

such violence down the precipice. In the evening about nine, the Table-Cloth is gone, and with it the wind, when a calm and beautiful night succeeds. A true solution of the whole appearance, with the circumstances attending it, does not seem yet to have been given. Probably, Sir John Herschel, during his residence in this quarter of the globe, may have made such observations as will throw light upon it. In the meanwhile we present the following statement of facts as ascertained by Mr. Webster:—"At the base of the mountain, on the south-east side, there is little or no wind; on the summit of the mountain, during the strongest period of the south-east wind, there is only air, accompanied by a raw cold mist and drizzling rain. Lower down in the cleft a brisker current of fresh air is felt; lower still, near the limits of the mist, the strength of the wind is greater; and below this again, where there is a clear blue sky overhead, the wind rushes down with great impetuosity, occasioning a loud howling noise. All this time a violent gale is passing over the heated plain of Cape Town. During the whole period of the south-east wind the sky is a beautiful Italian blue; not a vestige of a cloud is to be seen, excepting those resting on the mountains. The line of demarcation between the vapour rolling over the sides of the mountain and the clear atmosphere is as distant as if a huge table-cloth were thrown over its top, and hung down its sides."

The prevalent theory explanatory of the Table Cloth is, that the south-east wind passing over the ocean is loaded with moisture, and that the coldness of the Table Mountain condenses it. But this hypothesis is totally destroyed by the fact, that the south-east wind is generally of a dry evaporative nature, as was fully proved by experiments with the hygrometer and thermometer. Mr. Webster observes, "For my own part, I cannot account for it; nor can I accede to any explanation which I have seen of it. It is a superb phenomenon, and on a more extended scale here, perhaps, than anywhere else. I cannot help thinking that the impetus of the south-east wind partly proceeds from this rarification by heat, thus enlarging its volume, and setting its particles in motion." The mantle of vapour, we are told, deposits an immense quantity of moisture on Table Mountain. The question then is, whence comes this vapour? We are informed that it is neither brought by the wind nor deposited from the atmosphere. There is then no other place that it can come from but the surface of the ground. It is well known that very remarkable variations of the density of the atmosphere are produced by currents of air or winds. In the absence, therefore, of any other explanation of the phenomenon, we hazard the opinion, that when the south-east wind begins to blow, a rarification of the atmosphere takes place, arising first from the peculiar arrangement or relative position of the mountains, and, secondly, for the direction in which the wind blows upon them. That rarification of air from similar causes

does occur, is a well-established fact, and we see no reason why it should *not* take place in the present instance—nay, there is every reason for thinking that it does so. The immediate consequence of this decrease in the pressure of the air is the ascent of the moisture from the ground, or from any collected body of water whatsoever. Mr. Webster makes no mention of the barometer having been used; now, in our apprehension of the matter, this instrument was essentially necessary; and until its indications are known during the continuance of the phenomenon, every theory explanatory of it must be regarded as "NOT PROVEN."—*Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*.

WATER.—The hardness of river and shallow well water depends upon their containing calcareous salts with carbonate and sulphate of lime, one grain of the latter contained in 2,000 grains of soft water being sufficient to convert it into the hardest water that is commonly met with. Hard water is also subject to become putrid, on account of the vegetable or animal matter which it contains, and generally turbid from the suspension of earthy impurity; and when drunk, it is flat, from the absence of air.

HOW TO FLOAT ON WATER.—Mr. Wm. Nicholson has published some very good directions for this object, the chief of which are, "That when a person falls into the water who has not learned to swim, he should carefully avoid raising his hands above the water, and then by moving them under water, in any manner he chooses, his head will rise high enough to enable him to breathe freely; if he moves his legs, as in the action of walking up stairs, more of his body will rise above the water, which will allow him to use less exertion with his hands." To which may be added, that throwing back the head and shoulders so as to thrust out the chest to its greatest extent, and keeping it in that position, the volume of air contained in the lungs will be so much increased as to add very considerably to the buoyancy of the upper part of the body; this alone would enable some people to float without using any motion of their limbs.

MAGNANIMITY IN SAVAGE LIFE.—Several runaway negroes being condemned to be hanged, one was offered his life on condition of being the executioner. He refused it—he would sooner die. The master fixed on another of his slaves to perform the office. "Stay," said this last, "till I prepare myself." He instantly returned to his hut, and cut off his hand with an axe; returning instantly to his master, "Now," said he, "compel me, if you can, to hang my comrades."

When the Caribbee Indians see their enemies cast away on shoals, they plunge into the water to save them from the waves, and take every care to recover them. While they expect to be put to death, the Indian chief thus addresses them:—"To day you are our friends; to-morrow, our enemies: we will kill you then, if we can; but to-day depart in peace."