

cross on which our Saviour is nailed. The cross is richly gilt, and adorned with minute and capricious sculptures.

A STORM IN THE DESERT.

The desert was imposing and melancholy; it seemed to pant and heave beneath us, and to force up a burning breath from its inmost depths. The transition had been rapid and singular: it was no longer the oasis of the preceding evening, the repose at the foot of the palm-trees, the refreshing sleep, lulled by the murmuring sounds of the fountains; it was the burning sand, the terrible shock of the dromedary; the devouring thirst, fierce, terrible and maddening; the thirst which makes the blood boil, fascinates the eyes, and displays to the wretch that it scorches, lakes, islands, trees, fountains, shade, and water. I know not whether the rest felt like me, but I was really a prey to temporary insanity, to a reverie, to an endless delirium, which extended itself through all the vagaries of imagination. From time to time our dromedaries sank down, digging the scorching soil with their heads to find some semblance of coolness beneath the surface; they then rose feverish and panting like ourselves, and resumed their fantastic course. I do not know how often these falls were renewed; I cannot tell how we were so lucky as to escape from being crushed under our *haghins*, or buried beneath the sand; but I do remember, that scarcely had we fallen, when Taleb, Bechara, and Araballah were close to us, prompt and ready to give assistance, but mute as spectres; they raised up the men and camels, and then resumed their course, silent and folded in their mantles. An hour longer of this tempest, and I am convinced that it would have buried us all. Suddenly a blast of wind passed, illuminating the horizon, as when the curtain is raised at a theatre. "The Mokatteb!" cried Taleb. "The Mokatteb!" repeated all the Arabs. Then the sand rose again between us and the mountain; but Providence, as if to restore our strength, had shown us the desired haven. "The Mokatteb! the Mokatteb!" we repeated, without knowing what the Mokatteb was; but guessing that it was our haven, safety, and life. Five minutes after, we glided like serpents into a deep cavern: the narrow entrance of the cave allowed very little light to come in: our exhausted dromedaries knelt down with their heads extended to the rock, and remained so motionless, that their skins, covered with sand gave them the appearance of camels in stone. On our side, without thinking of tent, carpet, or food, we lay down as best we could, a prey at once to a numbness and a delirium which hold the midway between sleep and violent fever; then, without speaking, sleeping, or stirring, we remained there until the next morning, extended on our faces, like statues hurled from their base.

INDIAN JUGGLERS.

In no part of India are the jugglers so expert as in the Madras presidency, particularly in the Mysore country and the Carnatic. The bodies of the Madras jugglers are so lithic and supple as to resemble those of serpents rather than men. An artist of this kind will place a ladder upright on the ground, and wind himself in and out through the rounds until he reaches the top, descending in the same manner, keeping the ladder, which has no support whatever, in a perpendicular position. Some of the most accomplished tumblers will spring over an enormous elephant, or five camels abreast; and in rope-dancing they are not to be outdone by any of the wonders of our minor theatres. Swallowing the sword is a common operation, even by those who are not considered to be the most expert; and they have various other exploits with naked weapons of a most frightful nature. A woman—for the females are quite equal to the men in these kinds of feats—will dip the point of a sword in some black pigment, the hilt is then firmly fixed in the ground, and after a few whirls in the air, the artist takes off a portion of the pigment with her eyelid. A sword and four daggers are placed in the ground, with their edges and points upwards, at such a distance from each other as to admit of a man's head between them; the operator then plants a scimitar firmly in the ground, sits down behind it, and at a bound throws himself over the scimitar, pitching his head exactly in the centre between the daggers, and, turning over, clears them and the sword. Walking over the naked edges of sabres seems to be perfectly easy; and some of these people will stick a sword in the ground, and step upon the point in crossing over it. A more agreeable display of the lightness and activity, which would enable the performers to tread over flowers without bending them, is shown upon a piece of thin linen cloth stretched out slightly in the hands of four persons, which is traversed without ruffling it, or forcing it from the grasp of the holders. The lifting of heavy weights with the eyelids is another very disgusting exhibition. Some of the optical deceptions are exceedingly curious, and inquirers are to this day puzzled to guess how plants, flowers, and fruits, can be instantaneously produced from seeds. The Madras jugglers travel to all parts of India, but it is not often that the most celebrated are to be found at a distance from the theatre of their education. The serpent-charmers also make a great figure in all public festivals at Mysore; I have already described their performances, and need not add anything on a topic so repeatedly discussed. There is no doubt that they frequently practise ingenious deceptions, but I think there is just as little room to question their knowledge of a more efficacious

protection against snake-poison than any with which we are yet familiar.

WONDERFUL DEXTERITY OF INDIAN THIEVES.

Precautions are almost useless for the contrivances employed. Horses ever so securely picketed and guarded have been stolen from the midst of the camp; the whole property in a room or tent has been swept away without awakening the sleeping owner; nay, the very mattress has been removed by a skillful thief, without disturbing the slumbers of the officer by whom it was occupied. I witnessed the performance of this last-named feat when in the camp at Trichinopoly, by one of the *Colliries*, a class of persons noted for their expertness and adroitness as thieves. It was then performed for a wager, to convince an incredulous officer of the surprising dexterity of Indian thieves. When the officer's breathing gave proof of his being in a sound sleep, the *Colliry* entered the room stealthily as a cat, taking with him a small chafing-dish, on which he burned some intoxicating herbs, especially the seeds of the bang or hemp plant, which is nearly as powerful a soporific as opium. He allowed the officer to inhale some of those stupifying fumes, and then gently tickled him with a feather; as he mechanically shrunk from the tickling, the thief adroitly pulled away the mattress, until he succeeded in removing it altogether, when he went out of the room without being detected.—*Bevan's Thirty Years in India.*

A GOOD STORY.

"Once upon a time," an officer was travelling *dak* (post.) When the recumbent position became irksome to him, he alighted to walk; and on one of these occasions he was attacked by a bear at a little distance from his attendants. Being armed only according to nature's provision, he was obliged to wrestle with his assailant. During the struggle the bearers came up; but instead of tendering their assistance to the gentleman, they formed a circle round the contending parties, like bold Britons at a dog-fight, and expressed the interest they took in the contest by clapping of hands, and the following encouraging cheers—"Wah, wah, sahib!" or "Wah, wah, bhaloo!" as the chance of victory fluctuated from one side to the other. The officer was fortunately a strong man, and after a long struggle came off triumphant. At the end of the stage, in order to reward the tender interest the bearers had taken in the preservation of his honour, he delivered them over to the *Cutwal*, the chief civil authority, who awarded to each of them an external application of bamboo, instructing at the same time the *executor* to call out during the administration, "Wah, wah, bans!" "Wah, wah, peeth!"†

*** "Wah, wah, sahib!" "Wah, wah, bhaloo!"—Well done gentleman! Bravo, bear! or, Now, gentleman—now bear!

† "Wah, wah, bans!" "Wah, wah, peeth!"—Bravo, bamboo! Bravo, back!

THE HAPPY DAY.

Oh! mem'ry brings us back again,
To many a green and lovely spot,
And echoes many a soothing strain,
Perchance by others long forgot;
Some gentle link enchains the heart,
Some thought reflects the pleasing ray;
And thus while meaner things depart,
We live again the happy day.

Oh! is there one who hath not felt,
That e'en amid a life of pain,
No scenes there were, where he hath dwelt,
He would not wish to know again?
Though dark adversity hath gloom'd
The flowers that seemed in youth so gay;
He never can forget they bloom'd
Once—once upon some happy day.

When first I met some valued friend,
When first I breathed love's fervid vow—
When first my spirit learn'd to blend
With one who loves me dearly now;
When first I saw my infant smile,
Though time speeds on his rapid way,
These memories shall my heart beguile,
And call back many a happy day.

FLUENCY OF SPEECH.—Dean Swift says the common fluency of speech, in most men and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter and scarcity of words; for whoever is a master of language and hath a mind full of ideas, will be apt in speaking to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always ready at the mouth; so people come faster out of church when it is almost empty than when a crowd is at the doors.

FINE ARTS.

WATER COLOURS.

The charm of water-colour painting is its atmosphere: sunlight and storm, the shower and the breeze, the river and the clouds, are realized in the picture with a freshness that almost makes us sensible of the odour as well as the moisture of the dewy grass: the light which in oil painting is solid and opaque, in water-colours is represented by a transparent medium; hence the glow of sunset and the glare of noon partake of the airiness as well as the brilliancy natural to sunshine. But all does not rest with the material; for the limpid purity and brightness which we admire, may be attenuated into vacuum or converted into a chilling, glassy hardness: the medium is best suited, also, to that loose, sketchy, generalizing style of imitation—representing appearances and effects, not details of form—which is most suitable for delineating landscape (especially in a moist and variable climate like ours) and in-door scenes, where light is the leading feature, and in which our painters excel. A conjunction of favouring circumstances, therefore, renders the English school pre-eminent in this branch of art; and the pleasure which all successful imitations of nature give, particularly those of rural scenes, makes the water-colour Exhibition universally popular, at once delightful to the feelings and satisfactory to the judgment. The fascination thus accounted for, we no longer wonder that the same class of subjects, treated in the same manner by the same artists year after year, should never tire or grow uninteresting from monotony: it is Nature herself that we see through the bright lens of Art, and we should almost as soon grow weary of the fields and trees, and shifting clouds themselves. They are great mannerists, however, these water-colour men, and paint too much by recipe, doing all their lives one thing in one way; but they copy Nature's lineaments with living reality; and we excuse, nay, are even pleased with their manner, except when, as in the instance of John Varley, Hills, and W. Turner, it interferes with the truth. Copley Fielding paints the "green hill in its April shroud," the moor and mountain veiled in mist, the storm-black sea with its white crested billows; Dewint, the tedded grass with its gray green tints, the golden hue of the ripened harvest, the deep-toned verdure of the foliage, and the clear blue of the stream under the cloud-steeped radiance of noon, or the empurpled shades of evening; Cox, the dewy coolness of the grass on the lea, the purple heather on the mountain, and the weeds and rushes on the bank of the silver stream, the rain-clouds borne along upon the breeze, the glancing sunlight, and the falling shower; Barrett, the unclouded lustre of the sun at morn, at noon, and evening; and so with the rest, each painting his favourite effects pretty nearly the same as he did years ago. Nor do we wish them to change their manner if they could: long may they continue to repeat themselves after this delightful fashion.

But a new method is obtaining in this style of art—opaque water-colours are used in addition to transparent ones, and in some instances so freely, that instead of lustrous brilliancy, we have an adust heaviness resembling crayon-painting. It is a new thing, and like other novelties, pleases at first; consequently, we sometimes see it used where it should not be. We hear it much decried; but, so far from condemning it altogether, we think a judicious employment of opaque colours not only allowable, but advisable in figure subjects, interiors, and even in landscape, for the relief of solid objects in the foreground. No one in his senses would voluntarily substitute an opaque for a transparent medium in producing atmospheric appearances; and of course we should not prefer seeing a sun-burst represented by a red wafer stuck in the middle of a blaze of brick-dust, instead of a focal spot of white paper in a flood of gamboge; nor a cloudy sky by a wall of paper dryness, instead of the pearly gray tones washed in with a full pencil: neither do we desire to feel as well as see a tuft of weeds or the leaves of a bush in the foreground; though we have no horror of seeing the bark of a tree, or the surface of a rock or wall, or the lichens on a fence close to the eye, imitated by touches of solid colour. It is with reference to distance, and space, and the effects of light on objects seen through the medium of atmosphere, that the employment of opaque colours is injurious—it is their misuse, in short, not their use, that we oppose; and as yet we see few evidences of it. In transparent water-colour painting, the effects of solidity and relief is produced by opposition of tints rather than by texture of surface; and as in the generality of views the details are on so small a scale as almost to be merged in the masses and general effect, this is quite sufficient; but in painting objects on a larger scale and nearer the eye, the appearance of solidity is scarcely attainable without the aid of gum or opaque pigments; and as it is in representing atmospheric effects that transparent washes of colour are so peculiarly successful, wherever there is no depth of atmosphere (so to speak) between the eye and the object, the employment of opaque colours is advisable; and the opposition of them will tend to give a more aerial tone to the distance.

The Albany Microscope says that the "Wild Cat" money is so very bad in Michigan, that the military refused to take it for wadding on the Fourth, for fear their Muskets would not go off.