

the cultivated lands, and greatly increase their fertility.

The nearer the rivers are approached, the more valuable are the lands and the more abundant their produce. Wheat, rice, and other descriptions of grain, grow in rich luxuriance, and even with the slight skill and labour bestowed on them, the cotton-tree, sugar cane, opium, and indigo, flourish here as well as if any part of the world. The gardens, many on which are carefully tended, yield an ample supply of the finest fruits; oranges, peaches, grapes, lemons, pomegranates, mangoes, dates, figs, apples, and mulberries, are produced in perfection. Flowers of all kinds are yielded spontaneously by the ground. As the plains are farther removed from the rivers the soil is less fertile, large tracts of country being covered with jungle; but, as the hill districts are reached, the country becomes beautifully diversified, and yields almost every variety of produce.

Cattle in the Punjab are abundant. Large herds of buffaloes and flocks of sheep are bred though the former are only used for their milk and hides and the latter for their wool. Horses are bred extensively in the Punjab, and camels are numerous. Herds of deer, with a variety of animals of chase, roam in the unclaimed districts. The rivers partake of the general fertility of the country, swarming with fine mullet, carp, and a number of other species unknown in Europe. They contribute materially to the subsistence of the people, furnishing in addition to the amply stocked yards of poultry, and the pheasants, partridges, and other descriptions of fowl with which the wild country abounds, all the flesh the inhabitants desire for their food.

It is known that excellent mines of iron, copper, salt, coal, and other minerals abound in the Punjab, but dislike to calling in European skill for their working, has hitherto prevented the Sikh government from taking advantage of the immense wealth that lies below the surface of the soil.

Numerous towns and villages are situated in the vicinity of the rivers, but notwithstanding the power of the kingdom under Runjeet, no great pains were taken to fortify its principal places; the country therefore can offer no effectual resistance to an invader. Lahore, the capital, is surrounded by an imperfect brick wall, and the extent of its fortifications, seven miles, renders it impossible that it can be efficiently defended. The town is wealthy, though the narrowness of the streets, common to all Eastern cities, and the long ranges of blank walls give it a mean and dingy appearance. It has yet some splendid remains of the Mahometan dynasty; and in the time of Runjeet carried on a considerable traffic, both with British India and the surrounding states. It has manufactories of arms, of shawls, &c., and some of the workmen are remarkable for their dexterity. Urmiltzar is somewhat larger than Lahore, and from having been favoured by Runjeet is of greater commercial importance. It has a strong fortress, which serves as the regal treasury and arsenal.

The level country of the Punjab rises toward the north and becomes extremely intricate. In the recesses of mountains, and in their difficult passes the hill chiefs have sometimes been enabled to defy the power of Runjeet himself; and it is very evident that it would be from this part of the Punjab that an invader would have to encounter the most determined resistance. The Indian papers have long called for the seizure of this kingdom; but it seems probable, from the character of the people,—turbulent, warlike, and numerous,—and from the obstacles opposed by the country itself to the work of subjugation, that it can be reduced to British dominion only by years of severe and almost constant conflict. At the extreme north is the fine province of Cashmere, so famed in the pages of romance, and in the shawl warehouses of fashion. The whole of the Punjab is generally healthy, but varies materially with the season and locality. The heat is greatest in June, and is sometimes excessive, the heat rising in tents artificially cooled at Lahore to 112 deg.; this degree of heat is, however, rare. The severity of the winter is little felt in the plains of the Punjab, the thermometer in January and February not falling lower than 70 deg. at midday. The health of the people is so good that the mortality of the army from natural causes is not found to exceed one per cent per annum. The northern provinces present, perhaps, the finest climate in the world, and some of the most magnificent scenes of nature. Among the heights and valleys of this northern district almost every variety of climate and of vegetation can be found within the compass of a limited tract. The summer in Cashmere is extremely beautiful. The population here rises into a more stalwart race than in the plains, resembling in vigour and disposition the inhabitants of Afghanistan. By possessing himself of Peshawar, Runjeet secured himself from invasion from that quarter, and greatly strengthened his position.

THE INHABITANTS.

The Sikh population of the Punjab is generally estimated at about four millions. They are a fine race, more muscular in person than the Hindoos, and endowed correspondingly with more animal spirit and firmness of mind. Their diet, though simple, is of a higher kind; beef is forbidden, and mutton but little used; but they eat plentifully of fish, fowls, condiments, vegetables, and fruits.

The Sikhs owe their name to their religion. Originally Hindoos or Mahomedans, Nanac Shah, the son of a salt merchant, appeared, towards the close of the fifteenth century, to announce a new faith. This man had been a pious Hindoo, but, conceiving that many of his

tenets must be superstitious inventions and offensive to God, he began to preach a new religion, founded on pure Deism. He declared the one God to be the only being worthy of worship, and that thousands of Mahomedans and Vishnus stand before the gate of his everlasting dwelling. He denounced idol worship as contrary to the homage due to the Supreme Being, but he encouraged all sects to join him, by an assurance that all good men, whatever their faith, were acceptable to the Most High. By his labours, his preaching, his contempt of worldly goods, and his asserted miracles, Nanac Shah collected numerous followers, who called themselves Sikhs, a Sanscrit term, applicable to the disciples of any religious teacher. This term spread with the spread of the new faith, until it became applied to all the inhabitants of the Punjab. As the religion of Nanac Shah was rather remarkable for what it denied and rejected than for what it taught, the disciples of other creeds have engrafted their ceremonies and tenets on it, so that the Sikhs may still be regarded as Hindoos and Mahomedans, united together by the spirit of tolerance which Nanac Shah insisted on as a fundamental part of his teaching. As the Sikhs extended their conquests in the Punjab, the leading chiefs took the title of Singh, or Lion, by which all the leading Panjaubees are now distinguished.

The Punjab first rose into political importance under the rule of Runjeet Singh. His ancestors played a conspicuous part in the wars that desolated this splendid country in the middle of the last century. Under their guidance the Sikh chiefs finally became masters of the country; but, acknowledging no leader, war only gave place to a still worse evil—anarchy. By a series of successes and prudent measures, the father of Runjeet became possessed of a wide extent of territory and of considerable authority. At his death, in 1792, Runjeet succeeded him, and soon became the acknowledged ruler of the whole country.

The first connection of our country with Runjeet arose out of our war with some Sikh states beyond the limits of the Punjab. The alliance of Runjeet was courted by either party, but he wisely preferred an arrangement which allowed him to remain neutral. At last the Sikh states concluded a peace with the British government, and Runjeet was one of the subscribing parties. The treaty was signed in 1806. Two years later flattering overtures were made by Bonaparte to Runjeet; and Mr Metcalfe, now Lord Metcalfe, was deputed by the British government to negotiate with the great Sikh ruler. Runjeet, however, who had his eye on the countries east of the Sutlej determined on a rapid movement, and, before giving an answer to Mr Metcalfe, advanced with his troops across that river, entered the country which the Sikh chiefs have so recently invaded, and marched to Umballa. He seized the whole country and made it over to his dependents. The British government promptly interfered: it declared that the whole country invaded was under its protection, and called on Runjeet to withdraw his forces. As he refused, a British army was assembled, and he was decisively informed that he must consider the Sutlej to be the boundary of his kingdom.

On this occasion Runjeet gave proof of the sagacity which eminently distinguished him. He perceived the inability of his troops, though much superior to those of his Indian opponents, to cope with the organised skill of a British army. He expressed a wish to negotiate, and the terms were soon agreed on, the Sutlej being fixed as the boundary of his empire. The main stipulations of the treaty are worth giving here in consequence of the daring violation of them by the late invasion:—

“Article 1st.—Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British government and the State of Lahore: the latter shall be considered, with respect to the former, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers, and the British government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Rajah to the northward of the river Sutlej.

“Article 2d.—The Rajah will never maintain in the territory which he occupies on the left bank of the Sutlej more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of the territory, nor permit or suffer any encroachment on the possessions or rights of the chiefs in its vicinity.

“Article 3d.—In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles, or of a departure from the rules of friendship on the part of either state, this treaty shall be considered to be null and void.” (The fourth and last article provides for the exchange of ratifications.)

At the same time the Sikh states south and west of the Sutlej were formally received under British protection. To his treaty Runjeet Singh steadily adhered with inviolable faith. His constant answer to all persuasions urging him to break it was, that the British government had been faithful to him, and he would prove himself worthy their confidence.

In 1831 Lieut. Burnes visited Runjeet at Lahore, and from that date our communications with him became more frequent, in consequence of the preparations made for the invasion of Afghanistan. New treaties were made on the basis of former ones. Runjeet throughout remaining steadfast to the alliance he had formed, and leaving at his death, in 1839, his kingdom on terms of perfect friendship with the British government. Less than six years have sufficed to destroy the prudent labours of his life, to throw his kingdom back into the anarchy from which he reclaimed it, and to wantonly break, by a most wicked and unjustifiable invasion, an alliance of forty years' standing with the rulers of British India.

THE CORAL.

“We know not a millionth part of this beautiful world.”—LEIGH HUNT.

There's a living atom in the sea,
That weaves a flinty shell,
For itself a lasting shroud to dwell,
And a home in which to dwell,
In the briny wastes of the ocean waves
It builds its coral home.
And mocks at the beating surge that laves,
Its dreary abode with foam.

There—there, is the deep cerulean gloom,
Unnumbered myriad swarms
Are forming a coral home and tomb—
A shield to their insect forms.
And the rocky sepulchres made fast,
The league thus covered o'er
They appear a mauseoleum vast,
On the ocean's sandy floor.

'Neath the shallow waves of an inland sea,
Where gentle waters flow—
As bright flowers on the upland lea,
The branches of coral grow;
And dredged from their watery element,
And wrought with skilful care,
To beauty's bower their hues are sent,
To deck the forms of the fair.

But coral rocks of the tropic clime,
Built up mid the ocean wave,
And formed of the ocean's briny slime,
For the coral's home and grave;
How mean, would the grandest works compare
That pride of man can form,
With the mighty power in progress there,
The skill of the insect worm!

'Tis a wondrous work to mortal eyes,
And ocean's waves can tell
Of spreading climes that yet will rise
From the coral's rocky shell;
On the shores the winds and waves will fling,
And the wealth of other lands,
In time to come, then harvesting
Will be reaped by mortal hands.

A GERMAN IDEA OF LONDON.

You have heard that I made a flight of four days from Boulogne to London. I was absolutely incapable of finding myself so near London without throwing myself into the arms of the monster. I expected it would produce a feebleness on me that it did the first time—eleven years ago. Not at all; I was as much astonished as before. A foreigner who remains indifferent to the sight of London is a mere animal; there is in that enormity, that wealth, that power, something which almost converts the vulgar sentiment of admiration into a duty. I passed my time in running about the town, looking at the shops, now I went into a brewery, into one of the docks, then the houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey; I even went to see Windsor, and the cartoons at Hampton court. I cut myself out work enough for four days. My curiosity even led me to mount one of the columns, in order to have a general coup d'œil. There I acquired a conviction very consolatory to my reason. I persuaded myself by evidence, that London ends somewhere on one side at least for only one side was clear, and the others were enveloped in fog and smoke, so that the question is still, as far as I am concerned, undecided as to the other sides, I said to myself, London has a beginning—that you saw on entering; ergo, it must have an end. But London is above the reach of metaphysics. Is it possible to grow used to London?—Perhaps so—but I affirm that a man to whom London is become habitual, such a man is, by that very habit, rendered capable of anything. I was so fortunate as to have fine weather; nevertheless, when I looked at the sun, its physiognomy appeared to me so strange, that I was tempted to doubt of its identity with our own. As to the moon, it is impossible to deny that it is absolutely the same moon as that which enlightens the Continent.—Athenian.

REVOLTING CUSTOMS OF THE WEEJEE ISLANDERS.

Not only do the natives desire their friends to put them to death to escape decrepitude, or imolate themselves with a similar view, but families have such a repugnance to having deformed or maimed persons among them, that those who have met with such misfortunes are almost always destroyed. An instance was related to me, when a boy, whose leg was bitten off by a shark, was strangled, although he had been taken care of by one of the white residents, and there was every prospect of his recovery. No other reason was assigned by the perpetrators of the deed, than that, if he had lived he would have been a disgrace to his family in consequence of his having only one leg. When a native—whether man, woman, or child—is sick of a lingering disease their relatives will either wring their heads off, or strangle them. Mr Hunt stated that this was a frequent custom, and cited a case where he had with difficulty saved a servant of his own from such a fate, who afterwards recovered his health. Formal human sacrifices are frequent. The victims are usually taken from a distant tribe, and when not supplied by war or violence, they are at times obtained by negotia-

tions. After being selected for this purpose, they are often kept for a time to be fattened. When about to be sacrificed, they are compelled to sit on the ground, with their feet drawn under their thighs, and their arms placed before them. In this posture they are bound so tightly that they cannot stir or move a joint. They are then placed in the usual oven, upon hot stones, and covered with leaves and earth, where they are roasted alive.

When the body is cooked, it is taken from the oven, and the face painted black, as is done by the natives on festal occasions. It is then carried to the umbure, where it is offered to the gods, and is afterwards removed to be cut up and distributed, to be eaten by the people. Women are not allowed to enter the umbure, or to eat human flesh. Human sacrifices are a preliminary to almost all their undertakings. When a new umbure is built a party go out and seize the first person they meet, whom they sacrifice to the gods; when a large canoe is launched, the first person, man or woman, whom they encounter, is laid hold of and carried home for a feast. When Tanco launches a canoe, 10 or more men are slaughtered on the deck, in order that it might be washed with human blood. Human sacrifices are also among the rites performed at the funerals of chiefs, whose slaves are, in some instances, put to death. Their bodies are first placed in the graves, and upon them those of the chief and his wives are laid.

FISHING VILLAGES IN NEW-FOUNDLAND.

It would not be easy to give a correct idea of a Newfoundland fishing village. Village! the word calls up visions of quiet hamlets embosomed in trees. We see cottages, each with its little garden, from which floats upwards a scent of wall flowers and stocks. The women are working at their open doors; the children are rolling on the green, or sailing their boats in the willow shaded pond, or swinging in the old elm near the church. The church itself is half hidden by two or three dark yew trees, that throw deep shadows over the daisied graves about them; and there is a winding walk that leads to the very gate of the pretty parsonage. The old manor house is near, with its noisy rookery and its rich woods, from whose shadows flows forth all day a stream of merry song, and far away are yet statelier mansions and broader parks. Far other is the scene presented by a so-called village on the coast of Newfoundland. A few low, wooden huts, perched here and there among the rock, with a rude path of communication between them; a small, plain church, also of wood, and a building, generally of more pretension, surmounted by a small cross, the Roman Catholic chapel,—such are its component parts. No flowers, no gardens, save here and there a patch of potatoes; no parsonage, for a clergyman comes from a distance to perform divine service on a Sunday.

Tier above tier along the coast, supported by fir poles fixed in the rock, are the stages on which the salted fish is spread to dry. The scent rising from these is an antidote to all romance. The breath of the sweet south blowing fresh from the waters, passes over the cod flakes, and becomes tainted with the sickening odour. Even at a considerable distance from the shore the same annoyance is felt, poisoning the pure air of heaven. There are other horrors of a similar description, but I pass them by with a shudder. The bare footed children, laying among stones rise their unwashed faces to watch the stranger with looks of stupid wonder. The women, if it be summer, sit basking in the sun; few, alas! great as the need may be, with needle in hand. Their talk is of seals and codfish, of hauling and jigging.

All this is little cheerful, but there is a sadness induced by the silence of nature in the scenery of Newfoundland, that none, that have not felt it, can understand. You may pause again and again as you wander among the stunted woods, and strain your ear to hear the voice of a bird, the hum of an insect, in vain. The continuous murmur of life and joy that fills the summer air of our own country is unknown there. The wind cannot shake music from the boughs of the stunted fir trees. Here and there a stream bounding along its rocky bed, or a stray ouzel, with its poor chirping, may strive to break the melancholy spell; but the general aspect of nature is mournful, and where beauty exists it is as the beauty of a statue, cold and voiceless, and dead.—Fraser's Magazine.

INFLUENCE OF AN ECLIPSE ON INSECTS.

Signor Villa of Milan, thus describes the influence of the solar eclipse of July, 1842, upon the manners of different insects, which he observed during its continuance:—The insects in general were very restless, moved their feelers strongly here and there, and hid themselves. Some genera disappeared before the darkness came on; others flew about till its commencement. Most of them again appeared about half an hour after the obscuration had passed away. It is curious that though the day-insects thus sought to conceal themselves as they do on the approach of night, yet none of the nocturnal species made their appearance.

REASON.

Without reason, as on a tempestuous sea, we are the sport of every wind and wave, and know not, till the event hath determined it, how the next billow will dispose of us; whether it will dash us against a rock, or drive us into a quiet harbour.—Lucas.