

## A DREADFUL NIGHT.

In the vicinity of the barracks assigned to the European soldiers in India, there are usually a number of little solitary buildings or cells, where the more disorderly members of the corps are confined for longer or shorter terms, by order of the commanding officer. In one of these, on a certain occasion, was locked up poor Jock Hall, a Scotsman belonging to Edinburgh or Leith. Jock had got intoxicated, and being found in that position at the hour of drill, was sentenced to eight days solitary imprisonment. Soldiers in India have their bedding partly furnished by the Hon. Company, and find the remainder for themselves. About this part of house furnishing, however, Jock Hall troubled himself very little, being one of those hardy, reckless beings on whom privation and suffering seem to make no impression. A hard floor was as good as a down bed to Jock; and therefore, as he never scrupled to sell what he got, it may be supposed that his sleeping furniture was none of the most abundant or select. Such as it was, he was stretched upon and under it one night in his cell, during his term of penance, and possibly was reflecting on the impropriety of his future putting "an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains," when, lo! he thought he heard a rustling in the cell, close by him. At this moment he recollected that he had not, as he ought to have done, stopped up an air hole, which entered the cell on a level with its floor, and also with the rock, externally, on which the building was planted. A strong suspicion of what had happened, or was about to happen, came over Hall's mind; but he knew it was probably too late to do any good, could he even find the hole in the darkness, and get it closed. He therefore lay still, and in a minute or two heard another rustle close to him, which was followed by the cold slimy touch of a snake upon his bare foot! Who in such a situation would not have started and bawled for help? Jock did neither; he lay stone still, and held his peace, knowing that his cries would most probably have been unheard by the distant guard. Had his bed-clothes been more plentiful, he might have endeavoured to protect himself by wrapping them closely around him, but this their scantiness forbade. Accordingly, being aware that, although a motion or touch will provoke snakes to bite, they will not generally do it without such incitement, Jock held himself as still as if he had been a log. Meanwhile, his horrible bedfellow which he at once felt to be of great size, crept over his feet, legs, and body, and, lastly, over his very face. Nothing but the most astonishing firmness of nerve, and the consciousness that the moving of muscle would have signed his death warrant, could have enabled the poor fellow to undergo this dreadful trial. For a whole hour did the reptile crawl backwards and forwards over Jock's body and face, as if satisfying itself, seemingly, that it had nothing to fear from the recumbent object on its own part. At length it took up a position somewhere about his head, and went to rest in apparent security. The poor soldier's trial, however, was not over. Till daylight he remained in the same posture, flat on his back, without daring to stir a limb, from the fear of disturbing his dangerous companion. Never, perhaps, was dawn so anxiously longed for by mortal man. When it did come, Jock cautiously looked about him, arose noiselessly, and moved over to the corner of his cell, where there lay a pretty large stone. This he seized, and looked about for the intruder. Not seeing the snake, he became assured that it was under his pillow. He raised the end of this just sufficiently to get a peep of the creature's crest. Jock then pressed his knee firmly on the pillow, but allowed the snake to wriggle out its head, which he battered to pieces with the stone. This done, the courageous fellow for the first time breathed freely. When the hour for breakfast came, Jock, who thought little about the matter after it was fairly over, took the opportunity of the opening of the door to throw the snake out. When the officer whose duty it was to visit the cells for the day, was going his rounds, he perceived a crowd round the cell door examining the reptile, which was described by the natives as of the most venomous character, its bite being invariably and rapidly mortal. The officer, on being told that it had been killed by a man in the adjoining cell, went in, and inquired into the matter. "When did you first know that there was a snake in the cell with you?" said he. "About nine o'clock last night," was Jock's reply. "Why didn't you call to the guard?" asked the officer. "I thought the guard wadna hear me, and I was feared I might tramp on't, so I just lay still." "But you might have been bit: did you know that you would have died instantly?" "I kent that very weel," said Jock, "but they say that snakes winna meddle with you, if you dinna meddle with them; see I just let it crawl as it liket." "Well, my lad, I believe you did what was best, after all; but it was not what one man in a thousand could have done." When the story was told, and the snake shown to the commanding officer, he thought the same; and Jock, for his extraordinary nerve and courage, got a remission of his punishment. For some time, at least, he took care how he again got into such a situation as to expose him to the chance of passing another night with such a bedfellow.—*Chambers's Journal*.

A little girl having been told that the name of the first man was Adam, was asked what was the name of the first woman? She paused for a moment and then answered, "Why, Mrs. Adam, I suppose."

From the Albany Argus.

## TRAVELLING.

Travellers there are who by their own fireside  
Have lived devoted to the joys of home,  
Nor over unknown regions waste and wide  
Have ever roamed or ever wished to roam.  
Such travellers are clad in 'complete steel,'  
Arm'd against all misfortunes; they are those  
Who, stretch'd upon their couches, while they feel  
The traveller's joy, fear not the traveller's woes.  
Such have I been, and though I seldom rove  
Ten leagues from the dear spot that gave me birth,  
Yet do I live in visions, and I love  
To send my thoughts abroad o'er all the earth,  
Brooding o'er them until sleep will renew  
The fairy visions waking fancy drew.

Of't have I stood in thought beneath the dome  
That the blue sky hangs over Italy,  
Roved o'er the seven imperial hills of Rome,  
Or sigh'd o'er her that sat "Queen of the Sea;"  
—Of't wandered on my lone and desert way  
Serenely sad, what time the setting sun  
Ting'd with gay beam Palmyra's ruins gray,  
Or sank behind the towers of Babylon.  
—And crossing many a hill, and stream, and lake,  
Have stood where Oronoco, king of floods,  
In God's own presence, day and night doth make  
His everlasting music to the woods—  
—By Amazon reclined upon the sod,  
Far in her forest walks where no man ever trod.  
Sept. 13th, 1839.

## TRAVELS.

From a Journal during an Excursion in Asia Minor.—By C. Fellows.

## PLAINS OF TROY.

The poetical idea of the plains of Troy, the arena of Homer's battles, is frequently disturbed in passing the flat, sandy, and marshy ground, by seeing its present inhabitants,—the buffalo, with all but its head immersed in the swamps, the heron feeding in the shallow streams, and the frogs, whose voices certainly vary more than that of any other animal, sounding at different times like crying children, barking dogs, pigeons, and crows; and when in great numbers, producing a harmony almost as agreeable as the singing of birds. On the banks or sandy places the helpless tortoise is crawling sleepily along, and as we pass timidly draws in its head. They are so numerous that I often turned my horse out of the way to avoid them, although doubtless their hard shell would sufficiently protect them from injury. The dead ones lying about lose their outer shell, and become perfectly white, of a limy bone, with the horny scales scattered around.

Another extract will show still more, with what a pleasant variety of incident, observation, and adventure, this agreeable and scholarlike traveller relieves his most learned investigations. He thus closes an admirable account of the famous old city of Laodicea.

## A VULTURE.

I have mentioned that we killed a vulture this morning at Laodicea. It was shot at about nine o'clock, and at the time was washing itself in a stream after its hearty meal upon the dead camel. It was wounded in the head and neck, and dropped immediately; but upon taking it up, its talons closed on the hand of my servant, making him cry out with pain. He placed it on the ground, and I stood with my whole weight upon its back, pressing the breast-bone against the rock, when its eye gradually closed, its hold relaxed, and to all appearance life became extinct. It was then packed up in my leather hood, and strapped behind the saddle. The day was oppressively hot, for we trod upon our shadows as we rode across the plain. Until this evening (at eleven o'clock) the vulture remained tightly bound behind the saddle. My servant, on unpacking, threw the bundle containing it into the tent, while he prepared boiling water for cleaning and skinning it. Intending to examine this noble bird more carefully, I untied the package, and what was my surprise to see it raise its head and fix its keen eye upon me! I immediately placed my feet upon its back, holding by the top of the tent, and leaning all my weight upon it; but with a desperate struggle it spread out its wings, which reached across the tent, and by beating them attempted to throw me off. My shouts soon brought Demetrius, who at length killed it by blows upon the head with the butt end of his gun. My ignorance of the extreme tenacity of life of this bird must exculpate me from the charge of cruelty.

## MOUNTAINEERS OF CAIRI.

There was a mother with her child, perhaps five years old, dark as a negro, but of a far healthier and richer colour, almost veiled by its wild hair, which had never been cut, and perhaps never combed; its neck was hung with beads, coins, and various chains; its very few clothes hung loosely, leaving the arms and legs bare. The mother was young and of a peculiar beauty; with much elegance and softness, yet with the dignity of a Meg Merrilies; she had some-

what of the Græco-Egyptian style of face, the features being rather long. Her hair, which was formed into a band round her head and partly plaited, flowed with a long handkerchief down her back. Her clothes were loose and few; the breast was open, and the legs bare from the knee; the arms also were exposed. With this appearance even of poverty in the dress, there was at the same time a considerable display of wealth; on one of her wrists I saw three broad gold bracelets, or bands of plain gold, about three quarters of an inch wide, and on her neck other gold ornaments. A bunch of fresh flowers was stuck into the hair, a very common ornament among the people throughout Turkey; it is placed so carelessly, and still with so much taste both as to position and selection of colours, that a stranger cannot but be struck with it; and this is done without the aid of a glass, for there can scarcely be one in the whole country: I have seen none in the houses of either rich or poor, both Greeks and Turks having religious scruples against their use. I observe my guides frequently picking up flowers, and sticking them carelessly into the folds of the turban, generally with the blossoms hanging downwards.

## TURKISH CHARACTER.

I certainly never met with more determined wits than among the lower classes of the people here, in whom the national character is most easily read. Through in perfect ignorance of their language, I have been so amused by their inimitable acting and buffoonery, and by their games and even childish tricks, that I have laughed until they fancied I understood them, and began to talk with me; my servant was interpreter on these occasions, and their observations and repartees were so pointed, that he hesitated in literally translating them to me. In the coffee-room last night game succeeded game, all ages joining: and one man, who was unwittingly made the laughing-stock of the party, having had his face blackened while sleeping, took the joke in excellent humour, and enjoyed it as much as any of the party. The games are generally very simple, perhaps almost childish: no species of gambling is known. Our postillion to day, the ugliest, and most unprepossessing fellow I ever saw, headed us for forty-eight miles on horseback, whistling and hooting after the baggage horses with as much animation and noise as a huntsman. On our halt for half an hour in the middle of the day, I counted a crowd of people around us, nearly thirty in number, who were all taking the most ridiculous interest in our party, and joking with my servant and guide. On seeing me look at my watch and map, and then at my compass, one of these bystanders said something in a very significant manner, which I learned was, 'Ah! you can tell anything that is, but you cannot, with all your things, say what weather we shall have to-morrow.' The remark was quick, and showed a readiness of thought; but what I would more particularly notice is their love of buffoonery and sprightliness of manners; the boys are constantly saying something smart, that makes my servant laugh, and he in his turn with his whip makes them scamper off.

From Sketches in Egypt and Mount Sinai.

## ST. CATHERINE'S CONVENT.

They entered the basis of St. Catharine, which leads to the foot of Mount Sinai. There is considerable difficulty in approaching the convent, and, upon their arrival there, no great facility of access was offered them. Owing to the nature of the district which the monks inhabit, in order to avoid surprise or aggression, there are no gates to the convent; consequently, after the baggage of the party had been raised up by means of a rope, the travellers themselves were informed, that, if they purposed entering, they must do it in a similar manner. The convent itself is thus described:—

The convent, which is dedicated to St. Catherine, resembles a little fortified city of the middle ages; it contains about sixty monks and three hundred domestics, employed in all the labours of the house, and the far more considerable labours of the garden. Each has his fixed business in this little republic; so that a visitor traversing the streets of the convent, is immediately struck with the extreme order and neatness that reign there. Water, the great requisite of those who dwell in Arabia, springs up, pure and refreshing in every direction, and vines are trained over the white surfaces of the walls, which delight the eye by their verdant drapery.

The church is of a Roman construction; it dates at the epoch of transitions from Byzantium to Gothic. It is a basilica, terminated by a sanctuary of a more recent date than the rest of the edifice; the walls of which are covered by mosaics, in the taste of those adorning the cathedral of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and Mount Nea in Sicily. A double range of marble columns, heavy in their forms, and whimsical in their ornamentation, support semi-circular arches, above which small windows open a little below the roof; the ceiling is of carved cedar, enriched with gold mouldings. The ornaments of the altar, exceedingly rich and numerous, are nearly all of Russian origin and form. The lower walls are covered with marble, which the monks assured us came from St. Sophia. The lobby, which divides the church into two portions, is of red marble; its most remarkable feature is a Christ of colossal dimensions; and what is strange, this rage for ornament, which is the principal character of the Byzantium art, is extended even to the