

General Miscellany.

A Waterspout in the Indian Ocean.

Not a breath of air was stirring, and the vessel herself lay sluggishly on the briny ocean, the sails hanging in bags, or clewed up in festoons to the yards, and the masts motionless as Pompey's Pillar. At the distance of very little more than the ship's length the sea was bubbling up in the shape of spiral cones of varying height and sizes, all of them springing from within a circle, the circumference of which might be equal to that of the ring of an equestrian circus. The vertical rays of the sun invested the falling spray with an indescribable beauty, but the level water appeared of a dull, strong, white colour. The phenomenon was attended by a very loud and long-continued hissing noise, of a peculiar and terrifying kind. This was but the commencement of a waterspout. Every moment we expected to see the several columns unite in one; and, from their contiguity, there would, in such a case, be no hope of final escape. Either the ship would be totally engulfed, or every atom of mast, rigging, and all above deck would be whirled a hundred fathoms through the air.

Many on board were personally cognisant that any extraordinary concussion of the air, as that produced by the firing of guns, had been known to cause waterspouts to subside, and the captain of our ship had given orders to turn two of the main deck large carronades (for we were armed *en flûte*) upon it, with heavy charges. But so riveted and entranced were all, that it was with extreme difficulty that either soldiers or sailors could be made to move; and only when some of the officers literally put their own shoulders to the wheel, and exhorted the gaping, bewildered men, were the guns charged and trained to the waist of the ship. Scarcely was this done, when five or six of the largest columns suddenly joined together as though by a species of magnetic attraction, and formed one of colossal magnitude, high as the maintop-sail yard, the spiral motion rapidly increasing, and the whole body seeming to near the ship.

"We shall soon know our fate," exclaimed the captain. "Now, Tom," said he, to the old man o'war's gunner, "do your best—your very best."

"Ay, ay, Sir?" replied the tough old salt, in that muttering indistinct manner common to old seamen when much excited. "Avast a minute!" grumbled he to an assistant who was busy with the chocks. "Hand me that monkey's tail."

Eagerly clutching with his fish-hooks of fingers the short iron crow-bar so denominated, he rammed it as far as he could down the ample mouth of the piece, in a peculiar direction.

"Away, skylarkers! Sea-room, ye red-coats! There: depress a little—more—so, avast!" He took a quick squint down the short but deadly tube, and then turned to the artillery-man presiding over the carronade with, "Shipmate, are you all clear for a run?"

"All ready?" inquired the captain. "All ready, Sir," repeated the veteran tar.

"Very good," was the reply; and, springing on the capstan-head, the latter sang out at the top of his voice, "Now, men, I want every one of you—red-coats and blue-jackets—to try your lungs! They're strong enough on most occasions, and don't be behind hand now. Our lives depend upon it." Here he paused; and pointing significantly to the tremendous spot, which enlarged and neared the ship every moment, he impressively demanded, "Do you see yon big fellow?"

"Ay, ay," said the tarry-jackets. "Yes," said the red-coats.

"Very well, then, all I've got to say is, that if we don't thrash him, he will thrash us! So no demi-semi quavers, but give three hearty cheers to frighten him away, for he's a real coward. Hats off, and up at arm's length!" They obeyed.

"Now, my hearties," continued he, well knowing in what strain to address them, "Let us try if our throats cannot drown the bark of these two bull-dogs of ours! Why, we're good for nothing, if we can't make as much din as a couple of rusty iron candlesticks! Hu-rr-ah!"

As the gallant commander waved his hat aloft, the keen eye of the old gunner glistened with uncommon ardour, and, squirting a long stream of suspicious looking fluid some odd fathoms from the ship's side, he muttered, "Here goes a reg'lar wide awaker!"—applied the match to the priming—bang! bang! the two "candlesticks" blended into one simultaneous roar, accompanied by hurrahs which of themselves shook the sultry air.

The steady state of the ship was highly favourable to the marksmen, and the skill of the old gunner produced a result equal to his most sanguine expectations, for the "monkey's tail" struck fairly athwart the spout at an elevation of some fifteen feet, and the whole immense body immediately fell with a crash like a steeple, and before the cheering ended, all had subsided—old Neptune's face became unwrinkled as heretofore, ship and shadow again became double, rainbow-hued dolphins again glided like elfin shadows just beneath the translucent surface, flying fish again skipped along it with redoubled zest, the huge albatross again inertly stretched its immense wings, the screaming sea-hawk again descended from the regions of immensity, where it had been soaring at an elevation far beyond the pierce of human vision, the white side of the insatiate shark again glanced in fearful proximity to the imprisoned ship; aboard which ship hearts rose as the waves fell, fear was indignantly kicked out of its brief abiding place, tongues were again in active commission, feet were again pattering, and arms again swinging about, shrill orders were again bandied, the pet monkey ran chattering aloft to complete its lately suspended dissection of the marine's cap, tarry-jackets again freshened their quids, hitched their voluminous trousers, and made vigorous renewed allusion to their precious eyes and limbs, and red-coats once more found themselves at the usual discount.

I have only to add that a glorious spanking breeze followed within a few hours; and many a poor fellow blessed the waterspout, from a vague notion that to its agency he was indebted for the grateful change. But what mysterious affinity there could be between a waterspout in a calm, and a breeze springing up soon afterwards, I leave my scientific friends to discover and explain.—Such things are above a plain seaman's philosophy.

Mental Excitement.

Bad news weakens the action of the heart, oppresses the lungs, destroys the appetite, stops digestion, and partially suspends all the functions of the system. An emotion of shame flushes the face; fear blanches it; joy illuminates it; and an instant thrill electrifies a million of nerves. Surprise spurs the pulse into a gallop. Delirium infuses great energy. Volition commands, and hundreds of muscles spring to execute.—Powerful emotion often kills the body at a stroke. Chilo, Diagoras, and Sophocles died of joy at the Grecian games. The news of a defeat killed Philip V. The door-keeper of Congress expired upon hearing of the surrender of Cornwallis. Eminent public speakers have often died in the midst of an impassioned burst of eloquence, or when the deep emotion that produced it suddenly subsided. Largrave, the young Parisian, died when he heard that the musical prize for which he had competed was adjudged to another.

The Religion of Paying Debts.

One of our religious exchanges has the following strong remarks on this subject.—They drive the nail in to the head and clinch it.—*Merchant's Magazine*.

"Men may sophisticate as they please; they can never make it right, and all the bankrupt laws in the universe cannot make it right, for them not to pay their debts.—There is a sin in this neglect, as clear and as deserving church discipline, as in stealing or false swearing. He who violates his promise to pay, or withholds the payment of a debt when it is in his power to meet his engagement, ought to be made to feel that in the sight of all honest men he is a swindler. Religion may be a very comfortable cloak under which to hide; but if religion does not make a man deal justly, it is not worth having."

What the Richer are we?

Every one who goes to the Exhibition tries to get a good look at the great diamond. There it is in its gilt iron cage, under a glass case, on its lock up pillars, blazing back the light. People have heard so much about the diamond that they must see it, and bearing in mind its eastern name, Mountain of Light, and seeing, from a long way off, its golden dome, and a crowd around it as if they were basking in its beams, up they come, elbowing and pushing to the prison bars.

Some think that the "Mountain of Light" can, at all events, be no less than the whole glass shade that covers it; and it is quite amusing to hear their "That's it!" "O, is it?" "That's the Mountain!" "The Koh-i-Noor!" and to see their looks, as if they considered the whole thing a downright imposture, and felt themselves completely humbugged when they find that the big cage and the glass shade are all to cover a bit of a thing not bigger than a half a fair-sized walnut.

True enough; but then it is, or is supposed to be, the largest diamond in the world; and the lapidaries, having weighed it and tested its purity, set down its price at more millions than all the other things in the Exhibition are worth, taken together.—That bit of crystallized carbon, that any one could with the greatest ease hide in his mouth, is said to be of sufficient value to buy every item the world has sent to its Show of Industry, Queen of Spain's jewels, Crystal Palace, and all.

There it is in its cage, playing with the daylight, brilliantly enough, and doubtless, if well disposed, it might be seen the whole length of the building off, flashing forth its rays as if they were some condensation of light. But withal, what are we the richer? It tells the story of the fall of the Indian Cæsars: the Sikh Lion Kings, brave as lions ever were; of wars waged ten thousand miles off; of lands laid waste and cities ruined, and men maimed, and slain, and flung in mangled heaps. But what are we the richer? What wealth is there for the nation in that diamond? What the poorer were the world if it lay yet encrusted over among the quartz in some mountain-cave! What the worse off were the people of England, if it were brought within the wire of a galvanic battery, and burnt like a piece of coal?

There is no actual wealth in that diamond, millions though it be worth; it is a mere wealth of figures; it adds nothing to the land, or clothes, or food, or inventive powers of the people. It finds no fruit, no emulance, no wages; fells no forests, brings up no crop in any wilderness. It has an imaginary worth, but we are none the richer for it. We might have the whole transparent of the Crystal Palace set with such cages and diamonds, and be a poor starving people. However bright they shine, we do not live on diamonds. They are brilliant, rare, and dear, but the wealth of a people is in commoner things. Our riches in the Palace of Industry are shown in our coal, and iron, and machinery; in the inventive genius and workmanship that, toiling through a long course of years, has set up those hard materials as the arms, and hands, and bones, and muscles, and untiring thews of steam, to hew, and mould, and weave, and spin, and gather up for man a thousand-fold the abundance that his own mere strength could gain.

Your diamond-finders add nothing to the world's wealth; the growers of corn and cotton, the feeders of cattle and the weavers of wool, the carriers of commerce, awakening industry throughout the world, are the wealth producers. We are none the richer for the diamond, but we are, of all the world, the richest people in the genius that has made that iron work, and gathered from every corner of the world harvests for an ever-growing multitude; and richer we might be a hundred fold the value of that world-wonder of a diamond, if, instead of the sword, we had carried to India honour, justice, and industry.—*Liverpool Chronicle*.

A gentle heart is like ripe fruit, which bends so low that it is at the mercy of every one who chooses to pluck it, while the harder fruit keeps out of reach.

Support of Ministers.

Pay your minister.—1. Pay him, because it is the Ordination of God, "that those who minister at the altar should live of the altar." When God sent you your minister, he laid you under obligation to yield him a support. The head of the church is too just to call a man away from secular labours, for his service, without giving a precept for his sustenance.

2. Pay your minister, because you owe him, and the precept is, "owe no man." Having had the time of your minister, you can no more deprive him of his wages without sin, than you could the reaper of your fields. The money you subscribed is not a charity, but a debt.

3. Pay your minister, that he may be worth paying. How can he give rich instruction, if poverty drive him out of his study to dabble in the business of the world? How can he buy books and periodicals without means? How can he think and reason closely if you allow his mind to be tortured with fears of debt and solvency, and keep him running from neighbour to neighbour to borrow money.

4. Pay your minister, so that he can pay his debts. The world expects ministers to pay their debts punctually. Not to do this is to bring a reproach on religion. Can the minister be punctual, if his people withhold the means? The shoemaker, tailor, merchant, &c., &c., must have their money, and will you compel your minister to defraud them?

5. Pay your minister, if you would keep him, or ever get another as good. It is a bad thing for a church to get the name of "starving out their ministers." We know some such churches. The curse of God seems to be upon them. Reader, are you a member of such a church?

6. Pay your minister, because you have promised to pay him. Not to do it is to forfeit your word. It is a debt of honour as well as of law. Your minister has trusted to your word, thrown himself and his dearest interests into your keeping. Will you, can you, be so unjust, so ungrateful, as to compel him to lose, year after year, his pay, in part, \$100—more or less.

7. Pay your minister, because you are able to pay him. How small is the pittance which falls to your share! With a little extra labour, a little unusual economy, how easily could you pay your minister promptly!

8. Pay your minister, at least quarterly, as it will doubtless be easier for you, and certainly better for him.

The Daisy.

The daisy is a humble and unpretending flower. From the bosom of earth it lifts its low and modest head. Though it possesses no fragrance, like many of its fair companions, yet it has a loveliness in its blooming hours that is not equalled even by many more attractive flowers. Its meekness gives it a sweet and peculiar charm.

"Peaceful and lovely in its native soil,
It neither knows to spin nor cares to toil;
Yet with confessed magnificence decides
Our mean attire and impotence of pride."

We stand reproved, indeed, for our arrogance, our thoughts of self-complacency and admiration, when we walk forth into the garden, meadows, and fields, and behold this lovely tribe of flowers clad in all their humble yet gorgeous loveliness. "Go," thou vain, idle, haughty admirer of thyself, "clothe thyself with purple and fine linen; deck thyself up in all the gay attire which the shuttle or the needle can furnish; yet know, to the mortification of thy vanity,—that the native elegance of a common daisy eclipses all this elaborate finery. Nay, wert thou decked, like some illustrious princess on her coronation day, in all the splendours of royal apparel; couldst thou equal Solomon in the height of his magnificence and glory,—yet would the meekest among the flowery populace outshine thee; every discerning eye would give the preference to these beauties of the ground."

Let us then, dear reader, never be led astray by the witchery of fashion, or the grovelling taste for siltken finery, which—"makes the attributes of a butterfly the idyl of its affections;" but clothed with humil-