

MISCELLANEA.

ADVENTURE WITH A RHINOCEROS.—A correspondent of the *Bengal Hurkaru* says, that, being on a visit at the quarantine station at the Edmuntone Island, he was informed that a rhinoceros had several times made his appearance close to the residence at Middleton Point, on Saugor Island. I was requested (says he), being a killer, to go over and try my luck. I did so, and made preparation for a regular set-to. A stage being erected on a tree close to a tank at which my customer was in the habit of drinking every night, I there, in company with the resident at the Point, took my seat at eight o'clock in the evening, it being then quite dark. My first cheeroot had not been quite burnt out, when a noise from the jungle in our rear warned us of an approach. From the noise, I thought it was an elephant. Our anxiety, you may be sure, was very intense; however, in a very few minutes a very large animal showed his back within thirty yards of us. I saw it, and immediately pointed it out to my companion through the gloom, and we both agreed that it was our friend. His approach was slow, grazing as he came along, until almost immediately under us, and then we fired. He seemed a little astonished, but did not move. The second volley (for we were well armed, having two double-barrels each) disturbed him; he turned sharp round and made off with a curious snorting noise like an overgrown hog. He had the benefit of eight balls, which were, at the distance of fifteen yards, poured upon his impenetrable hide; but he seemed to mind them no more than so many peas. Ten minutes had hardly elapsed before he came again, but not on the same ground; he strolled along rather cautiously towards the tank. We had another beautiful view of him, and again fired together as before, when I am sorry to say the gun of my friend burst, blowing off two of his fingers on the left hand, and slightly wounding me in the arm. Nothing was now left for us but to go home; and at that time of night, and in such a place, with such an animal in our neighbourhood, it was no joke. My friend took a cutlass, and I took two of my guns. We cautiously descended the tree, and made good our retreat. A month and a half passed before the hand of my friend had healed, when we determined upon another attack, but in a different manner. The artillery of the station (two six-pounders) were placed in his path, and there we agreed to watch his approach. Every thing was got in readiness. The moon was favourable, and we took our station at the old lookout tree in the evening. The first start which we made was ominous, a tiger springing almost from under our feet as I was levelling the guns. One was pointed to sweep the corner of the tank, and the other to take him if he came in a different direction. A long tedious night passed, and no rhinoceros. The tiger above-mentioned prowled about the tree all night, but we could not get a shot at him. Another night passed in like manner, but the third night at ten o'clock our old friend once more showed himself. Down I jumped to my post at the gun, but he saw my movements, and vanished. Nearly an hour passed before he again made his appearance; but when he did come, I got him right before my gun; and as I was raising the match to fire, he charged full at me. But he was too late; the fatal spark had done its duty, and the canister met him half way. I lost no time in getting up the tree, for you may be sure the idea of his ugly horn being near me was not at all comfortable; it gave me, however, surprising agility, and I stumbled over my friend, who was coming down to assist me. In the midst of the confusion, a terrible groan proclaimed our victory. The next morning we found he had run nearly fifty yards, and there fell to rise no more. Many of the shot had taken effect. One (the fatal one) in the left eye, three in the shoulder, one in the flank, passing through his kidney and the hind quarter. His dimensions were twelve feet in length, without the tail, which made two more, seven feet high, and thirteen in circumference. Altogether he is a perfect monster. On opening him, one of the leaden balls of our first attack was found in his stomach, and appeared to be mortifying the flesh all round. I had a tough job to skin him, etc. Five of our balls were cut out. The flesh of the animal was greedily devoured by the famished crew of a Burmese boat,

which arrived at the point in distress.—(Alexander's East India Magazine.)

A DILEMMA.—A traveller recently played off a singular trick upon the landlord of an inn, near Rochdale. Having taken dinner and a bottle of wine, he fell into conversation with the landlord, and said he could teach him how to draw threepenny and the best ale out of the same cask. Boniface was, of course, desirous to learn so profitable an art; and the parties descended into the cellar, taking with them a large gimlet. The traveller bored a hole in one end of an 18 gallon cask of beer, and requested the landlord to place his finger upon the hole; he then bored a hole in the other end of the cask, and requested the landlord to place his finger upon that. He then left the cellar, under pretence of fetching his apparatus, and decamped, leaving the landlord with his fingers fully employed in taking care of his beer, and minus dinner and a bottle of wine. When the landlord's patience was exhausted in waiting, he called for assistance, got the holes in the cask stopped, and, in future, will be satisfied to draw one sort of beer out of one cask.—(Penny Magazine.)

THE SMALL IRISH FARMER.—The farmer and his family are all in half nakedness or rags; their lot is little better than the mere labourers. They raise wheat and barley, and oats, and butter and pork in great abundance; but never do they taste any of either, except, perchance, a small part of the meal of the oats. Potages are their sole food. I wish the farmers of our parish could see one that I saw in the fine county of Kilkenny. His dress was a mere bundle of rags, tied round his body with a band of straw; his legs and feet bare, no shirt, and his head covered with a rag, such as you would rip out of the inside of an old cart saddle. The landlord generally lets his great estate to some one man, who lets it out by littles; and this one man takes all from the wretched farmer. Some of the farmers in England grumble at the poor rates. Well, there are no poor rates here. Let them come here then, and lead the life of these farmers. They will soon find that there is something worse than poor rates.—(Cobett.)

SWALLOWS.—A Genevieve lately tied a distich round the neck of a swallow, stating where he dwelt, and the date of doing so, just before the annual migration of these birds, with the view of learning where it might be next picked up, and by whom. Six months after he received a note in reply by the same messenger, stating that at Athens, within three days, he had been caught, and his billet replaced.—(Cabinet de Lecture.)

POLYGAMY IN THIBET.—In social life the most characteristic feature of the Thibetans is that unique species of polygamy peculiarly opposed to the general Asiatic ideas, and consisting in the marriage of one wife to several husbands. All the brothers of a family have only one spouse among them, the privilege of selecting whom rests with the eldest. It is said that a surprising degree of harmony prevails in this extraordinary kind of household: the females, who are active and laborious, enjoy a higher consideration than those of India or other Oriental countries.—(Encyclopædia of Geography.)

DEATH FROM HYDROPHOBIA.—During my first season at the Dublin university, I was invited to pass a short vacation with a relative of my mother. He lived in the south of Ireland, in an ancient family mansion-house, situated in the mountains, and at a considerable distance from the mail-coach road. This gentleman was many years older than I. He had an only sister, a girl of sixteen, beautiful and accomplished. At the period of my visit she was still at school, but was finally to leave it, as my host informed me, at midsummer. Never was there a more perfect specimen of primitive Milesian life than that which the domicile of my worthy relative exhibited. The house was enormously large—half ruinous—and all, within and without, wild, racketty, and irregular. There was a troop of idle and slatternly servants of both sexes, distracting every department of the establishment; and a pack of useless dogs infesting the premises, and crossing you at every turn. Between the biped and quadruped nuisances an eternal war was carried on, and not an hour of the day elapsed, but a canine outcry announced that some of those unhappy curs were being ejected by the butler, or pelted by the cook. So common-place was this everlasting uproar, that, after a few days, I almost ceased to notice it. I was dressing for dinner, when the noise of dogs, quarrelling in the yard, brought me to the window; a terrier was being worried by a rough savage-looking fox-hound, whom I had before this noticed and avoided. At the moment, my host was crossing from the stable, he struck the hound with his whip, but, regardless of the blow, he still continued his attack upon the smaller dog. The old butler, in coming from the garden, observed the dogs fighting, and

brought him in her sole custody. Amongst other tasks, she kept the key of the church, and one day two gentlemen, guests at the house, went to enjoy the view from the elevated top of the steeple. Mary accompanied them. In their frolic, they attempted to kiss her; she ran down, locked the door, and departed. When the dinner-hour arrived, the gentlemen were not to be found; inquiry was made and the whole affair developed, to the no small chagrin of the gallants, and the high entertainment of the rest of the party.

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LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

PAROLES D'UN CROYANT, 1833. Paris, 1834.

(From the Quarterly Review.)

We should not have thought this silly and profane rhapsody worthy of even the slightest notice, but that the sensation it has created on the Continent appears to us as one of the signs of the times. We alluded in our last Number to the monstrous alliance of some *soi-disant* royalists of France with the republican *Mouvement*. This pamphlet announces an alliance still more monstrous—between a false Christianity and real Jacobinism. The author—the Abbé de La Mennais—is a *priest in a bonnet rouge*, and his work exhibits like ludicrous and disgusting masquerade. In a healthy state of society such a performance could have excited nothing but contempt; but in the present disposition of men's minds this attempt to amalgamate revolution with religion, and to preach rebellion and regicide in scriptural phraseology, seems to have occasioned a great commotion in the Roman Catholic world. The work itself has run through fifteen editions, and been, as we are told, translated, by the zeal of the radical *propagandists*, into all, or almost all, the European languages—though, as yet, we ourselves have only seen it in its original French. It has been answered by at least a dozen pens; it has been denounced in episcopal charges; it has been prohibited in many continental states; the author has been repudiated by his family and abjured by his order; and, finally, his book has been honoured by a formal interdict from the sovereign Pontiff himself. We should, *à priori*, have supposed that its extreme nonsense and inconsistency would have sufficed to render it wholly innocuous; but so many pious and able people seem to be of a different opinion, that we are forced to believe that, where there is so much alarm, there must be some danger.

We know, indeed, but too well into what extravagances, follies, and crimes religious enthusiasm may distort itself. The dupes of Cromwell and of John of Leyden, the followers of Praise-God Barebones and of Venner, and even in our own day the disciples of Johanna Southcote and Edward Irving, are melancholy evidences of the frailty of the human intellect, which is as liable to get drunk and disordered with mysticism as with brandy.⁽¹⁾ But we see nothing of this intoxicating quality in the laboured rhetoric and frigid bombast of M. de La Mennais. His object is wholly mundane—to calumniate kings—to disparage authority—to level mankind by plundering the rich—and to abolish all order and dissolve all society, by claiming for each individual of the human race an equality, not merely of rights, but of riches, and, moreover, of the *actual* powers of government. All this might be very captivating in the harangue of a demagogue to a mob, but seems little calculated to excite enthusiasm in a reader. The conveying such impracticable theories in a scriptural phraseology, and presenting this political poison in a chalice sacrilegiously stolen from the altar of God, is, we admit, a novelty likely enough to surprise and shock sober-minded men, but by no means, we should have thought, likely to inflame and proselytize the classes for whose sole behoof these obscure and impious visions are promulgated.

The Abbé de La Mennais was for some years a popular preacher in Paris. That flowery declamation which the French are pleased to call eloquence is too much the practice of their

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pulpit in general; but the Abbé was a peculiarly notorious rhetorician, who made his reputation by tropes and figures, rather than by the more solid and useful merits which might instruct and edify his congregation. In short he was a mere *pulpit adventurer*. He preached for celebrity and preferment; and from what we had before heard of him, we were not surprised that he should be the man to invent a *new fashion* in religion, of which the main-spring is personal vanity, and the only interest that which may arise from seeing one who calls himself a minister of the gospel exhibiting the extravagances of a mountebank. This is, we really believe, the chief, if not the sole cause of the success, or we should rather say notoriety, of this publication. Had it been written by a layman, or in ordinary language and style, it would probably have dropped "still-born from the press;" but the curiosity of the giddy Parisian world was awakened by hearing that an eminent churchman had turned jacobin, and that the celebrated *Mennais* had adopted the tenets of the more celebrated *Marat*. Voltaire and Rousseau had already hit on this kind of expedient; and by putting their attacks on Christianity into the mouths of fictitious priests—(*Jean Meslier* (1) and the *Cure Savoyard*)—they gave them, for the moment, a readier currency and a more *piquant* effect. But with La Mennais the advantage of being a real person very inadequately compensates the want of either the unctuous eloquence of Rousseau or the sarcastic point of Voltaire; and accordingly, we venture to predict, that, notwithstanding the *fus*—such an ignoble term is well suited to the occasion—that is now made about him, La Mennais and his *Paroles d'un Croyant* will be wholly forgotten by this day twelve-month. We, however, think it right, as an incident in moral and literary history, to give our readers a taste of this absurd and detestable production. It affects, in its form and phrase, to be a kind of serious parody of the prophetic Scriptures, and more particularly the *Apocalypse*. The insane vanity and disgusting profaneness of the man, who dares to insult by his awkward mimicry the prophets of God and the most spiritual and venerable of the Evangelists, are only to be equalled by the poorness of his conceits—the puerility of his illustrations—the fulsome poverty of his style—and the obscure inanity of what he would pass off for meaning.

The work opens with a transcript of some passages of holy writ:—

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will towards men.

"He who has ears let him hear.—He who has eyes let him see, for the time cometh.

"The Father begot the Son—the *Word*—and the *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt with us. He came into the world, and the world knew him not," etc.—sect. I.

It is with great reluctance that we quote these passages as introductory of such nonsense as is to follow; yet, if we did not do so, the reader could have no adequate idea of the profanation which we think it our duty to expose; but we shall, in our further selections, endeavour, as much as possible, to omit the "*Believer's*" direct use, or, to speak truly, abuse of the Scriptures, and shall endeavour to exhibit his folly rather than his impiety.

His proemium, then, proceeds as follows:—

"It is now eighteen centuries since the *Word* shed the divine seed; and the Holy Spirit fructified it. Mankind saw it flourish, and tasted its fruits—the fruits of the tree of life replanted in their humble dwelling.

(1) An impostor has lately appeared in America, of the name of Mathias, who, after deluding some respectable and affluent votaries into sundry donations, loans, and bequests, appears to have ensured or accelerated his enjoyment of these good things by *poisoning his dupes*; and these dupes were *yankees*—merchants of New York.—Verily, Mathias must be a clever fellow!

(1) There was a mad priest of the name of Meslier, but few doubt the celebrated testament which Voltaire cites, Voltaire made.