

A FOREST SCENE IN BRAZIL, SOUTH AMERICA.

THE FORESTS OF BRAZIL.

THE endless variety of vegetable life which our world exhibits, furnishes an inexhaustible fund of interest and instruction to the botanist, and supplies the natural theologian with fresh arguments as to the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being who said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind." From the colourless and stunted vegetation of the polar and frozen countries of the North, where life seems almost extinguished by the rigorous cold of a perpetual winter, to the hot regions of the tropics, where Nature displays her fullest energy, her greatest diversity, and most dazzling splendour, the variety is so boundless, as to attract the notice of the least observant, and more than satisfy the curiosity of the most careful investigators.

It is usually supposed that in India and the Indian Archipelago the richest developments of vegetable life occur. There ferns attain the proportions of forest trees, and grasses rise, as the majestic bamboo, to the height of sixty feet; there vivacity of colour and diversity of shade present the most brilliant effects, and offer the largest leaves and flowers known in the world.

But the real charms of a tropical climate are best displayed in those places where rains are frequent, and are alternated by warm, dry air, where dew is abundant, and where the earth is well watered by lakes and rivers. Brazil, less tropical than India, is, therefore, in this respect, a more privileged country.

In Brazil, an empire second only in extent to China and Russia, there is naturally a considerable

variation of climate, and its vegetable products are consequently of a wide range. The soil, however, is very fruitful, and the forests are of vast extent and luxuriance. Although in some parts of Brazil frosts are not unknown, at others the climate admits the growth of European fruits, and a large portion of the country is tropical. Winter resembles summer in the north of Europe, summer appears one continuous spring, and spring and autumn are unconsciously lost in summer and winter.

" Stern Winter smiles on this auspicious clime;
The fields are florid in eternal prime;
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
But from the breezy deep, the groves inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the eastern gale."

But, as we have already noticed, the vast extent of Brazil renders its climate exceedingly diversified; and thus, while some of its virgin forests spread their green canopy of the rich sward month after month, year after year, in other districts the forest trees are stripped of their leaves in the dry season. Very considerable differences are observable in the Brazilian forests. In those to which the people have given the name of *caatinga*, the leaves are stripped from the trees for many months; in others, the leaves remain on the trees during the whole year, if the soil is sufficiently moist, or the rain falls in abundance. The foliage, however, is so rapid in its growth, that the forest which the traveller may have looked upon under the blazing beams of the summer sun, stripped of every leaf, and literally baking in the red-hot glow, may, in the course of a few hours—thanks to a change in the wind, and a copious shower—be clothed afresh

with verdure, casting a welcome shadow on the path, and giving to the air a refreshing perfume.

The forests of Brazil produce almost every kind of wood employed in the useful and ornamental arts. The open country yields a large variety of articles of consumption. In the sandy soils along the coast the cocoa-trees are plentiful. The castor-tree, chiefly valuable for its oil, is an indigenous production. The forests extending along the Amazon yield vast quantities of caoutchouc, or india-rubber. Sugar, coffee, cotton, rice, tobacco, maize, bananas, ginger, yams, oranges, figs, are produced in abundance; and mandioc, a staple article of food, is cultivated almost everywhere in the empire.

In passing through the forests of Brazil, or in looking on its cultivated lands, one cannot fail to be struck by the luxuriance of the vegetation. The palm trees, lifting their lofty heads two hundred feet above the soil, flit their fan-like leaves, and look imperious as proud sultans; beneath them strikes out a still lofty, but humbler vegetation; innumerable shrubs and trees of somewhat smaller size fill up the intervening spaces; climbing plants, woody-stemmed twining lianas—infinately varied—surround them all with their flexible branches, displaying their own flowers upon the foliage, and making up a picture of unrivalled magnificence. The rolling rivers, speeding on their way through these sylvan scenes, impart their wealth to those vast solitudes; the heavy dews which gather in the evening, and the refreshing showers which fall on the leafy wilderness, make it what it is—as here the most favourable conditions for the production of vegetation exert their influence—namely, warmth and moisture.

The forest which is represented in our engraving

is in the province of Bahia. It offers a great variety both of the cactus and the palm. A singular specimen of the latter—the *coccos coronata*—is seen to the left; it is chiefly remarkable for its lofty crest, which has the appearance of a brilliant plume. In the centre is a remarkable tree, known as the *cavanillesia tuberculata*. It is formed of a soft, light wood, very rapid in its growth, but attaining an age of many centuries. One of these trees is said to have reached the age of 5,150 years! To the right is a tree known as the *spondias false*, the aromatic resin of which is employed in medicine, on account of its stimulating properties. Throughout the forests the eye is perpetually gratified by an endless panorama of luxuriant vegetation—which, thanks to the broad rivers of Brazil, are unequalled in the world.

OUR LOTS IN LIFE.

"If I had only been born in some other position! If I had the advantages that my friend—has! If I had been endowed with such talents as so and so possesses! If I had enjoyed as uninterrupted prosperity as such and such a one! If I had been allowed as much leisure as this or that person! If I were not tormented by so many petty vexations! If I had not been bowed down by such heavy trials! ah! then, indeed, I might have been a very different being from what I am! Then I should have been full of hope and spirit—full of patience and thankfulness; then I should have accomplished great ends in life; then I should have filled a worthy place in the world; yes, then I should have been quite contented!" Is not that the daily complaint of thousands, sometimes loudly spoken—often unuttered, though deeply felt.

To murmur against our lots in life, as though they had been distributed by some blind chance, is the very commonest of the darling sins which we hug to our thankless hearts—the favourite defence of our indolence and wilfulness—our slow steps in the path of progress—our casting down of appointed fardels on the road, crying out that they are greater than we can bear! And yet, while we are sending up this Heaven-upbraiding wail, how startled and shocked we should be at the assertion that we had no faith in the existence of a Supreme Being! But if we do really believe in that All-Potent Ruler, can we imagine that the destinies of those creatures he fashioned to be recipients of his bounty (a "God of love" could not have created them for any other purpose), are mere accidents, independent of his will and providence, though subject to his cognisance? He who, in his inmost soul, believes in chance, believes not in God at all.

However unequal, and apparently unjust, may seem the distribution of worldly gifts—of talents—of success—of happiness—if there be truth in the assertion that a sparrow falls not to the ground without the knowledge of our heavenly Father—that the very hairs of our head are numbered, an immutable law of wisdom must rule over the most insignificant, as over the most important, events of our lives. That law, through all its mysterious workings, can only have for its end the promotion of our eternal happiness. How, then, shall we escape the conviction that every one, during this, his probationary life, is allowed just the amount of success and prosperity—is subjected to just the degree of trial and temptation—is placed in precisely the situation, which will develop his true character, bring out the evil elements in his character through exciting causes, that he may become aware of and conquer them; and call forth his noble attributes, that they may be perfected by use; and thus that he may be fitted to enjoy the highest possible felicity here and hereafter?

Different organisations need to pass through different ordeals, that the dross may be separated from the gold.

How often a temper that was very sweet and lovable, during years of smooth prosperity, when it encounters unexpected opposition, or is perplexed by harassing cares, will evince an irritability and bitterness of which it seemed incapable! But if it learn to resist the influences by which its amiability was disturbed, its sweetness returns, is redoubled, and lastingly confirmed.

How often a disposition appears very lavish of benefaction until the generous impulse is suddenly checked by the necessity of undergoing personal privation, in order to give! But if, in time, joy in bestowing is re-awakened, despite of self-sacrifice, then generosity becomes real and rock-founded.

How often a heart that is soft and loving while other hearts beat in unison with its own, while tenderness and appreciation keep its pulses warm, when exposed to neglect, misrepresentation, cold-

ness, grows hard and frigid! But unless the ice melt again, and the tender affections, even in a chilling atmosphere, regain their ascendancy, the apparent love and gentleness of that nature was spurious.

Not a trial is sent but as a regenerating and perfecting agent. From the death-like stroke of affliction—from the deep humiliation which covers us with sackcloth and ashes—from the misfortunes that strip us of all—the spirit that can be purified rises stronger and gladder, with upward-looking eyes and chastened heart.

Those terrible bereavements—the snapping of those holy links, that convulse our spirits, and cast us prostrate on the earth in despair—are only permitted to give birth, through this agonising travail, to some new and holier state; to produce some great calm growing out of the mind's tempest, when the voice of the Lord has spoken to the raging waters and the wild winds of the soul, and said, "Peace! Be still!"

But all these heavenly ends are frustrated if we destroy the possibilities of happiness, implanted within us, by idle repining—if we cast away the mental and physical instruments apportioned for our use, saying, "They are blunted—they are not as noble as another man's—they are unmeet for us"—in short, if we murmur at our lots in life.

However exposed or barren, however lowly or obscure, is the corner allotted to us in our Lord's vineyard, we should not have been placed exactly in that locality, unless it were the fittest spot for toil and advancement. We must not rebel because another seems more fortunately situated, or better prepared to bring the ground he tills to fruition; we must not complain because those who have not borne with us the heat and labour of the day receive wages as large as ours. Unless just such work were needed for our development, it would not be placed beneath our hands;—unless just such toil was required for theirs, it would not be intrusted to them. Do the work, and leave the sequel to God! When the servants, who have been faithful over little, or over much, receive their rewards, the mystery of our seemingly unequal lots will assuredly be revealed to us.

Oddities.



OLD PARR.

THOMAS PARR, generally known by the name of "Old Parr," was born in 1433, in the reign of Edward IV., and was the son of a poor peasant, of Winnington, a village in Shropshire. He lived during the reigns of Edward IV., Edward V., Richard III., Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, James I., Charles I.; and thus became the witness of some of the most important changes in English history. He saw three religious revolutions; lived through the days of fierce and bitter persecution; he saw the crown for which the rival houses of York and Lancaster had so long contended placed on the head of Henry VII.; he saw the kingdom of Scotland, against which so much hostility had been excited, peacefully united to England, King James VI. of Scotland and I. of England reigning over both, and he was personally presented to Charles I. about the year 1635. He was a hardworking man, and engaged in agricultural pursuits at 130 years of age; he was a frugal liver—his food through life consisted of milk,

cheese, bread, &c.; he was never, however, what might be called a strong man, though perhaps not so bad as a recent writer makes him describe himself:—"I've lost my teeth; my head be bald; my back be bent; I ha' no taste in my mouth; I have singing in my ears; I've congestion of the spleen; I've softening of the brain; I'm afflicted with dropsy; I've erysipelas in the face; I've got lumbar abscesses and intermittent fever; I must get me to bed and die in a day at farthest."

Notwithstanding all his ills, Thomas Parr lived to the age of 152 and some months; he married a widow when he was 120, and died at last from a surfeit. When brought up to London about two months before his death, he slept away most of his time, and is thus described by an eye-witness:—

"From head to heel, his body had all over
A quick-set, thick-set, natural hairy cover."

COMPLIMENTARY PHRASES IN PERSIA.

The style of the complimentary phrases used in Persia, we learn from an account of an interview with the governor of Oroomiah. "We found the governor occupying a splendid mansion, and surrounded by numerous attendants. He received us with much civility, and apparent kindness; and as we entered the great hall, he beckoned us to the upper end to sit by his side, and then inquired after our health in the usual Persian manner. 'Kaef-az yokhshee dur?' (Is your health good?) 'Damaghan chah dur?' (Your palate—appetite—lusty?) 'Kaef-az kook dur?' (Are you in hale, fat keeping?) And all this so rapidly, that we could only reply by an inclination of our heads. When he had finished, we inquired after his health, to which, while solemnly stroking his beard, he replied—'By your auspices.' 'Only let your condition be prosperous, and I am of course very well.' He then reiterated his expressions of welcome, saying—'Your coming is delectable.' 'Your arrival is glad-some.' 'Upon my eyes you have come.'"

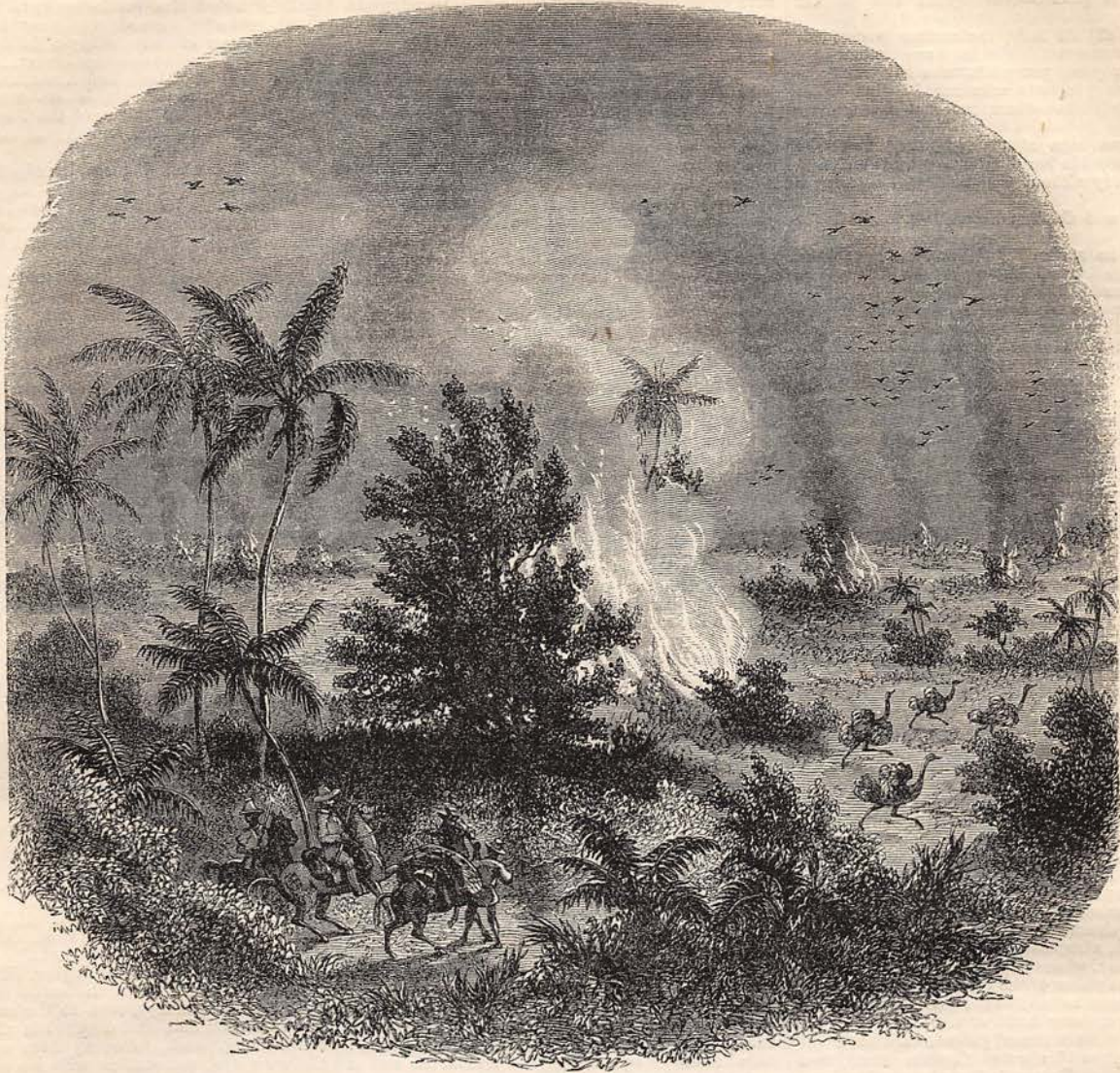
Facts and Scraps.

THE SCAVENGER'S DAUGHTER.—In the reign of Henry VIII., Sir William Skevington, a lieutenant of the Tower, immortalised himself by the invention of a new engine of torture, called Skevington's Irons, or Skevington's Daughters, which was known and dreaded for a century afterward under the corrupted name of the Scavenger's Daughter. In 1604 a committee was appointed by the House of Commons to inquire as to the state of the dungeon called "Little Ease" in the Tower. The Committee reported that "they found in Little Ease, in the Tower, an engine of torture, devised by Mr. Skevington, some time lieutenant of the Tower, called Skevington's Daughters." This instrument was made to roll and contract the body into a ball until the head and feet met together, and forced the blood to ooze from the hands and feet, and frequently from the nostrils and mouth.

HUMAN ENDURANCE.—During the Arctic voyages in search of Sir John Franklin, it was ascertained what a seaman can do in the way of travelling, carrying, and dragging. The maximum weight proper per man was ascertained to be 220 lbs., and of that weight, 3 lbs. per diem was consumed by each man for food and fuel—namely, 1 lb. of bread, and 1 lb. of meat, while the other pound comprised his spirits, tea, cocoa, sugar, tobacco, and fuel for cooking. Upon this estimate it was found that, for a hundred days' journey, they could march ten miles per diem, and endure with impunity a temperature of 50 deg. or 60 deg. below the freezing point.

MACAULAY'S MEMORY.—Mr. Thackeray, speaking of the late Lord Macaulay, says: "Almost on the last day I had the fortune to see him, a conversation happened suddenly to spring up about the senior wranglers, and what they had done in after-life. To the almost terror of the persons present, Macaulay began with the senior wrangler of 1801-2-3-4, and so on, giving the name of each, and relating his subsequent career and rise. Every man who has known him has his story regarding that astonishing memory. It may be that he was not ill-pleased that you should recognise it; but to those prodigious intellectual feats, which were so easy to him, who would grudge his tribute of homage?"

NATIONS WITHOUT FIRE.—According to Pliny, fire was for a long time unknown to some of the ancient Egyptians; and when Enxodus (the celebrated astronomer) showed it to them, they were absolutely in rapture. The Persians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and several other nations acknowledge that their ancestors were once without the use of fire, and the Chinese confess the same of their progenitors. Pompanius, Mela, Plutarch, and other ancient authors, speak of



THE CAMPOS OF BRAZIL.

before the people have quite settled themselves again. She will be less observed."

"Good-by, then, at least, for the present," said the countess, shaking hands with me, "I shall return to my place to enjoy your lovely notes once more, and then retire, cordially thanking you, Mrs. Elliot, for the treat you have so kindly afforded me. Good-by, Miss Bell; hereafter, let me hope, we shall meet again."

(To be continued.)

THE CAMPOS OF BRAZIL.

BRAZIL forms a sort of immense triangle, the superficial extent of which is about 300,000 square miles. In this wide territory the greatest possible variety of scenery, climate, and productions exist, and the traveller passing from one end of the country to the other, is refreshed at each stage of his journey by the sight of a landscape as different as possible from that which he has seen the day before. He passes, in turn, by picturesque mountains such as those of the Serra do Mar, green hills such as adorn the neighbourhood of Rio, through dense forests, full of the strange, rich vegetation of the tropics, and vast plains, to which the Brazilians give the name of *campos*.

The *campos* differ materially in their aspect from the prairies of the north. Stretching on every side to the horizon, they are dotted here and there with little clumps of trees which afford shelter to the numerous wild animals of these regions. During the hot months of summer the traveller through these plains finds himself suddenly stopped by clouds of smoke and flame, and the fire runs with

amazing rapidity along the surface of the *campos*, burning up all before it. These fires are not always accidental in their origin, for the Brazilian agriculturists frequently use, and more frequently abuse, this means of obtaining manure; vegetable ashes commanding a higher price than is usual in such a country.

The most important of the *campos*—for this name is applied to some twenty different districts—are those which were inhabited by the terrible race of the Goaitakazes. These Indians have shown their appreciation of the peculiar advantages of their district by giving it the name of *Guaitomoysi*—field of delights. These plains, well cultivated at certain points, contain at intervals fresh-water lakes, lagunes and marshes, so that the vegetation is rich and profuse. It was under John III. that Pedro de Goes da Sylveira obtained the first grants of land in these regions. The first colonists, however, had to sustain long and sanguinary contests with the original lords of this fertile soil, and the name of the latter still lingers in the general designation of *Campos Goaitakazes*, which is given to one of the richest districts of Brazil.

In this fair and fertile land nothing is wanting except wood. In order to form pastures, or to obtain land for cultivation, the farmers have burnt up the few trees which formerly grew in the district. Artificial *campos* are occasionally formed in Brazil, by similar agency. For instance, we are told by a traveller that at Goyaz, the dense forests which covered the ground were burnt down. After an interval another forest, composed of trees of inferior height, rose up in the place of the former. These were again burnt; and from their ashes arose ferns and shrubs, succeeded by a sort

of grass which served for pasturage. Not an implement was made use of; neither spade nor plough took part in this important change: the fire was the only cultivator, and the ashes the only manure.

CAPTAIN BRAND;

Or, The Pirate Schooner.

A TALE OF THE SEA.

CHAPTER XXII.

PLEASURE.

"BABETTE," said Captain Brand, as he tapped a spoon against his coffee-pot and puffed his cigar—while the stout dumb negress was removing the remains of the light dinner—"Babette, old girl, you know that we are going to leave here in a few days, and I should like to know whether you care to go with us or remain here on the island."

The negress made a guttural grunt of assent, and nodded her head till the ends of her Madras turban fluttered.

"Ho! you do, eh? Well, my Baba! I shall be sorry to leave you, for you will be very lonely here, and it may be a long, very long time before I come back."

Babette jerked her chin up this time and did not grunt.

"It's all the same, eh? old lady! Well, I shall leave enough to eat to last you a lifetime; but you will have to change your quarters, my Baba, and live in the padro's shed, for I—a—don't think this house will be inhabitable long after I am gone."