

whether the measurement was made by the Lacars themselves, or by some trust worthy European. A correspondent of the Edinburgh Literary Gazette has told, with every appearance of life-truth, a thrilling story of an encounter which he had with an enormous boa on the banks of a river in Guiana. Awakened, as he lay in his boat, by the cold touch of something at his feet, he found that the serpent's mouth was in contact with them, preparing, as he presumed, to swallow him feet foremost. In an instant he drew himself up, and, grasping his gun, discharged it full at the reptile's head, which reared into the air with a horrid hiss and terrible contortions, and then, with one stroke of his paddles, shot up the stream beyond reach. On arriving at his friend's house, it was determined to seek the wounded serpent, and several armed negroes were added to the party. They soon found the place where the crushed and bloody reeds told of the recent adventure, and proceeded cautiously to reconnoitre. Advancing, thus about 30 yards, alarm was given that the serpent was visible. "We saw through the reeds part of its body coiled up, and part stretched out; but, from their density, the head was invisible. Disturbed, and apparently irritated by our approach, it appeared from its movements to be preparing to attack us. Just as we caught a glimpse of its head we fired, both of us almost at the same moment. It fell, hissing, and rolling in a variety of contortions." Here one of the negroes, taking a circuit, succeeded in hitting the creature a violent blow with a club, which stunned it, and a few more strokes decided the victory. "On measuring it, we found it to be nearly 40 feet in length, and of proportionable thickness." I do not know how far this story is to be relied on; but if it is given in good faith, the serpent was the longest dependable example I know of in modern times. Still, "nearly 40 feet" is somewhat indefinite.—*Gosse's*

### Relations of the Vegetable and Animal Kingdom.

"There is a ceaseless round of force mutation throughout nature," says the *Cornhill Magazine*, "each one generating or changing into the other. So that force which enters the plant as heat and light, &c., is stored up in its tissues, making them organic. This force, transferred from the plant to the animal in digestion, is given out by its muscles in their decomposition, and produces motion, or by its nerves, and constitutes nervous force—force stored up in the body—resistance to chemical affinity; this force produces directly from the solar rays. The solar rays cause those operations in the vegetable world, by which trees and plants absorb the carbonic acid gas which is expired from the lungs of animals, and by which those very plants also inhale pure oxygen gas during light, to revive the contaminated at-

mosphere and supply the lungs of man with the breadth of life. Trees and plants are essential to the health of the animal creation, and there is a mutual relationship between the two kingdoms. Respecting these beautiful and mysterious operations of nature, a distinguished writer has given the following literary gem:

The carbonic acid gas with which our breathing fills the air, to-morrow will be speeding north and south, striving to make the tour of the world. The date trees that grow round the fountains of the Nile will drink it in by their leaves; the cedar of Libanus will take of it to add to the stature; the cocoa nuts of Tahiti will grow riper on it; and the palms and bananas of Japan change it into flowers. The oxygen we are breathing was distilled for us as hot time ago by the magnolias of the Susquehanna, and the great trees that skirt the Orinoco and the Amazon; the giant rhododendrons of the Himalayas contribute to it, the roses and myrtles of Cashmere, the cinnamon trees of Ceylon, and forests older than the Flood, buried deep in the heart of Africa, far behind the Mountains of the Moon. The rain which we see descending was thawed for us out of icebergs which have watched the polar star for ages, and lotus-lilies sucked up from the Nile, and exhaled as vapor, the snows that are lying at the top of our hills. Thus we see that the two great kingdoms of nature are made to co-operate in the execution of the same design, each ministering to the other, and preserving that due balance in the constitution of the atmosphere which adapts it to the welfare and activity of every order of things, and which would soon be destroyed were the operations of any one of them to be suspended. And yet man, in his ignorance and his thirst for worldly gain, has done his utmost to destroy this beautiful and harmonious plan. It was evidently the intention of the Creator that animal and vegetable life should everywhere exist together, so that the baneful influence which the former is constantly exercising upon the air, whose purity is so essential to its maintenance, should be counteracted by the latter.

**THE GLACIAL THEORY.**—On a large scale, for fifty miles along the west coast of Sutherland and Ross, there is a range of isolated mountains, of from 3,000 to 3,500 feet in height, standing widely apart from each other, and yet it is evident they have all, at some time, been part of one continuous formation. The large inter-spaces having been subsequently formed, the question is, by what destroying force? and the answer is ice. Ample memorials of its agency exist along the mountain sides, and on the platform of gneiss-rock whereon the mountains rest. These memorials consist of longitudinal hollows, containing lakes, all in the same