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MISCELLANEOUS.

MIDNIGHT MUSIC.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

What maketh music, when the bird
Doth hush its merry lay ?
And the sweet spirit of the flowers
Hath sighed itself away ?
What maketh music when the frost
Enchains the murmuring rill,
And every song that summer woke
In winter's trance is still.

What maketh music when the winds,
In strong encounter rise,
When ocean strikes his thunder-gong,
And the rent cloud replies ?
While no adventurous planet dares
The midnight arch to deck,
And in its startled dream, the babe
Doth clasp its mother's neck.

And when the fiercer storms of fate
Wild o'er the pilgrim sweep,
And earthquake voices claim the hopes
He treasur'd long and deep,
When lo ! the threatening passions roar,
Like lions in their den,
And vengeful tempests lash the shore,
What maketh music then ?

The deed to humble virtue born.
Which nursing memory taught
To shun a boastful world's applause,
And love the lowly thought ;
This builds a cell within the heart,
Amid the blasts of care,
And tuning high its heaven-struck harp,
Makes midnight music there.

NIGER EXPEDITION.

The Portsmouth Correspondent of the *London Times* furnishes the subjoined account of the Niger expedition —

The Horatio transport, Lieutenant Chapman, arrived on Friday from St. Helena and the coast of Africa, and brought home some of the Officers who have been included belonging to the Niger expedition, and who had descended the river in the Soudan steamer. The accounts they bring home are up to the first October, and are deplorable. The mortality and sickness among the Officers and men composing the expedition was great. Twenty-six had already died, and almost all were ill and unable to do duty. At the time the Soudan left it, the expedition had reached the confluence of the Niger and Tchadda, about two hundred and seventy miles up the river ; but it was feared that, in the lamentable condition in which it was placed by the

sickness and the increasing mortality among the officers and men, it would be compelled to return to Ascension. Among the victims to the climate previous to the Soudan's leaving her consorts, were Assistant-Surgeon Nightingale, of the Albert ; and during her passage on her return from Attah to the mouth of the river, she lost her own surgeon, Mr. W. B. Marshall, and one of her men. When she arrived at the entrance of the river she fell in with Her Majesty's Ship *Dolphin*, and put her sick on board that vessel to be conveyed to Ascension ; eight of whom, however, died previous to the *Dolphin's* reaching that place. Captain Allen, of the Soudan, did not come down the river with her, but joined the *Albert*, being anxious to accompany the expedition to the extent of its researches.

"The steamers make very slow progress in ascending the river ; none of them are remarkable for their speed. The current of the stream is about three miles and a half, and the average speed of the steamers is six miles, consequently their progress is not more than two miles and a half per hour. The *Albert* was to proceed up the Niger, and the *Wilberforce* up the Tchadda, while the *Amelia* schooner was to remain at Mount Stirling, where the farm is to be established, and where the tent lately used at the Eglinton Tournament has already been pitched. The natives were very friendly : at Eboe, a town containing 8,000 or 9,000 inhabitants, several of the Officers went on shore, the natives crowded to see them. At the Queen's Palace they were received by her sable Majesty ; who was squatted at the door, surrounded by her ladies, the principal of which were decorated with heavy ivory anklets weighing from eight to ten pounds each. They seemed much pleased with the visit, and laughed immoderately ; and in return for some little trinkets given by the Officers, Her Majesty presented them with a fowl and some Gooza nuts, the bestowal of which is considered highly complimentary there. The King of Eboe went on board the *Wilberforce*, accompanied by his son and the interpreter, and others of his suite. The King of Attah was more dignified ; and upon the Commissioners waiting upon him, he told them he was perfectly aware that they were the subjects of a Sovereign to whom they paid every respect, and he should expect the same respect paid to him. He should not go on board, because he considered he was entitled to as much attention as their own Sovereign. He said they might have the command of the water, but he had the command of the land. He looked with perfect indifference on the elegant and valuable presents of velvet robes trimmed with gold, but seemed much taken with the spectacles worn by the chaplain, and gladly accepted several pair that were given him. He, as well as the King of Eboe, entered most willingly into all the arrangements of the Commissioners, and they both expressed their desire that their subjects should be instructed. He sold them the land at Mount Stirling, where they intend to establish the settlement ; which he said was just within the extent of his dominions.