

voice, 'blood will speak, you know—remember!' The man's countenance fell as the girl uttered the last words; he relaxed his hold of the knife; and Anna, taking advantage of his indecision, and the relenting expression she thought she read in the dark faces round her, related her simple story, dwelling particularly upon the danger the comers would incur were she missing, and their security in case she was allowed to proceed on her journey, after seeing her friend the clergyman. Taking courage from the attention of her hearers, she even ventured to remonstrate with them upon their dangerous mode of life, and entreated them to abandon it, and seek their subsistence honestly.

There was a pause of some minutes when Anna ceased speaking, during which the comers exchanged with each other looks of mingled admiration and astonishment. At length one of them, who appeared to take the lead, addressing his companions, said, 'The woman has spoken well, and there is reason in what she says. It is true enough that murder will be out; and though she is a stranger, she was known to come here. Her disappearance might excite suspicion, suspicion would lead to inquiries, inquiries to search, and then all would be up with us; besides, a few weeks will see us clear of this place, if we have luck, and I think we may trust her so long.' Then turning to Anna, he continued, 'You have a spirit of your own, and I like you the better, and would trust you the sooner for it; none but fools rely on the word of a coward, but one who dare speak the truth, without fear or favor, when in peril of life, is not likely to break faith, I think; so you shall go free, on condition that you take a solemn oath not to reveal to any one the events of this night until six months have passed; by that time we shall have quitted not only this neighbourhood, but the country, and,' he added with a laugh, 'the ghost that has kept all the men in—quaking after dark, like a pack of frightened children, will be laid forever. Have I said well, my comrades?' There was a general murmur of assent, and the man continued, 'Recollect, then, that if you break your oath, your life will be the forfeit: we have means to ascertain and punish treachery; and should you attempt foul play, you can no more escape our vengeance than here in this lonely place you can resist our power. Will you swear, by all you hold most dear and sacred, to keep our secret inviolable for the time agreed?' To this proposition Anna, as will be readily believed, joyfully assented, and being conducted by her strange acquaintances back to her sleeping apartment, she most gladly, when morning dawned, bade adieu to the scene of her singular and alarming adventure. On arriving at the clergyman's house, she was not sorry to find but few of the family stirring, as she naturally wished to avoid much questioning. In answer to the inquiries which were made as to how she had passed the night, she said that she had been much annoyed and disturbed; and though she avoided entering into particulars, she strongly advised that no one should be permitted to try a similar experiment, assuring them that she believed few could pass through what she had done without sustaining severe, if not permanent injury from it. Having thus, as far as lay in her power, acquitted her conscience, she pursued her journey. In a few days she arrived at home; but it was not until several months over the time specified, that she related the adventure to me, in order to show how little dependence is to be placed on the stories told of ghosts and haunted houses. As Dutch Anna said, 'Evil men have generally more to do with such stories than evil spirits, and, after all, it is possible to give a certain gentleman and his agents more than their due.'

SOUTH AMERICA.

[The following interesting extracts are taken from a Review of "Humboldt's Travels," in Blackwood's Magazine for November.]

The rapids of the Orinoco—one of the most striking scenes in America—are thus described by our author:

"When we arrived at the top of the Cliff of Marimi, the first object which caught our eye was a sheet of foam, above a mile in length and half a mile in breadth. Enormous masses of black rock, of an iron hue, started up here and there out of its snowy surface. Some resembled huge basaltic cliffs resting on each other; many, castles in ruins, with detached towers and fortalices, guarding their approach from a distance. Their sombre colour formed a contrast with the dazzling whiteness of the foam. Every rock, every island, was covered with flourishing trees, the foliage of which is often united above the foaming gulf by creepers hanging in festoons from their opposite branches. The base of the rocks and islands, as far as the eye can reach, is lost in the volumes of the white smoke, which boil above the surface of the river; but above these snowy clouds, noble palms, from eighty to an hundred feet high, rise aloft, stretching their summits of dazzling green towards the clear azure of heaven. With the changes of the day these rocks and palm-trees are alternately illuminated by the brightest sunshine, or projected in deep shadow on the surrounding surge. Never does a breath of wind agitate the foliage, never a cloud obscure the vault of heaven. A dazzling light is ever shed through the air, over the earth enamelled with the loveliest flowers, over the foaming stream stretching as far as the eye can reach; the spray, glittering in the sunbeams, forms a thousand rainbows, ever changing, yet ever bright, beneath whose arches, islands of flowers, rivaling the very

lines of heaven, flourish in perpetual bloom. There is nothing austere or sombre, as in northern climates, even in this scene of elemental strife; tranquillity and repose seem to sleep on the very edge of the abyss of waters. Neither time, nor the sight of the Cordilleras, nor a long abode in the charming valleys of Mexico, have been able to efface from my recollection the impression made by these cataracts. When I read the description of similar scenes in the East, my mind sees again in clear vision the sea of foam, the islands of flowers, the palm-trees surmounting the snowy vapours. Such recollections, like the memory of the sublimest works of poetry and the arts, leave an impression which is never to be effaced, and which, through the whole of life, is associated with every sentiment of the grand and the beautiful."

As a contrast to this, we cannot resist the pleasure of laying before our readers the following striking description of a night on the Orinoco, in the placid part of its course, amidst the vast forests of the tropical regions:

"The night was calm and serene, and a beautiful moon shed a radiance over the scene. The crocodiles lay extended on the sand; placed in such a manner that they could watch our fire, from which they never turned aside their eyes. Its dazzling evidently attracted them, as it does fish, crabs, and the other inhabitants of the waters. The Indians pointed out to us in the sand the recent marks of the feet of three tigers, a mother and two young, which had crossed the open space between the forest and the water. Finding no tree upon the shore, we sank the end of our oars into the sand, in order to form poles for our tents. Every thing remained quiet till eleven at night, when suddenly there arose, in the neighbouring forest, a noise so frightful that it became impossible to shut our eyes. Amidst the voice of so many savage animals, which all roared or cried at once, our Indians could only distinguish the howling of the jaguar, the yell of the tiger, the roar of the cougar, or American lion, and the screams of some birds of prey. When the jaguars approached near to the edge of the forest, our dogs, which to that moment had never ceased to bark, suddenly hounded; and, crouching, sought refuge under the shelter of our hammocks. Sometimes, after an interval of silence, the growl of the tiger was heard from the top of the trees, followed immediately by the cries of the monkey tenants of their branches, which fled the danger by which they were menaced."

"I have painted, feature by feature, these nocturnal scenes on the Orinoco, because, having but lately embarked on it, we were as yet unaccustomed to their wildness. They were repeated for months together, every night that the forest approached the edge of the river. Despite the evident danger by which one is surrounded, the security which the Indian feels comes to communicate itself to your mind, you become persuaded with him, that all the tigers fear the light of fire, and will not attack a man when lying in his hammock. In truth, the instances of attack on persons in hammocks are extremely rare; and during a long residence in South America, I can only call to mind one instance of a Llanero, who was found torn in pieces in his hammock opposite the island of Ushgana."

"When one asks the Indians what is the cause of this tremendous noise, which at a certain hour of the night the animals of the forest make, they answer gaily, 'They are saluting the full moon.' I suspect the cause in general is some quarrel or combat which has arisen in the interior of the forest. The jaguars for example, pursue the peccaris and tapirs, which, having no means of defence but their numbers, fly in dense bodies, and press, in all the agony of terror, through the thickets which lie in their way. Terrified at this strife, and the crashing of boughs or rustling of thickets which they hear beneath them, the monkeys on the highest branches set up discordant cries of terror, on every side. The din soon wakens the parrots and other birds which fill the woods, they instantly scream in the most violent way, and ere long the whole forest is in an uproar. We soon found that it is not so much during a full moon, as on the approach of a whirlwind or a storm, that this frightful concert arises among the wild beasts. 'May heaven give us a peaceable night and rest, like other mortals!' was the exclamation of the monk who had accompanied us from the Rio Negro, as he lay down to repose in our bivouac. It is a singular circumstance to be reduced to such a petition in the midst of the solitude of the woods. In the hotels of Spain, the traveller fears the sound of the guitar from the neighbouring apartment; in the bivouacs of the Orinoco, which are spread on the open sand, or under the shade of a single tree, what you have to dread is, the infernal cries which issue from the adjoining forest."

One of the most remarkable of the many remarkable features of Nature in South America, is the prodigious plains which, under the name of Llanos and Pampas, stretch from the shores of the Atlantic to the foot of the Andes, over a space from fifteen hundred to two thousand miles in breadth. Humboldt traversed them more than once in their full extent, and has given the following striking description of their remarkable peculiarities.

"In many geographical works, the savannahs of South America, are termed prairies. That word, however, seems not properly applicable to plains of pasturage, often exclusively

dry, though covered with grass four or five feet high. The Llanos and Pampas of South America are true steppes: they present a rich covering of verdure during the rainy season; but in the months of drought, the earth assumes the appearance of a desert. The turf is then reduced to powder, the earth gapes in huge cracks; the crocodiles and great serpents lie in a dormant state in dried mud, till the return of rains, and the rise of the waters in the great rivers, which flood the vast expanse of level surface, awaken them from their long slumber. These appearances are often exhibited over an arid surface of fifty or sixty leagues square—every where, in short, where the savannah is not traversed by any of the great rivers. On the borders, on the other hand, of the streams, and around the lakes, which in the dry season retain a little brackish water, the traveller meets from time to time, even in the most extreme drought, groves of Mauritia, a species of palm, the leaves of which, spreading out like a fan, preserve amidst the surrounding sterility a brilliant verdure."

"The steppes of Asia are all out of the region of tropics, and form in general the summit of every elevated plateau. America also presents, on the reverse of the mountains of Mexico, of Peru, and of Quito, steppes of considerable extent. But the greatest steppes, the Llanos of Cumana, of Caracas, and of Meta, all belong to the equinoctial zone, and are very little elevated above the level of the ocean. It is this which gives them their peculiar characters. They do not contain, like the steppes of Southern Asia, and the deserts of Persia, those lakes without issue or rivers, which lose themselves in the sand or in subterraneous filtrations. The Llanos of South America incline towards the east and the south; their waters are tributary to the Orinoco, the Amazon, or the Rio de la Plata."

"What most strongly characterizes the savannahs or steppes of South America, is the entire absence of hills, or inequalities of any kind. The soil, for hundreds of miles together, is perfectly flat, without even a hillock. For this reason, the Castilian conquerors, who penetrated first from Coro to the banks of the Apure, named the regions to which they came, neither deserts, nor savannahs, nor meadows, but plains—*los Llanos*. Over an extent of thirty leagues square, you will often not meet with an eminence a foot high. The resemblance to the sea which these immense plains bear, strikes the imagination the more forcibly in those places, often as extensive as half of France, where the surface is absolutely destitute of palms, or any species of trees, and where the distance is so great from the mountains, or the forests on the shores of the Orinoco, as to render neither visible. The uniform appearance which the Llanos exhibit, the extreme rarity of any habitations, the fatigues of a journey under a burning sun, and in atmosphere perpetually clouded with dust, the prospect of a round girdle of an horizon, which appears constantly to recede before the traveller, the isolated stems of the palm-tree, all precisely of the same form, and which he despairs to reach, because he confounds them with other seemingly identical trunks which appear in the distant parts of the horizon: all these causes combine to make these steppes appear even more vast than they really are."

Yet are their actual dimensions so prodigious, that it is hard to outstrip them, even by the wildest flights of the imagination. The colonists, who inhabit the slopes of the mountains which form their extreme boundary on the west and north, see the steppes stretch away to the south and east, as far as the eye can reach, an interminable ocean of verdure. Well may they deem it boundless! They know that from the Delta of the Orinoco, crossing the province of Vannos, and from thence by the shores of the Meta, the Guaviare, and the Caugann, you may advance in the plains, at first from east to west, then from north-east, to south-east, three hundred and eighty leagues—a distance as great as from Tombuctoo to the northern coast of Africa. They know, by the report of travellers, that the Pampas of Buenos Ayres—which are also Llanos, destitute of trees, covered with rich grass, filled with cattle and wild horses—are equally extensive. They imagine, according to the greater part of maps, that this huge continent has but one chain of mountains, the Andes, which forms its western boundary; and they form a vague idea of the boundless sea of verdure, stretching the whole way from the foot of this gigantic wall of rock, from the Orinoco and the Apure, to the Rio de la Plata and the Straits of Magellan. Imagination itself can hardly form an idea of the extent of these plains. The Llanos, from the Caqueta to the Apure, and from thence to the Delta of the Orinoco, contain 17,000 square marine leagues—a space nearly equal to the area of France; that which stretches to the north and south is of nearly double the extent, or considerably larger than the surface of Germany; and the Pampas of Buenos Ayres, which extend from thence towards Cape Horn, are of such extent, that while one end is shaded by the palm-trees of the tropics, the other, equally flat, is charged with the snows of the antarctic circle."

These prodigious plains have been overspread with the horses and cattle of the Old World, which, originally introduced by the Spanish settlers, have strayed from the enclosures of their masters, and multiplied without end in the vast savannahs which nature had spread out for their reception.

"It is impossible," says Humboldt, "to form an exact enumeration of the cattle in the Pampas, or even to give an approximation to it,

so immensely have they augmented during the three centuries which have elapsed since they were first introduced; but some idea of their number maybe formed from the following facts in regard to such portions of these vast herds as are capable of being counted. It is calculated that in the plains from the mouths of the Orinoco to the lake Maracaybo, there are 1,200,000 head of cattle, 180,000 horses, and 90,000 mules which belong to individual proprietors. In the Pampas of Buenos Ayres there are 12,000,000 cows and 3,000,000 horses belonging to private persons, besides the far greater multitude which are wild, and wander altogether beyond the reach of man. Considerable revenues are realized from the sale of the skins of these animals, for they are so common that the carcasses are of scarcely any value. They are at pains only to look after the young of their herds, which are marked once a-year with the initial letter of the owner. Fourteen or fifteen thousand are marked by the greater proprietors every year, of which five or six thousand are annually sold."

From the Poetical Remains of the late Mrs. James Gray, in the Dublin University Magazine for December.

THE ABSENT ONES.

TIME hath passed with a light footfall,
Friend, through thy bright ancestral hall:
The fret-work still looks fresh and fair,
The windows their gorgeous colouring wear,
The dome is high, the pillars strong—
How can I think the time so long?
Years since I stooped my head before
'Neath the wreath o'ershadowing the low side-
door—

Years, and no trace of dull decay
Is here, yet a something hath passed away.
The fire burns bright on the ample hearth,
But I miss the sound of the children's mirth,
I miss bright smiles and their laughter's tone—
Where, oh, where are thy children gone?
There was one whose eye had an eagle's
glance,
And courage sate in his brow's expanse;
Tell me, sweet friend, and where is he?
"A wanderer from home on the treacherous
sea,
Long hath he roamed with a venturesome band,
Seeking for wealth in a distant land;
But when summer is fair, over valley and glen,
With the rose and the swallow he comes again."

And there was another, a thoughtful boy,
Careless of childish sport or toy,
Yet poring o'er books like a miser o'er gold,
Loving wild tales and legends of old.
Thought drew swift lines o'er that pure young
brow.
"Thro' the wood walks he strays, but when
night stars burn,
I trust to his home will the wanderer return."
And the merry, bright child, with the golden
hair,
Dancing like light o'er his forehead so fair?
"He trieth with teachers loving and kind,
Winning rich gifts for his opening mind;
But when the frost on the leafless trees
Is rustling crisp in the wintry breeze,
And the Christmas bough in the hall doth sway,
I trust in his home shall the fair child play."

And the sweetest of all, the lovely one,
Whose low soft voice had so dear a tone,
Whose eye was so darkly, so tenderly bright,
Whose hand so small, whose step was so light—
Thou tremblest, thou weapest! And is it so—
Is that beauteous head in the churchyard low?
Alas! and time shall the rest restore,
But the fairest and dearest shall come no more.

"Well hast thou guessed. From our household
band
The bright one is passed to a holier land;
She drinks from the fountains of wisdom there,
With a brow unclouded by earthly care;
And she dwells with a teacher far away,
Nor looks nor longs for a holiday;
She hath passed the Dark Valley's narrow
track,
And we know on its pathway she comes not
back.

"But by the light of her cloudless eye,
So full of Faith's heartfelt prophecy;
By the holy words of prayer and praise
That hallowed her lips in her few short days;
By her glad 'farewell,' when we needs must
part,
I have gathered strength to my weary heart,
For I know in the Saviour's ransomed train
With the Angels and Saints we shall meet
again!"

A VENERABLE CANARY.—A Canary, belonging to a gentleman at Wick, died the other day, after being nearly 30 years in the cage.—*Aberdeen Herald.*