

**INDIAN SUPERSTITION.**—Among the more innocent superstitions of the Indians, of which there are as many as among my countrymen in the Emerald Isle, I shall relate the following, as it happened to be personally concerned in it. A fine Indian youth of shining copper colour, with hair of jet flowing down his shoulders, called at the great gate of the house at which I lodged, and requested "for the love of Maria Santissima!" to be permitted to pass into my room, for he had a subject of infinite importance (*suma importancia*) to communicate.—He passed on, and entering my room, threw himself on his knees in an attitude of supplication, from which I with difficulty raised him, saying, that that was the posture for addressing heaven, but not me. He replied, that "I could now be of more use to him than Heaven; and implored with tears in his eyes, that I might assent to his prayer.

I was all amazement, and after forcing the man to rise from his kneeling posture, he said, "He was a servant of the Condesa, who had turned him out of her house in consequence of a silver dish having been stolen last night, and his fellow-servant having accused him of being the thief. He knew," he said, that I was in possession of an armadillo, which had discovered to me on a former occasion the thief who had stolen my silver plates. He now threw himself again on his knees, and prayed that I would consult the armadillo as to the theft, & thereby relieve him from a charge, of which I should soon know that he was altogether innocent." Being aware of the strange superstitions of the Indians respecting these little animals, and having heard several curious stories concerning them, this application was not altogether surprising to me. I, however, assured the Indian that I did not possess an armadillo, but only the shell of one which I produced in the hope of satisfying him on that point; but I was mistaken, for he insisted that "it was well known I had one alive, and that by means of it had detected the thief who stole the pick-axe, as also several other things in Potosi, and that I was in the habit of conversing with it every night, at twelve o'clock." My assurance that I possessed no armadillo, and the declaration of my belief that if I did I could gain no information from it, seemed only to distress the Indian, without producing any conviction of the unreasonableness of his request, which he felt persuaded I refused because it was not accompanied with a fee. He pleaded poverty, but vowed his services in any way that I should think fit to command, if I would but consult my infallible oracle, which it was in vain to deny that I possessed, for "my nocturnal conversations with the armadillo were notorious through the whole neighbourhood." The earnestness of the Indian so plainly bespoke his honesty, that I was induced to intercede with good old lady Condesa, and had him restored to favour. He was afterwards proved to be innocent.—[Temple's Travels in Peru.]

"Give us something new," says the

public. "Here are original communications," says the paper. "An invitation," cries the patentee. "New fashions," echo from the high priests of coats and frocks. But prithoe, is there after all, any one "track untrodden before," for the footsteps of this sage generation? In vain does the romantic swain die in rhyme, in one corner of a country newspaper;

The course of true love never did run smooth.

and ladies have been fickle, and poets very wretched, ever since time began. In vain are whole villages burned, and fair maidens carried off, and cannon, small swords and Indian scalping knives, with the whole machinery of blood and murder, put in requisition through column after column of "tales" and "sketches," it is alas, a repetition of what we have had ninety-nine times already. We have coaches raised by magic, and boats moving by invisibles, and so had they in days of yore. We array ourselves in the latest fashions a la Francois, promenaded Broadway, and verily believe the wise man was moon struck when he said "there is no new thing under the sun"—when lo! forth starts the wardrobe of our great grandmother from the sleep of a century, and puts its poor counterpart to shame. Surely there is nothing new on earth. N—A.

## THE ARTS

"What cannot Art and Industry perform,  
Where science plans the progress of their toil!  
They smile at penury, disease and storm;  
And oceans from their mighty moulds recoil."

## Selected. RAIL-ROADS.

No subject has, since the foundation of the government, engrossed the public mind so entirely as this. The interest which has been excited arises from one of two causes—either from an expectation that Rail-Roads would be profitable to individuals and the public, or from the hope that they would furnish the materials of speculation. A country cannot be so effectually improved in any way, as by internal communications. The greater the facility of communication, the more active will be social and commercial intercourse, and the transmission of the fruits of the earth and manufactures, and the dissemination of knowledge. The principle on which a Rail-way operates in the transportation of bodies, differs essentially from that of a canal; in the later, the body to be moved is sustained by the greater gravity of the fluid on which it is placed. Upon a canal, even with moderate motion the difference between the weight to be moved and the propelling power is great. The resistance lies in the gravity of the greater. On a level Rail-way, the resistance lies in the friction at the axles of the carriages and the flexure of the rails, and it is not materially increased by the velocity.—Canals are confined to comparatively low districts on account of the supply of water; Rail-ways can be made to traverse any regions, and the ascents and descents are easily overcome, owing to the superiority of inclined

planes over locks. Canals are effected by drought, floods, and frost: Rail-ways are not affected by the two first, and probably not by the last. The Baltimore and Ohio Rail-road continued open and in use during the last year, while all communications by river or canal were suspended. The question of the practicability of Rail-roads in winter, is of more serious import, on account of the almost exclusive use of steam power on them; and should be decided before entering on the construction of any road, the utility of which would depend on the business in the winter. If, however, it would apply against Rail-roads, it would apply with greater force against Canals. The first mention of Rail-roads in England, was in 1600. It is only within a few years, however, that they have been in general use, and their superiority to other modes of conveyance established. The length of all the Rail-Roads in England is about three thousand miles. The introduction of the steam engine promises to work as great a revolution in affairs, as the application of steam to the purposes of navigation. Twenty years ago, the mails did not travel faster than seven miles an hour: how shall we estimate a discovery that carries us from 20 to 30 miles an hour? Experiments made in England, prove that they have not yet arrived at the greatest point of improvement. The present average rate of speed on the Manchester and Liverpool Rail-way is 16 miles an hour—the greatest velocity is 32 miles. With a load of 16 tons, Mr. Stevenson's engine (the Rocket) travelled at the rate of 16 miles an hour, and a London Engine at the rate of 23 miles an hour. Explosion, if it takes place, will not injure the passengers, as they are in a separate conveyance.

The practicability of Rail-roads has been fully tested. Many companies in England owning profitable canals, contemplate draining them, and substituting Rail-ways. From experiments on the English Rail-ways, it appears that the following were the results: One pound moved 334 lbs. and kept it moving at the rate of 4 1-2 miles an hour. One pound moved 470 lbs. and kept it moving at the rate of three miles an hour. One lb. moved 616 lbs. and kept it moving at the rate of 2 1-2 miles an hour.

A Rail-way costs about two-thirds of a canal, through the same route. A single Rail-way will cost from 9 to \$12,000 per mile—a double Rail-way will cost from 15 to \$18,000 per mile. Both of the estimates are made for a favorable country.—The part of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail-road completed, of 61 miles, cost but little short of \$20,000 per mile. One cent per ton per mile will, it is estimated, cover all the expenses of transportation on a Rail-way. The daily expense of the engine on the Manchester road, England, is about \$2-28 per day. Supposing the engine to carry 30 tons at the rate of 10 miles an hour, and to work ten hours a day, performing 100 miles a day, the cost will be about 1-10th of a cent per ton per mile.