

THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

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[No 6,

MISCELLANEOUS.

SCENES IN GREECE.

NO. III.

"Knowledge shall be increased."—Dan. xii. 4.

ON the north of the island of Zante, where I dwell, are three villages, called Volimes, close together; the higher Volimes being about half a mile from the middle one, and the lower not so much. These three villages are said to contain, altogether, more than a thousand people. They are situated on the mountains; no coach or carriage reaches them; and the air is particularly salubrious. I inquired if many young people died; and the reply was, "Very few indeed; for the greater part die of old age." Though the ground appears barren around, yet corn is raised even among the stones. The soil is of a red colour; and between the mountains and valleys converted into vineyards, with here and there an olive tree: but the windmills on the hills declare that there is more corn than any other produce raised here.

On entering the first village, and inquiring for the school, I found it in a Greek church, consisting of twenty-five or more boys, ranged round the church, according to the British and Foreign School system. The master being busily employed with the first class of boys, after distributing some Greek books, I passed on to the next Volimes; and here was a sight that greatly pleased me. I entered a church, and found a school of the same number of boys, sitting in perfect silence, working their arithmetical questions, directed by the master, a Monk of the Convent. Better order, and greater regularity, I had never seen than in this school: though some of the boys were without stockings or shoes. This school was also conducted on the British and Foreign School system. The lessons were scriptural; and as the children wished to have a few New Testaments, I promised to send some. In finding these means of instruction in such an obscure spot, and so well regulated, I was forcibly struck with the expression, "Knowledge shall be increased." But in travelling, on the next day, I met with a complete contrast. In the midst of the mountains, the road leading over rocks and difficult passes, (so difficult that I would not run the risk of riding,) I came to St. Luca, which contained a population of two or three hundred; but I could only find two boys that could read. I gave them books, and, with my companion, exhorted them to begin to teach their neighbours to read.

There are no fountains or springs in this part of the island. The people depend for

their supply of water on the wells, which are replenished during the rainy season. Below the village of St. Luca, in a valley, there are many deep wells: each family seemed to have their own; and when they have obtained a supply, they cover the well with large stones. They bring with them the vessels to draw up the water. Was not this also the case in Samaria, when our Saviour sat on the well, and the woman said to him, "The well is deep, and thou hast nothing to draw with?" (John iv. 11.)

LUMINOSITY OF THE SEA.

As the ship sails with a strong breeze through a luminous sea on a dark night, the effect produced is then seen to the greatest advantage. The wake of the vessel is one broad sheet of phosphoric matter, so brilliant as to cast a dull, pale light, over the after-part of the ship; the foaming surges, as they gracefully curl on each side of the vessel's prow, are similar to rolling masses of liquid phosphorus; whilst in the distance, even to the horizon, it seems an ocean of fire, and the distant waves breaking, give out a light of inconceivable beauty and brilliancy; in the combination, the effect produces sensations of wonder and awe, and causes a reflection to arise on the reason of its appearance, as to which, as yet, no correct judgment has been formed, the whole being overwhelmed with mere hypothesis. Sometimes the luminosity is very visible without any disturbance of the water, its surface remaining smooth, unruffled even by a passing zephyr; whilst on other occasions no light is emitted, unless the water is agitated by the winds, or by the passage of some heavy body through it. Perhaps the beauty of this luminous effect is seen to the greatest advantage when the ship, lying in a bay or harbour in tropical climates, the water around has the resemblance of a sea of milk. An opportunity was afforded me, when at Cavite near Manila, in 1830, of witnessing for the first time, this beautiful scene: as far as the eye could reach over the extensive bay of Manila, the surface of the tranquil water was one sheet of this dull, pale, phosphoric essence; and brilliant flashes were emitted instantly on any heavy body being cast into the water, or when fish sprang from it or swam about; the ship seemed, on looking over its side, to be anchored in a sea of liquid phosphorus, whilst in the distance the resemblance was that to an ocean of milk. The night to which I allude, when this magnificent appearance presented itself to my observation was exceedingly dark, which, by the contrast, gave an increased sublimity to the scene; the canopy of the heavens was dark

and gloomy; not even the glimmering of a star was to be seen; while the sea of liquid fire cast a deadly pale light over every part of the vessel, her masts, yards and hull; the fish meanwhile sporting about in numbers, varying the scene by their brilliant flashes they occasioned. It would have formed, I thought at the time, a sublime and beautiful subject for an artist like Martin, to execute with his judgment and pencil, that is, if any artist could give the true effect of such a scene, on which I must express some doubts. It must not be for a moment conceived that light described as brilliant, and like to a sea of "liquid fire," is of the same character as the flashes produced by the volcano, or by lightning, or meteors. No; it is the light of phosphorus, as the matter truly is, pale, dull, approaching to a white or very pale yellow, casting a melancholy light on objects around, only emitted flashes by collision. To read by it is possible, but not agreeable; and, on an attempt being made, it is always found that the eyes will not endure the peculiar light for any length of time, headaches and sickness are often occasioned by it. I have frequently observed at Singapore, that, although the tranquil water exhibits no particular luminosity, yet, when disturbed by the passage of a boat, it gives out phosphoric matter, leaving a brilliant line in the boat's wake, and the blades of the oars, when raised from the water, seemed to be dripping with liquid phosphorus.—*Bennett's Wanderings.*

FOR THE MIRROR.

THE MONTHS.—No. II.

"Still reigns the chilling season far and wide."

FEBRUARY.—This month derives its name from the goddess Juno, or, as she was sometimes called, *Februa*. Our Saxon ancestors called it "sprout-kele month" because their cabbages and kale began to sprout. They also called it the "pancake month," because in this month they offered pancakes to the sun; hence, the origin of our celebrated pancake day.

One of the old poets describes this month as being "full of frost or storm and cloudiness.—Its frosts, its fogs, its thaws, being injurious to the health and depressing to the spirits."

Gloomy, cheerless, and cold, as is the general aspect of the month, yet the days brighten and lengthen. The sun bursts, out occasionally with some vividness and power, diffusing warmth and gladness through all nature, and affording a bright presage of advancing spring. One of the peculiarities of this month is its shortness. The interval