

—The Emperor William grows feeble. Although his condition is not considered serious, the continuous failing of his digestive powers has nevertheless enfeebled him considerably. His physicians have ordered a quiet difficult to enforce.

—It is a singular fact that the three fires most destructive of human life during the last quarter of a century—those in Santiago, Brooklyn and Vienna—all occurred in the month of December; not only that, but the Santiago Cathedral and the Ring Theatre were burned on Dec. 8 at the same hour, and the Brooklyn Theatre was burned only three days earlier in the month.

—Grave fears are entertained in Greece for the future of Chios. The island is said to be continually sinking, and there are reasons to believe that in time its entire surface may disappear from human sight. Small earthquakes are of constant occurrence, and the frequency of these is increasing. Moreover, hot springs have appeared in many places until there is hardly a locality which does not possess one or more.

—There are 18,000 Chinamen on the Sandwich Islands working as sugar coolies. They are fed on Chinese rice, which is admitted into Hawii for a nominal duty. The thrifty Sandwich-Island planter saves all his home-produced rice for exportation to the United States, where it is admitted duty free and brings a high price.

—Peat is imperfect mineral coal, or half carbonized vegetable matter, formed in swampy places by the continued growth of certain spongy mosses of the genera sphagnum and hypnum. These mosses have the property of dying at the extremities of the roots, as they increase above. Thus they may gradually form a bed of great thickness. The composition of ordinary peat is as follows:—Carbon, 60 per cent.; hydrogen, 55; oxygen, 33; nitrogen, 1.5.

—To say that the science of geology is antagonistic to revealed religion, and the facts it teaches are opposed or contrary to divine teaching, is a stupid and egregious error. Nothing, indeed, is farther from the truth than such an assertion; instead of contradicting the plain teaching of the Holy Scriptures, geology confirms it at every step.

—It is impossible to determine exactly at this stage of meteorological science what is the coldest place in the earth. Many geographers suppose that it is at, or in the vicinity of, the south pole; but, as far as we positively know, by direct and exact observations, the coldest place is at Verkhovansk, in north eastern Siberia, a small town situated on the northern slope of the mountains of the same name, and on the river Yana. Its mean temperature in winter is $55\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$.

—There are about twenty epic poems known to exist: three in Greek: "Iliad" and "Odyssey," of Homer, and "Argonautics," of Apollonius, three in Latin: "Æneid" of Virgil, "Pharsalia,"

of Lucan, and "Punic wars," of Silius Italicus; one in Italian: "Jerusalem Delivered," of Tasso; two in German: "Messiad," of Klopstock and "Niebelungen Lied"; three in French: "Télémaque," of Fenelon, "Henriade," of Voltaire, and "Martyrs of Chateaubriand"; two in English: "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained," of Milton; one in Spanish: "Cid"; one in Portuguese: "Lusiad," of Camocus; one in Scotch: "Ossian"; two in Sanscrit: "Ramayana" and "Mahabharata"; one in Parsee: "Chah-Nameli."

—Spain is having built in England several iron ships for her naval fleet. The company which built for her some time ago an iron cruiser has recently launched a second after the same design. The length of these ships is 210 feet, and their tons burden, 1,039; the armament being three 6-inch 4-ton breach-loading Armstrong guns. They belong to a type of fast, unarmored cruisers, now largely used in the European navies, which are employed on distant stations in times of peace, and in times of war are well adapted to the protection of mercantile marines. At the royal dock-yards in Spain other vessels of similar design are being built.

—It is time that the anti-vaccinationists were awake in India, for the operation has steadily grown in favor with the dense millions of that country. During the year 1879 to 1880 about 500,000 more persons were treated in Bengal than during the previous year, while in Burmah the natives are so ready to accept vaccination that it is found only necessary to supply them with competent operatives and a regular quantity of good lymph. It is believed that, by the exercise of the right patience and judgment, the greater part of the Indian native population can be brought to see the value of submitting to treatment. In districts where opposition exists it is not difficult to overcome it.

—HABITS OF ESQUIMAUX DOGS.—Some interesting details concerning the habits of Esquimaux dogs are given by Dr. Bessel. The instant a halt is called by the driver the dogs throw themselves to the ground with their snouts between their forepaws; they rise again to stretch, and then lie down at once. Two Newfoundland dogs which belonged to the Polaris pack, gradually assumed similar habits, but before lying down they always turned round and round in their resting place, like all dogs except the Esquimaux breed, for the author never saw an Esquimaux dog do this. Mr. Darwin, as will be remembered, has explained the habit of turning round before lying down, invariably to be observed in domestic dogs, as a survival of the instinct of the wild ancestor, which leads him to form a bed in the grass by this means. Every one has heard of the extraordinary voracity of the Esquimaux dogs; they will sometimes snap a piece off their master's flesh if exposed carelessly.