

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## THE DEAD SEA, OR LAKE ASPHALTITES.

(From "Incidents of Travel," by an American.)

The ancients believed that living bodies, and even heavy metals, would not sink in it; and Pliny and Strabo have written of its extraordinary buoyancy. Before I left Jerusalem, I had resolved not to bathe in it, on account of my health; and I had sustained my resolution during the whole of my day's ride along its shore; but, on the point of turning up among the mountains, I could resist no longer. My clothes seemed to come off of their own accord; and, before Paul had time to ask me what I was going to do, I was floating on its waters. Paul and the Arabs followed; and, after splashing about for awhile, we lay like a parcel of corks upon its surface.

From my own experience, I can almost corroborate the most extravagant accounts of the ancients. I know, in reference to my own specific gravity, that in the Atlantic, or Mediterranean, I cannot float without some little movement of the hands; and, even then, my body is almost totally submerged; but here, when I threw myself upon my back, my body was half out of water. It was an exertion even for my lank Arabs to keep themselves under. When I struck out in swimming, it was exceedingly awkward; for my legs were constantly rising to the surface, and even above the water. I could have lain there and read with perfect ease. In fact, I could have slept; and it would have been a much easier bed than the bushes at Jericho. It was ludicrous to see one of the horses. As soon as his body touched the water he was afloat, and turned over on his side; he struggled with all his force to preserve his equilibrium; but the moment he stopped moving he turned over on his side again, and almost on his back, kicking his feet out of water, and snorting with terror. The worst of my bath was, after it was over, my skin was covered with a thick glutinous substance, which it required another ablation to get rid of; and after I had wiped myself dry, my body burnt and smarted as if I had been turned round before a roasting fire. My face and ears were incrustated with salt; my hairs stood out, "each particular hair on end;" and my eyes were irritated and inflamed, so that I felt the effects of it for several days. In spite of all this, however, revived and refreshed by my bath, I mounted my horse a new man.

**ATMOSPHERIC RAILWAY.**—We have several times alluded to this means of transportation, as now in successful use in England. Our readers may, perhaps, be interested in a brief description of it:—

As early as 1810, Mr. Medhurst proposed to construct a tunnel from one end of a railroad to another, by means of which carriages should be propelled along it. Various projects of the kind have since been published, but a difficulty which always presented itself has not till lately been overcome. By means of powerful air-pumps, placed at the extremities of the tunnel, and wrought alternately, the air within was easily exhausted, and a piston was rapidly propelled along the tube by the pressure of the atmosphere in its rear. The difficulty was, to attach this piston, by rods, to a carriage moving along the rail, and not to allow the external atmosphere to rush through the aperture. After numerous ineffectual contrivances, the following has been adopted. A pipe, nine inches in diameter, is laid between the rails, with an aperture along the top. The aperture is closed by a strip of leather, strengthened by iron plates, attached, like a lid, to one side of the aperture, and falling, on the other, into a groove, filled with a composition of oil and wax. Wheels are attached for opening and closing this valve, and a heated iron rod follows, after the rods that connect the piston with the carriage have past. The heat melts the cement, and closely solders the valve. The saving of expense is great, an increased speed is obtained, and numerous casualties avoided.—*Dop. Advocate.*

**TELEGRAPHIC DESPATCH: CROWNING OF WILLIAM IV., SEPT. 8, 1831.**—The signal was given outside Westminster Abbey, that the King was just crowned. A royal salute was fired by the Park guns. A telegraphic despatch was convey-

ed to Portsmouth, distant seventy-two miles, announcing the event, and a royal salute was fired there within three minutes of the time, and while his Majesty remained upon the throne.

**RECORD OF ROYALTY.**—A London paper, published in 1810, contains the following singular facts, illustrating the dangers of royalty:—

"It appears, that of the fifteen monarchs of Europe, who were tranquilly seated on their thrones in the year 1788, George the Third, of England, alone possesses the kingly power. The sum of this melancholy record of royalty stands thus:—

One murdered,	One assassinated,
Five deposed,	One abdicated,
One expropriated,	One died a lunatic,
Two poisoned,	One natural death,
One sudden death,	One still reigning."

Well may it be said with the poet—

"Uncasy lies the head that wears a crown."

**YOUTH AND AGE.**—The plan of our social world is peculiarly favourable to its daily happiness, as well as to its general beauty, and seems to have been devised with express reference to its agreeable effect. All mature would have made life a mere counting-house of business, or an arena of warfare; all aged would have weakened and saddened it; youth alone would have disordered it; and childhood only would have converted it into a baby-house of whim and folly. But on the scheme which has been adopted and realised, there is always enough of the elder, for the most important offices and substantial realities, to secure the stability of the social fabric: and this being provided for, and thus upheld, all the others become agreeable ornaments and exhilarating companions to it. The scattered groups and moving forms of the younger are always pleasing: it is they who cause the story of life to be so often poetical and pathetic. Living chiefly on their fancy and their feelings, and fond of activity, it is from the ardent, adventurous, fearless, hoping, restless, day-dreaming, and struggling youth, that the most moving, agreeable, and startling incidents originate. Ever pursuing meteors of their imagination; often like shooting-stars themselves; elastic in nature, and bounding from disappointment; their wishes, passions and projects are always infusing into the world they mingle with, a vivacious and invigorating influence. But the inexperienced Telemachus wants perpetually his Mentor; and the aged supply, in daily life, the presence and service of the Palladian sage. The Homeric fable, so intellectually continued and expanded by Fenelon, is a parable of our living world. Youth, guided, lessoned, and guarded by age, is a dramatic representation of the plan on which our social economy has been framed, and is still conducted. The aged are thus indispensable elements of human life, and are so arranged as never to be absent from it.—*Sharon Turner.*

**EARLY RISING.**—Next to temperance, a quiet conscience, a cheerful mind, and active habits, I place early rising, as a means of health and happiness. I have hardly words for the estimate I form of that sluggard, male or female, that has formed the habit of wasting the early prime of day in bed. Putting out of the question the positive loss of life, and that too of the most inspiring and beautiful part of each day, when all the voices of nature invite man from his bed; leaving out of the calculation that longevity has been almost invariably attended by early rising; to me, late hours in bed present an index to character, and an omen of the ultimate hopes of the person who indulges in this habit. There is no mark so clear of a tendency to self-indulgence. It denotes an inert and feeble mind, inert of purpose, and incapable of that elastic vigour of will which enables the possessor to accomplish what his reason ordains. The subject of this unfortunate habit cannot but have felt self-reproach, and a purpose to spring from his repose with the freshness of dawn. If the mere indolent luxury of another hour of languid indulgence is allowed to overrule this better purpose, it argues a general weakness of character, which promises no high attainment or distinction. These are never awarded by fortune to any trait but vigour, promptness, and de-

cision. Viewing the habit of late rising, in many of its aspects, it would seem as if no being, that has any claim to rationality, could be found in the allowed habit of sacrificing a tenth, and that the freshest portion of life, at the expense of health, and the curtailing of the remainder, for any pleasure that this indulgence could confer.—*Flint.*

**TO MOTHERS!**—A few years ago, some gentlemen who were associated in preparing for the ministry, felt interested in ascertaining what proportion of their number had pious mothers. They were greatly surprised and delighted in finding that, out of one hundred and twenty students, more than a hundred had been carried by a mother's prayers, and directed by a mother's counsels, to the Saviour. Though some of these had broken away from all the restraints of home, and, like the prodigal, had wandered in sin and sorrow, yet they could not forget the impressions of childhood, and were eventually brought to the Saviour, to be a mother's joy and blessing.—*Abbott.*

**ST. GEORGE—THE PATRON OF ENGLAND.**—Dr. Byton conjectures that "Georgius" is a mistake for "Gregorius;" that the real patron of England is St. Gregory, who sent Austin the Monk to convert England; and that St. George (whom no one knows) came in by a mere blunder.—*Wesley.*

## POETRY.

## ON THE DEATH OF THE LAST CHILD.

FAREWELL, my young blossom!  
The fairest, the sweetest—  
The pride of my bosom,  
The last and the sweetest;  
On thee my heart centred,  
All hopes earth could cherish:  
The spoiler hath entered,  
And thou too must perish!

I see thy bloom wasting,  
And cannot restore it;  
The end now is hastening,  
'Tis vain to deplore it.  
Could prayers detain thee,  
As pale thou art lying,  
I would not detain thee  
To live, ever dying:

To linger—to languish—  
That life may be sorrow!  
Through the night pain and anguish,  
No rest on the morrow!  
Oh! soon may deep slumber  
In mercy steal o'er thee!  
Earth can but number,  
And heaven is before thee.

Oh! how I love thee!  
When anguish oppress'd thee,  
My arm still was nearest,  
My prayer still hath bless'd thee;  
But now all is ended!  
How welcome that sighing!  
My prayer has ascended!  
'Tis heard—she is dying!

My God! I adore thee!  
Receive the freed spirit  
In gladness before thee,  
A crown to inherit.  
Take the gem that thou gavest,  
Take the flower thou dost sever:  
Take the soul that thou savest—  
It is THINE, and for ever!

REV. T. DALR.

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