

the age, was born in Scotland, some years before the close of the last century. The earlier period of her life was passed at a school at Musselburg, about six miles from Edinburgh, where she was distinguished only for the gentleness and unpretending character of her manners. Her first marriage, with an officer of the navy doubtless became the means of developing the latent powers of her mind, as this gentleman took great delight in initiating her into the mysteries of mathematics and general science, being no doubt encouraged by the discovery of her wonderful aptitude for such pursuits. It is understood that the first work of Mrs. Somerville was undertaken by the advice of Lord Brougham. This was a summary of the "Mechanique Céleste" of Laplace, which she prepared for the "Library of Useful Knowledge," under the title of "Mechanism of the Heavens;" but as it was found too voluminous for the Society's publications, it was issued in a distinct form in the year 1831. To this succeeded "The Connection of the Physical Sciences," in 1834. The latest work of this accomplished lady is the "Physical Geography," published in 1848, comprising the history of the earth in its whole material organization, and, consequently, embracing all those branches of scientific inquiry to which she has, at various times, directed the capacity of her remarkable mind. In 1835 Mrs. Somerville was elected an honorary member of the Royal Astronomical Society. During the course of a long life she received many well-merited acknowledgments of her literary services, among which was a grant of £300 a year from the Civil List.

MR. KEIGHTLEY.

Mr. Thomas Keightley, the historian, died at his residence, Belvedere, Erith, Kent on the 4 November 1872. He was born in Dublin, October, 1789, the eldest son of Thomas Keightley, Esq., of Newton, in the Co. of Kildare, and was educated at Trinity College, in that City, where he graduated B. A. in 1808. Keightley was originally destined for the Bar, but relinquished that profession for literature, and with that intent proceeded to London in 1824. He contributed largely to the periodicals of the day, and assisted the late Crofton Croker in the production of "Fairy Legends of the South of Ireland." His histories of Rome, of Greece, and of England, are well known as able and useful school books. He was the compiler of several classical works, and amongst his own writings may be mentioned "Fairy Mythology," "Outlines of History," "The Mythology of Greece and Italy," "History of India," and, "The Crusaders." He also edited "Poems of Milton," translated from the Dutch an edition of Shakespeare's Plays, and was the author of "Life of Milton" and "The Shakespeare Expositor," published 1867.

THE REV. DR. JAMES BISSET.

We notice in the papers the announcement of the decease of Dr. Bisset of Bourtie, near Old Meldrum, in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, where he had officiated as Minister of the Parish about half a century. He was noted for his theological lore and critical acumen in Biblical Study as well as for the scholarly excellence and classic training with which his mind was imbued, and which bore fruit in a style of English Composition so pure, so tasteful and effective, as frequently to draw from the best judges special remark and commendation. In his earlier days Dr. Bisset was a School-master and turned out from his school at Udry, Aberdeenshire numerous pupils who afterwards distinguished themselves in various walks in life. As a churchman of the Established Kirk of Scotland he was remarkable for his high administrative capacity, his powers of debate and his influence in her supreme and subordinate councils, and, in consequence of these qualifications, was elected, ten years ago, to the highest position,—Moderator of the General Assembly. In private life he was much respected and generally beloved.

Dr. Bisset's death occurred on September 10th when he was in his 78th year. He was brother-in-law to Mr. Adam Thom, formerly editor of the Montreal Herald, and some time a Judge in the North-West Territory, and uncle of the Hon. Sir John Rose, late Finance minister of Canada.

EDWIN FORREST.

The eminent Actor died on the morning of the 12th December, 1872, in his native City, Philadelphia, where he was born in 1806, and at an early age appeared in female parts in two of the theatres of that city. For years he reigned supreme in the United States as one of the "Old School," not to be approached by any of the stars of to-day.

In 1820 he made his *debut* in New York with marked success, and from that time forward his reputation was established. In 1834 he was the acknowledged chief of the American stage, and in that year visited England, where, mainly through the instrumentality of Mr. MACREADY, he found great favour, and was the recipient of much attention and applause. In 1837 he again visited England, and married a Miss SINCLAIR, from whom he was divorced in 1852. In 1849 his patron, Mr. MACREADY, visited the United States, and to the professional jealousy of Mr. FORREST is attributed the desperate riot which took place on the occasion of Mr. MACREADY's first appearance at the Astor Opera House. Twenty-two lives were lost in the *melée* between the friends of FORREST and the military.

Books and Annuals.

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Agricultural Department, Ottawa.

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