

NEW WORKS.

From Southern Africa. By the Rev. F. Fleming.

Many of the tribes in Southern Africa are even more brutalized than the wild beasts of the forests, and display to a shocking extent the most depraved and debased instincts which human nature can entertain. Mr Fleming thus describes the tribes of Nammaqua bushmen:—

MONSTERS IN HUMAN FORM.

Respecting their domestic habits, if indeed they can be said to have any, little is known, except from missionaries who have been amongst them. Polygamy is universal, while conjugal affection seems totally unknown.—They appear to care little for their children, seldom correcting them for offences, and when they do so it is merely in a fit of passion, when they nearly kill them. The children appear to be the scape-goats on which are visited their parents' offences: for when a father deserts the mother, or in the case of a quarrel between father and mother, or the several wives of a husband, the deserted and defeated party always wreak their vengeance by murdering their opponents child. There are even instances, says Mr Kicherer, a most zealous missionary, who lived for some time amongst them, of parents throwing their tender offsprings to the hungry lion, who stood roaring before their cavern, refusing to depart until some peace offering be made to him. In general, he adds, their children cease to be the object of a mother's care, as soon as they are able to crawl about in the field. In some few instances, however, you meet with a spark of natural affection, which places them on a level with the brute creation. These creatures are altogether the slaves of passion; and even the females seem as barbarous as the men—no softness of heart or nature appearing to characterize their sex. They are wanting, as above described, even in what we term the common instincts of a fallen, vitiated nature; for, from equally authentic sources as those from which we have already quoted, we have heard that, on the least pretext, they will murder their offspring without compunction on their own part, and without any crime being imputed to them by their companions. If pursued by enemies, if in great want of food, when the child is born deformed or ill-shaped, or in cases of spite or revenge to the father, the mother frequently has been known to smother her infant, strangle it, bury it alive, or casting it from her, leave it exposed to perish of famine or drought, or, perhaps, to be devoured by the wild beasts, in the scorching plains of their desert habitations. They not unfrequently, also, forsake their aged parents and relatives, when obliged to move their location; and, making the trouble of carrying them, or their uselessness, the frivolous excuse for their brutality, they leave them to perish by slow torture, sometimes merely giving them the shell of an ostrich's egg filled with water, and a small piece of meat to support life, and sometimes nothing at all. To the other coloured races around them they seem to bear a more deadly hatred than to the white man; for, perchance, an isolated and unprotected Hottentot or Fingoe should fall into their hand, they subject them to the most cruel torture, putting them to a slow and lingering death in the most execrable manner. Mr Shaw, in his "Memorials of Southern Africa," gives the instance of a Hottentot, who had the misfortune to fall into the ruthless clutches of a party of these wild people. They placed him up to the neck in a trench, and then wedged him in on all sides with earth and stones, so that he was incapable of moving. In this dilemma, he remained all night and the greater part of the next day; when, happily for him, some of his companions passing that way effected his release. The poor fellow stated that he had been under the necessity of keeping his eyes and mouth in constant motion during the whole day, to prevent the birds of prey from devouring him.

EXTRAORDINARY TRADITION.

It is believed in the land that some of the Bosch people can change themselves into wolves and lions when they like. Once on a time, a certain Namaqua Hottentot was travelling in company with a Bosche woman carrying a child on her back. They had proceeded some distance on their journey, when a troop of wild horses appeared, and the man said to the woman, "I am hungry, and I know you can turn yourself into a lion; do so now, and catch us a wild horse, that we may eat." The woman answered, "You'll be afraid."—"No, no," said the man, "I am afraid of dying of hunger, but not of you." Whilst he was yet speaking hair began to appear at the back of the woman's neck; her nails began to assume the appearance of claws, and her features altered. She put down the child. The man, alarmed at the change, climbed a tree close by. The woman glared at him fearfully, and, going to one side she threw off her skin petticoat, when a perfect lion rushed out into the plain; it bounded and crept among the bushes towards the wild horses, and, springing upon one of them, it fell, and the lion lapped its blood. The lion then came back to where the child was crying, and the man called from the tree, "Enough,

enough, don't hurt me, put off your lion's shape and I'll never ask to see this again." The lion looked at him and growled. "I'll remain here till I die," said the man, "if you don't become a woman again. The mane and tail then began to disappear, the lion went towards the bush where the skin petticoat lay; it was slipped on, and the woman, in her proper shape, took up the child. The man descended, partook of the horseflesh, but never again asked the woman to catch game for him.

We extract the following on SNAKES.

Of snakes inhabiting the trees, none are more deadly, dangerous, and numerous than the "whip snake." This is a small delicate brown reptile, about two feet six inches long, and exactly the size and colour of a thick hunting whip lash. It climbs along the stems and lower branches of the overhanging forest trees; and, when it has attained the extremities of the twigs, it coils its tail two or three times round them, and then dropping its body, and holding by its tail, it swings in the air amidst the numerous pendant fibres and creepers, so that it is almost impossible to distinguish it. Whatever it comes in contact with it bites, and the poison being very virulent, causes instant stupefaction, when the snake drops on its prey and sucks its blood. Thus partaking more of the asp than the snake, which, however, it resembles in appearance. Of grass snakes there are three; a large one spotted with black, and usually measuring about three feet in length; a black one of the same size and form, and of very frequent appearance; and a bright green one. This latter snake is so exactly the shade of the surrounding herbage, that it is quite impossible to see it. They seldom wait however, to be molested by man, for, being very wary, the first intimation of their vicinity is generally given, either by their hissing or their rustling retreat through the grass. A wonderful instance of presence of mind in connexion with one of these snakes, was once shown by an officer of the Rifle Brigade (known to the author), whilst out shooting in Kaffirland. He and his companion had been regaling themselves at tiffin (lunch), seated on a grassy knoll; and when about to resume their sport, and in the act of rising this young man placed his right hand on the ground beside him. He instantly became aware that, in doing so, he had placed it on a large grass snake; he felt the reptile trying to drag its neck and head from beneath his grasp, and, at the same time, it wound its body and tail closely round his arm. His companion, seeing this, became so stupefied with fright that he could render no assistance, and sat in mute horror, which was, however, soon turned alternately to wonder, admiration, and thankfulness. His friend, feeling the position he was in, instantly pressed his hand firmer on the snake (instead of suddenly withdrawing it as ninety-nine out of a hundred persons under the same circumstances would have done), and having ascertained that he had luckily placed it on the back of the snake's neck and head, he thus prevented it from drawing itself through his grasp. With his left hand he then felt his pockets, and with it drew from one of them his large hunting-knife, and seizing the blade of it with his teeth, he thus opened it, and then turning round with perfect nonchalance and sang froid, he, by one sure stroke, severed the snake's head from its body, and thus saved his own life and that of his companion. The last of the genus are the adders and vipers. Of these the "puff adder" is the most common and the most deadly. The largest of these seen was three feet three inches long. The head two inches broad by two long, the tail round and thick, the circumference of the body was five inches. On the belly it was a pale straw colour, on the back light brown and straw coloured. It was marked in strips somewhat resembling small gothic arches, laid one over the other, and fifteen in number.—The mouth was large and triangular, and in it were found twelve fangs, six on either side; the outside pair were, from the roots to the point three-quarters of an inch long, very much curved, hollow throughout, and with bags of poison at the root. Through these cavities it ejects or spirts the poison; and it, in its encounter with enemies, its fangs were broken, it had five other pairs, all remaining dormant, yet ready on emergency to be erected. This is the most deadly adder in Africa, and possesses the peculiarity of springing backwards at its prey; thus throwing him off his guard, by first appearing to run away, then springing back and throwing a somerset in the air, and seizes it as it comes to the ground. Of these there are two varieties, the black and the brown. A dog bitten by one of these adders died in forty minutes; whilst a man, bitten in the knee at nine in the morning, although the leg was amputated at 4 p. m. that day, was dead at midnight.

From Tait's Magazine.

There is a first-rate paper on apparitions, dreams and other matters of spiritual intercourse with the other world. From this article we select a few anecdotes. The following case occurred when the writer was a boy, and he vouches for its accuracy.

A STRANGE DREAM.

A man of the name of Neale, a cattle-jobber,

lived at A—, in Norfolk. He was a man of dissipated and intemperate habits, spending most of his time in public-houses, and seldom leaving until intoxicated. On one occasion he had been drinking at L—Bridge, and left at eleven o'clock at night, completely drunk.—The innkeeper tried to persuade him to stop all night, as he had to cross a wide river on his road home; but he persisted in his determination, and set off on horseback to go about two or three miles. The next morning his horse was found, saddled and bridled, on the opposite side of the river through which he had to pass, in a farmyard which was the thoroughfare. It was at once supposed that Neale was drowned and parties were employed to drag the river above and below the ford; but no body was discovered, nor could any tidings be learned of him, except that he had left the public house, in the state described, at a late hour. About noon the farmer, in whose yard the horse was found, came to the writers father—whose estate joined the farmer's land—to consult about the affair, the writer also being present.—Whilst they were conversing, another man came up who was a stranger, and asked if one of the gentlemen was Mr C—? 'Yes' said the writers father, 'my name is C—; what do you want with me?'—'Well,' said the stranger, 'I suppose you will laugh at me, but I came here in consequence of a dream I had last night. I dreamt that I saw a man fall off his horse into the river opposite your meadows, and he was drowned.—That's very remarkable,' said Mr C—; 'we were just talking about a person that is lost, and we believe he is drowned; but we can't discover the body.'—'Well,' said the stranger again, 'then if my dream is right, I think I can take you to the very spot where he lies, for I know your meadows and have the very place in my eye.'—The whole party, including the writer, then followed the stranger, who went straight, as if a line had been drawn, to the river side, and there, at about four yards from the bank, lay the body of Neale, the water not being more than three feet deep. An inquest was, of course, held, and suspicion having attached to the stranger, a searching inquiry was instituted into the truth of the story. When it was found to be perfectly correct. He was a labouring man, and having gone to bed early the evening before, he had thrice awoke his wife to tell her that he saw a man drowned opposite Mr C—'s meadows; and the next morning he could not rest until he had gone to inquire about it. His innocence, too, was confirmed by the facts of Neale's watch and purse being found in the pockets of the corpse, and there being no marks of violence about the body. Under the circumstances, therefore, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death, exonerating the man from all suspicion.

From McClure's Discovery of the North West Passage.

BEWILDERING EFFECTS OF AN ARCTIC SNOW-STORM.

On May 7th a sad accident nearly occurred to a young carpenter named Whitfield, one of a shooting party on the western shore. A large flock of hares had been seen trooping up a ravine just as a heavy snow-storm set in; the rest of the sportsmen retired to their tent for safety, but Whitfield was tempted to go on.—On being missed by the others, the men of the shooting party started two at a time to look after him, each relief running much risk of losing its way and being smothered in drift; yet nothing could be seen of the lost man.—Fairly at their wits' end, the party which was in charge of a petty officer, retreated to their tent again, and began to fear the worst, when one of them suddenly exclaimed that he heard 'the footsteps of a bear!' All heard the sound for a minute, and then it ceased. The drift was so dense they could see nothing; and to their shouts of 'Whitfield' no answer came.—Shortly afterwards, during a lull in the gale, some one happened to look out of the tent, and there, not a yard from the tent, knelt poor Whitfield, stiff and rigid as a corpse, his head thrown back, his eyes fixed, his mouth open and filled with snow; his gun was slung over his shoulder; but his body was fast being buried in snow-wreath. They pulled him into the tent, restored animation, and then sent for aid to the ship. When the man eventually recovered enough to tell his tale, it was strange indeed. He said that whilst struggling with the snow-storm and endeavouring to find his way home he felt a chill and then a fit came on, which appeared to have deprived him of his senses to some extent, for he had seen people looking for him—some of them had even passed within a hundred yards of him—yet he could neither call them nor discharge his gun for a signal, and meantime the snow had covered him.—After a while he regained some strength, and fortunately discovered a track leading to his tent, and had actually almost reached it—indeed they were his footsteps that the people had heard—when again the fit came on, and he sank down a yard from the tent door, in the attitude of supplication in which he was found in the snow.

THE ARCTIC SPORTSMAN AND THE ARCTIC POACHER.

The wolves encouraged, no doubt, by the

feeding they got from the wounded animals which although strong enough to escape sportsmen, fell eventually to their share, became exceedingly bold; and five of them attempted to cut out the Esquimaux dog that had long been the pet of the investigator. One of these brutes was a perfect giant, standing nearly four foot high at the shoulder, and leaving a footmark as big as a reindeer's. Many a scheme was tried to shoot these weary creatures; but all failed this season, while some of the encounters with them were disagreeably close and the risk somewhat great. Perhaps one of the strangest was that of Mr Kennedy, boatswain, who, while out shooting early in April, broke at a shot two out of four legs of a fine buck. Evening came on, and knowing the animal could not go far, he returned to the ship, and next morning early he started to secure his game. Arriving at the place, he was disgusted to find five large wolves and several foxes in possession of the deer; but determined to have his share of the spoil, the boatswain advanced, shouting and calling them for every strong term he could muster, yet afraid to fire his single-barrelled gun at one, for fear of the rest doing as much to him as they had done to the buck, especially as they appeared inclined to show fight, and made no sign of retreat until he was within four yards of them. Even then only four of them moved off and sat down a pistol shot off, howling most dismally. 'Pipes' picked up the leg of a deer, which had been dismembered, and then grasped one end of the half-picked carcass, whilst a large female wolf tugged against him at the other! The position was, to say at least of it, a disagreeable one; and if the music of the four wolves had brought others of their fraternity to the rescue, the consequences of a struggle between hungry wolves and a no less hungry sailor might have been serious. Fortunately Mr Mierching, the interpreter, who was out shooting likewise on an adjacent hill, had his attention attracted by the howling of the brutes, and came to the rescue. He described the scene as the strangest he ever saw; and so close were Mr Kennedy and the wolf in their struggle for the meat, that he fancied the animal had actually attacked the boatswain. Seeing more bipeds approaching, all the wolves now decamped saving their skins as usual, and leaving the poor boatswain only twenty pounds weight of meat instead of the 120 pounds which his prize ought to have weighed.

A WONDREUL ESCAPE.

The 28th was spent in breathless anxiety as helpless in their icy trammels, they swept northward again towards the cliffs of Princess Royal Island. These cliffs rose perpendicularly from the sea at the part against which the ship appeared to be setting, and as the crew eyed them for a hope of safety, if the good craft should be crushed against their face, they could see no ledge upon which even a goat could have established a footing; and an elevation of 400 feet precluded a chance of scaling them; to launch the boats over the moving pack was their sole chance, and that a poor one, rolling and upheaving as it was under the influence of wind, tide and pressure. It is in such an emergency that discipline, and a certainty that each would perform unflinchingly his duty, as well as the innate good qualities of our noble seamen, are best exhibited. Dastards would, in such circumstances, have deserted their ship; but the investigators were made of different stuff; they knew too that One who is 'strong to save' was watching over them, and they eyed the bleak cliffs, which in a few minutes might be frowning over their graves with the calm courage of resolute men. A finer picture than such a scene presented can hardly be imagined, and it was one repeatedly exhibited during this wonderful voyage; but it would be an almost hopeless attempt to convey to the reader—by mere description—an adequate idea either of the scenery so replete with the grim terrors of the polar regions or of the moral grandeur of self-devotion in the officers and men. 'It looks a bad job this time?' inquiringly remarked one of the sailors as he assisted another old sea-dog in coiling down neatly a frozen hawser. 'Yes,' was the rejoinder, as the other shaded his eyes from the driving snow, and cast a glance at the dark cliff looming through the storm, 'the old craft will double up like an old basket when she gets alongside of them rocks.'

From Dr. Kane's Arctic Exploration.

A STARVING CREW CATCHING A SEAL.

With a wild yell, each vociferating according to his own impulse, they urged both boats upon the floes. A crowd of hands seized the seal and bore him up to safer ice. The men seemed half crazy; I had not realised how much we were reduced by absolute famine. They ran over the floe crying and laughing and brandishing their knives. It was not five minutes before every man was sucking his bloody fingers or mouthing long strips of raw blubber. Not an ounce of this seal was lost. The intestines found their way into the soup kettles without any observance of the preliminary home processes. The cartilaginous parts of the fore-flippers were cut off in the melee, and passed round to be chewed upon; and even the liver, warm and raw as it was, bade fair to be eaten before it had seen the pot. That night, on the