

THE PITCAIRN ISLANDERS.

The following information regarding the Pitcairn Islanders, descendants of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, is derived from a letter of date 31st March last, received by the family of a young gentleman belonging to Greenwich, who was an officer on board H. M. S. *Amphitrite*, one of the British frigates in the Pacific:

"At daylight we hoisted off *Bounty Bay*, and fired a gun, which was repeated at 6.30 A.M., and soon afterwards we saw the whale-boat full of Islanders coming out. They got alongside about 7.30 (there were thirteen in the boat.) On landing we found Mr. Nobbs with the greater portion of the men and children assembled on the beach. We received a hearty welcome, and, after the party from the cutter had joined us, proceeded up the hill, which is about 300 feet perpendicular at every part at any time, but late in the day, after some rain had fallen, it was dreadfully slippery, and we all had one or two tumbles coming down. We reached the market place (after a climb over 500 yards of ground), as it is called, being a space at the top of the hill under some coconut trees, in about ten minutes, and there were surprised by seeing nearly all the ladies, about fifty or so, awaiting our arrival. I was greatly pleased, and so was everybody, for you might go a long way before you would see such a collection of pretty, good humoured, cheerful faces. They were most of them a little shy at first, but it wore off. After chatting a short time, we went on to the settlement, and walked about, seeing everything and everybody. We all dined about noon, each family asking two or three; and to that house where you dined you were expected to go, if you wanted water or a melon—in fact, make it your home *pro tem*. We soon got a little singing up, and the ladies favoured us with 'God save the Queen,' the 'Pitcairn Song,' and two or three others. They sang very nicely, and so pleased the captain that he said he would wait till next day, instead of sailing at dark, as he intended at first. The girls made very pretty wreaths; they are made of a flower very much like a red daisy, and they wear them round their heads. The whale-boat came off at 7 p.m., and was hoisted up in the port main rigging for the night, the islanders about a dozen sleeping in the after-cabin. They are dressed nearly all alike except the Nobbs, who wear shoes, and are regarded, as superior. There are only eight of the first generation, two men and six women. The oldest man is sixty, and the oldest woman between seventy and eighty. None of these will leave the island, at least they say so, and only wish removal to Norfolk Island for their children's benefit; for, they say, in a few years the island will be too small for them.

The number of inhabitants at present is a hundred and ninety, ninety-five males and ninety-five females. They are all in good health, except Reuben, Mr. Nobbs' eldest son, who is in a consumption, and cannot live many weeks longer. They were greatly pleased with our presents, and they sent off to the ship's company lots of pumpkins, water melons, plantains, &c. Every house is beautifully clean, and for the first time after leaving England I have seen scrapers, which are made out of old cutlasses. The houses have the sleeping places made like bunks round one side, and there is generally, besides a chest or two of drawers a table, a stool, and a cupboard. Some of them have a slight partition, where the father and mother sleep; the rest are berthed indiscriminately. All the bunks have curtains to let down. They are all excellent swimmers, being in the water as soon as they can walk. The women are considered the best. I suspect we are the last men-of-war who will see them before their division; for I suppose they will remove this year or the beginning of next. We took a great many letters for them, and brought several away, mostly for officers who have been there. They were all very sorry at our leaving, and some of the women cried; some of the men also, I think. There was only a little dispute about some land, which had to be referred to the captain, and that was very soon satisfactorily settled. They rise at daylight and begin the day's work; but strange to say, they eat nothing until noon, then generally vegetable food, with meat once or twice a week only; they have supper about seven o'clock, and go to bed about eight p.m. The houses are raised about three feet off the ground, and thatched with palm leaves, with good eaves, so that all the rain runs off clear. The thatching lasts a long time. About eleven o'clock, a.m., the islanders on board left, loaded with presents for themselves and the ladies. Just before they pushed off they gave three hearty cheers, which were heartily returned; they then pulled for the shore, and we made all plain sail, with a refreshing breeze."

A GOOD ORGAN WELL DESCRIBED.

In the progress of these desultory sketches, I shall have somewhat to say on the subject of organs. As it is understood, however, I lay no claim to any artistic knowledge of their nature, whether mechanical or musical, and do not speak in the capacity of a critic. But I have an inborn partiality in this direction. To me, when a boy, the organ of the parish church had the same attractions that a bell and bell-ropes is said to have possessed in the eyes of the youthful John Bunyan. Quite naturally, then, my attention was directed to the observation and study of this most sublime of instruments, as found, in their excellences among the churches and cathedrals of the Old World.

My first experience of organ-playing abroad was in Dublin. In the shabbiest and vilest portion of that ancient city, corresponding to the parish of St. Giles in London, or the Five Points in New York, stands the little Cathedral of St. Patrick. Imposung and grand in its exterior, its interior is damp and gloomy always, partaking, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, of the decay and desolation that reigns around it. But enclosed within the caken gallery above the choir, like the diamond in the toad's head, is an organ of most mellow and delicious tone.

Tradition saith it was seized among the spoils of the celebrated Spanish Armada, and presented by good Queen Bess to her loyal subjects in Dublin, as a mark of especial regard. It was designed, no doubt, by the beautiful Philip, to lead in the *T. Deum* for his victory. Two hundred years' time has blackened its casing to the hue of ebony, and corroded the best particle of ornament from its pipes, till it presents a front like the portals of Newgate. But a marvellous beauty it hath in its voice; as though it joined to Saxon strength the soft voluptuousness of its Moorish origin, and had merged all asperities, from being much tossed in ships, as good wine is mellowed in a voyage through southern seas.

I was fortunate in that I was present on a festival day in the calendar, when the impressive Choral service of the English Church was performed by a choir of twenty-four male voices. On this occasion, the noble organ put forth its full powers. It boasts none of the embellishments of modern structure: no reduplication and coupling of registers—no swell—no *respiratoria*, and *cremona*, and *vox-humana* stops. Its chief glory is in its solemn diapasons, pouring forth an avalanche of sound, which moves on evenly, majestically, religiously—the very embodiment of praise to God. It is said of this instrument that the music-loving George III. offered £10,000 to have it removed to England, but without success. Of its precise size, its age, and place of birth, I cannot speak with authority. The wonder is, that in all its vicissitudes on sea and land, and the decay and damp endured for centuries in its ill-conditioned abode here, it still holds, to all appearance, its pristine vigor.—*Dublin Letter in Dwight's Journal of Music.*

DR. KANE AT WASHINGTON.—The *Washington Union*, Oct. 16th, says:—"Dr. Kane arrived in Washington at half-past eleven o'clock yesterday morning, and proceeded at once to pay his respects to the President of the United States, by whom he was most cordially received. He next visited the Secretary of the Navy, where an equally cordial welcome awaited him. His presence everywhere, during his brief stay, produced a marked sensation. He left in the afternoon cars for New York, where (although nominally on a furlough) he will spend some time in preparing the official account of his expedition, and which he expects to complete in the course of two or three months. The narrative part of the expedition, which is likely to prove exceedingly voluminous, cannot be prepared for the press for many months to come. In the brief account of the expedition published in this and other papers, a serious error inadvertently appears. The area seen of the great Polar Sea, discovered by Dr. Kane, is put down at three hundred miles. It should have been three thousand miles; and when the charts, now in the course of preparation, are completed, it is believed that the area will prove to be even much greater."

THE MOON.—Dr. Scoresby, in an account that he has given of some recent observations made with the Earl of Rosse's telescope, says:—"With respect to the moon, every object on its surface of one hundred feet was now distinctly to be seen, and he had no doubt that under very favorable circumstances, it would be so with objects sixty feet in height. On its surface were craters of extinct volcanoes, rocks and masses of stones almost innumerable. He had no doubt that

if such a building as he was then in were upon the surface of the moon, it would be rendered distinctly visible by these instruments. But there were no signs of inhabitants such as ours—no vestige of architecture remains to show that the moon is or ever was inhabited by a race of mortals similar to ourselves. It presented no appearance which could lead to the supposition that it contained anything like the green fields and lovely verdure of this beautiful world of ours. There was no water visible—not a sea, or river, or even the measure of a reservoir for supplying town or factory—all seemed desolate."

The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, considering the method employed by the Jews, in accordance with their religious scruples, of killing oxen in London for food, infinitely cruel, have brought the matter before the Lord Mayor. By the usual way of killing bullocks, it was alleged by Mr. Forster, secretary to the society, the spinal marrow being first divided, death resulted with scarcely any pain to the animal; but—

"According to the Jewish mode of slaughter, there appeared to be no attempt to deprive the animal of sensibility. The legs were hobbled by ropes, and the beast was brought down upon its side; an iron ring was then inserted in its mouth, and an iron bar was placed within the ring, by means of which the neck was stretched out, and the head was kept close to the ground. The religious officer to whom the duty attached of dispatching him was then summoned (and there were only three officers of that description for the whole of the White chapel Jewish slaughterhouses,) and when he arrived he, with a very long and sharp knife, first scraped off the hair from the throat of the bullock, and then severed with a single cut the two jugular veins, and all the smaller blood-vessels of the throat."

"Sir Peter Laurie—The object is to take every drop of blood from the animal."

"Mr. Forster said it would be shown on the highest medical testimony that the effect of the sudden separation of the blood-vessel, according to the Jewish mode of slaughtering, was to cause them to collapse, and the blood became coagulated, and clogged up the vessels. It was not permitted to the religious officer, in the event of the single cut being imperfectly made, to make another. If a second cut were made, the carcass of the animal would be at once condemned as unfit for Jewish food; and it would be shown that so horrified were the slaughtermen employed at the sufferings of the animals, that it was a common practice with them, when the back of the authorised officer was turned, to cut off a portion of the veins in order that life should ebb more speedily. Death seldom resulted in less than from ten to twelve minutes, and it was in the belief and hope that the Jewish community would not in the present enlightened days desire to justify any act calculated to prolong the sufferings of any animal intended for human food in the necessary process of slaughtering, that the present proceedings were instituted."

The case was adjourned.

In Mr. Tennant's very curious statistical paper on a Glasgow High School Class, of sixty years ago, there are very singular results brought out. The class consisted of 115 boys originally, and of these only twenty-six are now alive, being about one-fourth of the original number. Out of the 115, sixty had got prizes, or about one-half; but of these sixty, no less than twenty are among the survivors, constituting within six of the entire number. This is very remarkable, and would go to show that there is a more intimate relation between good, clever boys at school, and longevity, with success in after life, than is generally believed. But it is really shocking to find that twelve out of the twenty-six survivors are bachelors; and we are almost afraid to follow out the inference which may be deduced by some malicious, crabbed fraction of humanity from these figures. Let us, therefore, hope that the High School Class is an exceptional case, and that the dozen musty old bachelors who still live, do so in spite of their having been unmarried, contrary to all general rule and common sense.—*North British Mail.*

PROFANITY A SOCIAL VICE.—What is the public tendency of profaneness? Ask the children who surround your firesides or swarm through your streets; ask your servants and dependants, who dare not do before you, what you do before heaven's God; ask each other from the highest to the lowest class of community—ask, I say, who invented the vocabulary of oaths and curses, and I will venture to predict that not a single one can be found who will claim the merit of originality. Each individual received the contagion from others; and certainly, a more impressive commentary on the force of public example cannot be conceived.—*S. Larned.*