

me understand that she was not lying in her grave, but had flown to a beautiful country beyond the sky, where nothing died or ever grew old—we were very happy once!"

"Nelly, Nelly!" said the poor woman, "I can't bear to see one as young as you so sorrowful. Pray don't cry."

"I do so very seldom," said Nell, "but I have kept this to myself a long time, and I am not quite well I think, for the tears come into my eyes and I cannot keep them back. I don't mind telling you my grief, for I know you will not tell it to any one again."

Mrs. Quilp turned away her head and made no answer.

"Then" said the child, "we often walked in the fields and among the green trees, and when we came home at night, we liked it better for being tired, and said what a happy place it was. And if it was dark and rather dull, we used to say, what did it matter to us, for it only made us remember our last walk with greater pleasure, and look forward to our next one. But now we never have these walks, and though it is the same house it is darker and much more gloomy than it used to be, indeed."

She paused here, but though the door creaked more than once, Mrs. Quilp said nothing.

"Mind you don't suppose," said the child earnestly, "that grandfather is less kind to me than he was. I think he loves me better every day, and is kinder, and more affectionate than he was the day before. You do not know how fond he is of me!"

"I'm sure he loves you dearly," said Mrs. Quilp.

"Indeed, indeed he does!" cried Nell, "as dearly as I love him. But I have not told you the greatest change of all, and this you must never breathe again to any one. He has no sleep or rest, but that which he takes by day in his easy chair, for every night and nearly all night long he is away from home."

"Nelly!"

"Hush!" said the child, laying her finger on her lip and looking round. "When he comes home in the morning, which is generally just before day, I let him in. Last night he was very late, and it was quite light. I saw that his face was deadly pale, that his eyes were bloodshot, and that his legs trembled as he walked. When I had gone to bed again, I heard him groan. I got up and ran back to him, and heard him say, before he knew that I was there, that he could not bear his life much longer, and if it was not for the child, would wish to die. What shall I do! Oh! what shall I do!"

The fountains of her heart were open; the child, overpowered by the weight of her sorrows and anxieties, by the first confidence she had ever shown, and the sympathy with which her little tale had been received, hid her face in the arms of her helpless friend, and burst into a passion of tears.

In a few moments Mr. Quilp returned, and expressed the utmost surprise to find her in this condition, which he did very naturally, and with admirable effect, for that kind of deceit had been rendered familiar to him by long practice, and he was quite at home in it.

"She's tired you see, Mrs. Quilp," said the dwarf, squinting in a hideous manner to imply that his wife was to follow his lead. "It's a long way from her home to the wharf, and then she was alarmed to see a couple of young scoundrels fighting, and was timorous on the water besides. All this together has been too much for her. Poor Nell!"

FINE ARTS.

THE DELUGE. PAINTED BY F. DANBY, F.R.A.

The contemplation of undisputed and irresistible power, while it excites and elevates the imagination, depresses the spirits—a salutary chastening to which we now submit with satisfaction, as the natural tribute to a manifestation of power such as we have never before witnessed. In its subject and in its treatment "The Deluge" is the mightiest demonstration of power, before which we stand awed and admiring, encouraged but fearful, warmed and chilled at the same moment. We despair of doing any thing like justice to the impression made on our minds by this picture. The conception is poetically grand; for the painter, not satisfied with representing effects, investigated their cause, and, from the depths of his imagination, drew forth a light, amenable to the laws of nature, but supernaturally magnificent. He conceived that the instrument by which the Almighty produced that deluge, to which the Scriptures, our guide, and the united traditions of all ages and lands bear witness, was a comet, which, in its eccentric orbit, approached near enough to this earth to cause the windows of heaven to open and to break up the fountains of the great deep, producing that flow of waters, and that flood of phosphoric light, which are the sublime features in Mr. Danby's picture. The sun is setting in blood on the extreme verge of the horizon, his light overpowered with the thick sheets of vapour, through which the upper portion of his setting disk appears; but to the opposite extremity of the scene a faint and sullen flush of an uncertain red struggles with the bright, appalling light of the comet, and the thick coming darkness of the falling masses of waters, which half obscure and half reveal a sky whose depth and brightness are at once awfully beautiful—the shroud of nature in her throes of death.

On the expanse of waters, the rugged, broken, gurgling, whirling, eddying expanse, that fatal glare whitens to the glow of heated steel; in the distant, indescribable brightness glides the emblem of hope and safety, the ark of animated nature, in which the chosen

germs of the past diluvian world are carefully preserved—there is no other sign of hope, or token of mercy. In the far distance are the domes and spires of a submerged city receiving the red glow of the last sunset, while the devouring flood pours in upon their towering heights, threatening a speedy calm—the triumph of the fated element over the last resistance offered by the work of man. On the other side, in the distance, the everlasting masses of rock are bowed beneath the rush of waters; that terrible whirl, where the prone descending cloud meets the excited wave, shows that the winds of heaven are warring with the waters of the earth, and the beetling rocks are swept by the strength of the waters above from their adamant base, and fall in masses into the roar of waters beneath. Towards the foreground, if we might use that irrelative technicality where no ground is visible, the waters rushing and roaring, and foaming from heights of waters to depths of waters—broken, and agitated, and chafed by the precipitous tops of craggy and towering mountains not yet subdued, crushing rocks and crashing trees—boil out of the picture into an endless space, which the painter borrows from the spectator's imagination; or, lash themselves in white foam into another immensity, at once real and imagined, on the other side. Here the colour of the water is that grey green, which shows that it is not in its right place, not in natural depths, but yet deep and strong and wild; and we notice this peculiarity of colouring, so true to nature, the rather because in all parts of the picture the undertone prevails with equal truth, whether the shadow of the rock, or the faint red lurid light of the setting sun, or the wild glare of the comet's horrible brightness, falls upon it.

Here is a scene which without aid from anything but inanimate nature and the few wrecks of a city, tells the mighty tale of devastation, in that tongue which speaks to the eyes and minds of all men, of whatever language, or creed, or nation.

But the painter wrings the heart: his awfully grand middle distance is the point which rivets at once the attention, which fixes the mind, and agonizes the feelings. Here a mighty, towering, storm-fractured rock rises like a dark Fate, in the middle of the picture. To the mountains from which this elevated peak ascends, have the inhabitants of the city of the plain rushed for shelter; the latest fallen rocks are happily indicated by the crashing of trees, the last work of the waters; to one tree had clung whole families of men; with the grasp of death they clung to it, as to a hope of some moment's respite, but it is splintered with the weight of the last sinking mass of waters, and from its branch and bole are falling the desperate wretches who have clung till the muscles relaxed, while others are drowning or fighting with the waters against inevitable fate. Exquisitely painted is this tree and its details, its rich but subdued colour, the dark crimson of the drapery coiled round the bole, and the shred of brighter colour which marks and brings out the centre. On the right of the spectator is the form of a giant—there were giants in the land—on whose body lies a female figure and an angel of pity—angels then communed with the daughters of men—is weeping over this crush of earthly strength and beauty—a most poetic episode—sweetly relieving the terrible action of the epic. It is here that the magic light of the comet tells with a preternatural effect, every figure struggling with, or floating on, or sinking in the waters; every figure clinging to the tree as it falls across the picture; every figure eagerly scaling the rock; or in the reeling crowd on its summit is lighted up with the flashes of this fateful glare—this bright, white, phosphoric light of the comet. In the figures, every individual is a study, the anatomical truth, the roundness of form, the life of the attitude, the colouring of the flesh, and the expression of every feature and every muscle are truly admirable. Every group is in itself a picture, without ever obtruding beyond its own place in the general effect, the interest rises as the crowds scale the rock, and where the last peak is sustained, but for a moment, by the iron muscles of a giant figure, the flood has mined its way, the stone crumbles, and the mass is falling into the hopeless depths beneath. Oh, the straining, the struggling, the efforts of those death-hunted souls, climbing that precipice but to ensure death! So terrible a picture of divine power and human helplessness, as the subject of this picture represents, required the consolatory assurance of intellectual strength, and power of human genius in its treatment, to reconcile us to ourselves. In genius, as evinced in the conception, in taste, as displayed by the grouping and arrangement, in knowledge, as proved by the painting of the figures, in heart and mind, as developed in the sufferings depicted and the consolations offered, in judgment, as shown by the absence of all false ornaments, all vain efforts, by the subdued harmonious tone, by the brilliant chiaroscuro, and the exquisite composition of this picture—there is no painter in England, perhaps, in the modern world, that can compare with Mr. Danby, nor any picture of this age to compete with his "Deluge."—*Atlas.*

VENICE AND ITS SHOWS.

It would be difficult to point out a more cheerless spot than the site of Venice. The dreary and almost uninhabited beach, the tameness of the adjacent scenery, and the smooth unbroken surface of the tideless lagoons, all render it as uninviting as can be well conceived. Yet those very circumstances contribute to increase the interest of the traveller. The appearance, in such a place, of a splendid city, associated with so many brilliant recollections, recalls

to his mind the romantic history of its early inhabitants, the difficulties they had to surmount, and their triumphant success; and while he surveys its towering cupolas and painted domes, which at the first glance appear actually to float on the bosom of the Adriatic, and contrasts them with the desolate aspect of the surrounding shore, he cannot but do homage to the spirits of its heroic founders, who, overcoming every obstacle, preferred independence in such a spot to submission to the destroying invaders of the north.

It is strange that under a government the most suspicious that ever existed, the amusements of the people should have been characterized by such an exuberance of mirth, as was displayed on occasions of this kind, but it appears to have been a part of Venetian policy to encourage on holidays all kind of games and diversions, probably with the intention of diverting the minds of the people from more serious objects. The isolated situation of the city, however, obliged them to invent a series of amusements which, like their dress, their manners, and their government, differed entirely from those of other countries; and to them the rest of Europe is indebted for the masquerade, the extravagancies of Harlequin and his clowns, the drollery of Pulcinella, and numberless other diversions of a similar kind, the invention of a lively and ingenious people.

The open space in front of the Doge's Palace, extending from the great square to the principal harbour, was the spot allotted for the celebration of the popular games. It is a broad street paved with large square blocks of rough marble; and the range of buildings opposite, erected of the same durable materials, and at that time forming the residence of the principal nobility, is still one of the finest specimens of mixed architecture in Europe. The whole space was filled with people; and on the platform in the centre a number of clowns, painted and disfigured in the most grotesque manner, were standing on each other's shoulders three stories high, while the topmost one was grinning at a senator who sat at a window of the palace, laughing in spite of his robes at the grimaces of the mountebank. Around them there were fire-eaters, both in the professional and non-professional sense—sword-swallowers, fortune-tellers, and an Indian juggler who kept five balls at once in the air, with a couple of serpents tied round his neck as neatly as the cravat of a Bond Street exquisite. There was besides an itinerant astrologer, dressed in black to indicate the dignity of his profession. He had under his arm a circular frame, bearing the signs of the zodiac, and carried in his right hand a white rod; while he appeared to look with the utmost disdain on the performances of his brother mountebanks, and kept entirely aloof from them.

But what caused the greatest merriment among the populace was the appearance on the platform of a pig, whose spare and sturdy, remarkable longitude of limb showed that his diet of stale had been none of the fullest. The animal's tail was then carefully shaven and soaped—for this elegant pastime, graye reader, is of Venetian origin—and it was afterwards let loose, followed by the nimblest of the crowd. There are fewer animals, however, swifter than a lean pig; and the one in question having no superfluous weight to carry, easily outstripped his pursuers; or if one more dextrous than the rest did succeed in pouncing on the prize, he was dragged after him in full speed through the noisy throng, until the slippery tenure soon proved insufficient, the animal escaped with a grunt of triumph, leaving his adventurous pursuer extended prostrate on his back, to the infinite amusement of the bystanders.

The amphibious situation of Venice entirely debarred the people from the pleasures of the chase, the chief amusement both of rich and poor in the feudal ages; but in times of public rejoicings they found a ludicrous substitute for it. This was the goose-chase, or, as it was called, *il pigliar l'oca*. A goose was let loose in one of the canals, and after being allowed a fair start, a number of hummers plunged into the water and gave chase, and the bird of course became the prize of him who first seized it.

St. Helena.—On the evening of the 25th September, St. Helena was in sight, bearing N.W. by N. distant twenty-five miles. We approached this island early on the following morning, and sailed close to its majestic, gloomy, barren, and inaccessible cliffs, washed at their base by a fathomless ocean. The entire coast, indeed, presents a rampart of weathered and iron bound cliffs of a sombre, burned hue—scarce a trace of vegetation is visible—a line of low surf frets at the foot of the steeps—a few sea-fowl skim the water, or fly from the hollows of the rocks—while some solitary signal-houses, perched on the topmost heights, or a conspicuous magazine and battery, on the summit of a mountain called High Knoll, are the only indications of human occupants. The scene it offers is novel and grand—even sublime in barrenness—but melancholy in the extreme—and well adapted to elicit the remark made by Napoleon, when he gained the first view of the land of his exile—"Is this the Promethean rock to which I am to be chained for life?" To him it was, indeed, a Promethean rock, where the culture of disappointment never ceased to prey upon his heart. *Bennett's Travels.*

A young musician, on his first appearance in public, was so intimidated as hardly to be able to perform his part, on which it was observed that he trembled so much he could not shake.