

SELECTIONS.

AN UNDERGROUND RIVER.—Midway between Donagall and Ballyshannon, a very singular phenomenon may be seen. Running through the grounds of Major Hamilton, of Brownhill, is a small river, which bores its way underground, from cavern to cavern, for nearly two miles. The caverns are formed in the limestone, and the power of petrification possessed by the water is very astonishing. Sticks, straws, leaves, etc., are soon coated and crusted over, and by degrees hardened into stone; and so rapid is the process, that we may see one-half of the same leaf of the moss green and growing, and the other half crusted over in the process of petrification. The caves are, some of them, very beautiful, and when lighted up by the aid of a fragment of magnesium wire, the effect is most brilliant and striking, the walls sparkling and waterfall. The roof of the cavern is broken through by countless diamonds. In one of the river makes a fine and as the spectator stands in the subterranean light, looking up through a mass of ferns and stems of trees, with the hoarse roar of the waterfall plunging into an unseen depth through a cloud of mist at his feet, the dim cave partially lighted up around, but dark and mysterious in its recesses—the effect is inexpressibly charming—it is a perfect chamber of romance, and one can fancy superstition formerly holding high court here. Almost equally striking in another way is the manner in which the river once more makes its appearance into the light, wheeling up from a dark unfathomable-looking hole under a wide rift of rocks. Stealthily emerging from the ground, it oozes forth in a still black stream, a veritable people's hole about which, if legends do not exist, it is certainly a high time they did, as a most eligible opportunity has been hitherto unaccountably neglected.

GOLD MASK OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR.—This interesting relic of remote antiquity is preserved in the Museum of the East India Company. It was found by Colonel Rawlinson, while engaged in prosecuting the discoveries commenced by Layard and Botta at Nineveh and Babylon, and is supposed to have belonged to King Nebuchadnezzar. In exhuming from the mounds of these long lost cities, the destructive remains of this once gigantic power, the Colonel discovered, in a perfect state of preservation, what is well believed to be the mummy of Nebuchadnezzar. The face of the rebellious monarch of Babylon covered by one of those gold masks usually found in the Assyrian tombs, is described as very handsome; the forehead high and commanding, the features marked and regular. The mask is of thin gold, and independent of its once having belonged to the great monarch, has an immense value as a relic of an extinct people. The Arabs, tribes camping about Warka and other great mounds, search in the loose gravel with their spears for coins. Gold and silver ornaments, which have been buried in these graves for centuries, are worn by the Arab women of the present day; and many a rare object recovered thus are sold and melted by the goldsmiths of the East. The Arabs mention the discovery, by some fortunate shepherd, of royal tombs, in which were crowns and sceptres of pure gold.

AN EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERY.—A piece of news reaches us through the *Missouri Republican* which, if it should prove to be true (which we by no means affirm), is of the highest historical interest. But it is true, the engineers engaged in making the pier of a railway bridge at St. Louis, to cross the Mississippi, are said to have found an ancient tunnel below that mighty river! Details are given. The tunnel, we are told, "passes under the river to the Illinois shore, and whether it is wholly the work of some ancient race who once inhabited this land, whose interesting remains are strewn so thickly up and down this great valley, or whether it is partly natural and partly artificial, remains to be seen. In any case it is none the less stupendous. The main passage we should judge to be about 20 feet high by 15 feet broad, and systematically arched overhead, part of the way by cutting through solid rock and part by substantial masonry; the bottom seemed to be much worn, as if by carriage wheels of some sort. There are many lateral passages which, of course, we had no time to enter. These are about eight feet high and six feet wide. In the main passage we saw no foot or implements of workmanship; but on entering one of the lateral passages, we soon emerged into a large chamber supported by leaning pillars of solid rock when the chamber was excavated. Around the walls of this chamber there were what seemed to be niches closed with closely-fitting slabs, each slab covered with inscriptions in Runic uniform characters, which to our eyes bore a marvellous resemblance to those upon the slabs in the Mercantile Library, which were brought from the mine of Nineveh. Between the niches were projecting pilasters, with draped Assyrian or Egyptian heads, which presented a most impressive and awe-inspiring effect as they were illuminated by the torchlight. Those sweet, and faces looked down upon us from the ancient ages, like the souls of the departed."—*Review*.

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