

of their neighbours. There are nearly three hundred dialects spoken in China, some of them almost as different as French from English, and Chinamen speaking different dialects are unable to converse at all; but if they can write, they can communicate, for the written language is the same all over the empire.

Railroads must make a change in Chinese money, for they have no coin but brass or iron cash, which pass at about ten for a half-penny. For all large payments silver is used, either in lumps, or cast into the form of a little shoe, and this has to be weighed. Only on the coast are Mexican dollars in use.

When a crowd of passengers are buying tickets, it will be necessary for them to have coins of higher value than cash, and this will be a great benefit to the country.

It will also be necessary to adopt a foreign standard of time to run the trains by. The Chinese who come in contact with foreigners are very fond of watches and clocks; but in the interior the day is divided into twelve periods of two hours each, beginning at 11 p.m.

Each period is known by the name of an animal, and is farther divided into eight portions, each equal to a quarter of an hour. There is no smaller division, such as minutes or seconds.

For time-keepers they have sun-dials, water-clocks, and spiral incense sticks, arranged to burn for a certain length of time.

If you ask the time of day, you are told that "it is near the dog," or "two-eighths from the rat," but nearer the exact time you cannot get. A quarter of an hour, more or less, never seems to trouble a Chinaman.

As their superstitions and prejudices do not extend to clocks and watches, we may expect an immediate reform, and "railroad time" to be soon in use all over the empire.

The Chinese hate all foreigners, whom they call "Fan-qui." Intercourse by rail will tend to do away with this, as well as effect many surprising changes which can scarcely be foreseen.—*Communicated.*

### THE LITERATURE OF THE COLONIAL PERIOD OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE Colonial period of the United States was not a favorable one for the production of literature. Settlements were much scattered, the people were poor, troubled by Indians, and secretly jealous of each other. This period did, however, produce some writers who gained fame both in their own country and in Europe. Their writings were first in the form of messages sent to England, but these gradually enlarged into essays and magazine articles. John Smith, the governor of Virginia, though an un-

cultured soldier, wrote a history entitled "A True Relation of Virginia," which in many ways is equal to the best prose of the Elizabethan age. The colonists did not care for any book that was not serious or controversial, and the first book printer in America, "The Bay Psalm Book," is a specimen of the literature which they favored. This book came from the press at Harvard College in 1640. The first writer of any note was Thomas Hooker, sometimes known as "Minister Hooker." He was a native of England, and a graduate of Cambridge College. Was educated for a preacher of the Church of England, but for nonconformity was expelled by Archbishop Laud. He came to America and settled in Cambridge, but afterwards moved to Connecticut to hold in the founding of that colony. He was born in 1586, and died at Hartford in 1647. His most popular work is "The Poor Doubting Christian Drawn to Christ," but the work for which he is most noted is "A Survey of the ——— of Church Discipline." Thomas Shepard and John Cotton were contemporaries of Hooker, and, like him, were of English birth, and exiled by Laud for non-conformity. Thomas Shepard's works are, "The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel Breaking Forth Upon the Indians of New England," "First Principals of the Oracles of God," and "New England's Lamentations for Old England's Errors." The principal works of John Cotton are the "Holiness of Church Members," "Set Forms of Prayer," "A Practical Commentary on the First Epistle of John," "Spiritual Milk for Babies," "A Treatise on the New Covenant," and "The Bloody Tenet Washed."

Rogers Williams was one of the prominent men of the period. He was an unpopular preacher on account of his sympathy for the Indians. He holds an honored place in American history as the first man to establish a government that allowed freedom of opinion in religious and other matters. His principal work is "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience."

John Elliot won fame by the translation of the Bible, "The Bay Psalm Book," and "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted," into the Indian language; and besides these he wrote in English "The Harmony of the Gospel," "The Communion of Churches," and "The Christian Commonwealth."

Ann Dudley Bradstreet was the most accomplished woman of her time. She wrote a volume of poems entitled "The Tenth Muse," and also "Contemplations." The first was sombre in spirit, but in her later work she shows more naturalness.

The Mathers—father, son, and grandson—were prominent men in the colony. Richard Mather was born in England, and was expelled for preaching without