

a matter of necessity, as otherwise the small surface upon which they can bear, and the consequent danger of crushing, or at least flattening that surface, is a serious objection to spheres: once placed upon the rollers, it was drawn by means of capstans. The resistance does not appear to have been great, considering the enormous weight, since sixty men at the capstans, with treble purchase blocks, moved it with ease.

The transport of this enormous rock under such disadvantageous circumstances of country, over a distance of four miles, and its subsequent passage of thirteen miles by water, in a vast cassoon or vessel constructed for the purpose, was a work surpassing anything of the sort attempted by the ancients; and, indeed, in modern times the only thing which can be compared to it is the dragging a ship of the line up a slip; the weight is in this case nearly the same as that of the rock, but the distance traversed is short, and the difficulties to be overcome much less.

MATRIMONIAL BALANCE.—An American paper a few years ago related the following anecdote: "Not long since a reverend gentleman in Vermont, being apprehensive that the accumulated weight of snow upon the roof of his barn might do some damage, was resolved to prevent it, by seasonably shovelling it off. He therefore ascended it, having first, for fear the snow might all slide off at once, and himself with it, fastened to his waist one end of a rope, and giving the other to his wife. He went to work, but fearing still for his safety, 'My dear,' said he, 'tie the rope round your waist,' no sooner had she done this, than off went the snow, poor minister and all, and up went his wife. Thus on one side of the barn the astounded and confounded clergyman hung, but on the other side hung his wife, high and dry, in majesty sublime, dingling and dangling at the end of the rope. At that moment, however, a gentleman, luckily passing by, delivered them from this perilous situation.

THE TORTOISE.—The tortoise may occasionally be met with in gardens in this country. The *Testudo geometrica* I have certainly seen here; but the occurrence is rare. One of three tortoises (the common) laid three eggs in a garden at Montrose. One of these I forwarded to Professor Jameson, of Edinburgh. The size to which this creature occasionally attains is quite monstrous. I remember, some years ago, to have seen one, then semi-torpid, exhibited near Exeter Change, London, which weighed, if I recollect aright, several hundred-weight. Its shell was proportionally thick, and its other dimensions bore a corresponding ratio. It was stated to be about eight hundred years old. In the library at Lambeth Palace is the shell of a land tortoise, brought there about the year 1623; it lived until 1730, and was killed by the inclemency of the weather during a frost, in consequence of the carelessness of a labourer in the garden, who, for a trifling wager, dug it up from its winter retreat, and neglected to replace it. Another tortoise was placed in the

garden of the Episcopal Palace at Fulham, by Bishop Laud, when bishop of that see, in 1628; this appears to have died a natural death in 1753. It is not known what were their several ages when placed in the gardens. That of which I am about to give an account, I saw in the bishop's garden at Peterborough, adjoining the Cathedral, in the summer of 1813. It died only four or five years ago. Why this Episcopal predilection, is a question perhaps not unworthy antiquarian research! The *Testudo Græcia* is found in the island of Sardinia—generally weighing four pounds, and its usually computed age is about sixty years. From a document belonging to the archives of the Cathedral, called the *Bishop's Barn*, it is well ascertained that the tortoise at Peterborough must have been two hundred years old. Bishop March's predecessor in the see of Peterborough had remembered it above sixty years, and could recognise no visible change. He was the seventh bishop who had worn the mitre during its sojourn there. If I mistake not, its sustenance and abode were provided for in this document. Its shell was perforated, in order to attach it to a tree, &c., to limit its ravages among the strawberry borders. This animal moved with apparent ease, though pressed with a weight of 80 stone; itself weighed 13½ pounds. In cloudy weather, it would scoop out a cavity, generally in a southern exposure, where it reposed, torpid and inactive, until the genial influence of the sun roused it from its slumber. When in this state, the eyes were closed, and the head and neck a little contracted, though not drawn within the shell. Its sense of smelling was so acute, that it was roused from its lethargy if any person approached even at a distance of twelve feet. About the beginning of October, or latter end of September, it began to immure itself, and had, for that purpose, for many years selected a particular angle of the garden; it entered in an inclined plane, excavating the earth in the manner of the mole; the depth to which it penetrated varied with the character of the approaching season, being from one to two feet, according as the winter was mild or severe. It may be added, that for nearly a month prior to this entry into its dormitory, it refused all sustenance whatever. The animal emerged about the end of April, and remained for at least a fortnight before it ventured on taking any species of food. Its skin was not perceptibly cold; its respiration, entirely effected through the nostrils, was languid. I visited the animal, for the last time, on the 9th June 1813, during a thunder-storm; it then lay under the shelter of a cauliflower, and was apparently torpid.

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