

but as a dot, he will suddenly close both wings, and, falling like an aerolite, pass through the intervening space in a few seconds of time. With a burst his broad pinions are again unfolded; his downward progress is arrested, and he sweeps away horizontally, smoothly, and without effort. He has been seen to do this when carrying a sheep of twenty-six pounds weight in his talons; and from so giddy a height that both the eagle and his booty were not larger than a sparrow. It was directly over a wall of rock in which the eyrie was built; and while the speck in the clouds was being examined, and doubts entertained as to the possibility of its being the eagle, down he came headlong, every instant increasing in size, when in passing the precipice, out flew his mighty wings; the sheep was flung into the nest, and on the magnificent creature moved, calmly and unfurried, as a bark sails gently down the stream of a river.

AN ALPINE LAND SLIP.—The Steinberg cliff, a rocky wall of several millions of cubic fathoms, with all the forest upon it, and the nagelfluh wall of the "Gemeinde March" sinking like a terrace more than 100 feet below, had given way. This was the signal for universal destruction, for then began a tragedy which can be compared to no other phenomenon for its fearful sublimity. In the wildest confusion blocks of rock and splinters of stone, mud and turf, foliage and trees, sometimes whirled up into the air, sometimes, enveloped in clouds of dust, chased each other over the mountain shoulders of the Valley of Gordan. The chaotic fall of the vast masses, the speed of their descent, the universal confusion, increased every moment. Mountain blocks as big as houses, with pines fixed to them, hurried, as if slung by a demon's fist, with three bounds like flying birds, high through the air. Other masses of rock ricocheted like shots from a giant cannonade, striking from time to time only to bound up again into the air. Others were crushed by their companions on their path, and spluttered like white-hot iron rods shooting out sparks under the hammer. It was a scene from the Titan's battle of Greek mythology.—*Berlepsch's Alps.*

AN ELEPHANTINE ACTOR.—Sir Emerson Tennent, in his Natural History of Ceylon, says the elephant occasionally feigns death in order to regain its freedom. Of a recent captive he writes—"It was led from the corral as usual between two tame ones, and had already proceeded far towards its destination, when, night closing in, and the torches being lighted, it refused to go on, and finally sank to the ground, apparently lifeless. Mr. Cribbs ordered the fastenings to be removed from its legs, and when all attempts to raise it had failed, so convinced was he that it was dead, that he ordered the ropes to be taken off and the carcass abandoned. While this was being done, he and a gentleman by

whom he was accompanied leaned against body to rest. They had scarcely taken their pasture and proceeded a few yards, when to their astonishment the elephant rose with the ut-
most alacrity, and fled towards the jungle, screaming the top of its voice, its cries being audible after it had disappeared in the shades of forest."

A WORD ABOUT SERPENTS.—There is any little serpent, says our old friend, who is peculiarly active in his movements, and a master of science of projectile. He springs upon his from beneath shrubs, &c., after having turned self-rapidly round and round upon the ground to obtain that rotary motion for his flight which insures accuracy of aim. He is quite a W worth in his way, is this little serpent, the *Asp* and brings down his men at twenty cubits distance. The *Paubera* secures his prey with hook, which is fastened to the end of his tail. He swallows oxen alive and entire, and frequently suffers severely from indigestion on account of the horns. Our old friends the vipers, boas, anacondas, cobras and rattlesnakes figure in this strange company, and we have many novelties concerning their nature and uses. You would not imagine, now, that vipers "many noble medicines are prepared from them, that a wine from their flesh is singular in sump-tive, leporous, and scorbutic cases," or "they afford also a volatile salt, the most precious cordial in nature." Great is the power of simple things. If ever dear reader, you are bitten by a rattlesnake, don't run away, but get a bran-wine, wild penny-royal; then, having fastened it to the end of a stick, present it to the creature's nose, and if it be only of the family, one of which we have so dealt with by Cap'tain Silas Taylor, in the year 1657, it will turn and wriggle, labouring to avoid the potent herb, and die in less than an hour from its mere scent.—*Once a Week.*

FAIRY RINGS.—An accidental circumstance occurred to me on a journey to visit the famous and beautiful monastery of Batalha, in Portugal. On our road we were overtaken by one of those tremendous thunder-storms incident to the tropics, and which bear no comparison with the slight movements in the elements of our atmosphere. Whilst taking shelter from the fury of the storm, the forked lightning struck objects not far from us. Soon afterwards we observed several rings of smoke and gas slowly in the air, which, preserving their form, enlarged and diminished alternately, they ultimately settled in that form on the ground before us. In a day or two afterwards, occupying the same spot, I observed on the several rings, densely green, two or three inches in diameter, the grass of which (circumferences of rings) grown full an inch in that short time, and were beginning to make their appearance. It must have been some very fertilising property in the gas; and it has struck me that the