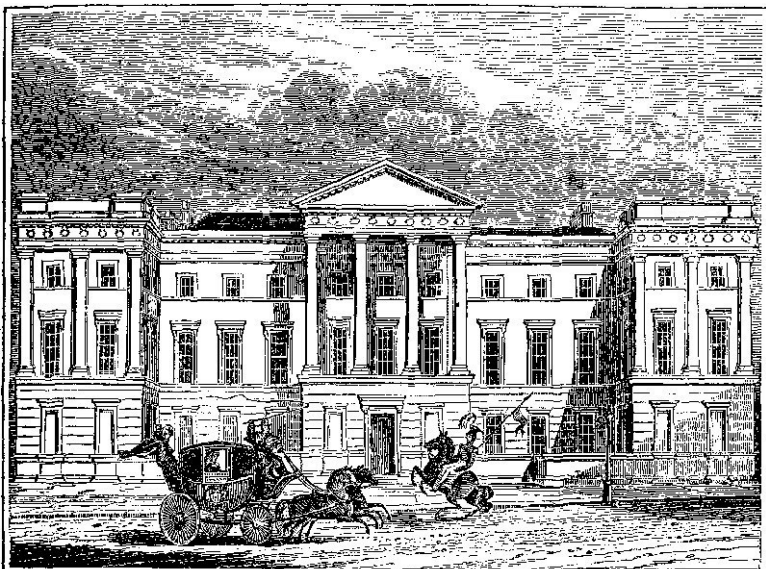
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ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL



All who enjoy the luxury of doing good (and who does not, in some way or other?) will be happy to learn that the above is the elevation of the new St. George's Hospital, at Hyde Park Corner. It is already a splendid monument of British benevolence; but is only a portion of the original plan, which is to complete another front towards Hyde Park; this will extend even further than the old hospital.

St. George's Hospital, we learn from a printed "Account," "was set on foot soon after Michaelmas, 1733, by some gentlemen who were before concerned in a charity of the like kind, in the lower part of Westminster. They judged this house convenient for their purpose, on account of its air, situation, and nearness to town; procured a lease of it, and opened a subscription for carrying on the charity here. The subscriptions increased so fast, that on the nineteenth of October they were formed into a regular society, and actually began to receive patients on the first of January following." The Establishment was, therefore, prosperous at its commencement, and the same good fortune has subsequently attended its progress. It is supported by Voluntary Contributions. The resources are considerable in property, and have been greatly enriched by legacies. Indeed, the legacies which fell to the Hospital during last year, exceeded 11,000l.

The building of the new Hospital, in the Engraving, was first proposed at a meeting held in the year 1827, at which

the open-hearted Duke of York was chairman; and at a subsequent meeting, the Archbishop of Canterbury presided. A "Building Fund" was raised, to which the late King munificently contributed £1,000. This Fund is entirely separate from the General Funds of the Hospital: "the sums already subscribed" says the Report of 1830, "have been expended in erecting a part of the building which is now occupied by 140 patients, and the public are earnestly requested to keep in view the importance of continuing their benevolent contributions, until the great object of re-building the entire Hospital has been effected. It is well known that the closeness of the wards in the old building has long been a subject of the deepest regret to the physicians and surgeons, who have observed its effect in preventing or retarding the cure of their patients; and this evil must, in some degree, be increased by the new building partially obstructing the ventilation of the old.

From the Report of 1829, we also learn that the subscriptions were £3,439. the Dividends £3,798. and the Legacies £1,781. and the expenses of the year £9,731. including £709. for bedding, &c. for the new building.

The new building is from the designs of W. Wilkins, Esq. R.A. architect of the London University, &c. The Engraving represents the grand front which faces the Green Park, and consists of a centre and two wings, in all 200 feet in length. Part of the north wing, which we have referred to as facing Hyde Park, or stretching towards Knightsbridge, is also erected. The south

wing is finished, and occupied by patients, as is also the south end of the east front. The theatre for lectures on surgery and medicine will accommodate 150 students. Immediately adjoining it is the museum of anatomical preparations. The entire edifice is faced with compost, coloured and checkered in imitation of stone. The hospital, when complete, will contain 29 wards, and 460 beds. The contracts for building the whole amount to about £41,000.

The grand front, seen from the Green Park, has a handsome appearance, and the architecture is simply elegant. Viewed in association with the costly arch entrance to the Gardens of Buckingham Palace, and the classic screen and gates to Hyde Park—the New Hospital gives rise to a grateful recollection of national benevolence as well as cultivation of fine art—of soothing life's ills as well as embellishing its enjoyments—in short, of nurturing the first and best feelings of our nature as well as encouraging taste and talent. May England never halt in raising such monuments of her real greatness!

SUNSET THOUGHTS

(For the Mirror.)

I've stood to gaze on the sunset hill,
When the winds were hush'd and the waves were still;
As the sun sank slowly down the west,
I thought of the good man dropping to rest,
When his race is run—he yields his breath,
And softly sinks in the slumber of death.

When I gazed on the gorgeous western sky,
I thought of those blissful bowers on high,
Whose brightness—blessedness serene,
Ear hath not heard—eye hath not seen.

When I saw the golden glories die,
I thought on life's uncertainty,
And as night came on in her ebon gloom,
Oh! I thought of the dark and the dreamless tomb,
How soon man's fairest prospects flee,
The curtain drops—"And where is he?"

COLBOURNE.

THE NOVELIST

THE GOLDEN BODKIN

An Illustration of Sayings and Doings

(For the Mirror.)

It was the vesper-hour when the lovely Lady Victorine entered the church of St. Genevieve with her liege lord the Marquess de Montespan, and proceeding slowly down a side aisle of that magnificent fane, prostrated herself upon the steps of an altar of black marble, upon which burned in silver cassolettes, two small glimmering fires, sparingly fed with frankincense, and serving rather to render visible, than to illumine the gloom of the niche in which the altar stood; whilst the tapers which twinkled like glow-worms here and there in the body of the spacious temple, indicated the presence of worshippers, who, in the uncertain and vasty darkness, were scarcely beheld. The Marquess de Montespan kneeled beside his fair lady, and a couple of domestics at a respectful distance from the noble pair,

whilst the solemn pealing of the organ intermingled with the low murmurings of human voices, and the sweet, full-toned responses of the choir, aided and attested the devotion of those who now attended vespers in the church of St. Genevieve. The sacred service was nearly concluded, when the attention of the congregation was painfully diverted from the solemn duty in which they were engaged, by thrilling shrieks proceeding from one of the side aisles, and an uncommon stir and tumult about the dark oratory of the Montespans, to which, therefore, a crowd was presently attracted. Alas! for the brevity and vanity of human life! The marquess, who had but so short a time since entered the church in manly prime, health, and strength, and in the full flush of happiness and hope, now suddenly, ay, even as he knelt beside his beautiful wife, and even as their spirits mingled in the same acts of devotion, the marquess now, struck by the angel of death, laid cold, senseless, and motionless, in the arms of his servants, who were vainly endeavouring to recall that vital spark which was totally extinct. Victorine, the young and lovely marchioness, thus suddenly and awfully reduced to widowhood, had fallen into such violent hysterics, as to render the task of supporting her almost dangerous to a noble youth who had voluntarily undertaken it. The consternation of the spectators at this tragical spectacle may be well imagined; but some two or three of them had, nevertheless, presence of mind sufficient to fetch a physician, and after medical aid had somewhat restored to composure the unhappy Victorine, she, with her deceased husband, upon whom,

alas, all efforts of art had been bestowed in vain, was carefully conveyed to the Hotel de Montespan. Upon the breast of the Comte de Villeroi had the head of the afflicted marchioness rested, in the eventful hour of her sad bereavement, and in less than six months did he supply to her the place of her departed lord. This event occurred, it was then deemed, prematurely, and the precise and censorious blamed the indelicate haste with which Victorine had exchanged her weeds for bridal attire; but the kind-hearted observed, "Poor young creature, all Paris knows that Villeroi was the elected of her heart, long ere she was forced into a marriage with Montespan; no wonder therefore is it, that the first act of her recovered liberty should be, that of throwing herself into his arms;" so, "all Paris," after this appeal to its knowledge of private history, and best sympathies, could do no less than take the charitable side of the question, and Madame la Comtesse de Villeroi was allowed, unmolested by the voice of public censure, to reign awhile as bride and belle in the high circles which her beauty and agreeable qualities so well fitted her to adorn. Ere long, however, it was surmised that Victorine found herself not quite so happy in her union with the object of her first affection as she had anticipated she should be; she was pale, spiritless, and absent; sometimes started when addressed, as if only accustomed to the accents of authority unmingled with kindness; her cheeks were hollow, her eyes sunken and ray-less, and her smile was the very mockery of mirth; evidently she was not happy, and the apparently affectionate attentions lavished

upon her by the comte, tended not to diminish suspicions that he was not altogether so amiable at home, as he took pains to appear in society. However, balls and fêtes followed the union of the young couple very gaily for some months, and everybody said that the Comtesse de Villeroi, rich, beautiful, and beloved, ought to be the happiest creature in existence.

Something more than a year after the demise of the Marquess de Montespan, Paris was thrown into considerable consternation by a report originating with some of the petty officers of the sacred establishment, that the church of St. Genevieve was haunted; old Albert Morel, the sexton, protesting upon the faith of a good Catholic, that he had heard, when occasionally in the church, alone, a strange rattling noise proceed from the vaults beneath it. "What this could be," he remarked, "was past comprehension, unless it were ghosts playing at skittles with their own dead bones." Some people laughed at this idea, and some sapiently shaking their heads, declared with ominous looks, that Morel was no fool, but knew what he knew, whilst every one agreed that some foundation, at least there must be, for the fearful tale. At length, in the church of St. Genevieve, it became necessary for the interment of some individual of rank, to open the very vault from whence seemed chiefly or entirely to proceed the strange and alarming sounds, and this happened to be that, in which were deposited the mortal remains of the Marquess de Montespan; from his coffin, (a mere wooden shell,) it was now ascertained that the rattling proceeded, and as upon inspection,

a hole was observed to have been drilled in the wood, as if by the teeth of some animal, it was judged expedient to open and examine it further. The remains of the marquess were discovered in a state of dry decomposition, with his head as completely severed from his body as if by the stroke of the axe; but, horror of horrors! that head, that skeleton skull, moved, as those who opened the coffin stood to gaze on its revolting contents, and rolled to and fro by itself! Dismay seized the spectators, who were about to rush in disorder from the spot, when one more courageous than the rest, laying hold of the skull, shook it violently for some moments, when, from one of the eye-sockets dangled the tail of a rat! The cause of the strange sounds heard by Morel and others, connected with the church of St. Genevieve, was now obvious; the voracious animal had entered when lean and small, into the head of the deceased marquess, by the eye, but after revelling upon the brain of the unfortunate defunct for some time, had increased to a size which rendered its exit by the same passage impossible, and its efforts at extrication from horrible thralldom, caused the rattling of the disjoined head in the coffin. It was proposed to saw asunder the skull, in order to free the creature, and the advice of Albert Morel, that the operation should be performed by one of the medical fraternity, who might be glad to witness the fact of a rat being imprisoned in a human head, was cheerfully taken. Some, however, objected to its being done, without application for leave having been first made to the Comtesse de Villeroi, as one to whom the proprietorship of

her deceased husband's remains naturally and solely appertained, and who might feel it as a cruel insult towards herself, and a sacrilegious violation of the grave of her first lord, the consigning without her knowledge and permission, any part of his body to the hands of a surgeon. "Tush!" quoth old Morel, "all nonsense that! for if one may believe what has long been town-talk, 'tis little that madame will care for her dead husband now she has a living one who pleases her better than ever he could do, poor man!" The sexton's arguments were conclusive, and it was agreed at last, that the skull should be carried to Monsieur Nicolais, the celebrated surgeon, who had unavailingly attempted by bleeding, to recover the late marquess from the apoplexy which carried him off.

A large and brilliant party had assembled at the chateau de Vermont, the residence of the gay and opulent Comte de Villeroi and his lady, to celebrate the christening of their first born, when in the midst of a splendid banquet, an alarm was given that the house was surrounded by police and gens d'armes, who required in the king's name a surrender of the persons of the Comte and Comtesse de Villeroi, they standing attainted of foul and treasonable murder! The confusion and dismay which seized all parties upon this terrible catastrophe, it is impossible to describe; but it suffices to state, that the Comte de Villeroi was impeached for, and fully committed for trial on the charge of having feloniously aided and abetted Victorine de Villeroi, (late Montespan,) in wilfully and maliciously causing the death

of her late liege husband, Herbert de Montespan, by thrusting a long pin, or bodkin of gold into his right ear, well knowing that the same entering into his brain, would cause his instantaneous dissolution. Master Nicolais, it appeared, in sawing open the skull of the deceased with anatomical science and precision, had found a pin or Golden Bodkin like that described in the indictment, and like what were at this period much used by ladies in fastening up their hair, bearing the initials, V.M. which he perceived had been violently thrust through the orifice of the ear, into the brain of the unfortunate victim. This inference as to the fiendish murderer was inevitable, and just; and the horror-struck practitioner scrupled not to incite the relations of the late marquess to summon witnesses, and lay a criminal information against Victorine de Villeroi as principal in, and Armand de Villeroi as accessory to, this abominable transaction. Upon trial, the innocence of the Comte, as to the slightest knowledge of his wife's secret and heinous crime, was so apparent that it ensured him an honourable acquittal; but the guilt of that wretched woman being established beyond all doubt by the evidence of the goldsmith who had made for her, and engraved her initials upon, the Golden Bodkin, of the domestics who had seen her when their master fell asleep during the vespers at St. Genevieve, put her hand beneath his head as if with the intent of waking, and raising him up, and subsequently by her own confession, her guilt was thus incontrovertibly established. She suffered those extreme penalties of the law which the heinous nature of her

crime demanded, and fully justified.

This historiette, in the leading incidents of which, every Frenchman at all acquainted with the *Causes Cèlèbres* of his country, will detect matters of fact, we have "made a prief of in our notebook," as one of those interesting cases, (not less remarkable because of rather frequent occurrence) which incontestably prove, that under the just government of the Omniscient, who hath willed that "Whosoever sheddeth the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed."—Murder will out!

M.L.B

THE SELECTOR AND LITERARY NOTICES OF *NEW WORKS*

POLAND

Dr. Lardner has commenced a "*Library*," as a kind of succedaneum to his valuable "*Cyclopaedia*." Both are styled *Cabinet*, and the first may be considered an amplification of the second. Two of the Cabinet Library volumes contain a Retrospect of Public Affairs for 1831—not a chronology of shreds and patches, but a well-digested review of the great events of the year—and important indeed they are. The work is the quintessence of an "Annual Register:" it is not so porous and pursy as the last mentioned book, but is a pleasant volume to put in one's pocket and read inside a coach, if the passengers will allow you to do so; and it seems to be a good book for newspaper readers, to arrange their head-pieces, for they are usually crammed with all kinds of recollections, and have but few right-set views. We do not content ourselves with saying the *Retrospect*

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