

never measured the leap of a flea with more seriousness—but presently one receives a dab in the eye, another in the mouth. They begin to grow hot and angry. "I hit your nose," cries one. "No, it was my cheek!" replied the other.—They draw a little nearer, in order to ascertain the truth by feeling; spit, spit, they still go, like two vicious old cats; their palates grow dry; their throats become parched; but the contest continues, and they exhaust themselves in making spitoons of each others faces, and beards. Hamlet and Laertes were not more eager and desperate. "A hit, a very palpable hit!" they exclaim, as they hawk up their last supply of ammunition. Each denies the truth; they mutually proceed to a verification, and the game of plaff often ends in a regular match of nose-pulling.—*Two Years' Residence in a Levantine Family.*

THE ELEPHANT AND THE CAMEL.

Elephants have the bitterest enmity to camels. When the camel scents the elephant it stops still, trembles in all its limbs, and utters an uninterrupted cry of terror and affright. No persuasion, no blows can induce it to rise: it moves its head backwards and forwards, and its whole frame is shaken with mortal anguish. The elephant on the contrary as soon as he perceives the camel elevates his trunk, stamps with his feet, and with his trunk thrown backwards, snoring with a noise like the sound of a trumpet, he rushes towards the camel, which with its neck outstretched and utterly defenseless awaits, with the most patient resignation, the approach of its enemy. The elephant, with its enormous shapeless limbs, tramples on the unfortunate animal in such a manner that in a few minutes it is scattered around in small fragments.

A STRIKING THOUGHT.

The death of an old man's wife, says Lamar-tine, is like cutting down an ancient oak that has long shaded the family mansion. Henceforth the glare of the world, with its cares and vicissitudes, falls upon the old widower's heart, and there is nothing to break their force, or shield him from the full weight of misfortune. It is as if his right hand was withered—as if one wing of the eagle was broken, and every movement that he made brought him to the ground. His eyes are dim and glassy, and when the film of death falls over him, he misses the accustomed tones which might have soothed his passage to the grave.

THE HOME OF THE DEAD.

Public taste, the requirements of enlightened opinion, the dictates of the holiest human affection, imperatively require, for a cultivated and socially progressive community, places of sepulture that shall not be repulsive charnel houses. The grave should be made beautiful and holy with pleasant paths around it, and sweet flowers upon it, with ever-blooming verdure around, and the eternal marble above, to consecrate it as a sacred place apart. Such care for the rest of the dead tells of yearnings for immortality—of aspirations above the clod of the valley, that

would simulate here on earth the paradisaical bloom of the spirit-land. It indicates that higher civilization of the soul, which is not the mere result of scientific culture and legal restraints—it elevates our physical being above brute existence, which perishes and passes utterly away.

DEATH-BED SUPERSTITIONS.—The practice of opening doors and boxes when a person dies is founded on the idea that the minister of purgatorial pains took the soul as it escaped from the body, and flattening it against some closed door (which alone would serve the purpose,) crammed it into the hinges and hinge openings; thus the soul in torment was likely to be miserably pinched, and squeezed by the movement on casual occasion of such door or lid. An open or swinging door frustrated this, and the fiends had to try some other locality. The friends of the departed were at least assured that they were not made the unconscious instruments of torturing the departed in their daily occupations. The superstition prevails in the north as well as in the west of England; and a similar one exists in the south of Spain, where I have seen it practiced. Among the Jews at Gibraltar there is also a strange custom when a death occurs in a house; and this consists in pouring away all the water contained in any vessel, the superstition being that the angel of death may have washed his sword therein.

PHYSICAL INFLUENCE OF HABIT.

Proficiency in all handicrafts is the legitimate result of the physical influence of habit. The blacksmith makes a nail, for instance, well and quickly only after many and often repeated trials. The hand and eye must be educated—habituated to the work, and then they cannot fail. It is so with all mechanical professions. The artisan by a long apprenticeship becomes acquainted with the use of the proper tools and at last the master of his trade, and the habits then acquired, whatever may be his after situation, will influence his whole life.

SCRAPS TO THE CURIOUS.

If a tallow candle be placed in a gun and shot at a door, it will go through without sustaining any injury; and if a musket ball be fired into water, it will not only rebound, but be flattened, as if fired against a solid substance.

A musket ball may be fired through a pane of glass, making the hole the size of the ball without cracking the glass; if the glass be suspended by a thread it will make no difference, and the thread will not even vibrate.

In the arctic regions when the thermometer is below zero, persons can converse more than a mile distant. Dr. Jamieson asserts that he heard every word of a sermon at the distance of two miles. We ourselves heard across a water a mile wide, on a still day, with perfect distinctness, every word of a mother talking to her child.

It is a sign of wisdom to be willing to receive instruction: the most intelligent sometimes stand in need of it.