SAHARA.

M. Largeau's Exploration of the African Wilderness.

Twenty-three Days from El Oued to Ghadames.

CARAVAN LIFE.

Interesting Details of Travel in the "Ship of the Desert."

AN OFFICIAL RECEPTION.

GHADAMES, Jan. 10, 1876.

I have pleasure in announcing to you our safe arrival at this place on the 5th inst., after a dreary march of twenty-three days across the sandy wastes of the desert. The reception accorded us by the Governor and the leading men of the old Cydame greatly surpassed our expectation. On being advised of the approach of our guide, who cantered into the city in advance, Kaimakam Si-Mohammed-bou-Aïcha, accompanied by a suite of nobles and citizens, started immediately to meet us.

After the presentation of the usual "salamalecs" (tokens of respect) he conducted us to the city and personally superintended our installation in a house which he had had fitted up, placing it at our entire disposal during our stay at Ghadamès. Moreover, he placed all his servants at our disposal, and a body of armed guards, or Zaftis, were ordered to accompany us in all the various excursions which we propose making around this city, this precaution being necessary, as we were informed, on account of a Touareg band who are encamped to the south of the city. He desired us to accept every day, also, the deffa, morning and evening, but Mr. Largeau was opposed to this excess of hospitality, and would only accept it for the first three days, in accordance with the general custom observed by foreigners of distinction. We passed the whole evening of the 7th with the Kaimakam, who manifested great satisfaction at again seeing our explorer, and at the same time expressed his happiness to receive his three companions.

HOPES OF SUCCESS.

I am also glad to announce that the object so earnestly sought and courageously followed up by Mr. Largeau will be, in all probability, successfully attained. We are now certain of taking back with us to Algeria a caravan of Ghadamèse merchants, with splendid samples of the produce of the Soudan. I think that finally these famous products will arrive there by thousands of camel loads at a time, and thus convince merchants of the immense field for enterprise. After our arrival we saw a twenty-camel caravan start for Tripoli, loaded with ivory, and three days afterward some of the leading merchants of the place followed. Si-el-Hadj-Attiya has just arrived from Râht, where he went three months ago to bring back 500 camels loaded with ivory, ostrich feathers, hides (superior to those of Morocco) and other Soudan products. I counted the camels and saw the cargo with my own eyes, and now Mr. Largeau hopes to induce this famous merchant—a veritable Rothschild of the desert—to come with us; at least he will show him all the advantages of so doing. But we cannot anticipate this, and, in the meantime, let me give you a few sketches of our tedious tramp across the desert.

ADVENTURES OF THE DESERT.

My last letter, dated from El Oued, stated that we should leave for Ghadamès on the following day, Monday, December 13, 1875. Accordingly, at sunrise on the 13th, we left the capital of the Souf. In addition to our three servants we then had a khebir, or guide, a back-amar, or chief of the camel drivers, and eight camel drivers under his command. Our caravan consisted of twelve camels instead of eight, as we had when we left Biskra. The weight of our baggage and the supply of water requisite for the journey across the dreary wastes rendered this increase of animals necessary. Our guide and chief of cameliers each had several camels loaded with garments and calicoes which they traded on their own account here at Ghadamès. Before starting our explorer called us aside and said:—

The Cadi of El Oued has communicated to me a piece of information which I must make known to you, knowing that you are men and will not be disturbed by it. The guide of a caravan arrived from Ghadamès last night and stated that some of the people of Touât and Châamba were in rebellion, to the number of about threescore, and were plundering travellers on the roads to Ghadamès, Bir-ed-Djedid, Bir-Tozeri, Hassi-Bothin and Temacinin. Our Souafa are intrepid hunters, sure men, and, moreover, sworn enemies of Châamba, with whom they have often fought. The names of Haoun, our guide, of Belkacem, the back-amar, of Mecaoud, and several others, are well known in the neighboring countries; but as we go into the desert with intentions other than those of quarrelling with the tribes, I have decided, as a prudential measure, to change our route. Instead, therefore, of going by way of Bir-ed-Djedid, the ordinary caravan route, we shall keep more to the east and travel through Bir-Beressof, where we shall be able to obtain our supply of water for the twelve days' journey between that place and Ghadamès. Beressof is not more than a day's march from Bir-ed-Djedid, and we shall then have, with the chance of passing unperceived by the marauders, the leisure to explore a new route, which I am told is excellent, and which is slightly to the north of that followed by M. Henri Duveyrier. We must watch in every way possible during the night, by turns, on approaching the wells. But though we should meet the razeurs, I do not think they can hurt us.

THE START FROM EL OUED.

None of us replied, with the exception of the Châteaudun merchant, who merely remarked that he was impatient to begin his journey in the desert. (I think I have already informed you that Mr. Fancheaux is not quite twenty years of age.) We at once plunged forward into the sand, accompanied by the Caliph of El-Oued, who, notwithstanding our desire to the contrary, was anxious to conduct us as far as the last oasis of the Souf. We halted at Sif-Younis, a short distance from El-Oued, where the brother of our accompanying Caliph did us the honor of inviting us to an excellent repast. We again started, but halted again two hours afterward at the Zaouia of Sidi-ab-el-Kader, where the two brothers urged us to rest until the next morning. All himself came into our quarters and declared that it was customary never to go further than this on the first day of a long journey. We were duly installed in the school of the village, a vast square room, surmounted by a white and gilded dome, from the summit of which depended the standard bearing the half moon, the mast being in the form of a cross, which passes through a door in the dome. On the angles of the cross there were shining ornaments not usually recognized in architecture—ostrich eggs enveloped in palm leaves. A similar ornament is seen a few yards distant surmounting a sombre looking building devoted to prayer and worship.

MISERY AND BEAUTY IN AN AFRICAN VILLAGE.

In order to give us an idea of the study at the school, after the regular custom in every Mussulman country, the children were collected to repeat verses of the Koran, which they were supposed to have learned by heart. All these little students of the Koran were ranged in rows upon the floor of the room for saying prayers, and, kneeling down, almost deafened us by bawling out at the top of their voices the contents of a little board, which each held up and on which the master had written a few verses. We fled precipitately from this dreadful discord, and went to cool ourselves near the waters of a well dug in front of the Zaouai. Unfortunately our presence had been rumored among the half-dozen huts composing the village proper, and among all the neighboring tribes, and, as at El Oued, we were made doctors in spite of ourselves. It was one interminable procession of natives afflicted with Opthalmia. Oculists and merchants do a flourishing trade in the oasis. In the Souf most of the inhabitants are affected with disease of the eye. Many are nearly, and others quite, blind from it. The chief causes are the constant sweeping of sand through the air and the too sudden and abrupt transition from the deathlike darkness of their huts to the glistering powerful light without. We made the diagnoses of several cases of fevers, bronchitis, &c.; we dressed a number of wounds and attended to many other human ills. Largeau distributed medicines to all. Encouraged by our complacency several husbands brought their wives for consultation. The Thaleb, or priest, also came. Everybody can see and speak with him. Among these females we discovered some with beautiful features. Ali, who is an adept in dispensing, and who, I suspect, will eventually become an excellent druggist, gravely interpreted for us all the varied

COMPLAINTS OF THESE DAMES.

Several of them made such extraordinary requests of us that I could hardly keep my countenance. One complained most energetically that she had had but five children, whereas she had desired to have a great many more. All satisfied my profound astonishment by informing me that "it is good" in the Souf when the women have a great many children. Another complained bitterly that she had none at all. Our chief, without smiling, regretted that he had no medicine then with him to meet her malady, but promised to bring some the next time he passed that way. Still another, and a beautiful daughter of Eve she was, pleaded with her eyes, which were "black as the night, without moon or stars," but, as we had nothing with which to meet her malady, we were obliged to accept her avowal that she simply wished to take a close glimpse of the French travellers. As she was pretty I engaged to marry her (in fun, of course), as a matter of economy, the cost being only $60. Indeed, all through this consultation there was sadness mingled with gayety. Several blind women came to us and asked us to restore their sight.

On the morrow, at the break of day, we had a splendid view of a "mirage" of the desert. The night had been damp and fresh; light vapors spread over the whole valley, but, breaking above the tops of the palms, appeared above the sandhills in the most peculiar forms. The sun rose above the horizon, and immediately everything was seen reversed in the clouds, like the tableau in the painting of "Aube and Aurore." After an hour's journey we reached Amieet, the last of the oases of the Souf, where we halted to take water from the neighboring wells. We replenished our store in this manner all the way, from well to well, throughout the journey to Bir-Beressof. Here we parted from our excellent host, the Caliph of El-Oued. We also received the adieux of the relatives and friends of the camel drivers—the di-essel-ama (health go with you). Another companion now joined us who merits the honor of special mention. This was the doyen of the khebir of the Souf,

THE VENERABLE NACER-BEN-ROTAIA,

the old guide of Henri Duveyrier. He has aged greatly. His form is bent forward and his whole air is that of a man advanced in years. He seems to have reached the age of seventy-nine. He is extremely thin, and one almost marvels that such a skeleton can move at all. The "bones" which answer for his legs, though stiff and crooked, are nevertheless moved with wonderful force as he hobbles across the desert. Besides, if he did not continue to travel he would die. He loves the desert as the sailor loves his vessel; and, like the vessel which sometimes disappears beneath the waves, the world will learn one of these days that old Rotaia has suffered shipwreck in the wilderness. He accompanied us to this place, with three camels laden with wool. We shall take special care of this good old man. Our caravan now consisted altogether of twenty-one persons and thirty camels. We crossed the hills which abound in the valley of the Souf. On reaching the summit of one of them we had a most enchanting *coup d'œil* of the contrasts of nature. Behind us were the dark green bunches of palm trees, the last of the oases of the Souf, but separated from us by a broad tract of dry white sand; in front to the distant horizon was another sea of sand, unrelieved by even a sprig of verdure, glistening beneath the powerful rays of the sun like the gigantic petrification of an ocean of another world. We were now fairly in the desert—the thirsty, heated, uninhabited desert. In the afternoon we were joined by several Souafa, who have to go on a journey of three or four days to feed their camels and cut wood. There is no vegetation immediately around the oases. The hills that we crossed were absolutely bare. The fact is, the natives pluck up everything in the shape of wood and never replant, while their flocks nibble even to the roots the vestiges of green that may remain. Consumption has killed production. Thus are they now compelled to roam far away in search of wood and forage, often much further in point of time than I have named. The

FIRST EVENING OF OUR ENCAMPMENT

was most lively. After dressing our tent, Largeau, who is decidedly an African, invited us to take our ease, preferring for his own part, however, to stretch himself out in front to gaze at the stars and in order to be ready in case of the least trouble. He recommended us not to remove our firearms, which he termed "the best friends of a traveller in the desert," and to be sure and keep them always in good order. He also entreated us never to lose sight of the caravan, never to keep too far behind and never to go far ahead without exercising the greatest caution.

LIFE WITH AN AFRICAN CARAVAN.

I will now give from my diary my impressions formed each day, and the result of my observation during our journey across the weary sands of Sahara.

A SAHARAN PORT.

DECEMBER 15, 1875.—At daylight Largeau stated that his minimum thermometer had stood one degree below zero (30.2 Fahrenheit). The cameliers hasten to relight the fires and to warm themselves before starting. When the sun rose the top of the frosted sand glistened beneath his rays like so many dew drops. At midday we arrived at Bir-Acemin, after having left Bir-Galda about a thousand yards to the left. Bir-Acemin is the first pit I have seen in the desert. It does not in any way resemble those of the Souf, of which I shall have occasion to speak on my return. A description of the Acemin well will answer for every well in the desert. It consists of a hole dug in the earth, without proper flooring or sides, the top of which is covered and protected by four rudely shaven trunks of trees selected from the neighborhood. This is about as primitive an idea as could be imagined for a cistern. About two feet off is a little basin into which the water runs for the camels. When the basin gets filled in with sand, which often happens, the cameliers replace it by a sheepskin, which they pack round with mud. In a minute the water runs into it and the watering trough is re-established. The wells differ only in width and depth, which of course can easily be understood. This of Acemin is only about eighteen inches in diameter. Thus you might die of thirst before ever discovering it. The depth is about fifty-six feet. The water we had from it tasted very strongly of sulphur, proving that the vegetation carried there by the wind had decomposed and become dissolved in the well. The heat of the water was 23 deg. (73.4 Fahrenheit).

THE WELLS

are dug by the nomads in depressed spots, where the sand has been levelled and hardened by the wind, and where they have only to dig through the upper layer of chalk, &c., before coming to water. The water of the wells most frequented is always the best, because there the vegetable matter is thrown out before it has time to decompose. Mr. Largeau explains that we shall have this bad water all the way to Bir-Beressof, because the nomadic bands who have gone to the Souf to gather the date crop have not yet returned to the desert with their flocks. The immense carpet of sand, of which I have before spoken and of which I may have occasion again to treat, is always of a light golden color. To-day we are crossing immense plains of this loose material, which are covered here and there with vegetation. Here we have the alfa, that textile plant of the wilderness, which formerly was only used for feeding camels, but which is now exported from the high plateaus of the province of Oran to England for the manufacture of paper; the olenda, whose long circular leaves are always green; the retem, which sometimes attains a height of ten feet, giving in the springtime tiny violet flowers; the azel, very similar to the retem, but whose flowers are like the prairie thistle; the merkh, a huge growth of Sahara, with yellow flowers; the arteya, whose rough leaves commence to bud; the sfar, very much like the rhiendent of your Western wilds, which grows in clumps in low damp places, and many other shrubs indigenous to the desert and more or less savory to the camels.

Plains extend on all sides; from one you emerge into another. Without being intense, the heat is such that we are compelled to cover our heads in the hoods of our cloaks. While on the march our cameliers amuse themselves by making slippers or sandals out of pieces of old cloaks, &c., which they cover over again with camel's hair. These shoes are always necessary while traversing certain parts of the wilderness. We halted this evening at five o'clock and encamped on the apex of two plains, where we have a full view to the horizon on every side, and have the advantage of guarding against any surprise.

SERIOUS DISADVANTAGES.

DECEMBER 16.—The night has been very moderate, the thermometer indicating but 9 degs. above zero (48.2 Fahrenheit. At the halt for breakfast we drank some of the stale water taken from the well Bir-Acemin. The pronounced odor of sulphur and tar, with which materials it is so strongly impregnated, rendered it a most disagreeable beverage and helped to make our frugal repast unpalatable. We now recognized the merit of the laxative waters of Oued Rhin and the Souf. We begin to pay tribute to the sun. The constant heat of his rays since leaving Biskra begins to affect us sensibly. We are changing our skins—or, rather, the sun is changing them for us. Largeau and Say, who are naturally dark, have become completely bronzed. I think they will be as black as ebony before reaching the country of the blacks, where they go after our journey to Ghadamès. Fancheaux and myself, naturally blonde, are as red as berries, and we expect to be copper color before we are through.

THE SHIPS OF THE DESERT.

We seldom mount our camels, though the motion of this "ship of the desert" does not make you seasick, as is generally supposed. It is not a pitching "motion," that is, an up and down movement, but a simple backward and forward jolting, to which one soon becomes accustomed. But the freight the animals carry, in huge camel's hair sacks called tellis, which are suspended on each side as a kind of balance, renders riding extremely uncomfortable. And again, you have the greatest difficulty to keep yourself awake against this easy lullaby, for if you sleep, down you go into the halfa briar and other painful creepers. Speaking of falling off, reminds me that I had a fearful tumble the first time I attempted to mount a dromedary. (I say "dromedary" *en passant*, and not camel, for I have never seen any of this family of quadrupeds, except those with a single hump, either in Algeria or in the midst of Sahara. But the fashion is to call these "camels.") I had a devil of a "mehari," which was formerly a courser in the desert, but now a freighter, the racer becoming a dray horse. There was no difficulty in getting on his back, for the animal was kneeling, but only in attempting to hold my equilibrum when the fellow began to rise. In rising he made a terrific plunge, as it seemed to me, first backward and then forward, and in a few seconds I found myself flying over his head at a speed considerably greater than that at which my companions were travelling, for whom, as a matter of courtesy, I waited after recovering from this first somersault.

"This animal, valuable on account of its great docility," say the dictionaries, is in my opinion a most prodigious glutton. If he is sometimes deprived of his drink, he makes it up in eating with a vengeance. He eats continually, even when "on the tramp." As he jaunts along he extends his long neck and seizes the green brambles that are within his reach, never stopping to clip them off clean, but drags them apart as he moves onward. He has his regular hours for browsing on the halfa, henna, or whatever other plant he prefers. I shall add that if he is docile he is an abominable grumbler, and will even roar if he thinks he is tested one bit beyond his regular duty. Morning and evening, when loading and unloading the teilis, these amiable animals keep up an incessant bellowing in order to drive away rambling rivals and to frighten the gazelles. This afternoon we took water from a new well, called Bou-Rhazela, which is about forty-five feet deep, and lined with alenda wood. The water has that strong sulphuric taste peculiar to the water of Acemin. We also left a full pit slightly to our left, called Ben-Douba. The plains we have crossed since yesterday are designated by the herders under the names of "Zamoul and Thiour," hills of the oases. Sometimes the shadow of a cloud which is seen on the horizon completely covers the plain in the distance, leading us to the belief that we are approaching an oasis. This evening as we halted and encamped we saw a most glorious sunset. The whole horizon seemed bathed in red fire, whence it was thrust forward in long flames which tapered off to nothing, forming, with the slightly tinted clouds above our heads, a perfect fan of fire. In an instant it was gone. The twilight is very brief in the desert. The heat during the day has not exceeded 39 deg. (102.2 Fahrenheit).

ARAB CHARACTER.

DECEMBER 17.—Last night was quite cold. At one to-day we halted at the wells of Mouy-Hamed, or the Little Waters. The depth of these wells, dug through the chalk, is about forty three feet. The temperature of the water is 22 deg. (65 Fahrenheit). By request of the cameliers our explorer consents to camp at this place until to-morrow. Under the pretext of giving their camels time for rest and for taking water, these jovial fellows simply want to gambol and squat about a little more than usual. They are not pressed by any means, but now, having fairly started on their journey, they would willingly pass the whole season in the desert. The Arab has no idea of time. Hours, days, years roll by, and he does not seem to attach the least importance to them. The march of time, distances, &c., are small matters of detail to him. Ten hours or twenty hours, ten leagues or twenty leagues, more or less, all are a trifle to him. The celebrated English saying "time is money" is not his motto. He does not care how he lives—he does not even count the years. He is born; he dies; *Mektoub*, it was so decreed. Our civilization puzzles him. He understands nothing about the existence of steam among us, and would prefer the camel to the finest of our locomotives. Our Souafa, who belong to the mixed race of Barbary negroes, add a certain gayety to their *insouciance*, however. Their conversations, which Ali sometimes repeats to us, are often upon the most simple subjects. Our persons serve as a general theme for their disputes. The notes we take and the continual observations we make of the country and plants excite their curiosity. They have, moreover, the greatest admiration for our firearms, as they cannot procure any like them, having only the long flint guns of the Kabyles.

This evening Haoun, our guide, said that we need not fear the razeurs—at least for the present. He says there were but two natives grazing their flocks of goats and sheep in the neighborhood of the wells. He had seen nothing, heard nothing concerning the Châamba. "Peace reigns in the desert," they told him, "all the way to Bir-Beressof." All says our cameliers have a horrible dread of being attacked, because they would regard it as a great misfortune, for which they might be held responsible and cast into prison. We desired him to tell them not to fear on this score; and we sleep in peace, knowing that they keep guard in turn around the camp each night.

FRIENDLY GREETINGS IN THE WILDERNESS.

DECEMBER 18.—The aspect of the wilderness has changed somewhat. Every day we cross deep depressions, a series of hollows, joined together by continuous sand hills; and at the bottom of these hollows the chalk seems to be in a state of decay. We discovered branches of trees down in these places encrusted with chalk and looking as if petrified. Wells dug in these depressions would surely give water at a very slight depth. The little hills that have heretofore dotted the plains now begin to vary. They are more frequent and higher, some reaching a height of about a hundred feet. In ascending or rounding them we often sink into the sand up to our knees. Our journey is becoming tedious. We saw to-day, for the first time, the hennet alga, one of the three varieties of the henopiton of Sahara. This variety is distinguished from the other two in that it has smooth instead of rough leaves. This evening, in choosing a place to camp on for the night, we fell in with a nezla (or portion of a tribe), numbering six tents; and the women who were watching the flocks in the absence of their husbands, taking us for robbers (razeurs), began hastily to bury their rings and other ornaments in the sand. On approaching nearer our Souafa recognized them as being natives of the Souf, of the tribe of Rebaia, to which they themselves belong. The women retired, the men ran forward and salamalecs rained from all sides. They offered us some excellent camel milk, and the evening was passed in general congratulations. Before dark we saw six gazelles grazing in the distance. Our guide promises us some fresh meat for to-morrow.

COLD—ANOTHER TRAVELLER HAILED.

DECEMBER 19.—It froze again last night, the thermometer recording 2 deg. below zero (28.4 Fahrenheit), but the winter sun of Sahara would melt the ice at the poles. The instant the sun appears above the line of the horizon the fire is lighted. The transition from night to day and from day to night is almost instantaneous. The action of the light is equally peculiar. In the Sahara the solar light is most powerful. The nights are remarkably clear. Even when there is no moon complete darkness does not appear. By the light of the stars alone I have always been able to tell the time by my watch. I might here give some meteorological and geographical explanations upon the influence of light upon decompositions and explain the formation of the sand by the disintegration of the rocks, a disintegration produced by dilatation, condensation, &c., but it will be readily understood that these explanations, whatever their nature, cannot enter into the necessarily narrow compass of these hurried observations. During the day we were agreeably surprised to see a horseman and two tall hounds, which came and barked at us as they passed. This was the owner of the flocks of sheep and goats we had seen near Bir-Mouy-Hamed. He is taking 100 camels to the wells of Beressof, which his servants will feed thereabout, and immediately after leaving these animals he will retake the road to the Souf. We continue our journey, traversing still these deep hollows, encircled by hills that are constantly increasing in height and extent as we proceed.

This evening the camelier Mecaoud, the best hunter of the caravan, brought us a gazelle and two Lilliputian foxes called fenek, about the size of a full grown cat, which he had taken from their burrows in the sand. We camp in a vast plain, surrounded by high hills. To-morrow we shall be at the wells of Beressof.

AT BIR-BERESSOF.

DECEMBER 20, 21 and 22.—We have crossed three more deep hollows, and hills that reached nearly 200 feet in height. They might be called the arenas of immense amphitheatres, of which the hills form the graded seats. At eleven o'clock we arrived at Beressof wells, the last until we get to Ghadamès. The wells of Beressof and Ed-Djedid now mark the extreme limits of the pastures. Alone the hunter, whose game here seeks to evade him, plunges forward amid the high hills in pursuit of the antelope and gazelle. We have as yet travelled less than one-third of our journey. We shall now fill all our water skins and increase the length of our stages, notwithstanding the roads will be more difficult, so that we may not run short of water before the end of the twelve days we have yet to travel before reaching Ghadamès.

The wells of Beressof, where Mr. Henri Duveyrier stopped in 1861, are dug in the middle of a large plain, studded with small hillocks, the plain being about 10,000 yards long and 15,000 yards wide. They are about 4 feet in diameter at the mouth, have a depth of some 76 feet and are encased with azel timber. The temperature of the water is about 22 deg. (65 Fahrenheit). The direction of our journey so far has been east-northeast, by a new route, slightly to the north of that followed by Duveyrier. At the outset Mr. Largeau intended to take the Dourneaux-Duperré route, to make the steep ascent and descend into Ghadamès by way of Din-el-Kadra and Bir-Tozeri. We are now to take a southeasterly direction and make for Ghadamès direct by the ordinary caravan road. According to the custom of offering deffa at the last well, Ali gave our cameliers an enormous mess of "couscoussi." Our worthies, once having rested, somewhat unpleasantly hinted that they desired to remain until to-morrow, in order, said they, that the camels may have a good drink, as they will take no more water before reaching Ghadamès. Our explorer granted them this day of *far niente*, though well knowing that they will not be compelled to stop in the hills for want of water. After the repast Ali thrust

A HUGE SCORPION

into a saucepan, which the heat of our "furnace" (?) had drawn from his hole in the sand. We carefully placed this representative of the family arachnidæ in a bottle to satisfy the curiosity of amateurs. On the morrow, with a brilliant sunshine, we had the misfortune to encounter one of the phenomenon characteristic of Saharan climatology—a kind of sirocco or cross wind, coming from the south and west, and repelled by that from the north and east, the latter dominating. During the whole of the day we were greatly annoyed by the flying sand, swept past us, first in light clouds, then hurled back again, almost blinding us and covering our baggage and provisions. Despite every precaution it got between our lips and into our teeth. We console (?) ourselves with the idea that this is but the beginning of our troubles, and that in the great hills we shall have to endure many other trials. It is now impossible for my eyes, which are naturally weak, to stand the intensity of the light. Fearing an ophthalmic disease I have recourse to spectacles, whose dark colored glasses break the force of both light and sand. In the desert, and despite the beginning of a fatigue natural enough to those unaccustomed to a

WALK OF EIGHT HOURS A DAY.

our health is excellent. The exercise and the invigorating, pure air give us ferocious appetites and induce the deepest sleep. The journey becomes more fatiguing because we have every moment to push aside the briars in order to avoid the spots where accidents are frequent, and we are constantly plunging into the sand almost up to the neck. We are constantly compelled to empty our belrhra, or cloth shoes, the only covering for the feet possible in the desert. We now begin to take our turns at watching, each taking two hours, between nine P. M. and five A. M. Largeau recommends us to specially observe if the brambles are thrust apart, and in case they should be pressed forward to fire upon the spot immediately. It is one of the Chaamba *ruses de guerre* to disguise themselves with brambles, in order the better to surprise the camps at night, an expedient of the forest savoring of Macbeth. The briars of the desert replace the wood of Birnam. I re-entered the tent after my vigil. Nothing had budged. Not a sound save the whistling of the wind among the branches of the halfa, and which covered me with sand. I shook off my c[illegible]nd went to sleep.

SUPERSTITIOUS CAMEL DRIVERS.

The 22d being Wednesday Ali comes and announces that the cameliers cannot come to any decision as to setting out again. "Wednesday is an unlucky day," says the old guide Rotaia. The Souafa are most decidedly partisans of the *statu quo*. They believe in practising the old proverb, "make haste slowly." As for themselves, they never hasten at all. So come, so go, "in cha Allah" (as it pleases God). It was at first Friday which, in El-Oued, the capital of the Souf, as with us, was held to bring misfortune. On the Saturday I could not understand why we delayed our departure, and Sunday, again, was a new source of evil. They are all filled with devilish superstitions. We fined our cameliers a gazelle for bothering us.

Haoun and Mecaoud started on a hunt and in the evening returned with two of these beautiful creatures. To-day, notwithstanding the wind and clouds, Say regulated the chronometer at noon and calculated the variations of the compass. In the evening he and Largeau climbed the peak of the highest hill of the plain, and after having gone several miles to it returned furious when they discovered it was not more than 200 feet high.

THE GHASTLY GHOURDS.

DECEMBER 23.—We broke camp at eleven A. M., after breakfast. We desired to start at sunrise, but long discussions were held among the cameliers on the subject of redividing the freight, now increased by the bottles, or, rather, skins, swelled out with water. After much wrangling they finally became quiet, after which they increased their gait, inciting their camels to better speed and went along humming their guttural songs. The tableau changes. We now enter a valley bordered with imposing hills. We are in the region of the great hills and the Erg, which extends from Bir-Beressof to the immense stony plateau of Ghadamès.

We have in front of us mountains of sand several hundred feet high. These are the ghourds. The northeast wind blows violently, the sky is partly clouded and obscures some parts of the route. The shining ghourds loom up white as snow and present a splendid tableau, the barrenness of the summit helping to give the aspect of a natural winter scene. The contemplation of this most desolate spot produces almost an infinite sadness, and we press forward as if expecting to meet a more verdant path further on. In the bottoms of the valleys we sometimes find gravelly and sometimes sandy grounds. The way is often obstructed by little hills which connect the ghourds and which appear to be holding a session amid the awful stillness which reigns. In the extreme northeast our guide points out a very lofty ghourd, named Gleib-Serami, after a plant which grows at its base. This ghourd serves as a landmark for the gazelle and antelope hunters who go over there for game. We halted this evening in a splendid broad valley environed with ghourds some 400 feet high. Further on in the line of our route Largeau pointed out to us another ghourd, El-laya the Fork, which, as its name indicates, is the point of bifurcation of the roads which lead to the well of Beressof and Djedid. The approaches to these wells, frequented by the caravans which are forced to stop and take a supply of water, are the most dangerous of the whole route between the Souf and Ghadamès. We kept a keen lookout throughout the night.

LITERARY CHAT.

Colonel G. E. Waring has a book in the press of Hurd & Houghton on "Sanitary Drainage for Houses and Towns."

A. J. Bicknell & Co. will print this month "Modern American Homesteads," with fifty plates by D. T. Atwood.

Harper & Brothers are about to publish "The Mikado's Kingdom," an instructive book on Japan, by W. J. Griffiths, formerly teacher in the Royal College of Japan.

The Authors' Publishing Company of New York will print a story entitled "Nine Little Busters," by K. Etheridge.

Mr. Gilder's poem, "The New Day," has already reached a second edition.

A revised edition of that notable book by Professor Hurd & Houghton will publish the present season four different "Riverside Centennial Guides." They will include "New York and How To See It," "Philadelphia and the Centennial—How To See Them," "Washington and How To See It" and "Boston to Washington," containing complete information regarding the cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. These guides will appear in four languages—English, French, German and Spanish—to suit European travellers.

The concluding portion of the "Life of Palmerston," covering the years 1846 to 1865, left unfinished by Lord Dalling, has appeared in two volumes, edited by Evelyn Ashley, M. P. But the *Athenæum* sadly tells us that they form no life of the gay old man we used to see trotting smartly down the hill in Piccadilly, or briskly quizzing and debating in the House of Commons.

Osgood & Co. will soon publish "Private Theatricals," by W. D. Howells. Also a new and thorough "Guide Book to the White Mountains," by M. F. Sweetser.

J. B. Lippincott & Co. will publish "America Discovered by the Welsh in 1170, A. D.," by Rev. B. F. Bowen.

Harper & Brothers will soon print "Early Man in Europe," by Professor Charles Rau.

The *Athenæum* says of Miss Braddon's latest, "Dead Men's Shoes," that it has not a single person or incident capable of kindling a spark of sympathy or interest. "The author's knowledge of cooking and female apparel," it says, "is as conspicuous as ever, and is only to be equalled by her ignorance of English."

G. P. Putnam's Sons will print Rev. James Martineau's book, "Religion as Affected by Modern Materialism."

Hon. Theophilus Parsons, of Cambridge, has in the press of Roberts Brothers "Outlines of the Religion and Philosophy of Swedenborg."

Turnbull Brothers, of Baltimore, have in press "The Southern Side of the Story of Andersonville Prison," compiled from official documents, by Dr. R. Randolph Stevenson, chief surgeon of the prison.

Professor Orton's valuable work on "The Andes and the Amazon" will be issued in a second edition shortly, with 300 additional pages, from Harper's press.

Encouraged by the great success of the "Bric-à-Brac" series, Messrs. Scribner, Armstrong & Co. will publish shortly the initial volume of a new series, called the "San Souci Series," which will be edited by Mr. R. H. Stoddard. This volume will comprise reminiscences of men and manners a hundred years ago.

Two volumes of the Italian note books are the latest addition to Osgood's Little Classics edition of Hawthorne.

Joaquin Miller's heroes have a great fashion of strewing roses in the path of their lady loves.

Scribner, Armstrong & Co. have published a new edition of that very attractive little poem, "Mrs. Jerningham's Journal."

Osgood's "Vest Pocket Series," which is literally what it professes to be, has reached its twelfth volume.

Lippincott & Co. publish John Forster's "Life and Works of Walter Savage Landor."

Mr. George A. Baker's "Bad Habits of Good Society" has made quite a hit.

Mr. Frank R. Stockton has written a very amusing little comedy, which will soon be brought out in the provinces.

Roberts Brothers are preparing a new edition of Hamerton's "Painters' Camp." The illustrations will not accompany this edition, which, however, will contain a steel portrait of the author.

T. B. Peterson & Brother announce a new novel by Mrs. Southworth.

RECENT DISCOVERIES IN SWITZERLAND.

A report drawn up by the chief local antiquaries on the remarkable discovery of the place of sepulture near Neufchatel of the lake-dwelling Swiss race, gives the following results:—The tombs found may be classed as of the stone-cist variety, allied in character to the dolmen, but differing from it in having been formed from the first beneath the natural surface of the earth, after the custom of our graves. They were not quite long enough to receive the bodies of adults stretched out, and it is probable that these were interred in the sitting posture much practised elsewhere in pre-historic days, and propped by the large pebbles which were found in numbers in the cavities. The height of the adults was, if anything, rather below that of the Swiss of the present day, and the skulls present no real typical difference of form from those of the latter, except that the forehead is more contracted, or, as it might be more correctly said, less developed. The actual discovery of the admixture in these tombs among the same set of remains of bronze ornaments with those of the pierced teeth of carnivora generally assigned to the age of stone has a double importance. It proves conclusively that the notion of some antiquaries that cremation was everywhere a characteristic of the bronze age, as opposed to the simpler interment used in that of stone, is not universally true. It also establishes the fact of the gradual passage—in Switzerland, at any rate—from the one era to the other, and so makes it doubtful whether a hard-and-fast line can really be drawn between the two anywhere.

LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

WHAT THE AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS ARE DOING IN LONDON—MACAULAY'S LIFE AND LETTERS—SPURGEON ON INSPIRATION AND INTELLECTUAL LAZINESS—BUCKLAND ON "THE HALF SHELL"—FOG SIGNALLING—COLONEL CHESNEY'S FUNERAL.

LONDON, March 30, 1876.

Seeing that a New York firm has secured the copyright for America of "Lord Macaulay's Life and Letters" it is not necessary for me to do other here than briefly mention the fact that the long looked-for book has appeared, and that it is the literary success of the season. It will more than satisfy all reasonable expectations that have been entertained with regard to it; and it is as immeasurably superior in point of interest, because free from backbiting and slander, to Greville's "Memoirs" as the works of Thackeray, as pictures of English society, are to, let us say, the productions of the author of "Broken to Harness." I predict for this volume of biography and reminiscence the same close attention in America as is certain to be awarded it in England. Mr. Trevelyan has shown himself an able and painstaking editor, an admirable and modest writer and a faithful and honorable keeper of his uncle's memory and honor.

SPURGEON ON INSPIRATION.

I have been amused in looking over a couple of published lectures by Mr. Spurgeon, delivered recently before the students of the Pastor's College attached to the Metropolitan Tabernacle here, which may not yet have reached America. The reverend gentleman seems to combine in his teaching the genial manners of the humorist of the world with the thoughtful advocacy of one who has attentively studied and professes common sense Christianity. Mr. Spurgeon charges home to his hearers on the subject of "knowing people" who claim to give us nothing in their sermons but what "they pretend the Lord reveals direct to themselves." Sometimes these gentlemen are more of borrowers than they admit. Their own remarks presented as the direct expression of the mind of the Spirit are conspicuously inferior to those of the men they affect to despise. A writer once sent Mr. Spurgeon a batch of poems for his publication, *The Sword and Trowel*, declaring that they were written "under the direct physical and mental influence of the Spirit upon his mind and hand." They turned out to be fearful rubbish, writes Mr. Spurgeon. "My bookshelves can show many poems as much superior to these pretended inspirations as angels are to blue bottles." Mr. Spurgeon finds that the claim to a state of

PRETERNATURAL ILLUMINATION

oftentimes covers so mean a vice as sloth. "You may take it as a rule," adds the reverend lecturer, "that the Spirit does not usually do for us what we can do for ourselves, and that if religious knowledge is printed in a book and we can read it there is no necessity for the Spirit to make a fresh revelation of it to us in order to screen our laziness," with which pertinent and pithy remark, no doubt, most of us will agree.

I have been looking over Mr. Frank Buckland's evidence before the House of Commons Committee on

"OYSTER FISHERIES,"

at present sitting here, and as the United States is essentially an oyster producing territory it has occurred to me that some of this well known naturalist's remarks on the succulent bivalve may not prove uninteresting. Mr. Buckland has made some estimates as to the cost of meat in English oysters. Natives, costing three shillings and sixpence (about seventy-five cents) a dozen, contain meat weighing one-quarter of the weight of the shell, and the meat, taking its net weight, costs nine shillings and fourpence (more than $2) a pound, as compared with good mutton at one shilling (twenty-five cents). Oysters over here costing two shillings a dozen contain meat weighing one-sixth of the shell, and the meat costs eight shillings per pound. With regard to the quantity of oysters imported into England, Mr. Buckland found that in the season twelve years back, 309,935 barrels, containing 495,996,000 oysters, worth $13,300,600, came to London alone. He had considered

WHY PEOPLE WERE SO FOND OF OYSTERS,

and had examined into their chemical composition. They contained much phosphate of lime, gelatine, mucous, animal matter containing phosphorus and osmazone. The latter was difficult to see, but it was the essence of meat, and could be smelt when beef was roasting. Phosphorus afforded a great deal of nourishment to the brain, and therefore oysters were a good thing for persons who had a great deal of brain work. People always served oysters on the wrong shell; they were served on the flat shell instead of the round one, and thus some of their nutritive properties were allowed to be lost. The number of spat contained in an oyster was very large. Four which he had purchased in a London shop contained respectively 829,665, 553,510, 424,031 and 276,555 spat. The spat was discharged by the oyster at the proper time in a great cloud, like a puff of smoke from a railway funnel. They adhered together by attraction of cohesion. To find out whether or not cold caused a failure of the spat he put some in a tube and lowered it into iced water. They began to tremble and sank to the bottom of the tube, and some of them could scarcely be restored. The spat seemed most lively when the sun was shining and liked the warmth. A temperature of from 65 to 72 Fahrenheit suited them best, and below a temperature of 44 Fahrenheit they died. One of the worst enemies an oyster had when grown was the five-finger, a species of star fish. It got round the shell of an oyster, like the fingers of a hand would hold it, and with its elastic stomach it forced open the shells and ate up the meat. Another serious enemy was the whelptingle. Mussels were a serious hindrance to an oyster fishery; they lived on the places where oysters would be, and they sent forth their armies of spat, which fell down on the oysters; they accumulated mud, and the mud covered over the oysters, and then it was a case of mussel versus oyster, and the latter generally got the worst of it unless they were protected. The oldest oyster he had ever known was from twelve to fifteen years old. The things oysters most liked were the shells of their own relations, especially dead shells. Then they were fond as food of mussels and cockles.

With native oysters in London at present at 3½d. per half mouthful one cannot precisely understand why American oysters of a certain size and flavor cannot be sent over here to compete with the Anglo-Dutch oyster which is finding much favor with London oyster eaters at 2d. per half mouthful. American oysters from Providence River are as superior to Anglo-Dutch oysters dredged from the coast of Holland as English hothouse grapes are superior to those of Catawba.

FOG SIGNALLING.

Professor Tyndall, Admiral Codrington and other eminent scientific authorities, together with several officers of the Royal Artillery and engineers, have been engaged during the past week in a series of experiments in fog signalling at the Nore. Fog horns and American sirens were this time out of the competition, and in their place a five-chamber revolving gun of such capacity best designed to give a report of more than usually loud sounding power was experimented with. The advantages claimed for this gun are that it will make signals to be fired at close intervals without the necessary delay for sponging and loading, and by firing two or more rounds in rapid succession, or by other combinations, mariners at sea may be informed of their position and understand the particular danger they should avoid. Professor Tyndall looks forward to a time, he has written, when such a disaster as the shipwreck of the Schiller on the rocks of the Scilly "will be a simple impossibility."

PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS.

He claims that it is in the power of man to make it so, and that power, he doubts not, will be promptly and easily employed. On the other hand, in a conversation I had the honor of having yesterday with one of the prominent officials of the Trinity House, he said to me that he considered the shipwreck of the Deutschland was an unavoidable calamity. Dr. Tyndall is, I am given to understand, hoping to perfect a means of penetrating the densest fog by the flash as well as by the sound of the gun. My experience leads me to think that there are fogs and fogs, and that some are so dense and opaque that not even a flash of lightning would penetrate them. No doubt Professor Tyndall and the officers of the scientific corps and the English Army know better than myself, and it is devoutly to be hoped that my unscientific observations on this subject may turn out to be absolutely false. The interesting experiments are at present in charge of the officers of the Royal Artillery, and will not come under the official cognizance of Dr. Tyndall until their report of the results of the experiments has been made to the government. In view of the interest displayed in the controversy on acoustical research raised by the *Nation's* review of "Tyndall on Sound," I have ventured to send this notice of the present experiments. At a future day I shall hope to send the results.

COLONEL CHESNEY'S FUNERAL.

There was buried on the 23d inst., in the churchyard of York town, close to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, a soldier whom England could ill afford to lose. His resting place was most appropriately chosen, for it was in its neighborhood that Colonel Chesney's influence was most conspicuously manifest. He was not only Professor of Military History at the Military College and the adjacent Staff College, but his influence extended to the various schools and institutions of the neighborhood.

As an author on military subjects he stood second to none; and it is only necessary to mention some of his works by name in order to impress on students of the art of war the loss they have sustained. In 1863 he published his "Campaigns in Virginia and Maryland," and in 1868 the "Waterloo Lectures," which created a profound impression in Germany and France as well as England, for in them he endeavored to extricate from the superincumbent stratum of mere romantic and sentimental patriotism the true story, in all its bearings, of the eventful struggle which finally broke the power of the great Napoleon, and to give the proper value to the important share which the German army took in the successful issue of the campaign.

The chief mourner at the funeral of this talented man was his equally able brother, Colonel George Chesney, author of the

"BATTLE OF DORKING,"

that thrilling pamphlet which created at the time not only a world-wide sensation but a literature of its own class, which, although fiction and imagination formed its basis, carried deep into the minds of the English people the conviction that, after all, the "silver streak" might not always continue as "inviolate" as their poets would have them believe.

The obsequies were even more impressive than military funerals usually are, owing to the propinquity of the great camp of Aldershott. The procession was headed by a firing party of the Royal Engineers, the deceased officer's own corps. Then came the massed bands of the Royal Military College and the Fifth regiment, and then the coffin, borne on a gun carriage covered with the "Union Jack" and surmounted by the sword of the dead man and a wreath of white immortelles. His charger followed.

The coffin having been lowered into the grave, and the words "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," pronounced by the officiating chaplain, at the short, sharp word of command 300 rifles volleyed forth as one. Then, the call of the bugle and the roll of muffled drums, followed by two more volleys, completed the knell of a soldier whose loss his country and his profession so much deplore.

"TRISTAN AND ISOLDE."

WAGNER'S NEW OPERA BROUGHT OUT IN BERLIN—THE FIRST PERFORMANCE—A MAGNIFICENT SCENE—THE EMPEROR AND THE COMPOSER—THE OLD, OLD STORY OF LOVE AND DEATH.

BERLIN, March 26, 1876.

Richard Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde" experienced yesterday at the first representation in Berlin a brilliant success. For some weeks nothing has been the subject of conversation but this new opera, for the study of which the composer himself had been staying here. After several rehearsals, conducted by Wagner in person, everything was so far perfected that the opera was to be given on Tuesday. At a wish of His Majesty, however, the performance took place yesterday, the Emperor fearing such an excitement on the evening preceding his birthday might try his strength too much to be able to bear the fatigues of the approaching day. The demand for tickets was something unparalleled. Although the price of seats was considerably enhanced thousands made applications in vain. For the few tickets dealers gained possession of

FABULOUS PREMIUMS

were paid. Places in the stalls, sold at the ticket office for $4, were disposed of in some cases at ten times their value. Besides those boxes belonging to the royal family and court the Emperor had ordered a reserve of several boxes for those princes who had arrived in Berlin to celebrate the anniversary of his birthday. The dress circle was principally occupied by members of the diplomatic corps, of whom the Ambassadors, their ladies and Ministers of all the leading States had appeared. As the British Ambassador, Lord Odo Russel, had issued invitations, on the termination of the opera, for a large party, all persons attending court were dressed in evening toilet, a circumstance which tended considerably to brighten the festive appearance of the house. Toward half-past five the building began to fill, and at six o'clock, the time fixed for the commencement of the opera, not one empty place could be seen. A few minutes before the curtain was drawn up the Emperor and Empress, accompanied by their daughter, the Grand Duchess of Baden, appeared in their private box adjoining the stage. In the box contiguous sat the Crown Princess, the Grand Duke of Baden, the hereditary Princess of Hohenzollern, with her sister, Princess George of Saxony; the widowed Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg, the only sister living of the Emperor; the Princess Carl, Frierich Carl and a number of reigning princes.

A few minutes after six o'clock

THE EMPEROR GAVE THE SIGNAL

for beginning the opera. A dead silence prevailed in the house on the first notes of the overture being heard. The orchestra was directed by Herr Eckert, a friend and scholar of Wagner's, while Wagner awaited the success of his production in a small box belonging to the manager. The very difficult overture, through which strains of the lyric melody of the opera prevail, was performed in a masterly manner. The musicians, all performers of note, put forth their best powers to effectively execute the work.

On the curtain being drawn up Isolde (Frau von Voggenhuber) was seen on the stage, accompanied by her faithful servant, Brangäne (Fräulein Brandt), on board of a large ship steering toward Cornwall, where the royal daughter of Ireland is to be united in marriage to King Mark. Isolde leaves her country with a heavy heart, merely having responded to a wish of her parents in consenting to the proposals of Tristan in behalf of his uncle Mark. In accordance with the narrative of Gottfried of Strasburg Wagner describes to us in his Tristan and Isolde how Tristan, of Parmenica, in a struggle for his parental heritage, under an assumed name, kills Marolt, the betrothed of Isolde. He himself struck down by poisoned steel directs his small bark to Ireland's shore, where he, the unknown, under the name of "Tantris," is nursed and healed by the hands of the young Princess.

THE STORY OF THE OPERA.

Full of pity for the sick hero, helplessly lying before her, she, in a moment of leisure examining his sword, finds a fissure in which the splinter of steel once extracted from the body of the murdered Morolt exactly fits. She thus recognizes in the infirm Tantris none other than Tristan, her greatest enemy. A feeling of revenge impels her to raise the sword of the sick youth to deal him a deadly blow, when Tristan awakes, and his pleading look causes the weapon to sink. Unconsciously the picture of Tristan imprints itself on Isolde's heart; she herself will not acknowledge it, but she carefully nurses him, however, until his return home. The feeling of love rekindles in Isolde's heart, when Tristan comes for the second time to Ireland, and begs, in behalf of King Marke, the hand of the beautiful princess. Faithful to his mission, he conducts her to his uncle without having ever approached during the passage. But Isolde, determined not to renounce the man she loves so dearly, resolves upon his or her death. Her wise mother has provided her with

ENCHANTING AND DEADLY POTIONS.

Brangäne, her confidential companion, contrary to the will of her mistress, and who is charged to administer the dose to Tristan from love to Isolde, fills the cup with a love potion. Isolde, not dreaming of the deception, snatches the cup from Tristan when half empty and quickly drinks the remainder. The die is cast! Deprived of earthly sense and presuming death is near, their eyes meet and they fall speechless into each other's arms. Only death has power to tear their secret from them, for they know nothing of Brangäne's deceit.

THE SHIP LANDS.

Isolde is married to King Marke and now begins, owing to this fact, the terrible conflict between natural right and moral wrong. Isolde is passionately attached to Tristan. Tristan has a false friend named Melat, who thirsts for the betrayal and ruin of the couple. To effect his object he persuades the King, who is no longer youthful, to institute a nightly chase, well knowing that Tristan will benefit by the opportunity to meet with Isolde. The second act represents a garden with high trees planted before Isolde's apartment. The summer night is clear and brilliant. A burning torch is placed over the open gateway. In the distance sounds of the receding hunt are heard. Brangäne, on the steps of the apartments, is intently listening for any audible signs of enemies. Isolde now rejoins her, and commands, in spite of her warning, to extinguish the torch, a sign for Tristan that he may approach. He comes; and in expressions of love the time quickly passes, when suddenly Brangäne with a cry announces treachery. A clatter of weapons is heard, and violently and swiftly King Marke, Melat and several court attendants appear on the scene.

MORNING DAWNS.

Tristan, filled with hatred against the treacherous Melat, draws his sword to kill him, but wounded to death by Melat's steel, he sinks to earth. The third act shows Tristan, deeply wounded, in his own castle, and, feeling himself on the point of death, longs for Isolde. His faithful attendant Kurvenal has sent a reliable man across the sea to conduct Isolde to the dying hero. Joyous sounds of watching shepherds now penetrate the air, for Isolde approaches. She ascends the shore. Tristan, overcoming his physical weakness, goes to meet her. His strength, however, forsakes him and he dies in her arms. A second ship is perceived, which brings King Marke. Kurvenal, believing his arrival forboded hostile intentions, fortifies the entrances, but too weakly. Melat, the traitor, forces his way in, and is immediately struck to the ground by Kurvenal. But the latter misapprehends the designs of the arrivers. Marke, informed by Brangäne of the tragical fate of Tristan, his favorite, has come to unite him with Isolde. Too late, Isolde has fallen, deprived of consciousness, on Tristan, with whom she is united in death.

THE EXECUTION OF THE OPERA.

To this epitome of the contents of the opera, in which no pretensions to detail are made, I will just mention some parts of the music calling forth loud applause. The sad strains of a young fisherman's song at the beginning of the opera—"Frisch weht der Wind der Heimath zu, mein irisch Kind wo weilest du"—and the plaintful duet between Isolde and Brangäne were of great effect. The discourse between the hero and the messenger, in which he gives her evasive replies not to respond to the call, is sung in full rhythm and power. The culminating point in the first act is a duet between Tristan and Isolde, when she feels called upon to make him atone for his neglect. From this point, where the hero, endeavoring to hide his feelings, quickly replies to the questions of the passionate woman, to the moment when he seizes the cup and discovers his real sentiments for her, a truly demoniacal increase of power,

THE MUSICAL PORTRAITURE OF LOVE

predominates. In the long love duet in the second act, in which passionate words are exchanged between the two, a musical exuberance and dreaminess of enchanting sweetness and melody prevail, as well as in the passage, "Was dort in keuscher nachs dunkel verschlossen wacht," and the indescribably beautiful song, "Sink, hernieder, Nacht der Liebe," through which the voice of the watching Brangäne complainingly mixes.

WAGNER'S SUCCESS.

To the words, "Wie sie selig, hehr und milde, wandelt durch des Meers Gefilde," the maestro has imagined a melody which must be acknowledged as beautiful, even by his most inveterate opposers. And not less powerful, if clothed in another form, is Isolde's last song. The immense success of this opera, describing the tale of the poor lovers Tristan and Isolde, their sufferings and their death, was especially shown yesterday at the close of each act. The burst of applause was never ending; the audience would not be satisfied until Wagner himself appeared on the stage and personally responded to the ovations awarded him. Wagner seemed deeply moved by the enthusiastic greeting accorded him. The favorable and ardent reception of "Tristan and Isolde" plainly shows what transformation public opinion has undergone in favor of Wagner. Whereas, at the first representation of the "Meistersinger" his friends formed a minority, and were by no means capable of influencing the condemning judgment of his foes, yesterday's opposition was exceptional and trustworthy. This splendid reception of "Tristan" in Berlin guarantees the success of Wagner's grand enterprise in Bayreuth.