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TWO IRRITABLE FOUNTAINS.

In Iceland are the Geysers, the most remarkable springs in the world. Lord Dufferin, who visited them in 1856, describes a false alarm of the great Geysler, the teasing of the Strokr and an eruption of the great Geysler as follows:

As the baggage-train with our tents and beds had not yet arrived, we fully appreciated our luck in being treated to so dry a night; and having eaten everything we could lay hands on, were set quietly down to chess and coffee brewed in Geysler water; when suddenly it seemed as if beneath our very feet a quantity of subterranean cannon were going off; the whole earth shook, and Sigurdr, starting to his feet, upset the chess-board (I was just beginning to get the best of the game), and flung off full speed toward the great basin. By the time we reached its brim, however, the noise had ceased and all we could see was a slight movement in the centre, as if an angel had passed by and troubled the water. Irritated at this false alarm, we determined to revenge ourselves by going and tormenting the Strokr. Strokr—or the churn—you must know, is an unfortunate Geysler, with so little command over his temper and his stomach that you can get a rise out of him whenever you like. All that is necessary is to collect a quantity of sods and throw them down his funnel. As he has no basin to protect him from these liberties, you can approach to the very edge of the pipe, about five feet in diameter, and look down at the boiling water which is perpetually seething at the bottom. In a few minutes the dose of turf you have just administered begins to disagree with him; he works himself up into an awful passion—tormented by the qualms of incipient sickness, he groans and hisses and boils up and spits at you with malicious vehemence, until at last, with a roar of mingled pain and rage, he throws up into the air a column of water forty feet high, which carries with it all the sods that have been chucked in and scatters them scalded and half digested at your feet. So irritated has the poor thing's stomach become by the discipline it has undergone, that even long after all foreign matter has been thrown off, it goes on retching and sputtering until at last nature is exhausted, when sobbing and sighing to itself, it sinks back into the bottom of its den.

We had now been keeping watch for three days over the Geysler in languid expectation of the eruption which was to set us free. All the morning of the fourth day I had been playing chess with Sigurdr; Fitzgerald was photographing, Wilson was in the act of announcing luncheon, when a cry from the guides made us start to our feet, and with one common impulse rush toward the

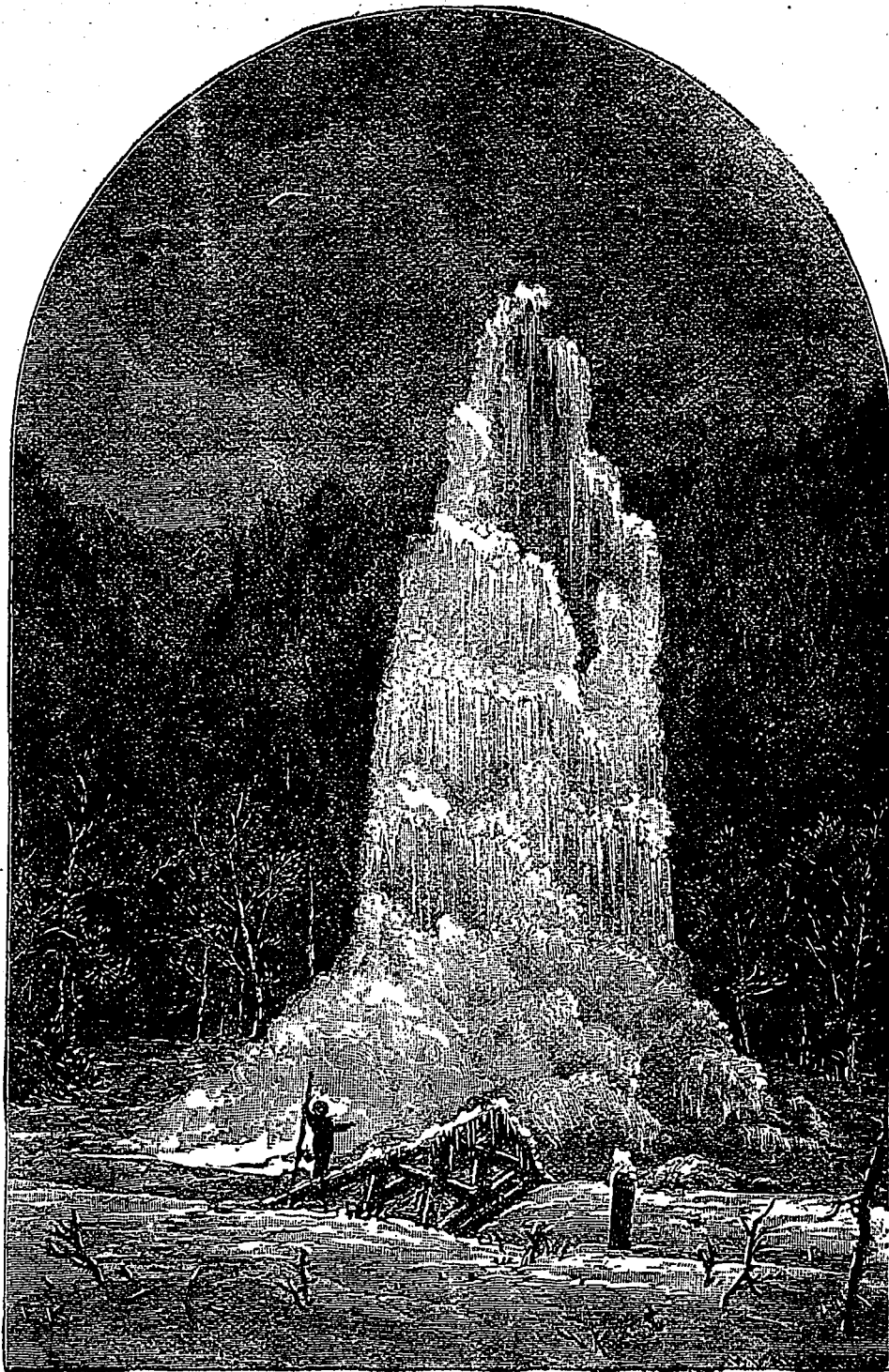
basin. The usual subterranean thunders had already commenced. A violent agitation was disturbing the centre of the pool. Suddenly a dome of water lifted itself up to the height of eight or ten feet,—then burst and fell; immediately after which a shining liquid column or rather a sheaf of columns

themselves, and were immediately sucked down into the recesses of their pipe.

The spectacle was certainly magnificent; but no description can give any idea of its most striking features. The enormous wealth of water, its vitality, its hidden power,—the illimitable breadth of sunlit

and at no moment did the crown of the column reach higher than sixty or seventy feet above the surface of the basin. Now, early travellers talk of three hundred feet, which must, of course, be fabulous; but many trustworthy persons have judged the eruptions at two hundred feet, while well-authenticated accounts—when the elevation of the jet has been actually measured—make it to have attained a height of upward of one hundred feet.

So much for the Geysers of the frozen North. Our picture is of one nearer home. At the town of Kour on the summit of the Alleghany Mountains, in May, 1878, a well was sunk over two thousand feet without oil, which was searched for, being found; but vein after vein of oil gas, sufficient to illuminate a city was struck. There being no hope of oil being reached the casing was pulled down, since which time the well has attracted much attention from the remarkable phenomena it exhibits. The hole fills rapidly with water which remains until a sufficient head of gas accumulates to throw it off. To overcome the weight of a column of water a third of a mile in depth, it will be readily understood is no trifle. At intervals of six and ten minutes it is expelled with great violence, commonly rising over a hundred feet into the air. The gas and water are thoroughly intermingled, and, on being fired, give rise to what may be termed night rainbows of singular beauty and variety of coloring. In the winter the foam that is thrown up freezes and gradually forms a huge cone of inconceivable grandeur. The picture shows the appearance of the fountain last winter when it was estimated to measure over one hundred feet in height.



THE FLOWING FOUNTAIN OF KOUR IN WINTER.

wreathed in robes of vapor—sprung into the air, and in a succession of jerking leaps, each higher than the last, flung their silver crests against the sky. For a few minutes the fountain held its own, then all at once appeared to lose its ascending energy. The unstable waters faltered,—drooped,—fell, “like a broken purpose,” back upon them-

vapor, rolling out in exhaustless profusion,—all combined to make one feel the stupendous energy of nature's slightest movements.

And yet I do not believe the exhibition was so fine as some that have been seen; from the first burst upward, to the moment the last jet retreated into the pipe, was no more than a space of seven or eight minutes,

first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.”—*American Messenger.*

THE BRAVE MAN is not he who feels no fear, for that were stupid and irrational, but he whose noble soul its fear stubdues, and bravely dares the danger which it shrinks from.—*Joanna Baillie.*

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