

LAND LEECHES.

The island of Ceylon is celebrated for its tropical luxuriance of animal and vegetable life. Huge elephants roam its forests in large droves, and the richest spices impart fragrance to every breeze. Yet with all its abundance it does not seem to be a very inviting count, for a residence. There appears to be a bitter for every sweet; poisonous serpents and noxious insects are very numerous, but the greatest pest of the whole country is the land leech. These plagues are most detested by travellers. In size they are about an inch in length and as fine as a knitting needle, but they are capable of swelling out and distending until they are about two inches long and as thick as a writing-quill. They are so flexible that they can insinuate themselves through the meshes of the finest stocking, and ascend up the back to fasten upon the most tender parts of the body. They are never found in ponds and moist places, but lie among the grass and fallen leaves, and such is their vigilance and instinct, that they hear a man or a horse at a considerable distance, when they prepare for attack with great alacrity. They advance by some circuitous strides and lay hold of the traveller's foot, raise themselves from the ground, and ascend his dress in search of an aperture to enter for a feast. Mosquitoes, spiders, and centipedes are very troublesome pests, but they are all "gentlemen" in comparison with the land leeches of Ceylon.

HONESTY.

A Quaker, passing through a market, stopped at a stall and inquired the price of citrons.

"I have none" said the honest countryman, "that will suit you; they are decayed, and their flavor is gone."

"Thank thee, friend, I will go to the next stand."

"Hast thou good fruit to-day?" said he to the dealer.

"Yes, sir, here are some of the finest nutmegs of my garden. They are small, but rich of their kind."

"Then canst thou commend them?"

"Certainly, sir."

"Very well; I will take two."

He carried them home, and they proved not only unsound, but miserably tasteless.

The next morning he again repaired to the same place. The man who sold him the fruit the previous day asked him if he would like some more.

"Nay, friend, thou hast deceived me once, and now, although thou may'st speak the truth, still I cannot trust thee; but thy neighbor chose to deal uprightly with me, and for henceforth I shall be his patron. Thou would'st do well to remember this, and learn by experience that a lie is a base thing in the beginning, and a very unprofitable one in the end."

A CURL CUT OFF WITH AN AXE.

A True Incident.—"Do you see this lock of hair?" said an old man to me.

"Yes; but what of it? It is, I suppose, the curl from the head of a dear child long since gone to God."

"It is not. It is a lock of my own hair, and it is now nearly seventy years since it was cut from this head."

"But why do you prize a lock of your own hair so much?"

"It has a story belonging to it, and a strange one. I keep it thus with care because it speaks to me more of God and his special care than anything else I possess."

"I was a little child of four years old, with long, curly locks, which, in sun, or rain, or wind, hung down my cheeks uncovered. One day my father went into the woods to cut up a log, and I went with him. I was standing a little way behind him, or rather at his side, watching with interest the strokes of the heavy axe, as it went up and came down upon the wood, sending off splinters with every stroke, in all directions. Some of the splinters fell at my feet, and I eagerly stooped to pick them up. In doing so I stumbled forward, and in a moment my curly head lay upon the log. I had fallen just at the moment when the axe was coming down with all its force. It was too late to stop the blow. Down came the axe. I screamed, and my father fell to the ground in terror. He could not stay the stroke, and in the blindness which the sudden horror caused, he thought he had killed his boy.

"We soon recovered—I from my fright and he from his terror. He caught me in his arms and looked at me from head to foot, to find out the deadly wound which he was sure he had inflicted. Not

a drop of blood or a scar was to be seen. He knelt upon the grass and gave thanks to a gracious God. Having done so he took up his axe and found a few hairs upon its edge. He turned to the log he had been splitting, and there was a single curl of his boy's hair, sharply cut through and laid upon the wood. How great the escape! It was as if an angel had turned aside the edge at the moment when it was descending on my head. With renewed thanks upon his lips he took up the curl, and went home with me in his arms.

"That lock he kept all his days, as a memorial of God's care and love. That lock he left to me on his death-bed."

BURSTING OF AN ICEBERG.

Some years ago, while a French man-of-war was lying at anchor in Temple Bay, the younger officers resolved on amusing themselves with an iceberg, a mile and more distant in the Straits. They made sumptuous preparations for a picnic upon the very top of it, the mysteries of which they were curious to see. All warnings of the brown and simple fishermen, in the ears of the smartly-dressed gentlemen who had seen the world, were quite idle. It was a bright summer morning, and the jolly-boat, with a showy flag, went off to the berg. By twelve o'clock the colours were flying from the ice-turrets, and the wild midshipmen were shouting from its walls. For two hours or so they hacked and clambered upon the crystal palace, frolicked and feasted, drank wine to the king and the ladies, and laughed at the thought of peril where all was so fixed and solid. As if in amazement at such rashness, the grim Alp of the sea made neither sound nor motion. A profound stillness watched on his shining pinnacles, and hearkened in the blue shadows of his caves. When, like thoughtless children, they had played themselves weary, the old alabaster of Greenland mercifully suffered them to gather up their toys, and go down to their cockle of a boat, and flee away. As if the time and distance were measured, he waited until they could see it and live, when, as if his heart had been volcanic fire, he burst with awful thunders, and filled the surrounding waters with his ruins. A more astonished little party seldom comes home to tell the story of their panic. It was their first and their last day of amusement with an iceberg.