AN ASTRONOMICAL CRUISE.

THE NOTEBOOK OF THE AMHERST ECLIPSE EXPEDITION.

CORONA AND CORONET. Being a Narrative of the Amherst Eclipse Expedition to Japan in Mr. James's Schooner-yacht Coronet. By Mabel Loomis Todd. Illustrated. Octavo, pp., 383. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

There is no mystery which the astronomers have sought more eagerly to solve and from the solution of which they have reasonably expected to gather more abundant results than the nature and behavior of the solar corona. This vast, delicate envelope of the sun, seen only during the rare and brief intervals of total eclipse, is the chief subject of scientific interest whenever the interposition of the moon gives us a chance to examine the appendages of the orb of day. It is now believed that all of the fixed stars—probably about a hundred million in number—are suns, some larger and some smaller than ours, some less developed and some older, but all of them bodies whose composition and life history are very much like those of the one about which the earth makes a circuit yearly. Hence, if we could but learn the secrets of this particular body, which is so much nearer to us than the stars, we should gain a good deal of information in regard to the remaining millions. More than that, it is not improbable that we should also find out something of the influences exerted upon our own planet—its atmosphere, magnetism, weather and, possibly, the life of its population. No wonder, then, that the astronomers go to the uttermost parts of the globe to witness a total eclipse of the sun, when, by calculations that afford a beautiful exhibition of the powers of the human mind, they ascertain years in advance not only the very hour and minute of the event, but the precise path on the earth's surface that the fleeting lunar shadow will pursue.

The line along which the eclipse of August, 1896, was total extended from the coast of Norway up across Nova Zembla, in the Arctic Ocean, down again into Siberia, and so out to the Pacific. One of the many parties of astronomers organized to observe it was in charge of Professor Todd, of Amherst College, and was stationed at Esashi, on the island of Yezo, about 350 miles north of Tokio. High hopes were entertained in regard to this expedition, not only by the members, but by other experts and many friends. Mr. D. Willis James and his son, Captain Arthur James, placed at the disposal of the Amherst party their schooner-yacht Coronet, the boat which won a famous victory in a race with the Dauntless across the Atlantic just before she came into the possession of her present owners. The wife of Professor Todd, who is the daughter of the late Elias Loomis, of Yale—himself a noted astronomer—accompanied the expedition, and now gives us a pleasant account of a remarkable cruise. The voyage to Japan and back added forty-five thousand miles to the record of the Coronet. She was taken around the Cape by her sailing master, but Captain James sailed her from San Francisco, and in a chapter of his own he offers some attractive suggestions relative to the use of square sails on a schooner. Captain James and the astronomical party left the Atlantic seaboard as soon as the Coronet arrived at San Francisco, Professor Todd carrying the more delicate instruments, chronometers, lenses and so on. The heavier parts of the apparatus had already been shipped on the yacht.

A few days were spent at the Sandwich Islands. The astronomers and the "unscientific contingent" visited the volcanoes, noted the beautiful flowers of that oceanic paradise, ate poi—in moderate quantities—and did many other things which the islanders do, although Mrs. Todd evidently did not ride a horse astride, as women in Hawaii are accustomed to do. The circumstances of the death of Kate Field, which occurred while the Amherst party was at Honolulu, afford material for a chapter, as do the facts gleaned by the doctor of the expedition in regard to the leper colony at Molokai. A typhoon was encountered on arrival off the coast of Japan. And when the party went ashore they heard of a terrific destructive earthquake and tidal wave that had ravaged Japan just before they reached Yokohama. The Government of the island empire did much to facilitate the work of the astronomers. Professor Todd hurried northward to the station as promptly as possible, in order to have his apparatus ready before the event which he had come to observe. Meantime the unscientific members of the party spent two or three weeks in sightseeing in the southern part of the archipelago. Mrs. Todd had visited this part of the world before, having accompanied her husband on one of his eclipse expeditions to Japan. In the following paragraph she embodies the one phase of the life and scenes she especially observed: "A certain half-tropical, gently pungent odor, not precisely that of flowers or luxuriant vegetation, incense, or moist atmosphere, old embroideries, or the culture of ages, but perhaps all of these together, and more powerful to awaken association than even sight or sound, haunts Japan like a spiritual aroma. With its first dimly suggestive breath the nine years' chasm was so bridged that life might almost have gone on ever since without a break, in this dear, dreamy lotus-land."

Professor Todd's apparatus included a number of novel devices. One of these was a clock for keeping his instruments continually directed to the sun, after being set in operation. One leg of a tripod terminated in a piston, or plunger, that was inserted in a tube filled with glycerine. This fluid was allowed to escape like the sand from an hourglass, at just such a rate as to allow the plunger to sink at the desired rate. This device had been repeatedly tested, and worked like a charm before the eclipse. But even more valuable was an electrical machine, looking like an organette, which actuated the shutters and replenished the plates, of a lot of cameras mounted on the one "polar axis." Pins set into the revolving barrel of this apparatus were so adjusted as to make an electric contact at the right second of time, and thus mechanically insure the exposure of several hundred photographic plates during the two minutes of totality. Twenty distinct instruments were operated in this way, automatically. Not only were the services of that many men dispensed with, but the numerous elements of uncertainty, such as human forgetfulness or excitement, which might interfere with success, were eliminated. When the long-looked-for day arrived, the scientists experienced a sad disappointment. A film of broken cloud covered the sky to such an extent as to prevent the cameras from getting any record that was worth preserving. But visual observation was rewarded with glimpses of the corona, valueless, alas, from a scientific point of view, though tantalizingly beautiful. The island of Yeso is the home of the nearly extinguished race of Ainus, about whom the ethnologists have been much divided of late. Professor Morse, of the Peabody Museum, had requested Mrs. Todd to secure for him, while she was in that region, various products of the Ainu handicraft. In this incidental part of the work of the Amherst expedition she was highly successful.

There was sold in London, the other day, one of the most precious printed copies of the Bible known to collectors. This was a copy of that first printed edition of the Sacred Book known as the "Gutenberg Bible," and the first important issue from movable metal types. Only twenty-five copies are known to exist. This particular copy was sold to Mr. Quaritch for $14,750. Five copies out of the twenty-five have changed hands within the last twenty years.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling is to respond to the toast of "Literature" at the next Royal Academy banquet. The president of the Academy, by the way, is Mr. Kipling's uncle, Sir Edward Poynter.

Much that is new and important will be found, we are told, in Lord Ashbourne's forthcoming volume on Pitt. Materials little used by other biographers have been placed at his disposal. An interesting place which he visited in the course of his work was the house of the late Edward Stanhope, Revesby Abbey, which Lord Ashbourne says, "teems with memorials" of Pitt. "Mr. Stanhope," it is stated, "regarded the subject as one of the great interests of his life, but there was no trace of any design on his part to write any book. He had, however, made (as his magnum opus) a marvellous and priceless collection of Pitt's pictures and caricatures—interpaged at suitable places in his father's 'Life of Pitt.' He had, besides, numerous volumes of illustrations and caricatures of the time, together with a lock of Pitt's hair. The whole place was full of signs and tokens of Pitt."

In the recently published third volume of the annals of the Blackwood firm, there is much entertaining matter concerning George Eliot, who entered on her career as a novelist under John Blackwood's auspices. The secret of her authorship was well kept for a long time. Dickens was one of the shrewdest of the guessers. "I have been very much interested," he wrote to Mr. Blackwood, "by your extract from 'Mr. Eliot's' letter, which has given me the greatest pleasure. Also of your account of the manner in which you had the good fortune to find (I say nothing of the good sense immediately to appreciate) that admirable and charming writer. The portions of the narrative to which you refer had not escaped my notice. But their weight is very light in my scale, against all the references to children, and against such marvels of description as Mrs. Barton sitting up in bed to mend the children's clothes. The selfish young fellow with the heart disease, in 'Mr. Gilfil's Love Story,' is plainly taken from a woman's point of view. Indeed, I observe all the women in the book are more alive than the men, and more informed from within. As to Janet, in the last tale, I know nothing in literature done by a man like the frequent references to her grand form, and her eyes and her height and so forth; whereas I do know innumerable things of that kind in books of imagination by women. And I have not the faintest doubt that a woman described her being shut out into the street by her husband, and conceived and executed the whole idea of her following of that clergyman. If I be wrong in this, then I protest that a woman's mind has got into some man's body by a mistake that ought immediately to be corrected."

Some of George Eliot's literary theories were described by Mr. Blackwood in a letter to his wife. "He had visited the novelist while she was at work on "Romola": "Her great difficulty seems to be that she, as she describes it, hears her characters talking, and there is a weight upon her mind as if Savonarola and his friends ought to be speaking Italian instead of English. Her description of how she realized her characters was very marvellous. I never heard anything so good as her distinction between what is called the real and the imaginative. It amounted to this, that you could not have the former without the latter and greater quality. Any real observation of life and character must be limited, and the imagination must fill in and give life to the picture. 'Silas Marner' sprang from her childish recollection of a man with a stoop and expression of face that led her to think that he was an alien from his fellows. The dialect of Lisbeth in 'Adam Bede' arose from her occasionally hearing her father when with his brothers revert to the dialect of his native district, Derbyshire. She could not tell how the feeling and knowledge came to her, but when Lisbeth was speaking she felt it was a real language which she heard."

One of the Scotch stories which Mrs. Gerald Porter tells in her "Blackwood" book is to this effect:

"An inquiry was once being made as to the cause of the potato disease, and a number of leading farmers and agriculturists were invited to give their views on the subject in 'The Agricultural Journal,' which the Blackwoods published. Among the many answers received for publication one took the palm. The writer said: 'I thocht at first it was a dispensation of Almichty God, but now I believe it is an insect.'"

Another amusing anecdote concerns a clerical friend of Mr. Blackwood, and an old gardener employed by the latter:

"One day my father happened to be walking round the garden with Mr. White, when they came across this old worthy, to whom he introduced Mr. White, remarking that he was a fellow-countryman, although a clergyman of the Church of England. 'Ou, aye,' said the old man, looking at him complacently, 'gairdners or meenisters, ony kind o' held wark, they maun aye come tae us.'"

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Vol. XII., No. 68 CHRISTMAS NUMBER DECEMBER, 1898

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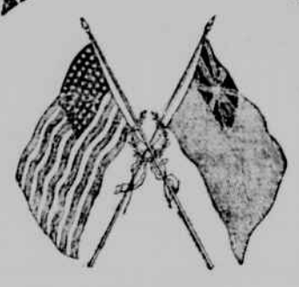

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IN HONOR OF ADMIRAL SCHLEY.

DINNER GIVEN FOR HIM BY THE BROOKLYN CLUB—THE SPEAKERS.

"Nations do not win great victories and then restore to the conquered nation the fruits of those victories," was a typical expression of the expansion sentiment which was enthusiastically applauded at the dinner given in honor of Rear-Admiral Winfield Scott Schley, U. S. N., at the Brooklyn Club last night. It was attended by one hundred of the leading citizens of Brooklyn. Chauncey M. Depew, General Tracy and St. Clair McKelway, who presided, also made addresses in addition to the guest of the evening. All spoke strongly along the lines of expansion, and their remarks were sympathetically received.

Rear-Admiral Schley was the first speaker, and was received with cheers. He gave a calm, clear and vivid analytical description of the battle of Santiago. Every word was listened to with the keenest interest. A few of the sentences which provoked enthusiasm were in substance:

It is a great tribute to the American Navy that every one of our ships which were set to watch the entrance to the harbor simultaneously observed and reported the movement of the Spanish fleet.

When we cut loose with the Brooklyn in pursuit of the Cristobal Colon I had a feeling similar to Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, that it would spoil a glorious victory if we should allow one ship to escape.

The result of the battle was unique in this respect, that, in a contest where two fleets of almost equal strength were engaged, one was totally annihilated, while the victors lost hardly a man.

In speaking of his trip and work in Porto Rico he said that he had found these fundamental errors in the Spanish military system, which, in his opinion, accounted for their defeat: The Spaniards believed that the soldier can fight who is not fed; they believed that the soldier can be vigilant who is not allowed to sleep; that he will serve loyally the State when he gets no pay; and the Spanish soldier and official talked too much.

Mr. Depew was introduced and was warmly welcomed. In an historical sketch of the country, he traced the growth of American responsibilities and of American capacity for government. He was strongly in favor of expansion, and said that "the country must live up to the opportunities given it by her heroes."

General Tracy was introduced as the creator of naval resources. He spoke of his personal friendship with Rear-Admiral Schley, and said that the latter's gallantry and bravery as a naval officer were only equalled by his generosity and honor as a friend. The General said that the country must now face the consequences of the war. It was true that Americans had not started upon a war of conquest, but no nation could anticipate the results of a war once entered upon.

A toast to Rear-Admiral Bunce, United States Navy, who was one of the guests, ended the dinner. Another guest was Medical Director Delevan Bloodgood, United States Navy.

OBITUARY.

COLONEL HENRY LEE.

Boston, Nov. 25.—News of the death of Colone Henry Lee, for many years the head of the well-known banking firm of Lee, Higginson & Co., which occurred at his home in Brookline last night, was made known to-day. Colonel Lee was born in Boston, September 2, 1817, and was the son of Henry Lee, a noted economist of his time. He was a graduate of Harvard in the class of '36. For more than thirty years he had been one of the overseers of the college. He got his title of Colonel by appointment on the staff of Governor Andrew, Massachusetts's War Governor. During those days Colonel Lee was a strong opponent of General Butler in the latter's attempt to raise troops in Massachusetts independent of the State authorities. He retired from the firm of Lee, Higginson & Co. on December 31, 1897. He was one of the leading promoters of the American Bell Telephone Company.

A few years ago he published a work entitled "The Militia of the United States: What It Is and What It Should Be." For many years he had given much attention to literary pursuits, and was thus actively engaged until the time of his death. He was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

WESTON STICKNEY.

Weston Stickney, a lawyer, with an office at No. 31 Nassau-st., died at his home, No. 141 West Eighty-sixth-st., yesterday. Mr. Stickney was the eldest son of Albert and Elizabeth Stickney. He was a member of the Harvard Club.

GENERAL ANDREW T. M'REYNOLDS.

Muskegon, Mich., Nov. 25.—General Andrew T. McReynolds, who was the first and only person commissioned by President Lincoln direct to raise a regiment in the Rebellion, died to-day at the age of ninety-one at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Frederick Nims. He served in the Mexican War and was promoted to the rank of Major for gallantry at Cherubusco. He was a United States District-Attorney and rendered distinguished service in the Civil War. General McReynolds always said he was the oldest Knight Templar in the United States.

TO WIND UP A BOSTON BANK.

Boston, Nov. 25.—At a meeting to-day of the Shawmut National Bank stockholders it was voted to liquidate the institution, 8,717 shares being in favor to ten shares against. President Stearns and Frederick E. Snow, of Gaston & Snow, were appointed the liquidating committee.

GEORGE B. POST ELECTED PRESIDENT.

At a meeting held yesterday in the offices of ex-Judge Henry E. Howland, the Board of Trustees of the National Arts Club elected as president George B. Post, the president of the Fine Arts Federation and late president of the American Institute of Architects. The following were elected vice-presidents: James W. Alexander and Samuel P. Avery, New-York; Bernard N. Baker, Baltimore; Perry Belmont, New-York; Colonel George G. Briggs, Grand Rapids, Mich.; J. Templeman Coolidge, jr., Boston; Professor Charles E. Dana, Philadelphia; Sir William C. Van Horne, Montreal; William M. Ladd, Portland, Ore.; John La Farge, New-York; George E. Leighton, St. Louis; R. Hall McCormick, Chicago; Professor Allan Marquand, Princeton, N. J.; E. Francis Riggs, Washington, D. C., and Irving M. Scott, San Francisco.

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ANOTHER WILMERDING INQUIRY.

INSANITY EXPERTS DECLARE THAT SHE IS COMPETENT TO MANAGE HER OWN AFFAIRS.

Eugene B. Travis, Dr. Charles F. MacDonald and Dr. H. Ernest Schmid, commissioners appointed by Justice Keogh, in the Supreme Court, last summer to inquire into the sanity of Mrs. Marie F. Wilmerding, who is an inmate of the Bloomingdale Asylum, in White Plains, held another session yesterday in the courthouse in that village. Besides the commissioners, there were present Louis Levi and Albert Bach, counsel for Mrs. Wilmerding, who brought the proceedings for her release, and John B. Gleason, counsel for Mrs. Wilmerding's guardians, who are opposed to her being discharged from the asylum, to which she was committed on January 28 last.

Mrs. Wilmerding was present in the courtroom, accompanied by two female attendants from the asylum. She seemed to be in excellent health, and verified by every look and action the testimony of the doctors examined as to her sanity. Dr. George E. Jacoby, of this city, stated that it was his belief that at the present time Mrs. Wilmerding was sound of mind and able to manage her business affairs, and he knew of no reason why she should be confined in a lunatic asylum. Dr. Jacoby was cross-examined by Mr. Gleason concerning certain letters written by Mrs. Wilmerding, but the lawyer failed to obtain any admission from the doctor that the statements in these letters, however irrational, were conclusive proof that the writer was afflicted with paranoia.

Drs. Landon Carter Gray and Carlton Simon, also insanity experts, from this city, were examined, and their testimony was on precisely the same lines as that given by Dr. Jacoby.

On being recalled Dr. Jacoby advanced the idea that the irrational acts committed by Mrs. Wilmerding were the outcome of delusions from alcoholic insanity. Dr. S. B. Lyon, superintendent of Bloomingdale Asylum, testified that, concerning Mrs. Wilmerding's condition, he was of the same opinion as when he last appeared before the commission. She is in good condition physically, her mental condition is fair, and if she has any delusions she conceals them. She could get along nicely with suitable surroundings outside the asylum, but he did not think her capable of properly managing her business affairs. Mr. Gleason wished to introduce testimony as to Mrs. Wilmerding's condition prior to her entering the asylum last January, and the inquiry was adjourned until this morning.

TINPLATE CONSOLIDATION ASSURED.

MOST OF THE MANUFACTURERS TAKING STOCK FOR THEIR PLANTS.

Cleveland, Nov. 25.—"The Iron Trade Review" says that the failure of the steel rail manufacturers to agree on a selling arrangement or to fix prices for 1899 is the important development of the last week. The next step is still undetermined. The possibility of some division of Central and Western business between Pittsburg and Chicago is reported to be still under consideration, and a meeting will be held at Chicago to-day.

The tinplate consolidation is now an assured fact. Most of the details have been arranged, and nothing has been left undone which could cause a miscarriage of the plans at the last moment. Probably 90 per cent of those who are selling out to promoters are taking stock in exchange. The consolidated company will be in actual working order by the first of the new year. It is the frank admission of well-posted men that no similar deal has ever been consummated in the United States which was so perfectly managed in all its details. The tinplate manufacturers were originally a unit in asking for cash for their plants, but in the most admirable manner they have been convinced that stock would be preferable, and it is now certain that the bulk will accept stock.

It is generally agreed that D. G. Reid, now treasurer of the American Tin Plate Company, Elwood, Ind., will be president. His only formidable opponent is W. T. Graham, president of the Ætna-Standard Steel Company, of Bridgeport, Ohio.

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MR. GRAHAM SAYS HE WILL NOT BE PRESIDENT.

Wheeling, W. Va., Nov. 25.—W. T. Graham, president of the Ætna Standard Iron and Steel Company, who is mentioned in a dispatch from Cleveland as an aspirant for the presidency of the tinplate consolidation, said to-night:

"None of the credit to be given for the success of the tinplate scheme is due to me more than to any other of the manufacturers. It properly belongs to Judge Moore, of Chicago, and a syndicate working with him. I have not been and am not now a candidate for the presidency of the company. I believe it is well understood among manufacturers that D. G. Reed is to be president of the company."

GOING TO CUBA TO BE MARRIED.

Among the passengers who sailed yesterday for Havana on the steamer Saratoga was Miss Catherine Wiselogel, of St. Louis, who goes to Cuba to be married to William H. Mephan, who until recently was in business in St. Louis. He went to Cuba three months ago, and soon became engaged in business there. Miss Wiselogel was accompanied by her brother.

GEN. BUTLER CALLED TO WASHINGTON.

Washington, Nov. 25.—In the Army orders published to-day the announcement is made that under instructions of the President Major-General Matthew C. Butler, a member of the Cuban Evacuation Commission, is to report in person to the Secretary of War for temporary duty in Washington, and on its completion will return to Havana. It is supposed that the President and Secretary Alger wish to consult General Butler concerning the work of the Evacuation Commission.