

## SLUMBER SONG.

BY EDWIN OSCAR COOKE.

HUSH, baby, hush!  
 In the west there 's a glory,  
 With changes of amethyst, crimson, and gold:  
 The sun goes to bed like the king in a story  
 Told by a poet of old.

Hush, baby, hush!  
 There 's a wind on the river—  
 A sleepy old wind, with a voice like a sigh;  
 And he sings to the rushes that dreamily quiver,  
 Down where the ripples run by.

Hush, baby, hush!  
 Lambs are drowsily bleating  
 Down in cool meadows where daisy-buds grow,  
 And the echo, weary with all day repeating,  
 Has fallen asleep long ago.

Hush, baby, hush!  
 There are katydids calling  
 "Good-night" to each other adown every  
 breeze:  
 And the sweet baby-moon has been falling and  
 falling,  
 Till now she is caught in the trees.  
 Baby, hush!

Hush, baby, hush!  
 It is time you were winging  
 Your way to the land that lies—no one knows  
 where;  
 It is late, baby, late—Mother 's tired with her  
 singing,  
 Soon she will follow you there.  
 Hush! Baby—Hush!

## SOME BALLOON EXPERIENCES.

BY JOHN LEWEES.

NEARLY all of us have read and heard so much about balloons that it is not necessary now to consider their construction or their history. All that is intended in this article is to give an idea of some of the unusual experiences of balloonists.

It is nearly a hundred years since the first balloon was sent up in France by the brothers Montgolfier, and yet very little advancement has been made in the science of ballooning. It is true that we can make balloons that will rise as high as human beings can bear to go, but this is proved to be of little practical use. In 1862, two English gentlemen, Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell, ascended to a height of seven miles above the surface of the earth. At this immense height the air was so thin and light that they could scarcely breathe; it was intensely cold, the mercury in the thermometer going down below zero. One of the gentlemen very soon became insensible, while the other was so nearly exhausted that he was barely able to seize with his teeth the rope which opened a valve in the top of the balloon. In this way a portion of the gas was allowed to escape, and they came down very rapidly. If they had gone up much higher, it is probable that both would have perished in that cold and dangerous upper air. This ascent

proves that seven miles is too high above the surface of the earth for human beings to live in comfort or safety.

Although, as we have just seen, it is perfectly possible to make balloons go up into the air to a great height, no means have yet been discovered by which they can be made to move in any required direction. Until this is done, balloons can never be of much practical use.

Many attempts have been made to devise methods by which balloons can be propelled and steered, but, up to this time, none of them have been found to answer the purpose. In *Scribner's Monthly* for February, 1879, Mr. E. C. Stedman described an aërial ship which he invented. His theories and plans seem to be quite practicable, and when a ship of this kind is made, it is to be hoped that we shall be able to navigate the air in any direction we please. But this is all in the future.

Not many years ago there was made in New York a balloon in which three gentlemen intended to try to cross the Atlantic Ocean. This great balloon was not to be propelled by any machinery, but to be carried on its course by a current of air which it is believed continually moves at a certain altitude from west to east, across the Atlantic. But this

balloon was made of poor materials, and it burst before it was entirely filled with gas. It is fortunate that this accident happened when it did, for if the balloon had burst when it was over the ocean, it would have been a sad thing for the three gentlemen. If this attempt had succeeded, it is probable that by this time there would be balloons making regular trips to Europe; still I do not know of any breeze or current that would blow them back again.

But, although we are not yet able to direct the

connected with the ground by a rope. From this balloon the men could see what the enemy was doing, and how his forces were disposed, and were high enough to be out of gunshot.

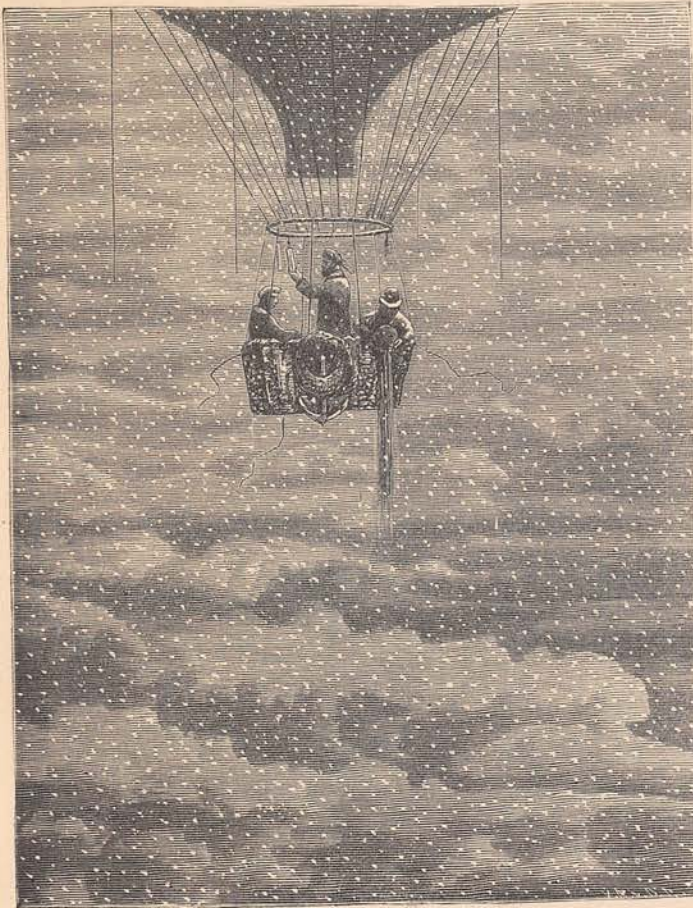
But the most important use to which balloons were ever applied was during the siege of Paris, in the late war between France and Prussia. It was impossible for any one to get out of the city, excepting in a balloon, and a number of persons availed themselves of this way of leaving Paris.\*

Monsieur Gambetta, the distinguished French statesman, was among those who escaped in a balloon. These ascents were very important, because the balloons not only took persons, but carrier-pigeons, and these pigeons afterward flew back to Paris bearing news from the outside world; and in no other way could the besieged citizens get such news. Some of the balloons came down in the French provinces, some were blown over to England, and one was carried across the North Sea into Sweden. Some of them came down among the Prussians, and their unfortunate occupants were captured by the enemy. Out of the sixty-four balloons which left Paris during the siege, only two were lost and never heard of after.

One of the advantages enjoyed by balloonists is, that they can in a measure choose their own weather, especially in the summer-time. By this I mean that they can rise above the clouds into clear sunlight, no matter how dreary or stormy it may be near the earth, and they can go up high enough to be just as cool as they could possibly wish.

In one of their ascensions, Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell, of whom I have before spoken, left

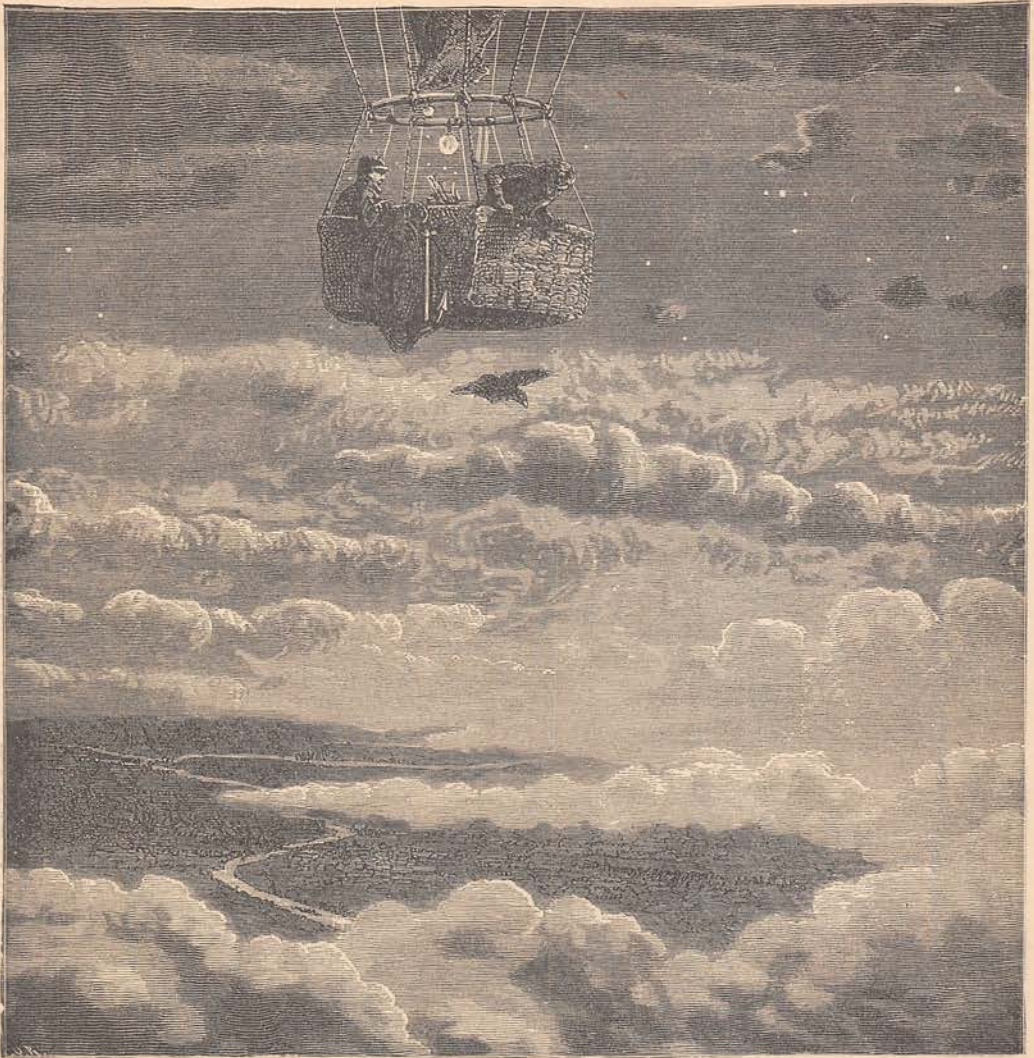
the earth in a balloon on a cloudy, sultry day in June. They passed through cloud after cloud, fog after fog, expecting every moment to come out into sunlight, and to see the blue sky above them; but they went upward through this vast mass of fog and cloud until they had attained a height of four miles; and still they were not out of the clouds. It was not considered prudent to go any higher, and so they very reluctantly began to descend without having penetrated through these immense



A SNOW-STORM ABOVE THE CLOUDS.

course of balloons, they have, in late years, been put to some practical use. During our late war, balloons were used by the Union army for the purpose of making military observations. Two of them were attached to General McClellan's army, and, with the gas generators and other apparatus, were drawn about in wagons from place to place. When it was desired to make an observation of the works or position of the enemy, a balloon with several men was sent up to a sufficient height, and

\* See the story of "Puck Parker," in ST. NICHOLAS for April, 1878. Page 416.



LOSING A PIGEON FROM A BALLOON, AT NIGHT.

layers of cloud and fog. On coming down, they passed through a fall of rain, and then, some distance below that, through a snow-storm, the air all about them being thick with snow-flakes. This, it must be remembered, was in the summer-time, when the people on the earth had no idea that a snow-storm was going on above them, or that the clouds they saw over them were four miles thick. On another occasion, three balloonists went upward through a snow-storm very much like the one which Messrs. Glaisher and Coxwell passed through during their descent.

People who make balloon voyages very often take birds with them, especially pigeons, which

they let loose at a great height. When not too high above the earth, pigeons frequently fly directly to their homes, but at a height of three or four miles they sometimes seem bewildered, and act as if they did not know how to find their way back to the ground. They fly around and around, and occasionally alight upon the top of the balloon, and stay there. Sometimes, when the height is very great, the air is too thin to support a flying bird, and the pigeon drops like lead until it reaches denser air, when it is able to fly.

Dogs and cats are often taken up. They are sent down attached to a parachute, which is a contrivance like an immense umbrella, and is

intended to prevent the rapid fall of anything suspended beneath it; the resistance of the air under the wide-spreading parachute causing it to descend very slowly and gradually. In this way, cats and dogs have come to the ground from balloons without receiving any injury, although it is not to be supposed that they fancied the trip.

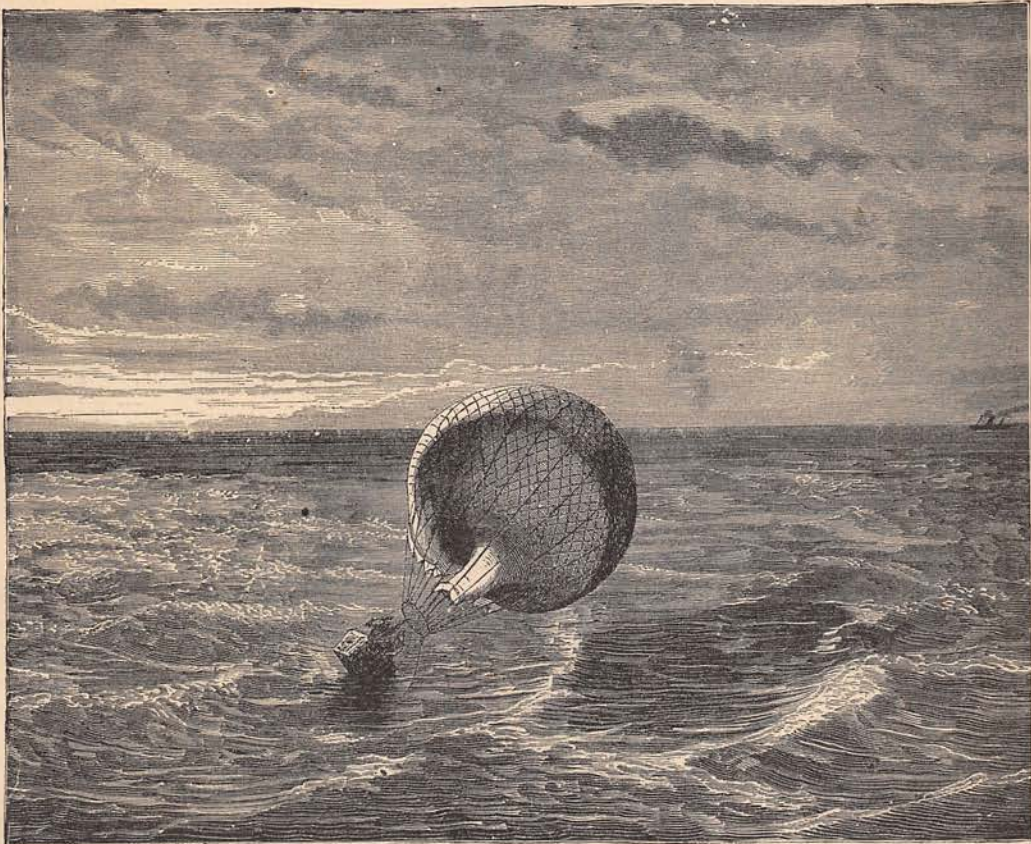
Balloonists themselves have frequently come down to the earth in parachutes, descending from a height of one or two miles. Generally these descents have been made in safety, yet there have been cases when the parachutes were not properly constructed, and when the unfortunate balloonists came down too fast, and were killed.

Not only when they descend by means of a parachute, do air-voyagers, or *aéronauts*, as they are called, run great risks of injury or death, but also when they come down in their balloons. In fact, it is much easier and safer to go up in a balloon than

perienced balloonists frequently manage to come down very gradually and gently, but sometimes the car of the balloon strikes the earth with a great shock; and if the wind is strong, the balloon is often blown along just above the surface of the ground, striking against trees, fences, and rocks, until its occupants, or some persons on the ground, manage to stop it.

But a descent into a river, a lake, or an ocean is one of the greatest dangers that a balloonist can expect. As I have before said, there has been no way devised by which a balloon may be made to move in any desired direction. Consequently when one comes down over the water the *aéronaut* generally endeavors to throw out all his sand-bags and other heavy things, in order that the balloon may rise again, and not come down until it has been blown over the land.

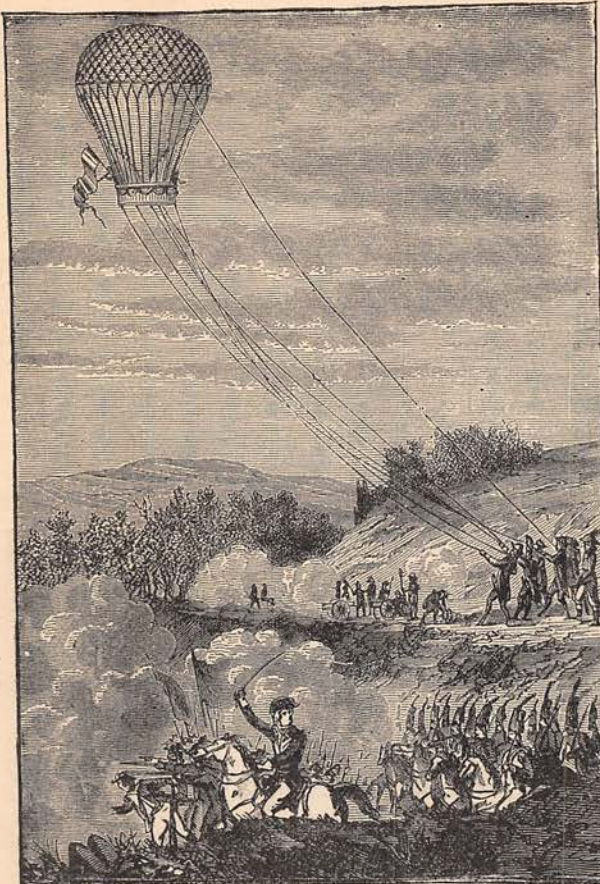
With regard to rivers and small lakes, this plan



"SOMETIMES DIPPING THE CAR INTO THE WAVES."

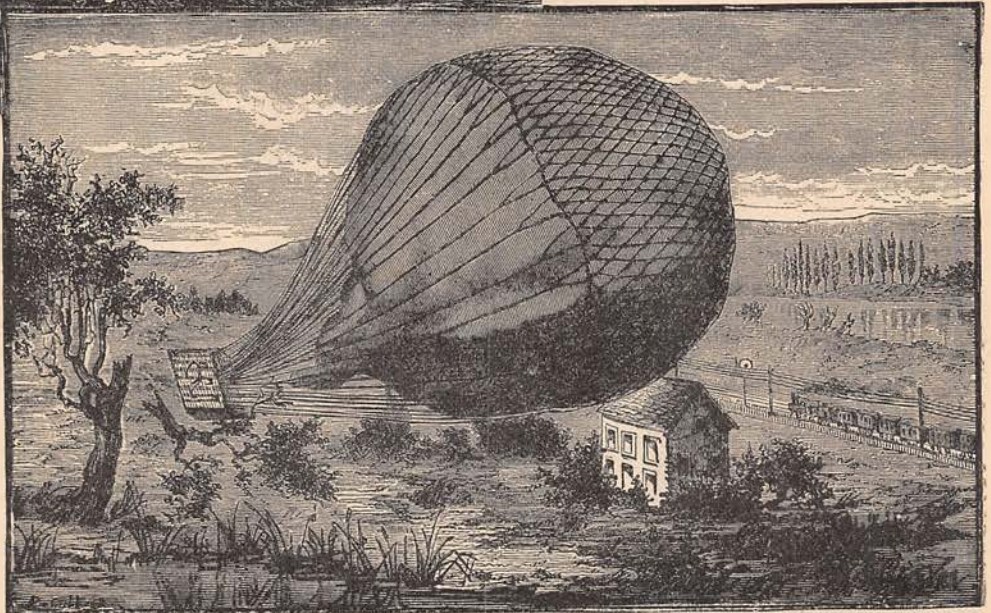
to come down in one. It is seldom possible for the *aéronaut* to know exactly, or to regulate just as he would wish, the rapidity of its descent. Ex-

may often be successful, but when the balloon is being carried out to sea, it generally comes down into the water sooner or later, and if the balloonists



are not rescued by some passing boat or vessel, they are almost certain to be drowned. In cases such as these, the balloons are often blown for a long distance over the surface of the ocean, sometimes dipping the car into the waves, then, perhaps, rising a little and sailing for a short distance above them, and then dragging the car and its occupants with great rapidity through the water. The lower picture on this page shows an incident that occurred on the land in October, 1863. An immense balloon, built by M. Nadar, and appropriately named "Le Géant" [The Giant], rose from Paris and made a pleasant voyage in the air. But when it neared the earth again, the vast ball was seized by the wind, and for hours the two-story car of wicker-work was dashed against rocks, trees, and houses, until the nine travelers, with broken limbs and many bruises, were rescued near Rethem, in Hanover. Many people would be frightened to death, even if they were not actually killed, during such adventures as these; but aeronauts must, of necessity, be brave men, for if a man is easily frightened, it is a wise thing for him to keep out of a balloon.

As I have said, balloons were found useful during the Civil War in the United States, but the first time a balloon was employed in warfare was at the battle of



Fleurus, Belgium, in 1794, between the French and the Austrians. Upon this occasion the balloon was managed as a kite, in the manner shown in the upper picture on the preceding page.

Sometimes balloonists have had very curious ideas. Mr. Green, one of the most distinguished aeronauts of England, once made an ascent on the back of a pony. The animal was so fastened on a platform beneath the car that he could not lie down nor move about. His owner then got upon his back, and the balloon rose high into the air. They came down in perfect safety, and the pony did not appear to have made the slightest objection to his aerial flight. Other aeronauts have made successful ascents on horseback and in various dangerous ways, but some of them lost their lives while performing these fool-hardy feats.

Occasionally balloonists make long voyages. Mr. Wise, our greatest aeronaut, once made a trip of one thousand one hundred and twenty miles in a balloon. He was a very successful balloonist. He made several hundred ascents, and was one of the few aeronauts who possessed a scientific knowledge of his profession.

He made a study of air-currents, and all matters relating to ballooning, and wrote a book on the subject. It is not long, however, since he lost his life during a balloon journey, so we see that even the most experienced navigators of the air are not free from danger.

But the practiced balloonist does not seem to fear danger any more than does the sailor, who steers his ship across the stormy ocean. There seems to be a fascination about ballooning, and some persons have made a great many ascents. Mr. Green made more than five hundred ascents in balloons. He, however, escaped all serious dangers, and died at a good old age.

The incidents which I have described show that, although balloons have, so far, been of little practical service to mankind, the people who are fond of rising two or three miles into the air very often meet with curious experiences, and that these unusual things generally occur when they are descending to the earth. If any of us could feel certain that it was not necessary for us to come down again, it might be a very pleasant and prudent thing to go up in a balloon.



"MISTER BROWN TAKES SISTER ANNIE YIDIN' 'MOST EVVY DAY. 'CAUSE SHE 'S A BID DIRL, I S'POSE. WONDER WHAT MADE ME BE SO YOUNG. ONLY FREE YEARS OLD! I 'D RAVVER BE FOUR. BUT DEN, A DOOD MANY FOLKS IS FREE. 'MOST ALL 'TITTLE DIRLS AINT ANY OLDER 'N 'AT."