

THE REALITIES OF LIFE.—The seeds of great empires, like the germs of all true greatness, in both the natural and the moral world, are imperceptibly sown. The acorn is blown about for months, the sport of every fitful breeze, before it finally takes root in the soil; and season must follow season, and fashions ebb and flow for many years, before the matured oak spreads its branches to the skies, and bids defiance to the wintry blast. Myriads of little shell-fish die, and for centuries the waters roll above them before the coral reef is formed; but it is formed, and slowly yet surely raises its head above the waves, and wrecks the proudest vessel as it proceeds on its way. A Shakespeare lies in his cradle, with few eyes looking down upon his infant slumbers—he grows up from boyhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, without its being known that a mighty man is born into the world. He wanders among his native woods and streams, inquiring and thinking, thinking and inquiring, little cared for by the great men of the earth. He comes to London, poor, friendless, and with much difficulty keeps himself from starving by holding horses, and shifting scenes at theatres. He works for the day that is passing over him, and finds it long before he can spare thought for the morrow. He retires, at length, like a respectability to his native place, dies as his fathers had died before him; and on his deathbed, when his last hour is near, the beams of the sun dance on the window-panes as usual, the grass grows as usual, the flowers open their buds as usual, the evening star that night gazes wistfully down as usual, people eat and drink, laugh and chat, make merry and make money, go to bed, put their foolish heads in nightcaps, and dream foolish dreams as usual; and the world next morning rolls on as usual; as though Shakespeare had not died, as though Shakespeare had never lived, as though the world had nothing to do with Shakespeare. But Shakespeare lived, and Shakespeare still lives, and Hamlet, Lear, Othello, and Macbeth, still remain, and are realities amid a world of nothings. As it is with the growth of a coral reef, as it is with the growth of a Shakespeare, so it is with the growth of a great empire.

—*Frazer's Magazine.*

FIVE HUNDRED PERSONS DESTROYED BY A WATER-SPOUT.—On Saturday intelligence was received at Lloyd's, under date Malta, Monday, the 8th instant, of a most awful occurrence at the island of Sicily, which had been swept by two enormous waterspouts, accompanied by a terrific hurricane. Those who witnessed the phenomena describe the waterspouts as two immense spherical bodies of water, reaching from the clouds, their cones nearly touching the earth, and, as far as could be judged a mile apart, travelling with immense velocity. They passed over the island of Marsala. In their progress houses were unroofed, trees uprooted, men and women, horses, cattle, and sheep were raised up, drawn into their vortex, and borne on to destruction: during their passage rain descended in cataracts, accompanied with hailstones of enormous size, and masses of ice. Going over Castellamarre, near Stabia, it destroyed half the town, and washed 200 of the inhabitants into the sea, who all perished. Upwards of 500 persons have been destroyed by this terrible visitation, and an immense amount of property, the country being a waste for miles. The shipping in the harbour suffered severely, many vessels being destroyed and their crews drowned. After the occurrence numbers of dead human bodies were picked up, all frightfully mutilated and swollen.

Literary Notices.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE NEW YORK STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY; VOL. 10, 1850. Albany: Printed by order of the State Legislature, 1851.

The indefatigable and respected Secretary of the New York Society has again favoured us with a copy of their Transactions, which we inadvertently omitted to acknowledge in our last number. We, in common with others connected with the Agricultural press, both of the Old World and the New, have been accustomed to look forward with much interest to this annual exposition of what our near and influential neighbours have done, or are doing, in the important cause of Agriculture, and its kindred arts. It has been pleasing to witness a progressive, and during the last three or four years, a rapid improvement. Highly as we esteemed the merits of the last volume of the Transactions, the present is, we think, in some respects superior, and with several of its later predecessors, indicates that Agriculture, both as a science and an art, is making a healthy and satisfactory progress in the State of New York. Besides the report of County Societies and several valuable contributions from individuals, the volume is enriched with a Prize Essay on Agricultural Dynamics, and a very elaborate survey of the County of Seneca; embracing its history and settlement, state and progress of its Agriculture, Geology, Natural History &c., neatly illustrated with maps, sections, and cuts of fossil remains and botanical specimens. This survey was prepared by John Delafield, Esq., of Geneva, late President of the Society; an enlightened and enterprising practical farmer; and we hesitate not to say that it would do honour to the Transactions of any of the older Agricultural Associations of Europe: it as well as Mr. Thomas's Essay will, we trust, appear in a separate form. We have in this volume, consisting of 300 pages and a number of well executed engravings, much that will interest and instruct the enquiring farmer out of the State of New York; and we shall not neglect to cull something from it, that will benefit both our readers and Agricultural Societies. Mr. Johnson will please to accept our grateful thanks.

A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE CLIMATE OF WESTERN CANADA, considered in relation to its influence on Agriculture. By Henry Youle Hind, Mathematical Master and Lecturer in Chemistry and Natural Philosophy, at the Provincial Normal School; Toronto: Brewer, McPhail & Co. 1851.

Mr. Hind has succeeded in compressing within the limits of a small pamphlet, a mass of useful and interesting information, relative to the climate and capabilities of the Western Peninsula of Upper Canada. It has long been known that this Section of the Province possesses a milder climate, a moister atmosphere, and a more fertile soil, than other portions of this continent having the same, or even a lower latitude. The two former conditions may be satisfactorily accounted for by the influence of the immense lakes by which this section of country is almost surrounded. Mr. Hind has been at considerable pains to collect and arrange in a convenient form, from authentic sources, much valuable information relative to the Meteorological character of this now rapidly settling portion of Canada, compared with other portions of