

ger for a day, and it is always carried with them on their hunting and other excursions. As I before observed, the leaves of this favoured plant contain a rich & delightful beverage, altogether forming a most extraordinary combination of food and drink, thus affording another illustration of the beneficence of a kind Providence in securing even to the wild & untutored savage a luxury which their more favoured and civilized brother might well envy.

I have seen the Mascal so thick in some places as to form almost impenetrable forests of thorns, as formidable in appearance as would be the same number of glittering spears, covering the whole expanse of the country as far as the eye could see, in travelling through which the incautious or unwary will be reminded by a gentle stab of the necessity there is to have a care.

I may also mention that many of the peasantry of the states of Lonora and Chibushua, bordering on this country, also cultivate the Mascal in their fields and gardens, and I have been informed distil from its liquor which is said to be excellent, and not inferior to the best Jamaica Rum.

**THE DAHLIA.**—The Dahlia was discovered by Humboldt, on the high sandy plains of Mexico, about 5000 feet above the level of the sea. It was first introduced into this country some thirty years ago; but it is only within the last ten years that its cultivation became an object of great attention on the part of the floriculturists; and such have been the results of care and experiment, that there are now about one thousand varieties; the best differing in price from one guinea to one shilling, according to their novelty, and the common sort, still cheaper, but looking very beautiful to those who have not

Procured a taste to double the surprise,

And gazed on dahlia charms with learned eyes.

These things, united with very little difficulty of cultivation, (apart from the preservation of its roots in the winter,) and a capability in the plant of blooming, almost any where, have rendered the dahlia a universal favourite—popular, but not common.

Both convolvulus & the pimpnel fold up their leaves on the approach of wet weather. The latter is called the poor man's weather glass. In the same manner species of trefoil contract their leaves at the approach of a storm, and they have been named the husbandman's barometer. Chickweed is another plant which answers the same purpose. When the flower expands boldly and fully, no rain will hapen for four hours or upwards; if it continue in that open state, no rain will disturb the summer's day. When it half conceals its miniature flower, the day is generally showery, but if it is entirely shut, or veils the white flower, with its green mantle, let the traveller put on his great coat, and the ploughman with his beasts of draught expect rest from their labors.

**A GIFTED BIRD.**—Mr. J. P. Robertson gives the following account of the wonderful imitative powers of a Paraguay parrot, which he owned when he resided at Assumption:

So acute was the bird—so exquisite his ear—so sagacious his perception—and so strong and instinctive his imitative powers, that I have seen him listen attentively for five minutes to one person's speaking, and give both the words and tone of the speaker. No mimic more accurate—no critic more caustic—no satirist more libellous than this chattering bird. I have heard him imitate the cry of the child, the squeak of the pig, the bark of the dog, and mew of the cat; and all so admirably, that it was impossible not to class him as ventriloquist of the first order. He gave the word of command like a drill-sergeant to a company of soldiers; played trumpet for them, and beat the drum; and then sang the song of "Viva la Prtria."