

of the bungalow, and bathing as it were in the flood of silver glory poured down so profusely by the pale queen of night upon the earth! Not even upon the ocean have I witnessed a splendour equal to that! The stars twinkled dimly here and there, obscured by the more powerful beams of the moon, whilst the whole earth seemed lit up with intensely burnished silver mirrors, reflecting floods of light in every direction. The dark shadows on the hill sides were rendered still darker by the soft glow which diffused itself equally upon all the salient points of the landscape. If one could choose, where all was loveliness, perhaps the palm trees presented the most strikingly new and bewitching aspect. Their long graceful leaves, wet with dew, shone with a mild radiance as the flood of light was poured down upon them, whilst between their evermoving branches the rays of the moon made their way timidly as it were, to the earth, where an exact impression of the graceful tracery above was pictured out upon the grass in black and silver, never at rest, but always lovely. All nature seemed to enjoy the glorious spectacle. — Most glorious night, involuntarily exclaimed with the poet, 'thou wert not sent for slumber.' From the minutest insects in the air to the hugest denizens of the forest, all seemed equally impressed with the same idea, that it were treason to the majesty of nature not to enjoy such a scene. The air was filled at intervals with the various noises that a luxuriant tropical Fauna alone can produce; bellowing from the woods, the wild shriek or shrill cry of the monkeys mingling there with the trumpeting of the elephant; croakings from the river and marshes; loud buzzings from the trees and air; whilst birds called to and answered each other with incessant rapidity, all intermingled and alternated with each other at intervals, between which a silence as of universal awe or death crept over the landscape—the nearer and sharper sounds ceased, the silent circle widened, and gradually the more distant reverberations ended, and then there was a perfect calm for a time, holy, pure, and exciting in its peacefulness so different from the tumult which proceeded and succeeded it. — *Knighon's Forest Life in Ceylon.*

COMPARISON BETWEEN CHRISTIANIA AND KIRKWALL.

WHEREVER the traveller may choose to fancy himself, his last idea would probably be (what is really the fact) that he is here in the latitude of the Shetland Islands, nearly in the parallel of Lerwick, and a degree north of Kirkwall. Some tourist in a moment of spleen, has chosen to draw a comparison between the county town of Orkney and the capital of Norway, in favour of the former but the comparison is too absurd to be regarded as more than a jest—the only point of superiority of Kirkwall, its noble cathedral (which it owes besides to a Norwegian architect and Norwegian builders), being quite incapable of concealing the manifest inferiority in every other quality of beauty, greatness, or convenience, granted by nature or attained by art. Every one naturally refers what he sees in other countries to the standard of home, and the contrast of southern Norway to the extreme northern parts of Great Britain, came upon me perpetually, with a force which added great zest to the scenery of a country already in all respects new to me. Shetland, treeless and bare, covered for the most part with morasses, and abounding in inaccessible cliffs, is enveloped, even in summer by frequent fogs, and rarely joys an entire day of shunshine; in winter, on the other hand, it boasts of a climate as mild as that of Avignon, and little colder in the month of January than Florence, which is 17 deg. farther south—its capital little better than a fishing village with one street, which a carriage (did carriages exist) could with difficulty traverse. But here on the same parallel, and only 12 degs. of longitude further east, we see the Agyershuus Amt, in which longitude Christiania is placed, verdant with superabundant forests, not only of spruce and pine, but with nearly all the ordinary trees of an English demesne—the plane and sycamore, the ash and elm, and even (though more rarely) the beech and oak, growing to a full stature and in luxuriant foliage, besides all common kinds of fruit trees and flowering shrubs such as lilac, which yield in luxuriance and colour to none in England. Then, during summer, a sky for weeks together unclouded, with a temperature often oppressive, and in winter, a clear and constant cold unfelt in any part of Britain, and sometimes approaching that of Russia.

We here find, also, a city of at least forty thousand inhabitants, with wide and rectangularly built streets (unfortunately, however, with a pavement no way superior to that of Kirkwall, and far inferior to that of Lerwick); a seat of government, with a royal palace, which, if its architecture is no ornament to the town, is of a size quite equal to the occasion; the Storthing Hall, or House of Commons; a great and flourishing university, with excellent museums, library and astronomical and magnetical observatories attached

to it, and reckoning amongst its professors many of the highest merit, and several of a European reputation; a respectable port and mercantile quarter, with extensive wooden warehouses built into the sea, according to the Norwegian custom; and in whatever direction we choose to walk from the town, we meet with cultivation or with shelter, with woodland scenery, or with green fields or country seats agreeably distributed upon nearly every high ground overlooking the fiord. These peculiarities and these contrasts are due to conditions of climate and situation now tolerably well understood, yet far too striking not to create a pleasing surprise even when the causes are known, and the results anticipated. The existence of such intelligent, wealthy, and polished societies as characterize the Norwegian cities of Christiania and Bergen on the 64th degree, and Thronjhem, nearly on the 64th, indicate a concurrence of circumstances favourable to civilisation, which are not to be found at the same distance from the equator in any part of the globe. They are striking consequences of those laws of physical geography which produce many of the phenomena purely natural, which it is our object in this work to illustrate and explain.—*Norway and its Glaciers, by Doctor Forbes.*

From Chamber's Edinburgh Journal. A QUIET THOUGHT, AFTER SUNSET.

Rest—rest—four little letters, one brief word, Yet widening to infinitudes of bliss— Rest is upon the earth. The weary clouds Hang poised in the dun ether, motionless, Seeking nor sun nor dew. No restless star Thrills the sky's gray-robed breast with pulsing rays: The night's heart has throbb'd out. No grass-blade stir— No downy-winged moth comes flitting by, Caught by the light. Thank God, there is no light— No opened-eyed, loud-voiced, quick-mot'oned light— Nothing but gloom and rest!

The ghostly trees Along the hill—horizon, westward, stand All back and still—as 'twere lost angels met Before the amber gate of Paradise— The bright, shut gate, whose everlasting smile Deadens despair to calm.

O God! O God! Better than bliss is rest! If suddenly Those burnished doors of molten gold, steel barred, Which the sun closed behind him as he went Into his bridal-chamber—were to burst Asunder with a clang, and in a breath Thy mysteries were revealed—Thy kingdom come; The multitudes of heavenly messengers Hastening throughout all space—the thunder-quire Of praise—the obedient lightnings' lambent gleam Around the unseen Throne—Should I not fall Crushed by the weight of such beautitudes, Crying: 'Rest, only rest, thou merciful God! Hide me beneath the hollow of thy hand in some dark corner of the universe— Thy bright, full, active universe, that blinds, Deafens, and racks, and tortures—Give but rest!' O for a soul-sleep, long, and deep, and still! To lie down weary after the pale day, Dropping all pleasant flowers from the numbed hands, Saying 'Good-night' to all companions dear; Drawing the curtains of the darkened world; Closing the eyes, and with a patient smile Murmuring 'Our Father'—fall on sleep till dawn!

PICTURE OF MENCHIKOFF.

MENCHIKOFF has invariably refused to sit to an artist. He is about seventy years of age, of middle stature, has close-cut milk white hair, a high open forehead, sharp defined features, and a bright sparkling eye. His gait is haughty, but slightly limping, from a wound he received in a singular manner, at the siege of Varna, in 1828. One evening, having given some orders that he wished to see implicitly obeyed, he strolled throughout the camp; and as he was returning to his quarters he stopped and remained with his legs stretched wide apart, while he enjoyed a pinch of snuff. Suddenly the report of a heavy gun was heard, and the Prince fell headlong to the ground. When he was taken up it was found that a cannon ball had passed between his legs and wounded him severely in the thigh. Prince Menchikoff is one of the most extensive landed proprietors in the empire, and counts his serfs by thousands; but unlike the generality of the Russian nobles, he adds daily to his wealth. His economy is without a parallel and indeed is stated to descend to parsimony of the lowest grade; but, however grinding his extortion in his patrimonial estate, on all grand state occasions his appearance, carriages, and suite are most magnificent. He possesses a most superb mansion at St. Petersburg; his establishment of servants and equipage is on a scale of the most lavish expense, and he is surrounded by numerous aides-de-camp glittering in "barbaric pearls of gold." Another striking peculiarity of this remarkable man is the aversion he en-

tertains for foreigners. Not one—even an ambassador—has ever been permitted to enter his palace. He is both rough and fickle, and when anything offends him becomes absolutely brutal. But while he bends to the Imperial yoke from motives of avarice or ambition—he revenges his official servitude by browbeating, threatening, and abusing all who have the misfortune to be connected with him; and as he is a man of considerable talent and of indomitable energy, he succeeds most marvellously in his amiable occupation. It is not therefore to be wondered at that he has many enemies. Menchikoff married the Princess Delgrouki, by whom he had a son and daughter.—*United Service Gazette.*

WINTERS IN OLDEN TIMES.

In 1664 the cold was so intense that the Thames was covered with ice 61 inches thick. Almost all the birds perished. In 1693 the cold was so intense that the famished Wolves entered Vienna and attacked beasts and even men. Many people in Germany were frost-bitten to death in 1605, and 1699 was nearly as bad. In 1709 occurred that famous winter called by distinction the "Cold Winter." All the rivers and lakes were frozen, and even the sea for several miles from the shores. The ground was frozen nine feet deep. Birds and beasts were struck dead in the field, and men perished by thousands in their houses. In the south of France the wine plantations were almost destroyed; nor have they yet recovered that fatal disaster. The Adriatic Sea was frozen and even the Mediterranean about Genoa; and the citron and orange grove suffered extremely in the finest parts of Italy. In 1715 the winter was so intense that people travelled across the Straits from Copenhagen to the Province of Sena, in Sweden. In 1729 in Scotland multitudes of cattle and sheep were buried in the snow. In 1740 the winter was scarcely inferior to that of 1709. The snow lay ten feet deep in Spain and Portugal. The Zuyder Zee was frozen over, and thousands of went across it. And the lakes in England froze. In 1744 the winter was very cold. Snow fell in Portugal to the depth of twenty-three feet on a level. In 1754 and 1755 the winters were very severe and cold. In England the strongest ale, exposed to the air in a glass, was covered with ice one-eighth of an inch thick. In 1771 the Elbe was frozen to the bottom. In 1776 the Danube bore ice five feet thick below Vienna. Vast numbers of the feathered and finny tribes perished. The winters of 1774 and 1775 were uncommonly severe. The Little-Belt was frozen over. From 1800 to 1812 also the winters were remarkably cold, particularly the latter in Russia, which proved so disastrous to the French Army.—*English Paper.*

AN INDIAN ON LYING.

THE Cattaraugus Whig states that a suit was recently brought before a magistrare in the village of Randolph, and during its progress an Indian was brought forward to testify. His blank, expressionless face, and the general unmeaningness of his whole demeanour, gave rise to a serious doubt in the mind of the "Court," as to the admissibility of his testimony. Accordingly, he was asked what the consequence would be if he should tell a falsehood while under oath. The countenance of the Indian brightened a little as he replied in a solemn tone, 'Well, if I tell a lie, guess I be put in jail—great while may be.—Bimeby I die—and then I ketch it again. The witness was permitted to proceed.

KENNY DODD ON THE RUSSIAN QUESTION.

To all appearance, we are not far from a war; but where it's to be, and with whom, is hard to say. There's no doubt but fighting is a costly amusement; and, I believe, no country pays so heavily for her fun in that shape as England; but, nevertheless, there is nothing would so much tend to revive her drooping and declining influence on the Continent as a little brush at sea. She is, I take it, as good as certain to be victorious; and the very fervour of the enthusiasm success would evoke in England would go far to disabuse the foreigner of his notion that we are only eager about printing calicoes and sharpening Sheffield ware.

Believe me, it is vital to us to eradicate this fallacy; and until the world sees a British flag reeling up the Downs with some half-dozen dismayed line-of-battle-ships in their wake, they'll not be convinced of what you and I know well, that we are just the same people that fought the Nile and Trafalgar. Those industrial exhibitions, I think, brought out a great deal of trashy sentimentality about universal brotherhood, peace, and the rest of it. I suppose the Crystal Palace rage was a kind of allegory to show that they who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones; but our ships, Tom, our ships, as the song says, are "hearts of oak!"—*The Dodd Family Abroad.*

Luxury increases the luggage of life and thereby impedes the march.

The Politician.

THE BRITISH PRESS.

From Blackwood's Magazine for January. THE ABERDEEN CABINET.

It was evident to that the head of the Administration, Lord Aberdeen, was unfitted to deal with the new complications which the altered state of European affairs has introduced. At no one period of his life did the Premier ever occupy a place in the foremost rank of statesmen. He was neither acute enough in his intellect, nor adroit enough in his management of affairs, to entitle him to such a position. He might be a useful colleague, but he never was qualified to be a leader. In precedence, the most valuable attribute of a diplomatist, he has always shown himself to be defective. Cold and unsympathising in his nature, he is not able to keep pace with the events which have crowded so thickly upon us; hence he is rather to be regarded as a Minister of the past than of the present. Obscurancy, which he mistakes for firmness, and craft, which he conceives to be wisdom, have made him the unconscious tool of far superior men, who, in the palmy days of European congresses, were his associates. Strange as it may appear, Lord Aberdeen, who at home is confederated in council with Sir James Graham and Sir William Molesworth, is universally regarded abroad as the last prop in Britain of the absolutist policy and dominion. Russia is delighted to see him Prime Minister of this country, because, so long as that arrangement lasts, she anticipates no active check to her designs. Austria, while acting the hypocritical part of mediator, and keeping up the farce of negotiation after the hour for action has arrived, chuckles at the credence which is given to the sincerity of her concocted notes, and forwards at proper intervals, fresh projects for the maintenance of peace to Downing Street, in order to divert attention from the boom of the Russian cannon. With regard to France, Lord Aberdeen has not cultivated those friendly relations which were established by Lord Malmesbury, and which, especially at the present time, are so important for maintaining the influence of the two great western powers. Forgetting the adage, that nations have no cousins, and the maxim against foreign cabals in behalf of rejected dynasties, he is well known to regard with favour the pretensions of the House of Orleans, which has not even the abstract merit of legitimacy to recommend it; and not only that portion of the press which is under Ministerial control, but even members of the Cabinet, were allowed, without contradiction or reproach, to indulge in unmeasured obloquy and invective directed against the present Emperor of the French. Knowing these things, and being aware at the same time that the peace of Europe rested upon a very insecure foundation, it would have been strange indeed had we reposed much confidence in such a Cabinet, or believed that it was likely to act with vigour and determination abroad, or pursue an upright, moderate, and satisfactory course in the administration of our domestic affairs.

Still, while we entertained these impressions, we could not forget that some degree of forbearance was due to a Ministry which had declared itself able and willing to undertake the task of government. We remember that Lord Derby, when the Premiership was forced upon him, made a manly and noble appeal to the honour of his political opponents, acknowledging the difficulties of his position, admitting the want of official experience on the part of some of his colleagues, but requesting, for the sake of the country, a fair consideration of his measures. It is true that such considerations were not granted—true, that his opponents were too eager for office to listen to the voice of duty—true, that they exalted and coaxed to unsat him before the details of his police were more than partially disclosed. No one section of the opposition being strong enough to effect this object, it was brought about by a common union in attack, on the express understanding of a common sharing of the spoils. Men whose lives had been passed in mutual suspicion and antagonism, suddenly and without any union of principle, found themselves associated in the onslaught, and, that over, grimly proceeded to the apportionment of offices without regard to the general agreement. Notwithstanding all this, and the subsequent violence which clearly demonstrated the secret consciousness of the confederates as to the unworthy nature of their conquest, we were resolved not to incur that reproach which must remain with them after their coalition shall be numbered with the things that were. We could not forget that, of whatever material composed, the Queen's Government was entitled to a fair and impartial consideration—that, having accepted a distinct responsibility, Ministers should be allowed, at any rate, the full opportunity of developing their measures without encountering at the outset that active opposition, which, however, becomes a duty so soon as it is evident that they are pursuing a false or hurtful course to the internal interests of the empire, or one which is likely to lower its name and repute in the estimation of the world. We might, with more sincerity than he himself displayed, have attacked Mr Gladstone on the subject of his budget, as violently as he attacked Mr Disraeli. We might have pointed, with justifiable derision to this unhappy experiment on the Funds; and have calculated to a nicety the ultimate cost of the country arising from the efforts of that high vaulting but ineffectual financier. The opportunity, it will be allowed, was tempting; but we forbore—not, as we are aware, without incurring the censure of some of our more zealous friends, who accused us of lukewarmness, whereas, in fact, we are not only performing a duty, but exercising a sound discretion. Our impression, from the very first, was, that the present Ministry could only thrive through opposition. They were, like the garrison of the Grade Dolomereco, an exceedingly motley group. Trimmer, Whig, and Radical, corresponded to the Norman, Saxon, and Fleming of the romance; who, so long as the borders of the insurgent Welsh were battering at their gates, were held together by the tie of common interest, and the dread of common danger; but who, if left to themselves, would instantly have fallen into feud. The result, we submit, has entirely justified our anticipations. During the long recess, there is usually in politics—the forces of the opposition are with drawn—the garrison is left to pursue its deliberations and to make its arrangements unmolested—and lo! before the year is out, the public is made aware that there has been a desperate intestine quarrel; and Lord Palmerston, the ablest member of the Cabinet—with the entire approbation, as we are given to understand, of the Marquis of Lansdowne, who is the oldest and most sagacious—has deemed it necessary to tender his resignation!