

could keep before them. Having fired a second time, the report of my gun was followed by a loud roaring noise, and we seemed to increase our distance from them. There were two Bornou men among our crew who were not so frightened as the rest, having seen some of these creatures before on Lake Tchad, where they say, there are plenty of them. However, the terrible hippopotami did us no kind of mischief whatever; they were only sporting and wallowing in the river for their own amusement, no doubt, at first when we interrupted them, but had they upset our canoe, we should have paid dearly for it. We observed a bank on the north side of the river shortly after this, and I proposed halting on it for the night, for I wished much to put my foot on firm land again. This, however, not one of the crew would consent to, saying that if the Gewo Rana, or water elephant did not kill them, the crocodiles certainly would do so before the morning, and I thought afterwards that we might have been carried off like the Cumbric people on the islands near Yaorie, if we had tried the experiment. Our canoe is only large enough to hold us all when sitting, so that we have no chance of lying down. Had we been able to muster up thirty thousand cowries at Rabba, we might have purchased one which would have carried us all very comfortably. A canoe of this sort would have served us for living in entirely, we should have no occasion to land excepting to obtain our provisions,—and having performed our day's journey, might have anchored fearlessly at night. Finding we could not induce our people to land, we agreed to continue on all night.

**CHOLERA PUZZLES.**—If we say that epidemic cholera is a disease of warm seasons and climates, we know that it has appeared in high northern latitudes. As to the weather and country, it has respected no rule, but has allied itself to the most positive extremes: for it has prevailed in draught and in rain, in storm and in calm, in cold and in heat, in high grounds and in low, in dry soils and in moist. Do we assert that it is universally epidemic, and the cause of it entirely in the air? It spares multitudes, and appears also, in some cases, and under peculiar circumstances, to extend itself gradually from man to man, and from place to place. Do we say that it is contagious, and depending upon contagion for its diffusion? It has sprung up in numerous places where no contagion could be traced by the most diligent inquiry. Do we maintain that sanitary cordons have defended cities against its invasion? It has fallen upon many which were vigilantly watched in this way, and has spared others which kept up regular intercourse with those already attacked. Towns, that were near and took no precautions, have escaped its ravages, while others at a great distance, that thought themselves secure, have been visited by the calamity. The fearful cure, has pursued, and the bold it has respected: it has reached the selfish in their seclusion, and has couched at the feet of the humane, who, with minds warmed by active benevolence, have made themselves familiar with its den of horrors. Yet, with all its anomalies, or natural deviations, it has been true to one moral code. It has released from their misery thousands of the wretched who had none to help, and has been the scourge of the dissipated, whom no preacher could correct. It has sounded an alarm from one kingdom to another, in a language all may understand, and with a universal effect none could have imagined possible from such a cause.—Dr. Hancock on the Epidemic Cholera.

**THE RUSSIAN ARMY.**—The present army is calculated at eight hundred and seventy thousand men. Of these, five hundred and twenty thousand are infantry; two hundred and forty thousand, cavalry, sixty thousand, artillery; and fifty thousand, life-guards, pioneers, sappers, and Cossacks. Every third year two men in five hundred are enlisted. By this means a constant supply of soldiers is yielded to the state. Every serf becomes free from the moment he is enrolled in the Imperial army: his long beard is cut off, and he is thenceforth a civilized European; but the change in his condition is regarded as a subject of condolence rather than congratulation. His friends consider him as dead, because every social tie is ruptured: and, sometimes (I am informed) they even put on mourning. The pay of a private is thirty rubles, or twenty-seven shillings a year. Besides this, he receives clothes, and a certain quantity of salt and grain. The salary of officers is equally insufficient to enable them to live in a style suited to their rank. Hence gambling, dishonesty, and a whole train of evils. I have long been convinced of the improbability of our Indian possessions being endangered by a war with Russia. This conviction is confirmed by observations during my short sojourn here. There is a want of system in every public department; in none, perhaps, more than the military; and there is a surprising ignorance of every thing connected with the East. Between Russia and Persia there is no cordiality. It is not to be expected that that should ever exist; but even could the latter be induced to favour an invasion of India by Russia; could the difficulty of procuring sustenance for an army on the route be overcome; and could the constitutions of the soldiers be fortified against

the climate; yet Russia is not furnished with resources to enable her to carry an efficient army through the territory occupied by the warlike nomade hordes of Afghanistan and of neighbouring countries. National power consists neither in money nor men, but in the relative proportion of these to the territory occupied, and in the ability to apply them to practical purposes. Tried by this test, the wealth of Russia will be found to be less, and her disposable military force smaller, than that of any of the kingdoms with which she is likely to be embroiled; and greatly inferior to that against which she would contend in the event of her ambitious hand grasping at India.—*Letters from the North of Europe.*

## THE SWAN AND THE SKYLARK.

BY MRS. HEMANS.

MIDST the long reeds that, o'er a Grecian stream,  
Unto the fatig wind sigh'd melodiously,  
And where the sculpture of a broken shrine  
Sent out, through shadowy grass and thick wild flowers,  
Dim alabaster gleams—a lonely swan  
Warbled his death-chant, and a poet stood  
Listening to that strange music, as it shook  
The lilies on the wave; and made the pines,  
And all the laurels of the haunted shore,  
Thrill to its passion. Oh! the tones were sweet,  
Ev'n painfully—as with the sweetness wrung  
From parting love; and to the poet's thought  
THIS was their language.

Summer, I depart!  
O light and laughing summer, fare thee well!  
No song the less through thy rich woods shall swell  
For one, one broken heart!

And fare thee well, young flowers!  
Ye will not mourn! Ye will not shed odours still,  
And wave in glory, colouring every rill  
Known to my youth's fresh hours.

And ye, bright founts, that lie  
Far in the whispering forest, lone and deep  
My wing no more shall stir your lovely sleep—  
Sweet water, I must die!

Will ye not send one tone  
Of sorrow through the shades? one murmur low?  
Shall not the green leaves from your voices know,  
That I, your child, am gone?

No! ever glad and free!  
Ye have no sounds a tale of death to tell;  
Waves, joyous waves, flow on, and fare thee well!  
Ye will not mourn for me.

But thou, sweet boon, too late  
Pour'd on my parting breath, vain gift of song!  
Why comest thou thus, o'ermastering, rich, and song,  
In the dark hour of fate!

Only to wake the sighs  
Of echo voices from their sparry cell;  
Only to say—O sunshine and blue skies!  
Of life and love, farewell!

Thus flow'd the death chant on; while, mournfully,  
Soft winds and waves made answer, and the tones  
Buried in rocks along the Grecian stream,  
Rocks and dim caverns of old prophecy,  
Woke to respond; and all the air was fill'd  
With that one sighing sound—'Farewell, farewell!'  
Fill'd with Thine sound? high in the calm blue heavens  
E'en then a skylark sung; soft summer clouds  
Were floating round him, all transpierced with light,  
And, midst that pearly radiance, his dark wings  
Quiver'd with song; such free, triumphant song,  
As if tears were not—as if breaking hearts  
Had not a place below—as if the tomb  
Were of another world; and thus that strain  
Spoke to the poet's heart exultingly.

The Summer is come; she hath said, 'Rejoice!  
The wild woods thrill to her merry voice;  
Her sweet breath is wandering around on high:  
'Sing, sing, through the echoing sky!

There is joy in the mountains; the bright waves leap,  
Like the bounding stag when he breaks from sleep;  
Mirthfully, wildly, they flash along;  
Let the heavens ring with song!

There is joy in the forest; the bird of night  
Hath made the leaves tremble with deep delight;  
But mine is the glory to sunshine given;  
Sing, sing, through the laughing heaven!

Mine are the wings of the soaring morn,  
Mine the free gales with the day-spring born!  
Only young rapture can mount so high;  
Sing, sing, through the echoing sky.'

So those two voices met; so Joy and Death  
Mingled their accents, and, amidst the rush  
Of many thoughts, the listening poet cried,  
'Oh, thou art mighty, thou art wonderful,  
Mysterious nature! not in thy free range  
Of woods and wilds alone, thou blindest thus  
The dirge-note and the song of festival!

**AN AFRICAN TORNADO.**—A violent tornado appears to strangers a most appalling visitation, and produces an extraordinary effect upon their feelings. It consists of successive flashes of the most vivid lightning, tremendous shocks of thunder, rapidly and alarmingly reiterated, impetuous gusts of wind, deluging rain. This terrific combination of the elements sweeps along the whole of the coast under consideration; but it occurs with peculiar violence on what is called the windward coast, especially at Sierra Leone. Its denomination is derived from the Portuguese, it being a corruption of the word *trueno*, which means thunder storm. Its approach is first discernible by the appearance of a small, clear, silvery speck, at a high altitude in the heavenly expanse, which increases and descends towards the horizon, with a gradual and slow, but visible motion. In its descent, it becomes circumscribed by a dark ring, which extends itself on every side, and, as soon as the silvery cloud approaches the horizon, veils it in impenetrable gloom. At the moment, the elements seem to have ceased their operations, and the very functions of nature to be paralyzed; the atmosphere appears to be deprived of the spirit of vitality, and a sensation of approaching suffocation pervades and oppresses the physical system. The mind is wrapped in awe and suspense, but the latter is speedily relieved by the dark horizon being suddenly illuminated by one broad blaze of electric fluid; peals of distant thunder then break upon the ear, and rapidly approach and increase in fervency and violence, till the shocks become appalling; when the thunder is at its loudest, a tremendous gust of wind rushes, with incredible and often irresistible vehemence, from the darkened part of the horizon, not rarely in its course carrying away roofs of houses and chimney pots, blowing down or uprooting trees, and laying the stiffest and largest ships on their beam ends, or sinking them under weigh or at anchor; and to that succeeds a furious deluge of rain, which falls in one vast sheet, rather than in drops, and concludes this terrible convulsion. The lightning is of the most vivid description, and, contrary to what has been reported of it, seldom sheet lightning, but forked and piercing, and often extremely destructive, both to things animate—and inanimate. Its apparently doubtful, wild course, is sometimes directed to a large and lofty tree, and the foliage, at the points of contact, is blasted on the instant, the exposed branches are severed from the trunk, and, probably, the enormous trunk itself is rent to its basis and destroyed. When it comes in contact with a house, it frequently leaves it as great a wreck as ships have been seen to be on coming out of a severe action, or after a destructive storm; and, occasionally, the building entered by it may happen to remain by it untouched, and its inmates, some or all of them, as the author has known to occur, perish under its scorching influence. Occasionally, the spindle of a ship's mast, the most elevated part of it, may appear to be the point of attraction, and it will sometimes dart among the spars and cordage harmless, descending till it reach the deck, when it will suddenly quit the vessel by some aperture, and, rapidly returning through another, seem to have acquired a new character with incredible velocity; for, steering its strange and rapid course into the main deck, or hold, it will kill, maim, or injure, every thing animate or inanimate with which it comes in contact. Much good has unquestionably been done by conductors; but those who have watched the progress of the electric fluid, will hold the theorist in no estimation who does not make the atmosphere the first and most important point of consideration. The heavy peals, or rather the terrifying shocks of thunder, which follow the lightning, frequently not only shake the buildings at Freetown, but the very foundations on which they stand; and the reverberations from the surrounding mountains increase, if possible, the awe excited by elementary commotion. The succeeding rain, or rather deluge, is happily of short duration, and, rushing down the various inlets and indentations in the adjoining mountains, it forms into streams, even a few minutes after its commencement, which sweep through the streets of Freetown with astonishing velocity, bearing with them all the exposed vegetable and other matter in a state of putridity or decay. Such is the tornado; and it is by the preponderating power of its gusts, and the atmospheric influence of lightning