

It is painful to be told that his sense of the ingratitude manifested towards him never left Forbes till it was buried, two years afterwards (1747), in the untimely grave to which it hastened him. We fondly hope that the true religious principles which animated his whole life, preserved him from any unbecoming or depressing grief of spirit. He thoroughly understood and believed the great truths of revealed religion. His age was the age of scepticism and speculative infidelity; and, in a small treatise of his, entitled, "Reflections on Incredulity," he traces the infidel objections to their true cause, the pride of intellect in fallen man, and the alienation of the heart from God and holiness. But he does not defend merely the outworks of truth, but distinctly affirms the early and total fall of man, and the revelation of what natural religion never could have imagined, the possibility of divine mercy at all, and the method of its exertion, by the substitution of the God-man to suffer in the room of the guilty sinner. He read the Old Testament in the original language, eight times over, and, like many pious men of that time, was delighted to trace, in the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation, and even in the wretched perversions of similar rites in heathen nations, the proof that from the earliest times God had revealed the grace of the new covenant, by institutions which were to keep alive, till the fulness of the time, the hopes of the coming Saviour.

About the year 1812, two large chests and three sacks full of documents were discovered at Cul-loden House. A selection was made and published at the time. There are various lairds, and other personages, who make but a shabby figure in this collection; but the clear honour and open heart of him to whom they address themselves is manifest in every page. None of his descendants or countrymen need to blush for him. His statue, by Roubiliac, with its earnest look and sagacious brow, is conspicuous in the Parliament House at Edinburgh, to excite the applause and emulation of future judges and advocates, and his memory lives in the admiration of Scotland; a proof that, even since she ceased to be a separate kingdom, she has had at least one statesman whose principles were as pure as his understanding was enlightened, and whose concern for his country was never once suspected to be quickened by any regard to his own power or emolument.

INCENDIARY MICE.

MICE, aptly described by Johnson as being the "smallest of all beasts—little animals that haunt houses and corn-fields," are usually considered as being merely mischievous nuisances, whose sole destructive propensities are directed against candle-ends, cheese, and corn, nibbling through skirting-boards, cupboards, and boxes, and other trivial depredations. We shall find, however, by a further investigation of facts, that mice, powerless as they may seem to be of producing evil on a large scale, may nevertheless cause a large and destructive loss of property, and even of life.

We find, by contemporary journals, that in the bed-room of a certain individual a fire is suddenly found to be raging—an odd circumstance, considering that no light or fire of any description had been in the apartment for some time; but still more odd was the locality of the fire in this case—a chest of drawers, shut and probably locked. The mysterious nature of the origin of this fire will be best seen by quoting the account given of it by a local journal at the time of its occurrence.

"Mr. E. Lewis, of Broadheath, discovered a fire in his bedroom a day or two ago, the origin of which is enveloped in the most profound mystery; it occurred in a chest of drawers. What renders it so mysterious is the fact that for many weeks past there has been no light, or fire of any description, in this apartment. The fire originated in a chest of drawers, the contents of which (lace, and some volumes of the 'Illustrated London News') were burnt or damaged before the fire was detected."

It would not be the object of an ordinary incendiary to burn a few books. A fire lighted in a drawer, and that drawer subsequently closed, could but smoulder and smoke, and expire for want of air to support combustion. This smouldering might destroy, as it actually did in this case, the contents of the drawer, but the flames would not extend; the premises would be safe, for the smoke engendered would be such in quantity and quality as to insure early detection.

Now, from this plain statement of a fact, what can we infer? A fire is discovered: how did it originate? What the green fat of the turtle is to the alderman—what curry and rice are to the Indian—what fat puppy and kitten pie are to the Chinaman—such is phosphorus to the mouse—a decided luxury, an epicurean *morceau*. Advantage of this well-known partiality is taken by the commonly used vermin poison, now extensively sold under the name of "vermin-destroying paste," the basis and active principle of which is phosphorus. This is self-evident from its smell, its being luminous in the dark, the manner in which it burns, and the phosphoric acid produced by its combustion. A thin layer of this, spread upon bread-and-butter, and put in the neighbourhood of its holes, will lure the unsuspecting mouse from his ordinary cheese or candle diet to the poisoned and invariably fatal bait. We have watched its effects: at first it appears to act as a narcotic, or stupifying agent; the mouse walks and stumbles about, unheeding the presence of man: it seems intoxicated. Death, however, soon follows; and upon examining their bodies a few minutes afterwards, evidence of extensive inflammation of the bowels is to be found. We have seen rats similarly under its influence, and detected the same post-mortem appearances.

We will now adduce another fact, as bearing considerably upon the subject under investigation. Some few years ago, a fire originated in a cupboard, very mysteriously. Satisfactory and conclusive evidence was given at the time, that no lighted candle or fire had been in the room for months. The shelves of the cupboard, the floor, and the ceiling of the room underneath were burnt, when,

fortunately, discovery took place, and the ravages of the flames were stopped. As we have before explained, had the fire originated in a closed drawer, it must soon have been stifled; but the mischief could extend, and did, to greater lengths, in an airy and large cupboard. All that was found were the remains of a lucifer match-box, and the ends of a few burnt matches. Evidence of the existence of numbers of mice was apparent, from the great quantity of the droppings of these little animals.

It is hardly necessary to state that the power of ready ignition possessed by lucifers is derived, amongst other things, principally from phosphorus. In all probability, the mice endeavoured to get at the contents of the box, attracted by the smell of this phosphorus; the friction caused by their continued nibbling was sufficient to ignite the matches; the box, the shelf, the floor would follow; and hence the catastrophe.

This explanation appears to us to be more credible than that of wilful incendiarism, or spontaneous combustion; for the incendiary aims at more than the spoiling or destruction of a few books in a drawer, and all the elements necessary for spontaneous combustion are not present in a match-box.

A few words would not be out of place here, to caution our readers as to the deadly nature of this poisonous paste, and to impress upon them the necessity of extreme circumspection as to where they place this bait. Being usually—as indeed is ordered in the directions for its use—spread upon thin bread-and-butter, children would, if they got at it, eat and be poisoned. Cats, dogs, pigs, and poultry, would devour it and die. Nor must we forget that an animal dying from being thus poisoned, and eaten by another, would prove equally deleterious to the latter; in the same manner that partridges, killed by eating wheat soaked in arsenic, would prove poisonous to man or beast, if eaten.

To the uninitiated we may here observe, that wheat is usually “dressed,” as it is termed, with arsenic, as a preventive against smut—a diseased or blighted condition of the grain, by which it is so blackened as closely to resemble smut, or soot. We have eaten of such black bread, and feel bound to confess that it offends the eye more than the palate.

In the event of any animal dying from eating this paste, *bury the carcase*; don't throw it carelessly away. We cannot advocate this system of poisoning vermin, for several reasons. As to the cruelty of causing a painful and lingering death, we will say nothing. But—and this is important—the poisoned animal frequently crawls away to its hole to die, where its putrefying carcase may in hot weather be productive of disagreeable effects in the way of stench; while fever, of a low typhoid and exceedingly dangerous nature, is often engendered by breathing and living in an atmosphere tainted with decayed animal and vegetable remains.

ENGLISH HEROISM IN INDIA.

THE recent terrible struggle in India has served to bring out, perhaps more prominently than any previous event in our history, the determined

energy and self-reliance of the national character. Although English officialism may often drift stupidly into gigantic blunders, the men of the nation generally contrive to work their way out of them with a heroism almost approaching the sublime. In May, 1857, when the revolt burst upon India like a thunder-clap, the British forces had been allowed to dwindle to their extreme minimum, and were scattered over a wide extent of country, many of them in remote cantonments. The Bengal regiments, one after another, rose against their officers, broke away, and rushed to Delhi. Province after province was lapped in mutiny and rebellion; and the cry for help rose from east to west. Everywhere the English stood at bay in small detachments, beleaguered and surrounded, apparently incapable of resistance. Their discomfiture seemed so complete, and the utter ruin of the British cause in India so certain, that it might be said of them then, as it had been said before, “These English never know when they are beaten.” According to rule, they ought then and there to have succumbed to inevitable fate.

While the issue of the mutiny still appeared uncertain, Holkar, one of the native princes, consulted his astrologer for information. The reply was, “If all the Europeans save one are slain, that one will remain to fight and reconquer.” In their very darkest moment—even where, as at Lucknow, a mere handful of British soldiers, civilians, and women, held out amidst a city and province in arms against them—there was no word of despair, no thought of surrender. Though cut off from all communication with their friends for months, and they knew not whether India was lost or held, they never ceased to have perfect faith in the courage and devotedness of their countrymen, though they might be afar off; they knew that while a body of men of English race held together in India, they would not be left unheeded to perish. They never dreamt of any other issue but retrieval of their misfortune and ultimate triumph; and if the worst came to the worst, they could but fall at their post and die in the performance of their duty. Need we remind the reader of the names of Havelock, Neill, and Outram, men of each of whom it might with equal appropriateness be said that he had the heart of a chevalier, the soul of a believer, and the temperament of a martyr. Of all it might be said that their lives had been spent in the patient performance of obscure services; but the outbreak of the rebellion provided them with the opportunity of proving that each had in him the qualities of a hero. Indeed, the same might be said of every private soldier who distinguished himself in that great struggle. Desperate though the work was of retrieving this terrible and wide-spread calamity, there were men found to do it—men whose lives until then had for the most part been spent in the performance of mere routine duties, whose names had never before been heard of, and who might have died unknown but for the occasion which put their highest qualities to the proof, as well-bred, brave-hearted, high-souled Englishmen. In the course of the struggle which ensued, an amount of individual energy was displayed of an extraordinary