

PICTURES AT SEA.

A FINE effect is often produced by a conflict of moonlight and lightning. I witnessed a magnificent scene of this kind in the Indian Ocean, the island of Amsterdam being in sight on the starboard quarter. There was a full moon in the north, and in the south hung a vast bank of clouds charged with fire and thunder. The early gusts of this electric storm broke away great wings of vapour from the shoulder of the main body, and sent them speeding athwart the moon. The shining of the luminary was ghastly, rendered so by the alternations of her own light, darting wildly over the edge of the driven clouds, with the quick dazzle of the southern flashes. Her beams seemed to be coloured by the electric leaping. It was the eye, of course, that carried the reflection of the blue and sun-bright darts to the northern illumination; but the effect was as though the lightning struck its own hellish quality into the fabric of the silver beams as they fell from the rims of the flying clouds. The combined illumination put a new and monstrous face upon the ocean. It made you think of a dead sea complexioned to a very mockery of vitality by the light of such flames as those from which Milton's fiend rose to steer his flight to dry land.—*Macmillan.*

CLEVELAND'S POLITICAL INSIGHT.

ASSUMING the paramount importance of continuing the control of the Democratic party in the general affairs of the Government, the President would have erred in springing the issue on the country on the eve of a Presidential campaign if the people were not ready to settle it definitely, or did not wish for its immediate consideration. Was he mistaken in believing them ready and desirous to settle it now? When Congress convened on the first Tuesday of December he was reasonably sure of a renomination upon existing issues, and of a re-election. He seized the opportunity of his first message to the new Congress to present the issue of tariff reform as the one issue of the time. He made this question the sole subject of his message. Had his party been unwilling or afraid to second him, and to adopt the issue he had offered them, his act could readily have been accepted as his own political suicide. The leaders of his party in State Governments and in Congress had been, to all appearances, radically divided on this issue. There was indeed an outcry at the first. Yet to-day there is but one conspicuous man within the Democratic ranks who is recognized as irreclaimably hostile to the President's policy, and the leaders elsewhere have declared themselves, with an almost extraordinary unanimity, as his enthusiastic supporters. There can be no valid explanation for this unanimity except that their constituents have warmly indorsed the outspoken declaration of the President that tariff reform is the one great issue of the day.—*North American Review.*

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK'S ANTS.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK recently read a paper before the Linnean Society, in continuation of his previous memoirs, on *The Habits of Ants, Bees, and Wasps*. He said it was generally stated that our English slave-making ant (*Formica sanguinea*), far from being entirely dependent on slaves, as was the case with *Polyergus rufescens*, the slave-making ant *par excellence*, was really able to live alone, and that slaves were only, so to say, a luxury. Some of his observations appeared to throw doubt on this. In one of his nests the ants were prevented from making any fresh capture of slaves. Under these circumstances the number of slaves gradually diminished, and at length the last died. At that time there were some fifty of the mistresses still remaining. These, however, rapidly died off, until at the end of June, 1886, there were only six remaining. He then placed near the door of the nest some pupæ of *Formica fusca*, the slave ant. These were at once carried in and soon came to maturity. The mortality among the mistresses at once ceased, and from that day to this only two more have died. This seems to show that the slaves perform some indispensable function in the nest, though what that is still remains to be discovered. As regards the longevity of ants, he said that the old queen ant, which had more than once been mentioned to the Society, was still alive. She must now be fourteen years old, and still laid fertile eggs, to the important physiological bearing of which fact he called special attention. He discussed the observations and remarks of Graber as regards the senses of ants, with special reference to their sensibility toward the ultra-violet rays, and referred to the observations of Forel, which confirmed those he had previously laid before the Society. Professor Graber had also questioned some experiments with reference to smell. He, however, maintained the accuracy of his observations, and pointed out that Graber had overlooked some of the precautions which he had taken; his experiments seemed to leave no doubt as to the existence of a delicate sense of smell among ants.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE.

In oratory, however, he greatly and distinctly improved as years went on. I remember many years ago, when Sir Stafford was a young man, his making a speech from this platform at a meeting presided over by the then Bishop of Exeter, a man of very great qualities, himself in a certain style an orator well nigh unrivalled, and a critic of other men's performances, at once most competent and most severe. His judgment of Sir Stafford's speech was not only very unfavourable, but committed him to the opinion that the speaker never could succeed in public life. How entirely the Bishop's forecast was falsified by the event we all know. He became, as I can testify, a speaker perfectly competent to hold his own with the greatest masters of debate in the House of Commons—one with whom the foremost

man of his time always felt that he must deal respectfully, and put forth his whole strength to answer; not perhaps one who could thunder down a Chamber or sweep the House of Commons away in a fierce flood of eloquence; but one who could express clear thought in clear language, could conceive with spirit and express with dignity, and could leave his audience when he sat down not, perhaps, convinced (who ever convinced a political antagonist on the spot by a speech?), yet brought to a pause, if they were his opponents, and supplied, if they were his supporters, with excellent reasons for the vote they were about to give. Above all, he had in large measure that which Aristotle calls the *πίστος ῥητοική*, the moral suasion, the influence of character, charming and conciliating even where it did not convince. The great Lord Erskine, as I have heard his son say, was once discussing with Mr. Canning the merits and gifts of Mr. Percival, whom Lord Erskine thought Mr. Canning underrated as a rival. Lord Erskine said that Mr. Percival was a much abler man than Mr. Canning was disposed to admit, for various reasons, which he gave, and then he added; "Remember, Canning, that you never speak without making an enemy, Percival never speaks without making a friend, and this in itself is a great power." I leave the application of the story to those who have heard Sir Stafford Northcote speak.—*Lord Coleridge, in Macmillan.*

TIGER SHOOTING.

IN the cold weather of 1844-45 the 22nd Native Infantry was on escort duty with the camp of the Agent to the Governor-General in the States of Rajpootana. On one occasion the camp halted in the vicinity of a river, where was a very heavy tamarisk jungle. Here, for some reason or another, the Political Officer halted. Lieutenant Hall got some of the inhabitants of the adjoining villages to his tent and began to cross-examine them concerning the existence of game in the adjoining jungle. The villagers, in reply to his inquiries, told him that they could scarcely give him any definite information, nor could they say what was or was not in the tamarisk jungle, as they had been for some time past much harassed and many of their cattle killed by tigers; that the jungle was full of them, and for that reason no one had dared to enter it. This was enough for Hall, a man scarcely to be surpassed with the rifle, so he determined to try his luck. That night he cleaned up his rifle and dried his powder, sewed up his bullets in the tips of discarded white kid gloves, and carefully greased them. Next morning, before a soul was stirring, Hall was up, a villager as a guide having slept with his servants during the night. The day was just light enough to see fairly, when he and his guide with his spare gun left the tent, and made their way towards the tamarisk jungle. The two plodded along for fully three-quarters of an hour without seeing or hearing anything except the snapping of the decayed wood under their feet, when all of a sudden the coolie stopped and pointed to a tawny object in front of him. Hall brought up his rifle, and, taking a steady shot, rolled the brute over. Turning for his second gun, he found his guide had sloped. Fortunately he had his ammunition with him. He had hardly hastily reloaded—it was not in the days of breech-loaders, and the operation of reloading a rifle took some little time—when, from a thick patch of grass in his immediate front, out stalked another tiger. A quick and steady sight and a touch of the trigger, and over it rolled, stone-dead. Hastily cramming down a bullet into the discharged barrel, he had scarcely advanced twenty paces when out rushed a magnificent tigress, lashing her tail from side to side in a fury. She did not see him; he fired, but a branch of tamarisk diverted his aim, and he struck the tigress in her right leg. She was round in an instant and crouched to spring, but quick as lightning he fired and struck her in the centre of the forehead; but the muscular action of her spring took place, and she crashed towards him, rolling over dead almost at his very feet. He then went and looked at the three animals he had killed, and tore his pocket-handkerchief into strips and hung them in spots near so as to be visible at a little distance on. After this Lieutenant Hall lost his way in the jungle, but was guided to camp by the sound of the bugles. Here at breakfast he told, amid general incredulity, the result of his morning's sport; nor was his performance believed till the bodies of the tigers were brought in in triumph by coolies who had been sent in search of them. Lieutenant Hall's prowess procured for him from the Political Agent a staff appointment which it was at that time almost impossible for any one to get without great personal interest, which the lieutenant did not possess.—*Civil and Military Gazette.*

MONTE CARLO.

I CAME away from Monte Carlo at 7.47, carefully concealing the fact that I still had a small sum to the good about me. I was afraid to whisper it to Albert Edward, lest the authorities should hear of it, and send a message to the railway company to make the 7.47 "*facultatif*" also. But when we were safely in the train and it had started, I imparted to my companion the news that I was still twenty-six francs to the good. Then, his big baby face beaming all over with smiles, he imparted to me the fact that he also had won £30. I put on a forbidding aspect at once, and sternly rebuked him. "You had no right to gamble," I said. "You cannot afford it. You have a wife and family at home in the Walworth Road. I wouldn't have taken you to Monte Carlo if I had imagined you would so far forget yourself!" "But I *didn't* gamble," he replied. "I give you my word of honour that I didn't." "Then how have you won £30?" Albert Edward looked cautiously around him, and then he whispered in my ear, "I made the money by attempting to commit suicide in the grounds. Ha! ha! It was not for nothing that I brought that revolver with us!" The wicked, deceitful, artful fellow! What do you think he