

THE OCEAN.

As we stand then, to-night, looking forth upon the ocean, what do we behold? At first sight only a barren waste of waters, surrounding the continents and covering three-fifths of the surface of the globe. It is a pathless and desolate expanse, which seems designed to check the intercourse and to defy the authority of men. No cities are built on its heaving and treacherous breast; and the bustle of human life, the roar of human activity, ceases at its edge. The realms of space above our heads are hardly more appalling in their silence and their solitude than the boundless ocean plains, where no living thing appears to break the oppressive stillness with its movement or its cry, and only wave chases wave from end to end of the horizon. No barrier of mountains, lifting their snowy summits to the clouds, would seem to arrest the progress and mock the power of mankind, like this great wall of water which the Almighty hand has reared around the nations.

But man has conquered the sea, and if you observe it again, you will perceive that it is not a barrier to keep nations apart, but a bond to bring them near and to unite them together. The trackless expanse, at which we were just now looking, is furrowed by a million keels. The cunning of the human mind has traced upon it a network of paths, along which the commerce of the world swiftly and safely moves. Its dreary solitudes are, bright with sails, and the music of human voices has broken the spell of silence which had settled upon it; science and daring have robbed it of its terrors, and have brought it into subjection to the human will. It has become a great and free highway, over which thought and wealth may pass from land to land. It has made all the nations neighbours, and widely sundered peoples familiar friends. To traverse it is no longer a matter of desperate adventure, it is an incident of a holiday. It has been explored, mapped out, subdued, and the voyage across it, which was once involved in hardly less uncertainty and peril than that in which a soul sets forth upon the unknown ocean of another life, is now an experience of which almost every detail may be anticipated and of which the end may be predicted to an hour. When forty-six years ago the French astronomer sent word to all the observatories of Europe that on such a night, at such a point in the heavens, a new planet might be seen, it was rightly held to be a marvellous example of the power of the human mind. But it is a hardly less signal display of man's mastery over nature, when, after pushing steadily forward for many days, through sunshine and storm, through mist and darkness, on the North Atlantic, the captain of the vessel in which you are sailing says quietly to you: "At nine o'clock this evening, in that direction, you will see the light on Fastnet Rock." The ocean has been tamed and civilized and made a part of the habitable globe.—*Rev. E. B. Coe, D.D.*

WEATHER AFFECTING THE MIND.

Dull, depressing, dingy days produce dispiriting reflections and gloomy thoughts, and small wonder when we remember that the mind is not only a motive, but a receptive organ, and that all the impressions it receives from without reach it through the medium of senses which are directly dependent on the condition of light and atmosphere for their action, and therefore immediately influenced by the surrounding conditions. It is a common-sense inference that if the impressions from without reach the mind through imperfectly-acting organs of sense, and those impressions are themselves set in a minor æsthetic key of colour, sound, and general qualities, the mind must be what is called "moody." It is not the habit of sensible people to make sufficient allowance for this rationale of dullness and subjective weakness. Some persons are more dependent on external circumstances and conditions for their energies—or the stimulus that converts potential kinetic forces—than others; but all feel the influence of the world without, and to this influence the sick and the weak are especially responsive. Hence the varying temperaments of mind changing with the weather, the outlook and the wind.—*Anon.*

GEMS.

The rarest of all gems is not the diamond, which follows after the ruby. This in its turn allows precedence to the chrysoberyl—popularly known as the cat's-eye. The true stone comes from Ceylon, though Pliny knew of something similar, under the name of *simulampis*, found in the bed of the Euphrates. Can we wonder, when we look at one of these singular productions of nature, with its silver streaks in the centre, and observe, as we move it ever so slightly, the magic rays of varying light that illumine its surface, that it was an object of profound reverence to the ancients? The possessor was supposed never to grow poorer, but always to increase his substance. The largest known is now in the possession of Mr. Bryce Wright, the well-known mineralogist. It is recorded in the annals of Ceylon, and known to history as the finest in the world. Two stars of lesser magnitude shine by its side, and we are informed that three such stones are not known to exist elsewhere in the wide world.—*London Graphic.*

FISHING WITH ELECTRIC LIGHT.

A French yachting paper describes the new apparatus which is used with the permission of the Government of that country for fishing by electricity at night. It consists of a globe of glass within which the electric light is shown. Two conductors encased in gutta-percha are arranged so as to meet one another on the inside, very much on the same principle which is now familiar to all visitors to the Crystal Palace. They communicate with a fishing boat anchored at a convenient distance, and can, of course, be set into activity by the occupants of the boat. As to the globe, it is attached to a weight below and a float above, so that it can be raised or lowered to the desired depth. As soon as the carbons are ignited and the glass is in proper position, all the sea in its vicinity is illuminated brilliantly, and the fish,

over whom light is well known to exercise an irresistible influence at night, come eagerly, and sometimes in large schools, within the rays. They may be seen from above disporting themselves in the unaccustomed brightness, and little dreaming of the sinister purpose with which the little fête is organized for them. It is then that other fishing-boats, armed with nets, come up and set to work at the unconscious victims, which they surround as well as they can without interfering with the apparatus connected with the lighted globe. It may be supposed that this device is calculated to operate with much deadly effect whenever it is used; and there seems to be much doubt whether it will ever be allowed as a recognised kind of fishing within territorial waters. Indeed, the license granted by the Government is said to be merely provisional, and for the purpose of testing the new machine.

IN HARBOUR.

I think it is over, over—
I think it is over at last:
Voices of loeman and lover,
The sweet and the bitter, have passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outblown its ultimate blast.
There's but a faint sobbing seaward,
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward,
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbing through the river,
Those lights in the Harbour at last—
The heavenly Harbour at last!

I feel it is over, over—
The winds and the waters surcease.
How few were the days of the Rover
That smiled in the duty of peace!
And distant and dim was the omen
That hinted redress or release.
From the ravage of Life, and its riot,
What marvel I yearn for the quiet
Which bides in this Harbour at last?—
For the lights, with their welcoming quiver,
That throb through the sanctified river
Which girdles the Harbour at last—
The heavenly Harbour at last!

I know it is over, over—
I know it is over at last.
Down sail; the sheathed anchor uncover;
For the stress of the voyage has passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean,
Hath outblown its ultimate blast.
There's but a faint sobbing seaward,
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward,
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbing through the river,
Those lights in the Harbour at last—
The heavenly Harbour at last!

—*Harper's Magazine.*

COLLECTING OLD POSTAGE STAMPS.

Some years ago the inquiry was started in France, why the convents and congregations collected the old postage stamps by the million. The French postmaster-general, struck by the singularity of the fact that none of the religious congregations ever purchased postage stamps, investigated the subject, and was told that the priests of each diocese received large quantities of stamps from correspondents desirous of making offerings or paying for masses, and that these were used in paying for letters. He was not satisfied with this explanation, and commissioned M. Mace, the chief of the detective service, to make further investigations. The official reported that the convents collected old stamps that had been used to sell them again to dealers in various parts of the world, to be absorbed by collectors. M. Cochery was not satisfied with this explanation, which proceeded on the assumption that several millions of philatelists were yearly added to many millions already interested in the collection of stamps of various nations. This year the Post-office Department has renewed its inquiries, stimulated by the fact that the work of collecting old stamps is going on more actively than ever, and that several dealers have opened their shops in Paris. M. Cochery has his suspicions that all is not honest in this business, but the Paris authorities decline to co-operate any further, and thus the matter stands. This same thing has been done extensively in other places, but it is for no good purpose in the end. Stamps cannot be collected in quantities at any cost excepting for the purpose of defrauding the government, by cleaning and using them over again.

MR. PAUL TULANE, of Princeton, N. J., has given to the Board of Trustees in New Orleans property in that city valued at \$2,000,000, for the endowment of a college for the education of its white young men.

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH has raised quite a commotion by his statement in the Assembly that the only great name associated with Voluntarism is that of Vinet. He is being asked if he never heard of John Locke, Robert Hall, John Foster, Andrew Fuller, Angell James, Dr. Owen, C. H. Spurgeon, R. W. Dale, Dr. McLaren of Manchester, Lindsay Alexander, and a large number of others. The names of Milton and Daniel Defoe may be added to the catalogue.

HERE is one of Mr. Spurgeon's latest hits: "Mrs. Partington uttered more of the truth than she thought when she said: 'Dear me, nothing don't do me so much good as to go to church Sunday morning, and hear a precious minister dispense with the Gospel!' Yes, dear soul, that is exactly what some of them do: they give us anything and everything but the glad tidings of salvation, and then they wonder that their chapels become empty. Yet it does not do to say as much, or you will have a hornet's nest about your ears."

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

CETEWAYO will leave Cape Town on July 12th for England.

MILITARY preparations at Woolwich for Egypt have been completed.

Of the 1,150 convicts in the Ohio penitentiary, but seventeen are women.

THE Bedouins are threatening to become a source of trouble in Egypt.

FENIAN emissaries are said to be actively engaged against the English in Egypt.

Of the 160 Southern Presbyterian churches in Texas, seventy-five have no pastors.

ARABI BEY proposes to confiscate the property of Europeans who have fled the country.

FRANCE proposes to make a thorough extermination of the wolves that infest some of its districts.

GUITEAU's avenger has appeared in the shape of a crank from Chicago, who has gone to Washington.

A SIMLA despatch says 12,000 men could be assembled in Bombay for transport to Egypt in twenty-four hours.

OFFICIAL statistics show that there are 1,580 Americans or Irish Americans in Dublin without visible occupation.

THE Lutheran and Reformed churches in Constance united this year for the first time in observing the Week of Prayer.

THE National Conference of the Dunkard Church, in session recently, near Wabash, Ind., was attended by 20,000 people.

THE annual meeting of the British Association will be held this year at Southampton, and will commence on the 23rd August.

THE last clause of the Repression Bill was passed in the Imperial House of Commons by a vote of 69 to 6, after a 32 hours' sitting.

A REPRESENTATIVE meeting at Newport has unanimously resolved that a Sunday-closing Bill for the Isle of Wight should be introduced.

A TUNE played on a church organ in New Britain, Ct., was distinctly recognized by telephone in Worcester, Mass., a distance of 90 miles.

FLEMING, a Director of the City of Glasgow Bank, has been sentenced to eight months' imprisonment for connection with the failure of the bank.

THE Queen has been pleased to appoint the Very Rev. Principal Tulloch Dean of the Order of the Thistle, in place of the late Rev. Dr. Macleod.

THREE acres of a subterranean forest ten feet below the surface were recently brought to light in Crowland, Lincolnshire, Eng., as workmen were excavating some clay.

WHILE recently draining a swampy meadow in Freehold, N. J., the remains of a mastodon were uncovered, the bones being plainly distinguishable, though greatly decomposed.

MR. DARWIN has left £146,000. To his friends Sir J. D. Hooker and Prof. Huxley he has bequeathed £1,000 each; all the rest goes to his widow, five sons, and two daughters.

A STUDENT of philosophy in Berlin has been sentenced to three months' imprisonment for having stolen as many as twenty hats and overcoats from various restaurants and cafés.

THE sum of £131 has been collected toward the bust of Burns which it is proposed to place in Westminster Abbey. One-half of the Scottish members of Parliament have subscribed.

THE body of Guiteau was buried in the north-east corridor of the Washington gaol, and, so far as is now known to the contrary, the remains will lie undisturbed by any future sepulture.

JOSEPH COOK delivered five lectures in Yokohama and Tokio, which were highly praised by the Japan papers. His intention was to lecture in Shanghai, China, before going to Australia.

AT Oxford, on the 14th ult., the honorary degree of D.C.L. was conferred upon Sir William Muir, Mr. Goldwin Smith, Mr. Robert Browning, Mr. Allen Thompson, and Mr. G. F. Watts.

A COLLECTION of books relating to the history of the Province of Brandenburg, valued at over \$50,000, has been presented by an unknown donor to the city library of Berlin, the capital of that Province.

"GREAT PAUL," as the new monster bell for St. Paul's Cathedral, London, is called, has been put in position after fifteen hours' lifting, and was dedicated with a religious service of chants and special prayers.

SCOTLAND gives the encouraging report that crime is greatly decreasing in her borders. In the years 1840-42, the convictions averaged 1,120 per million inhabitants, while in 1876-80 they were but 570, a decline of nearly 50 per cent.

DURING 1881 there were in Alexandria 8,075 deaths, being 38 per 1,000 of population. Among the resident foreigners the rate was 43.76 per 1,000. Both rates are very high. The last census showed the whole population to be 212,034, of whom 164,718 were Egyptians and 47,316 foreigners.

THOUGH New York has the largest population of any of the States, it is only the fifth in density of population. The rate for the whole country is 17.29 per square mile. Rhode Island has 254.87 per square mile, Massachusetts 221.78, New Jersey 171.73, Connecticut 128.52, and New York 106.74. Germany has 205 inhabitants to a square mile.

AN extraordinary ceremony has just been performed at Burslem by the Bishop of Lichfield. Some two months ago a man named Blaise committed suicide in St. Paul's churchyard by hanging himself over his wife's grave, and the burial ground being thus considered to have been polluted, the Bishop was asked to re-consecrate the ground, and a solemn service was held in the church.