

VEGETABLE SERPENT.—According to some *English Journals*, a new organized being has been discovered in the interior of Africa, which seems to form an intermediate link between vegetable and animal life. This singular production of nature has the shape of a spotted serpent. It drags itself on the ground; instead of a head, has a flower, shaped like a bell, which contains a viscous liquid. Flies and other insects, attracted by the smell of the juice, enter into the flower, where they are caught by the adhesive matter. The flower then closes, and remains shut until the prisoners are bruised and transformed into chyle. The indigestible portions, such as the head and wings, are thrown out by two spiral openings. The vegetable serpent has a skin resembling leaves, a white and soft flesh, and instead of a bony skeleton, a cartilaginous frame filled with yellow marrow. The natives consider it a delicious food.—*English Paper*.

“WHITECHAPEL SHARPS.”—In Yarriba and elsewhere, it was a general practice with us to pay the carriers of our luggage with needles only, but here we are endeavouring to dispose of them in order to purchase provisions for our people. We brought with us from England nearly a hundred thousand needles of various sizes, and amongst them was a great quantity of “Whitechapel sharps,” warranted “superfine, and not to cut in the eye!” Thus highly recommended, we imagined that these needles must have been good indeed; but what was our surprise some time ago, when a number of them which we had disposed of was returned to us with a complaint that they were all *eyeless*, thus redeeming with a vengeance the pledge of the manufacturer, that they would not cut in the eye.” On an examination afterwards, we found the same fault with the remainder of the “Whitechapel sharps,” so that to save our credit we have been obliged to throw them away.—*Lander’s Travels in Africa*.

RAILWAY COMPENSATIONS.—The great difference between the sums claimed by proprietors and the sums offered by railway companies, for occupation of land and damages, has frequently excited remarks and surprise. The difference in the case of the Edinburg and Glasgow Railway, and the directors of the Glasgow Lunatic Asylum, presents, perhaps, a greater difference than was ever before witnessed in the Kingdom, and would almost lead to the supposition that the claim had been made by the inmates rather than by the directors. The first claim made was 44,000*l.*, but, before trial, this was reduced to something a little above 10,000*l.* The sum awarded by the jury was 873*l.*

THE QUEEN AND THE QUAKERS.—In the autumn of 1818, her late majesty, Queen Charlotte, visited Bath, accompanied by the Princess Elizabeth. The waters soon effected such a respite from pain in the royal patient, that she proposed an excursion to a park of some celebrity in the neighbourhood, the estate of a rich widow belonging to the Society of Friends. Notice was given of the Queen’s intention, and

a message returned that she should be welcome. Our illustrious traveller had, perhaps never before held any personal intercourse with a member of the persuasion whose votaries never voluntarily paid taxes to “the man George, called king by the vain ones.” The lady and gentleman who were to attend the august visitants had but feeble ideas of the reception to be expected. It was supposed that the Quaker would at least say *thy* majesty, or *thy* highness, or madam. The royal carriages arrived at the lodges of the park, punctual to the appointed hour. No preparations appeared to have been made, no hostess nor domestics stood ready to greet the guests. The porter’s bell was rung; he stepped forth deliberately with his broad-brimmed beaver on, and unbendingly accosted the lord in waiting with “What’s thy will, friend?” This was almost unanswerable. Surely” said the nobleman, “your lady is aware that her majesty—Go to your mistress and say the Queen is here.” “No, truly,” answered the man; “it needeth not; I have no mistress nor lady, but friend Rachel Mills expecteth *thine*; walk in.” The Queen and Princess were handed out, and walked up the avenue. At the door of the house stood the plainly-attired Rachel, who, without even a curtsey, but a cheerful nod, said, “How’s thee do, friend? I am glad to see thee and thy daughter; I wish thee well. Rest and refresh thee and thy people, before I show thee my grounds.” What could be said to such a person? Some condescensions were attempted, implying that her majesty came not only to view the park, but to testify her esteem for the society to which Mistress Mills belonged. Cool and unawed she answered, “Yea, thou art right there; the Friends are well thought of by most folks, but they need not the praise of the world; for the rest, many strangers gratify their curiosity by going over this place, and it is my custom to conduct them myself; therefore I shall do the like to thee, friend Charlotte; moreover, I think well of thee as a dutiful wife and mother. Thou hast had thy trials, and so had thy good partner. I wish thy grandchild well through hers”—(she alluded to the Princess Charlotte.) It was so evident that the Friend meant kindly, nay, respectfully, that offence could not be taken. She escorted her guests through her estate. The Princess Elizabeth noticed in her hen-house a breed of poultry hitherto unknown to her, and expressed a wish to possess some of those rare fowls, imagining that Mrs. Mills would regard her wish as a law; but the Quakeress merely remarked, with characteristic evasion, “They are rare, as thou sayest; but if any are to be purchased, in this land or in other countries, I know few women likelier than thyself to procure them with ease.” Her Royal Highness more plainly expressed her desire to purchase some of those she now beheld. “I do not buy and sell,” answered Rachel Mills. “Perhaps you will give me a pair?” persevered the Princess, with a conciliating smile. “Nay, verily,” replied Rachel, “I have refused many friends; and that which