

be. Scarcely had they come to this conclusion, ere their ears were assailed by a most appalling shriek, after which all became silent. They retired, pleased with their success, and thinking of the laugh and joke they should have with her in the morning at breakfast.

Morning came, but she did not come down as usual. They suffered an hour or so to elapse, and her brother, thinking she might have overslept herself, knocked for admittance, calling her by name at the same time. No answer being returned, he and the young man forced the door, and sad to relate, there sat the poor girl, playing with the bony fingers of the grim and appalling skeleton, quite unconscious of the intruders—there the poor thing sat a confirmed idiot for life! When she gave that fearful shriek, her reason fled never to return. It is needless to remark on the remorse that attended the after life of the two young men.

SELECTIONS.

A NEW VIEW OF VESUVIUS.—The cone surmounted, we stood on the edge of a dark crater some two miles in circuit, and of no great depth. We experienced new sensations in traversing the fissured crust which covers it. Half-cold cinders were crackling around us; at every other step we saw through partial rents the red-hot lava flowing in the direction of the sea, and momentary explosions broke on our ears as the subterranean gas escaped. The general aspect was that of the bed of some vast furnace, where sulphur has streaked the cooling masses with orange and verdite, and impregnated the jets of smoke which burst through apertures in its sides and bottom. I climbed the chimney, a black hillock heaped with ashes about forty feet in height, and walking round its edge, looked into the mouth of the funnel. It was a lake of fire: volleys of smoke whirled up from it; occasionally came a gush of flame with fumes of brimstone, and every now and then a shower of something like lighted rags, only heavier. At ten feet distance the heat, even to windward, was suffocating, and my feet were half-grilled. The flame, which is intermittent, probably resembles that which plays on the surface of ignited alcohol. I thrust a stout stick into a crevice in the chimney's side: it took fire instantly; this argues a great degree of heat. No written description conveys an adequate idea of such a scene. I think, however, that a glacier is a more supernatural kind of thing: the sensations produced by fire and smoke are familiar to those who have witnessed a conflagration, or visited a coal or iron district; but the death-like stillness, the numbing chill which possess you on a glacier, are something unwonted and mysterious. The streaked veins, too, in the ice, and the deep precipitous clefts, are perhaps as horribly beautiful as the sulphureous lavas. *Francis' Notes upon Italy and Sicily.*

THE ABUSE OF ETHER.—A late number of the London Times publishes a letter from a philanthropic correspondent, denouncing a fatal habit which it seems has speedily sprung up in the Great Metropolis, of using the new agent of ether in the same way that the drug opium has been taken—for the purpose of pleasant exhilaration—to all intents, intoxication. This letter-writer remarks as follows:—"Entering a chemist's shop the other day, I observed a nurse come in for four ounces of ether. As the chemist poured it out, he said to me—"This is all the go now—it is used for inhalation." A small apparatus has been invented for ladies. So delightful are the sensations it produces, that persons who have used it for the relief of pain, continue to use it for the pleasure it affords."

THE "STYES WHICH LAW HAS LICENSED." LICENSED TO DO WHAT?"—With a voice of the most indignant and searching inquiry, may the human heart utter this exclamation. And were we to answer that question fully, we should be compelled to go back through many dark pages of human history, to the fatal time when men were first allowed to purchase from Governments the liberty of preying upon the lives and happiness of their fellow-men; and from many a touching and mournful history of sorrow—from many a dark and fearful tale of crime—from many living evidences of woe and desolation—from many a lonely grave, unmourned save by the crushed and broken heart of some poor solitary wife or mother—we should collect an amount of sin, and crime, and destruction, and fearful misery, which men's drunkenness has produced, at the sight of which the most hardened heart would stand aghast. The stern finger of the past points to this accumulated mass of agony and sin, and her voice proclaims, for answer to the inquiry:—"Licensed to do all this!"

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE JEWS.—The total number of the Jews in the world is computed to be about 6,000,000, half of whom, it is estimated, reside in Europe. Historical vicissitudes, and more especially the progress of civilization and international intercourse, have called forth amongst Jews manifold sects and religious differences. The European Jews are divided into German and Portuguese, according to the part from whence they have emigrated, either from Germany (whither they are said to have come with the Roman legions), or from the Spanish Peninsula, where they had been expelled by the holy inquisition. From Germany, a great number of Jews again emigrated to the Slavonic countries, where, under the name of Polish Jews, they have adopted a line of civilization and education peculiar

to themselves, and from whence they have sent forth teachers and colonists to almost every quarter of the globe. This accounts for the otherwise rather strange circumstance, that not only most of the European, but also the Asiatic Jews, those born and bred even in Siberia and Palestine, at least understand, if they do not speak German; in like manner the Pyrenean idioms have been preserved amongst the Portuguese Jews, whose principal seat is now England, very few of them having settled in Germany beyond Hamburg and Altona. The great hatred that previously existed between the two sects has now in some measure abated, in consequence of intermarriages; which the Portuguese would by no means allow formerly, being extremely proud of their aristocratic descent, numbering as they do amongst the descendants of their race the families of Pereira, Da Costa, De Castro, Da Silva, Saporitas, Ximenes, and even the house of Braganza. The Jews of the present day are, upon the whole, borne along with the stream of progressive civilization, and strict orthodoxy amongst them is now of rare occurrence, since strict adherence to the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws is irreconcilable with the present state of the social condition of Europe.—*The Topic.*

LEECH GATHERING.—Near Nantus the leeches are gathered all the year round; but in the highlands only in summer. To collect them people go into the water, wading about with their legs and thighs bare, so that the leeches may stick to their skin. They then scrape them off, and put them into a bag. The leech-merchants carry them away in linen bags, which they soak in every stream or pool they come to. Each carries many of these bags suspended in a basket, and kept apart by twigs. Every day such of the leeches as may have died are separated from the living and thrown away. Smyrna is their usual destination, whence they are forwarded to the ports of France and Italy. The leeches are farmed by the Agas, but there is a profitable contraband trade driven. They are sold by the gatherers for about one hundred and twenty piastres the oke; which, even though a great many die, gives a large profit to the merchant. Sometimes, however, all die. There is a leech bazaar held at Caisar.—*Spratt's Travels in Lycia, Milyas, &c.*

REBELLIOUS HENS.—A neighbour of ours states that hog's lard is the best thing he can find to mix with the dough he gives to his hens. He says one cut of this fat, as large as a walnut, will set a hen to laying immediately after she has been broken up from her setting; and thus his hens lay through the whole winter. Will some more experimenters try the virtues of hog's lard.—*Poughman.*

HISTORY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.—The transportation of criminals, is one of those subjects which has long perplexed the wisdom both of statesmen and judges. To send out of the country those who have proved themselves unworthy of its protection, was probably the first idea of banishment; but when our plantations, or colonies, stood in need of labourers, it was no doubt deemed expedient to render it incumbent on the convicts to employ their labour for the benefit of the colonists or planters. In the civil wars, during the period of the commonwealth, multitudes of prisoners were thus unceremoniously sent into servitude in the plantations. In the reign of Charles II. we find the first enactment imposing transportation as a penalty, and then it was in regard to the Border Moss Troopers, whose deeds have been so much celebrated in border minstrelsy. The 18th of Charles II. enacts that "Notorious thieves and spoil-takers in Northumberland, or Cumberland, on conviction before Justice of Assize, &c., may be transported to any of His Majesty's dominions in America." The recitals in this Act, and one passed a very few years before, give a very different account of "the Moss Troopers," from what we are accustomed to receive from Sir Walter Scott. Stripped of the embellishments of romance, they are described as "lawful, disorderly, and lawless persons, being thieves and robbers, who are commonly called Moss Troopers," who, after committing the most notorious crimes, took advantage of heaths and mosses "to escape from one kingdom to another." The transport of such persons to an unsettled country, was no doubt attended with a degree of benefit, which was equally reciprocated by the land of their birth and the land of their banishment. But the evils that have in later times arisen out of the transport of convicts have become so great that colony after colony has petitioned to be exempted from the grievance of being subjected to the demoralizing consequences of the importation of the refuse of the population of the mother country. New South Wales and Australia are both exempted, and Van Diemen's Land claimed the same privilege, so that the difficulties as well as the evils of transportation have been yearly increasing.—*London Record.*

A STRONG ARGUMENT.—The late Dr. Mason once said to an infidel who was scoffing at Christianity because of the misconduct of its professors, "Did you ever know an uproar to be made because an infidel went astray from the path of morality?" The infidel admitted that he did not. "Then don't you see," said Dr. Mason, "that, by expecting the professors of Christianity to be holy, you admit it to be a holy religion, and thus pay it the highest compliment in your power?" The young man was silent.

The number of emigrants pouring into California is very great. The editor of the *California Star* says 1500 arrived in the valley from the United States within three months, by the route over the mountains. They were all Mormons. Monterey has been fixed upon by General Kearney and Commodore Schuibrick as the temporary seat of government for the territory. The *Star* states that Gen. Kearney, in conjunction with Commodore Schuibrick, would immediately organize a civil government for California.