ROSSETTI.

Further Souvenirs of the Painter Poet and His Circle.

ROSSETTI PAPERS, 1862 to 1870. A Compilation by William Michael Rossetti. 8vo, pp. xxiii, 359. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

Is it a matter of interest to the world at large that William Bell Scott, being in Venice in 1862, burned a small hole in his trousers with a lucifer, and could not, with the aid of either money or magic, procure a jobbing tailor to repair the damage? We do not think it is, and accordingly we are disappointed to find the episode, and scores of others equally trivial, solemnly commemorated in the book before us. But, on the other hand, a book of this sort always requires to be rather carefully sifted by the reader, and Mr. William Rossetti is not, perhaps, to be too harshly blamed. He means well, if ever a man did. He has already published two books filled with information about his famous brother and his friends, and the task begun in them he now continues—the task of making it impossible for posterity to misunderstand the celebrated pre-Raphaelite painter and poet. He wants to show him to us exactly as he lived, putting every detail into the picture that might serve to give it reality. He promises to succeed in his aim, for from the material that he is slowly but steadily putting into print future biographers will be able to obtain many suggestive points.

For example, we have in the past heard enough and to spare about Dante Rossetti's morbidity. This element in his nature is not to be ignored, but neither should it be put too constantly in the foreground, and nothing is more welcome in the present volume than its frequent revelation of the high spirits and jocularity of which he was capable. "I can't get on with men who are not men of the world," he is quoted as saying, and indeed these pages make the dry bones of many an old squabble rattle again, for divers of the individuals in his circle were anything but men of the world. But he had his happy moments, and even some of his difficulties with obstreperous clients are hit off in his letters with a blithe touch. Rossetti had a keen eye for the main chance, and in his biography one is always coming across matters of pounds, shillings and pence. At one moment we are sympathizing with him in his wrath over the too slow approach of fortune, and in the next we rejoice with him over some addition to his collection. "I have just bought for £2," he writes to Madox Brown, "a most godlike picture of 'The Old Swan Inn and Market Place at Barnet'—the chef d'oeuvre of the British school—I should think by Morland in his best time." He makes purchases of blue china and writes joyously to Brown: "My Pots now baffle description altogether, while the imagination which could remotely conceive them would deserve a tercentenary celebration." "Roses and honeysuckles have left me penniless," he says in another note, alluding to his efforts to achieve accuracy in the flower painting of a work upon which he was engaged. In the course of his reading he comes upon a title that appeals to his sense of the comic, "Essays Written in the Intervals of Business," and with a chuckle he jots down this parody of it: "Essays Written in the Intervals of Lockjaw, Elephantiasis, and Penal Servitude." The impulse toward sheer fun which came from time to time to counteract his melancholy is shown by the nonsense verses which he liked to compose, and of which his brother gives us an abundant sheaf. Here is one of these characteristic squibs:

There is a combative artist named Whistler
Who is, like his own hog hairs, a bristler;
A tube of white lead
And a punch on the head
Offer varied attractions to Whistler.

Rossetti's famous recovery of his poems from the grave of his wife is touched upon in this volume. He appears to have been full of fears about the transaction. Talking with Scott, he told him "how nervous he was about what his own family might feel about the measure necessary to be taken." His note to Madox Brown is matter of fact enough. He says:

I went to-day to see those MSS. at the Doctor's, and I shall be able to have them in a few days. They are in a disappointing state. The things I have already seem almost perfect, and there is a great hole right through all the leaves of "Jenny," which was the thing I most wanted. A good deal is lost, but I have no doubt the things as they are will enable me, with a little rewriting and a good memory, and the rough copies I have, to re-establish the whole in a perfect state.

The fact is that, while the strange atmosphere of Rossetti's household, and his own eccentricity, have not been exaggerated in the various notes we have received on both, the different members of that family seem to have proceeded upon a great many occasions in a merely natural manner. We are glad to learn this, as we do learn it from Mr. William Rossetti's latest volume. In view of the morbidity to which we have alluded, it is well to know that Dante Rossetti, for some years of his life at least, took his affairs in easy fashion, corresponded cheerfully with his sister Cristina about her poems, and altogether behaved like a rational human being. The glimpses of him given in this book show him to us generous, good natured, humorous, and more sympathetic than in most previous records of him.

Incidentally, Mr. William Rossetti offers us some sidelights on more than one distinguished Englishman. He prints a note from Palgrave to this effect: "Tennyson when here looked at Miss Rossetti's poems, and expressed great pleasure to me at what he read. But one never gets him to formularize a neat 'Saturday' or 'Longman's Review' judgment on these matters." Nothing could be more characteristic of the late Laureate. Swinburne is quoted as calling Matthew Arnold more satisfactory a poetic writer than either Browning or Tennyson. Elsewhere, alluding to the death of a beautiful Angora given to the poet by Mazzini, Mr. Rossetti adds that "it used to sit on his head while he was writing!" There are several passages relating to Ruskin. He was enchanted with a book of uncolored Japanese landscapes lent to him, and wrote, "I should like to go and live in Japan," a remark disclosing a phase of taste in him in some ways surprising. There was a quaint half-quarrel between him and Rossetti over a photographer introduced to him by the latter. "I tell you the people you associate with are ruining you," he declared. "But remember I have personally some right to say this—for the entirely blamable introduction you gave to a mere blackguard, to me, has been the cause of such a visible libel upon me [a certain photograph] going about England as I hold worse than all the scandals and lies ever uttered about me. But, if there is anything in my saying this which you feel either cruel or insolent, again I ask your pardon." These were strong words, and Rossetti seems to have resented them, but he seems also to have been placated. The next Ruskin letter runs in part as follows:

Dear Rossetti,—I am also very thankful these letters have been written—we shall both care more for each other. Please come now the first fine evening—tea at seven. I will stay in till you do come, so you will be sure of me.

Before I see you, let me at once put an end to your calling me, whatever you may think (much more, any supposing that I think myself), a "great man." It is just because I honestly know I am not that I speak so positively on other known things. I entirely scorn all my own capacities, except the sense of visible beauty, which is a useful gift—not a "greatness." But I have worked at certain things that I know that I know, as I do spelling.

But we won't have rows; and, when you come, we'll look at things that we both like. You shall bar Parma, and I, Japan; and we'll look at Titian, John Bellini, Albert Durer and Edward Jones; and I'll say no more about the red-eyed man and the photographs.

We might go on indefinitely citing odds and ends of interest from this volume. It is an overfilled scrapbook of letters, diaries and memoranda, and, we repeat, it needs sifting. But for those who are interested in one of the most striking personalities in English art and literature, the trouble is worth taking.

A KING'S CONSORT.

Sophie Dorothea's Letters to Count Konigsmarck.

THE LOVE OF AN UNCROWNED QUEEN. SOPHIE DOROTHEA, CONSORT OF GEORGE I, AND HER CORRESPONDENCE WITH PHILIP CHRISTOPHER, COUNT KONIGSMARCK. By W. H. Wilkins. New and Revised Edition. 8vo, pp. 451. Longmans, Green & Co.

One of the most dramatic love stories in history is that of Sophie Dorothea of Celle and Hanover and the handsome adventurer, Königsmarck. Our readers will remember that Mr. Wilkins's picturesque narrative was some time ago reviewed in these columns—we have now to note the issue of a carefully revised edition of the work. Mr. Wilkins has the credit of discovering by chance and publishing for the first time in English the letters of the unfortunate princess and her worshipper—a correspondence which had been hidden away for many years in the library of the little University of Lund in Sweden. All these appeared in the first edition, the only suppressions being of passages in which Königsmarck, in the coarse vein of his century, relates anecdotes of his comrades in camp. There are over two hundred of these epistles, but they do not exhaust the correspondence between the lady and the soldier. Since his first edition was brought out the author has found that a further instalment is preserved in the state archives at Berlin, and that still another instalment is in the custody of one of Sophie Dorothea's descendants, the Duke of Cumberland, at his castle, Gmünden. He has examined the letters at Berlin and tells us that, like those at Lund, they are alternately full of jealous reproaches and passionate avowals of love, and they shed no fresh light on the tragedy. He has not printed these new letters in this edition, hoping in a later one to be permitted to present the whole correspondence as preserved at Lund, at Berlin and at Gmünden.

The revised edition, as the author admits, shows few changes aside from the addition of notes specifying authorities or adducing proofs of the genuineness of the letters. He has left out a few of the letters which were merely repetitions, and he has shortened his account of the accession of Sophie Dorothea's husband to the English throne. The portrait of that brutish George he has certainly provided with no softening touches, but the man lives in these pages, whether the painting be truthful or not. So do Duchess Sophia, the plain, ambitious daughter of the lovely Queen of Hearts, and Countess Platen, the base intriguante, and Sophie Dorothea, poor little, impulsive, vain, warm-hearted, wrong-headed victim of political policy and of her own unstable character. The romance that ended with the midnight murder of Königsmarck in the long corridor in the old Hanover Palace is described with a faithfulness based on many unpublished state documents, and the same care is displayed in the account of Sophie Dorothea's imprisonment of years in the Castle of Ahlden. The story is told with an impartiality oddly veined by an obvious sympathy with the princess—a sympathy which in many a reader takes its rise no doubt in a hearty contempt for her husband. The book, painstaking history as it is, is as animated, vivid and absorbing as a good novel.

DISRAELI AND THIERS.

The Story of the Former's Famous Plagiarism.

Emily Crawford, in The Contemporary Review.

I knew M. Thiers before the fall of the Empire. My husband made his acquaintance under peculiar circumstances, soon after the first meeting of Parliament that followed the Duke of Wellington's death. Reading Disraeli's eulogium in the House of Commons on that great warrior, it struck Mr. Crawford that he had already seen it, and in trying to remember where, it seemed to him it was in a work of Thiers. He mentioned the subject to Montalembert, who habitually read "The Times," and who also thought he must have read Disraeli's speech in some French history. "Thiers," he said, "has written so much and so well that one must be pardoned if one does not retain all the fine pages in his books." Mr. Crawford asked whether he could give him a letter of introduction to M. Thiers, a request that Montalembert at once complied with in the most obliging and complimentary manner. Furnished with it, my husband called on M. Thiers at the Place St. Georges, met with a gracious reception, and stated why he had come. He translated Disraeli's speech. Thiers listened with the shrewdest interest, and, when he had heard the translation, said: "Cela doit être de moi." He seemed greatly amused at the matter, and remarked what a droll idea it was for Disraeli to adapt to Wellington, "whose character I hate, though I have ever sought to do him every justice, something I had written, no doubt, about a person of a wholly different disposition. I met Disraeli at General Peel's when last in London, and thought him pince sans rire. The general told me he was très farceur, and he estimated him, it appears, rightly."

Thiers promised to look through his histories of the Revolution and (as well as I remember) the Consulate for the chapter from which Disraeli must have pirated. He kept his word. The original and the adaptation appeared side by side in some London journal—probably "The Daily News."

I often heard my husband, whose acquaintance I made years later, speak of his first interview with Thiers. Disraeli knew nothing about military matters, and probably preferred purloining from Thiers, who did, to making a fool of himself. France and England had been connected for the first time by a submarine telegraph on the last day of Wellington's life. Hardly any Tory M. P.'s had read Thiers's work, and Paris and London were so far apart that the eulogium on Wellington would in all likelihood be forgotten before the original author could be brought to light.

AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS.

From The London Academy.

The trouble between authors and their illustrators is an old one, and it is often difficult to apportion the blame. Sometimes the author is so vague that the illustrator has to fall back upon his own imagination, in which case he is almost certain to enrage the author; sometimes the author is so precise and detailed in a description that the unfortunate illustrator is at his wits' end to know what to leave in and what to leave out. And there always comes in the author's conception of a character, which he has rendered according to his lights, and the illustrator's, which he has to render definitely in a wholly different medium.

When Tennyson saw one of Holman Hunt's drawings for "The Lady of Shalott" he said: "But, my dear Hunt, I never said that the young woman's hair was blowing all over the shop." To which Hunt replied: "No, but you never said it wasn't." The only reasonable course is for author and illustrator to meet and talk things over.

"CLAMEUR DE HARO."

From The Intermédiaire.

This custom, without effect now in Normandy, where the référé takes its place, has still the force of law in the Anglo-Norman islands. In 1872 a tenancier of a parish in Jersey considered himself injured by the opening of a public road across his property. Having repaired to the place concerned, he knelt down and, with crossed arms, cried out: "*Ah! Rollon, mon, duc et mon prince, on me fait violence! je demande justice: Haro! Haro! Haro!*" At this cry the navvies, ceasing all work, laid down their tools. The constable of the parish, being warned, ran to Saint Hélier to fetch the members of the court, and soon after sixteen magistrates . . . arrived . . . with the bailli and the procureur général. The tenancier had put all justice in precipitate movement.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Current Talk of Things Present and to Come.

John Dennie has translated from the French Julian Klaczko's work on Italian art, "Rome and the Renaissance—The Pontificate of Julius II." The author has made a long and intimate study of the subject, and his book is described as having a strong personal element. The decade discussed, 1503 to 1513, was in many ways memorable in painting, architecture and sculpture. The translator is himself the author of a book on Roman art, called "Rome of To-day." The volume will have a large number of illustrations.

The late C. A. Higgins had travelled much in the West, had descended the trails of the Grand Canyon of Arizona, and had often camped for weeks at a time in the inner gorge and on the rim as well. In his meetings with the native Indians he had managed to become rather intimate with much of their life, and took the greatest interest in studying it. He was initiated into one of the most secret of the Moki societies. In a book which has just come from the press of Doubleday, Page & Co. he tells of these things. The volume, "To California and Back," is, however, designed as a complete guide to travellers. Mr. Higgins was an active railroad official.

Hitherto a new book by Mr. Kipling, published in ordinary form, has not been printed in the subscription edition until a later time. Charles Scribner's Sons have only just brought out, in the twentieth volume of the "Outward Bound" edition of this author's writings in prose and verse, the "Just So Stories," which were first published about a year ago. The volume contains, by the way, "The Tabu Tale," a fragment of which we quoted the other day. The capital illustrations in black and white, by the author, are all retained.

The Scribners also issue, as the twenty-first volume of the "Outward Bound" edition, Kipling's new book of verses, "The Five Nations," issuing it on the same day with the ordinary edition brought out by Doubleday, Page & Co. The frontispiece is an illustration to "The Truce of the Bear," modelled in clay by Mr. J. Lockwood Kipling after a fashion which has now grown thoroughly familiar in his son's books. Henceforth, it is stated, all the latter's new books will appear in the "Outward Bound" edition simultaneously with the publication of the ordinary edition.

Dr. Henry van Dyke's new book, "Joy and Power," is shortly to appear with the imprint of Thomas Y. Crowell & Co. In the volume will be included three of the author's addresses. The presswork, done at the Merrymount Press, is set forth in black and red.

A small first edition of J. T. Trowbridge's "My Own Story" has been issued in uncut style, bound in boards with paper label, and each copy signed by the author.

Edmund Ludlow's memoirs, in three volumes, edition of 1698-'99, is among the books of an old country library offered for sale by Arthur Reader, London. Ludlow, who was commander in chief of the forces under the Commonwealth in Ireland, where he suppressed the rebellion, was stripped of his estate after the Restoration as a traitor and spent thirty years of exile in Switzerland. These memoirs were written and printed there. They include a collection of original papers illustrative of the matter of which he wrote. A book which caused a great sensation at the time of its publication, Mrs. Manley's "The Secret History of the Present Intrigues of the Court of Caramania," is also to be found in this list. The romance, published in 1727, was a satire on those who effected the revolution, and was seized by order of the Secretary of State. It is full of somewhat extraordinary gallant intrigues and love adventures. With thirty-odd engravings on wood by Bonner, after drawings by Cruikshank, is a scarce copy of "Doings in London, Day and Night Scenes of the Frauds, Frolics, Manners and Depravities of the Metropolis." It was published by Hodgson without date, but is set down as a faithful picture of some aspects of London about 1825.

"Sea Scamps" is the title chosen by Dr. Henry C. Rowland for a little book of maritime adventure that McClure, Phillips & Co. have issued lately. The region in which the author's band of sailors operate is one much in public notice at present—the Philippines, China and Japan. This particular gang of seamen, while on pleasure bent, have a decidedly frugal mind; they are by no means averse to a little burglary to add spice to life, and piracy on the high seas they take to kindly.

The Macmillan Company has fixed the date for the publication of Morley's "Life of Gladstone" at next Friday. Mr. Morley has devoted himself to the portrayal of his subject as a man and a statesman rather than as a churchman. He believes that Gladstone and all his acts can stand the frankest criticism. The book will be published in three volumes.

The author of the juveniles setting forth the life and adventures of "Billy Whiskers" and his progeny, Mrs. Frances Trego Montgomery, has ready a new book, entitled "The Wonderful Electric Elephant," which the Saalfield Publishing Company is bringing out. It has illustrations by C. M. Coolidge. Mrs. Montgomery is a Chicago woman.

Articles by Dr. Max Nordau and Dr. Gustav Gottheil, contributed to "The International Quarterly" Magazine, will be brought together in a book to be published by the Scott-Thaw Company on October 20, with the title "Sionism and Anti-Semitism."

The third volume of Poultney Bigelow's "History of the German Struggle for Liberty" has been made ready by the Harpers. The first two volumes were published seven years ago. This volume brings the work down to 1848. It treats of the period from Waterloo on. Mr. Bigelow has had at his disposal, by the courtesy of the Emperor, the manuscripts kept in the Prussian archives. He has been engaged upon this history for the last sixteen years.

G. R. S. Mead, a writer on occult subjects, brings out from the press of John Lane an inquiry into the Talmud Jesus stories, which is given the somewhat curious title, "Did Jesus Live One Hundred Years B. C.?" The author first considers the Christian tradition that Jesus was born in the reign of Herod and put to death under Pontius Pilate. He then presents the Talmud Jeschu stories, which vary throughout from the Christian account. Further, to support his question, he examines the Toldoth Jeschu, mediæval legends about Jesus, and in addition to this he collates and considers some passages from the writings of Epiphanus of Salamis. Mr. Mead's earlier books include "Fragments of a Faith Forgotten," "Apollonius of Tyana," "Pistis Sophia" and "The World's Mystery."

A descriptive book on spiders, for children, has been prepared by Miss Alice Jean Patterson, which A. C. McClurg & Co. are bringing out with the title, "The Spinner Family." A frontispiece in colors and illustrations are supplied from drawings by Bruce Horsfall.

The Madison Book Company has brought out a volume of quotations from the speeches and books of the President, called "The Maxims of Theodore Roosevelt."

Israel C. Russell is the author of one of the latest additions to the Appletons' "World" series, a volume on "North America." Mr. Russell has written with the intention of giving a condensed account of the more important features of this continent from the geographical standpoint. He divides the discussion into two parts, taking up first the natural conditions of the country, and second, man's dependence upon such conditions and the use he has made of them. To each chapter a short bibliography is appended.

The present Countess Potocka is the author of an intimate story of the life of the piano teacher, Leschetizky, which is among the Century Company's new books. Leschetizky was born in the palace of the Potocki, where his father taught the young countesses music. At nine he made a successful public debut, and before he was eleven he was entertaining princes and their guests with his precociousness as a musician and in talking. At fourteen he set up his own establishment. At eighteen he visited Italy, and was deep in an idyllic love affair. At twenty-two he was rising in favor as a musician in St. Petersburg, which he left only in the late '70s, when he adopted Vienna as his home. Among his pupils have been Paderewski, Slivinski, Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler, Mme. Hopekirke and others.

The name of the author of "Miss Toosey's Mission" has at last been disclosed. This book was published some years ago, and in the interval a number of books have followed from the same hand, but the anonymity of the author has been sedulously preserved. On the title page of a new book, however, "Gay, a Story," we read as follows: "By Evelyn Whitaker, author of 'Miss Toosey's Mission', 'Laddie,' 'Faithful,' 'Tom's Boy,' etc. The publishers, Little, Brown & Co., are still unable, nevertheless, to supply further information, beyond the fact that this author is an English writer who has always declined to furnish biographical matter for publication. It is added that a uniform edition of twelve of the "Miss Toosey" books is now appearing. But all this cannot save one from the awful suspicion that after all these years of anonymity "Evelyn Whitaker" may be nothing more than a pen name.

The fate of the son of Louis XVI, Louis Charles Capet, who is variously supposed to have perished in the gloomy Temple Tower in 1795 or to have escaped from Paris to safe exile, has been made the material for an historical novel by Henry Shackleford. "The Lost King," as the tale is called, reaches a happy conclusion. The book, which is illustrated, is announced by Brentano's.

Professor Heinrich Wolflin, of the University of Munich, has written a handbook on Italian art of the Renaissance, which is being published here by the Putnams, under the title "The Art of the Italian Renaissance." It is expected to prove serviceable to travellers, but is intended for students generally. Special care has been taken with the illustrations. Professor Wolflin has written an historical introduction, and, beginning with Giotto, he has taken up the work of the masters in detail.

A "Color Key to North American Birds" has been prepared by Frank M. Chapman for publication by Doubleday, Page & Co. Descriptions of birds are accompanied by a marginal drawing in color for aid in identification. Mr. Chapman has written a number of bird manuals.

A. S. Barnes & Co. have among their autumn fiction a novel of life on the Mississippi called "Tennessee Todd." It will be published early this month, and is written by G. W. Ogden.

After laboring for years with politicians and failing to effect his desired reforms, Judge A. L. Fitzgerald, of the Supreme Court of Nevada, so he avows, has turned to the people, "that august tribunal," for a proper consideration of the silver question. After this matter has been presented to them in his "Thirty Years' War on Silver," he expresses himself as entirely willing to abide by the decision they may come to. Ainsworth & Co. are bringing out this book.

Mrs. Elizabeth Robbins Pennell is the possessor of a large library of cookery books in Latin, French, German, Italian, Spanish and English, which she has been collecting for some years. She has now prepared a humorous account of this special library, which has been printed in quarto from a special font of modern type on unbleached Arnold wove paper, by Houghton, Mifflin & Co. With the essay is included a bibliography, interesting, besides showing the scope of the subject, in the reminder it carries of the great number of arts and sciences which were considered to be allied with cookery in older days. Old engravings and titles have been reproduced, and, to approach the original appearance more nearly, are printed on antique paper and mounted. The edition is limited, and the type will be distributed.

MEMORY.

Why We Remember Some Things and Forget Others.

Patrick Maxwell, in Notes and Queries.

This is a subject regarding which a good deal of nonsense is habitually talked. We often hear people say that they have a good memory for certain things, but a bad one for other things. This I believe to be a delusion. A man's memory may be good or it may be bad, but it cannot well be good for one thing and bad for another thing. It might as well be said that a bottle was good for holding brandy, but bad for holding whiskey. In the case of a feeble intellect all its faculties will be feeble—memory, judgment and all the rest—but they will not be feeble for one purpose and vigorous for another purpose. The fact is that our memory is in itself equally powerful or feeble for all purposes, but we remember best those things which interest us most, and so say that we have good memories for such things; while we forget those things which do not interest us, and we say, accordingly, that we have bad memories for those things.

Horace Walpole used to say that his memory was all-retentive as to the names of persons and of places, but that it was absolutely impotent in regard to dates. It has been said of him—by Macaulay, I think—that he could tell you the name of the grandaunt of King Ethelwald, but that he could not tell you whether she lived in the year 500 or in the year 1500. The truth was that he took an interest in names and genealogies, but none in dates. Similarly, in his introduction to "Anne of Geierstein," Scott aptly says:

"I have through life been entitled to adopt old Beattie of Meikledale's answer to his parish minister when the latter was eulogizing him with respect to the same faculty: 'No, Doctor,' said the honest border laird, 'I have no command of my memory; it retains only what happens to hit my fancy; and like enough, sir, if you were to preach to me for a couple of hours on end I might be unable at the close of the discourse to remember one word of it.' Perhaps there are few men whose memory serves them with equal fidelity as to many different classes of subjects, but I am sorry to say that while mine has rarely failed me as to any snatch of verse or trait of character that had once interested my fancy, it has generally been a frail support not only as to names and dates and other minute technicalities of history, but as to many more important things."

No, it is pretty certain that we have not got good memories for this and bad memories for that, in any other sense than that we remember that which interests us and forget that which interests us not.

I will not insult readers of "N. & Q." by reproducing here the good old chestnut as to Dugald Stewart's contribution to the conversation of certain of his friends who were comparing notes as to their earliest recollections. But it may be lawful to recall Fred Locker's capital verse rendering of it:

I recollect a nurse called Ann
Who carried me about the grass;
And one fine day a fine young man
Came up and kissed the pretty lass.
She did not make the least objection;
Thinks I, "Aha!
When I can talk I'll tell mamma";
And that's my earliest recollection.

LANGUAGE AND TRADE.

From The London Times.

On this side of the Channel . . . there is a widespread feeling that, unless we arouse ourselves in this as in other things, we shall enter upon some momentous conflict some day with even less knowledge of our opponents than was displayed in the case of the Transvaal war, and that the rivalry of our competitors in trade is rendered more formidable by the fact that they are better informed than we are of the prevailing ideas in foreign markets, a result largely due to their superior skill in the use of foreign languages.

The French, it would seem, are also becoming aware that they are suffering from disabilities not very different in kind, though less serious in degree, since their commercial relations with the external world are not comparable with ours. Still, it is obvious that France can no more afford than any of her neighbors to be handicapped by imperfect opportunities of intercourse with the surrounding countries. . . . But both in England and in France progress in the mastery of foreign languages will be slow and spasmodic, until those who conduct the educational systems of both nations have come to the conclusion that it is both their interest and their duty to give serious and organized assistance to a branch of study for which hitherto no adequate provision has been made.

THE "BALLON POSTE."

Paris correspondence of The Daily Mail.

There has just been added to the Army Museum a very interesting memento of the Franco-Prussian War. It is the first and perhaps the only number of a newspaper entitled the "Ballon Poste," dated Sunday, October 30, 1870. The journal, folded to the size of a letter, was dispatched from the veleagued city by balloon, and a twopenny stamp was fixed to each copy, so that it might be posted to the subscriber.

The "Ballon Poste" was intended to keep the provinces informed of what was happening inside Paris. The issue presented to the Army Museum was taken in the balloon which came to earth at Tours.

GUIZOT'S SANGFROID.

From "V. C."

How many people have owed their lives to a cigar? M. Guizot, the great French historian, for instance, owed his life to one. Followed about one day by an ill-looking individual, M. Guizot finally sat down on a bench, and his unwelcome follower seated himself there also, all the time watching him with a threatening air. The historian was not troubled. He pulled a cigar out of his pocket and lighted it. At that action the strange man arose and muttered that he had been mistaken, as the scoundrel he meant to kill did not smoke. The historian was considerably puzzled by this occurrence until he learned several days afterward that a man answering the description of the fellow who had followed him had been arrested for a murderous assault on a public official, against whom he had a grudge.

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