

the air and the beasts of the field, is yet of incalculable benefit in a climate like ours, and especially at this time, when the deep springs of the earth were falling, and the mill streams were refusing their motive powers to the craving appetites of man. If, during the last month, the clouds had dropped rain instead of snow we might have pumped and bored the earth in vain for water; but, with a foot of snow upon the earth and many a foot upon the mountains, the hum of the mill stones and the harsh notes of the saw will soon and long testify to its beneficence. Bridges, earth works, and the fruits of engineering skill and toil may be swept away, but man will still rejoice in the general good and adore the benevolence of Him who orders all things aright.

The snow is a great purifier of the atmosphere. The absorbent power or capillary action of snow is like that of a sponge or charcoal. Immediately after snow has fallen melt it in a clean vessel and taste it and you will find immediately evidences of its impurity. Try some a day or two old and it becomes nauseous, especially in cities. Snow water makes the mouth harsh and dry. It has the same effect upon the skin, and upon the hands and feet produces the painful malady of chilblains. In Alpine countries snow water has been thought to be productive of the disease called *goitre*. The following easy experiment illustrates beautifully the absorbent property of snow: Take a lump of snow (a piece of snow crust answers well) of three or four inches in length and hold it in the flame of a lamp; not a drop of water will fall from the snow, but the water, as fast as formed, will penetrate or be drawn up into the mass of snow by capillary attraction. It is by virtue of this attraction that the snow purifies the atmosphere by absorbing and retaining its noxious and noisome gases and odors.—*National Intelligencer*.

MODERN ALEXANDRIA.

Modern Alexandria can scarcely be said to have any distinct characteristic. It is neither wholly European or Oriental, but an admixture of both. Its population is made up of Turks, Albanians, Syrians, Greeks, Jews, Copts, Armenians, French, Germans, Italians, and English. From 6,000 people previous to the Pashalic of Mohammed Ali, it has increased to 180,000, and is at this time rapidly improving in wealth and importance. The European quarter has wide streets and large elegant public and private buildings, and the trade is mostly controlled by Europeans—the business and court language being French.

In its palmy days, this city embraced a circuit of fifteen miles, extending from the sea to Lake Mareotis, and contained a population of six hundred thousand. It was founded by Alexander the Great after his conquest of Syria, 336 years before the Christian Era, and was laid out in the shape of a Macedonian cloak, with a bridge or causeway connecting with the Island of Pharos. It attained to great consequence and splendor under the Ptolemies, and as late as A.D. 640, when captured by Amer, under the Caliph Omer, was remarkable for its wealth and magnificence. Amer, in a letter to the Caliph, thus describes his conquest:

"I have taken the great city of the West. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety of its riches and beauty, and I shall content myself with observing that it contains 4,000 palaces, 4,000 baths, 400 theatres or places of amusement, 12,000 shops for the sale of vegetables, and 40,000 tributary Jews."

The great Alexandrian library contained 700,000 volumes, including 200,000 belonging to the Kings of Pergamus, presented to Cleopatra by Marc Antony. This portion of the library was doubtless destroyed during the war of Julius Cæsar with the Alexandrians.

Omer should not be made answerable for all the barbarity connected with the history of this doomed city. Beside, if "a barbarous Persian overturned her temples, and a fanatical Arab burned her books," one of her most magnificent public buildings, the Temple of Serapis, owes its destruction to the bigotry and ignorance of the early Christians. The pious indignation of Theophilus could not tolerate the existence of this splendid pagan edifice, and he procured an order from Theodosius for its demolition, A.D. 389.

Pompey's Pillar, Cleopatra's Needles and the Catacombs alone remain to shew the artistic skill of the early inhabitants. The pillar in the whole is 98 feet high, with a single column or shaft of red granite 73 feet long, and 29 feet 8 inches in circumference at the bottom. It has a capital at the top, 16½ feet in diameter.

It was erected in honor of Diocletian about A.D. 300. Only one of the needles remain standing, and it is similar in all respects to the Obelisk at Heliopolis, from whence it was no doubt transferred to Alexandria. Another lies half buried in the earth near by.

The Catacombs are certainly very extraordinary subterranean excavations in the rock, as receptacles for the dead; but they have been desecrated by the mummy hunters, to an extent which has taken from them much of the interest of a visit.

The baths of Cleopatra are after the same class, and should rather be called catacombs than baths.

At the mosque or convent of St. Mark, which I visited, the Coptic priest assured me that they possessed the head and heart of St. Mark, and as these sacred relics are shown for a half a crown, in a very good state of preservation, I was not permitted to doubt the correctness of the story.

Leo Africanus, however, says these remains were carried off to Venice, and when I get there I shall, no doubt, have another sight of them, for another half crown. Historians, I believe, agree in saying that the Evangelist was put to death in Alexandria, but the mosque which was said to contain his remains was destroyed in the year 1219, and it will require the asseveration of more than one monk to convince a person of intelligence that the head and heart of the Evangelist did not suffer the fate of the morque which contained them.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

DISCIPLINE OF THE MIND.

It is not by mere study, by the mere accumulation of knowledge, that you can hope for eminence. Mental discipline, the exercise of the faculties of the mind, the quickening of your apprehension, the strengthening of your memory, the forming of a sound, rapid, and discriminating judgment, are of even more importance than the store of learning. Practise the economy of time. Consider time like the faculties of your mind, a precious estate; that every moment of it well applied is put out to an exorbitant interest. The zest of amusement itself, and the successful result of application, depend in a great measure, upon the economy of time. Estimate also the force of habit. Exercise a constant, and unremitting vigilance of the acquirement of habit, in matters that are apparently of entire indifference—that perhaps are really so, independent of the habits that they engender. It is by the neglect of such trifles that bad habits are acquired, and that the mind, by total negligence and procrastination in matters of small account but frequent occurrence—matters of which the world takes no notice—becomes accustomed to the same defects in matters of higher importance. By motives yet more urgent, by higher and purer aspirations, by the duty of obedience to the will of God, by the awful account you will have to render not merely of moral actions, but of faculties entrusted to you for improvement—by all these high arguments do I conjure you "so to number your days that you may apply your heart unto wisdom," unto that wisdom which, directing your ambition to the noble end of benefitting mankind, and teaching humble reliance on the merits and on the mercy of your Redeemer, may support you in the "time of your wealth;" and in "the hour of death, and in the day of judgment," may comfort you with the hope of deliverance.—*Sir Robert Peel*.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD ACADEMY.

The appellation of *Academy* with which it is now customary to dignify the meanest private schools, originally signified a pleasure-house a mile from Athens, where Plato held his philosophical assemblies. It took its name, *Academia*, from *Academos*, or *Ecademos*, an Athenian, to whom it belonged, and who had gymnastic exercises performed within it.

This academy was adorned by Cimon with fountains, shady walks, &c., for the convenience of philosophers; and hence all public places destined for the assemblies of the learned, have been called *Academies*. Sylla sacrificed the delightful groves planted by Cimon, to the laws of war, and employed those very trees to make machines to batter the city. Cicero also had a villa near Puzzuoli, which he called by the same name *Academia*. Here he entertained his philosophical friends; and here he composed his *Academical Questions*, and his books *De Natura Deorum*.

The first modern academy was established by Charlemagne; it consisted of the chief wits of the court, the emperor himself being a member.

Academy is also now used for a kind of collegiate school.

SIZE OF OUR GREAT LAKES.

The latest measurements of our fresh water seas are these;

The greatest length of Lake Superior is 335 miles; its greatest breadth is 160 miles; mean depth 998 feet; elevation 627 feet; area 23,000 square miles.

The greatest length of Lake Michigan is 360 miles; its greatest breadth 108 miles; mean depth 900 feet; elevation 587 feet; area 23,000 square miles.

The greatest length of Lake Huron is 200 miles; its greatest breadth is 160 miles; mean depth 900 feet; elevation 574 feet; area 20,000 square miles.

The greatest length of Lake Erie is 250 miles; its greatest breadth is 80 miles; its mean depth is 84 feet; elevation 555 feet; area 6,000 square miles.