

NELSON'S PILLAR.

It is rather favourable to the private reputation of this Themistocles of the British navy, that his fame, almost unexceptionably monopolizes public attention; and excites public admiration. Indeed, to sully this fame, would be a dishonour to the living and an injustice to the dead: for a soul more dauntless, or a mind better stored with all the qualifications of his danger-seeking profession, never existed. In him, England possessed the intellectual bulwark of her naval glory; a glory, which, though his successors have not lessened, they, however, have never been able to increase. Horatio Nelson was born on the 29th of September 1758, at Burnham Thorpe, in the county of Norfolk, England. At the very early age of twelve years, he entered the navy, and in his nineteenth year was promoted to a lieutenancy. On the commencement of that war with France, which was the nursery of heroes abroad, and beggars at home, Nelson was appointed commander of the *Agamemnon*, of 64 guns, with which he joined Lord Hood in the Mediterranean: and assisted in the attack and taking of Toulon, and the siege of Bastia. The fame of Nelson, however, had reached no very distinguished altitude, until the 13th of February 1797, when he attacked the splendid and powerful Spanish ship *Santisima Trinidad*, of 136 guns, and then, passing to the *San Nicholas* of 80, and *San Joseph* of 112 guns, obliged them both to surrender. In reward for this service, he was made Knight of the Bath, and Rear Admiral of the Blue. In his attack on the town of Santa Cruz, in the island of Teneriffe, he lost an arm, for which he received a pension of one thousand pounds: but the bravery exhibited on each of the above occasions, fearless as it was, was yet to be eclipsed. His vigilant watch after the French fleet having failed, he pursued them to Egypt, where they were anchored in the Bay of Aboukir. The engagement was long and obstinate; but, in that day, the English fleet possessed a boasted superiority, which, however, is now, at least, divided with a younger nation; and the triumph of Nelson was glorious and complete: all the French ships, but two, having been either taken or destroyed. For this gallant service he was deservedly rewarded with a title as Baron Nelson of the Nile, and a pension of two thousand pounds. Of his public connexion with Lady Hamilton after the death of her husband; and his subsequent separation from Lady Nelson, we shall merely say that they considerably lessened his reputation in the moral world. In the year 1801, he made a gallant attack on Copenhagen, destroying the Danish fleet and batteries; on which occasion he was under the command of Sir Hyde Parker. On his return to England he was further distinguished by receiving the title of Viscount. The great victory; "the brightest and the last," in which he reached the climax of his glory, and which is particularly commemorated by the pillar of which a very correct and well executed engraving is annexed, took place on the 21st of October 1805, off Cape Trafalgar, two days previous to which, the combined fleets of France and Spain sailed from Cadiz. After an engagement, which, as is recorded by the inscription on that splendid pillar, "is unparalleled in naval history;" victory had been just declared for the English, when the gallant hero of so many triumphs, was shot by a musket ball; and shortly after expired. His body was re-conveyed to England; where it reposes in Westminster, amid the dust of the most distinguished of ancient chivalry and modern intelligences. The corner stone of the pillar, in that most beautiful of streets, Sackville street, Dublin, was laid by the late Duke of Richmond, on the 14th of February 1808. It is a fluted Doric column; 121 feet three inches in height, resting upon a plain square pedestal, and surmounted by a colossal statue of Nelson, 13 feet high; appropriately leaning upon a Man of

War's capstan. The sum of £6856 was entirely raised by individual contribution, and expended upon this national memorial.

The inscription on it is as follows:

"By the blessing of Almighty God, to commemorate the transcendent heroic achievements of the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Nelson, Duke of Bronte in Sicily, Vice Admiral of the White Squadron of his Majesty's Fleet, who fell gloriously in the battle off Cape Trafalgar, on the 21st day of Oct. 1805. When he obtained for his country a victory over the combined fleets of France and Spain, unparalleled in Naval History."

THE LARGEST TREE IN THE WORLD.

THE boabab or monkey-bread, (*Adansonia digitata*) is the most gigantic tree hitherto discovered. The trunk, though frequently eighty feet in circumference, rarely exceeds twelve or fifteen feet in height; but on the summit of this huge pillar is placed a majestic head of innumerable branches fifty or sixty feet long, each resembling an enormous tree, densely clothed with beautiful green leaves. While the central branches are erect, the lowest series extend in a horizontal direction, often touching the ground at their extremity; so that the whole forms a splendid arch of foliage, more like the fragment of a forest than a single tree. The grateful shade of this superb canopy is a favourite retreat of birds and monkeys; the natives resort to it for repose, and the weary traveller in a burning climate gladly flies to it for shelter. The leaves are quinate, smooth, resembling in general form those of the horse-chesnut. The flowers are white and very beautiful, eighteen inches in circumference. The fruit, which hangs in a pendant manner, is a woody gourd-like capsule with a downy surface, about nine inches in length and four in thickness, containing numerous cells, in which brown kidney-shaped seeds are embedded in a pulpy acid substance. The timber is soft and spongy, and we are not aware that it is used for any economical purpose. It is very easily perforated, so that, according to Bruce, the bees in Abyssinia construct their nests within it, and the honey thus obtained, being supposed to have acquired a superior flavour, is esteemed in preference to any other. A more remarkable excavation is however made by the natives; diseased portions of the trunk are hollowed out and converted into tombs for the reception of the bodies of such individuals as, by the laws or customs of the country, are denied the usual rites of interment. The bodies thus suspended within the cavity, and without any preparation or embalmment, dry into well preserved mummies. The juicy acid pulp is eaten by the natives, and is considered beneficial in fevers and other diseases on account of its cooling properties. The duration of the boabab is not the least extraordinary part of its history, and has given rise to much speculation. In it we unquestionably see the most ancient living specimens of vegetation. "It is," says the illustrious Humboldt, "the oldest organic monument of our planet;" and Adanson calculates that trees now alive have weathered the storms of five thousand years.—*Edinburgh Cabinet Library. No. XII.—Nubia and Abyssinia.*

Talking of spouting reminds me of an abominable habit some parents have got of making Tommy or Billy get up and recite some favourite piece of declamation, such as "The Pet Lamb," "Lochiel's Warning," or "Lochinvar." You are obliged to listen to and praise the annoying little devils, while you are heartily wishing them and their rhetoric at the bottom of the Red Sea.