

AMERICAN actors in New York say that ten fully equipped English companies have been so far booked for American tours next season, comprising over five hundred English actors.

A CABLEGRAM to the New York *Herald* says that Mrs. Langtry arrived in Paris on Friday from London, and was in the dressmaker's hands. She says she is going to Aix for a cure for the gout, and that she does not intend to return to the United States this year.

THE scenes of Mark Twain's "Prince and Pauper," in which little Elsie Leslie is to appear next winter, are laid in England at the close of the reign of Henry VIII. Elsie will represent Edward, Prince of Wales, who in a boyish freak exchanges clothes with Tom Canty, the pauper. His adventures in this disguise and his difficulties in getting back to the palace furnish much of the plot.

THE vivacious Hopper sprang the following upon the audience at Palmer's Theatre, New York, the other night, and it was encored until his bronchial tubes succumbed:

My childhood's days, my childhood's days,
Their memory dwells with me always;
In fancy's fairy light I see
Myself a child on mother's knee!
'That self-same knee I ne'er forget,
Methinks I'm wriggling on it yet;
She spake no words, sweet mother mine,
She merely reached and made a sign—
That slipper fell, and I knew what it fell on.

But there are things, but there are things
'Tis better not to dwell on!

MR. RICHARD MARSTON, the distinguished New York scenic artist, has been casting his professional and critical eye over the London stages, and finds that Mr. Irving's Lyceum Theatre is alone up to the standard of real, solid and conscientious painting, for which the chief credit is due to Mr. Hawes Craven. He finds too much hasty job work, done by incompetent assistants after good sketches from which splendid results ought to be had. Even the scenery in the Grand Empire ballet of "Cleopatra" struck him as unequal, although undoubtedly well designed. Some things he found worth high praise, but these made the rest suffer more by contrast.

THE piano as we see it to-day, says the Washington *Press*, is the growth of centuries of invention. In its infancy it was a harp with two or three strings. From time to time more strings were added, and after a while the cithara was born. The cithara was in the shape of the letter P, and had ten strings. It took many centuries for musicians to get the idea of stretching the strings across an open box, but somewhere about the year 1200 this was thought of, and the dulcimer made its appearance, the strings being struck with hammers. For another hundred years these hammers were held in the hands of the player, and then a genius invented a key-board, which, being struck by the fingers, moved the hammers. This instrument was called a clavicytherium or keyed cithara. This underwent some modifications and improvements from time to time. In Queen Elizabeth's time it was called a virginal. Then it was called a spine, because the hammers were covered with spines or quills, which struck or caught the strings of wires and produced the sound. From 1700 to 1800 it was much enlarged and improved, and called a harpsichord, and this was the instrument that Lady Washington, Mrs. Hamilton, and the ladies of our revolutionary times played on. In 1710 Bartolomeo Cristofoli, an Italian, invented a key or key-board, such as we have now substantially, which caused hammers to strike the wires from above, and thus developed the piano. In the past 150 years there is no musical instrument which has so completely absorbed the inventive faculty of man as the piano.

LITERARY AND PERSONAL GOSSIP.

TENNYSON celebrated the eightieth anniversary of his birthday Tuesday, Aug. 6.

ANDREW LANG has edited a fairy book which will be published in London soon.

MRS. HUMPHREY WARD has just been offered \$5,000 for a story of 30,000 words.

JOSEPH HOWARD is writing a novel. How some of the reviewers would like to score it.

THE copyrights of "Jane Eyre" and "Vanity Fair" will very shortly expire in England.

AN exhaustive life of Adam Smith has been written by Mr. John Rae, and will soon be published in London.

THE widow of the late James Grant is in very poor circumstances. Aid is hoped for from the English Civil List.

"THE LAND OF AN AFRICAN SULTAN," a record of three years' travel in Morocco, by Walter Harris, will be published by Sampson Low & Co. this autumn.

"A MAN in a Million," is the title of a new serial story by Dr. Gordon Stables, R.N., the first part of which will appear in the August number of *Cassell's Magazine*.

THE Worthington Co. have in preparation a translation by Mrs. T. W. Davis of "Lora, the Major's Daughter," a new novel by W. Heimbürg, which has not yet appeared in Germany in book shape.

MESSRS. CHATTO & WINDUS are about to publish a new book by Mr. W. H. Davenport Adams, entitled "Witch,

Warlock, and Magician: a Popular History of Magic and Witchcraft in England and Scotland."

THE early publication of a second revised and enlarged edition of "King's Classical and Foreign Quotations" is announced by Mr. Thomas Whittaker, of New York. The first edition was exhausted very shortly after its appearance.

CANON LEFROY, who has been recently appointed Dean of Norwich in succession to Dr. Goulburn, according to the *Printers' Register*, "began life as a compositor in Dublin," and was afterwards for a time "sub-editor of the *Irish Times*."

DR. NANSEN has arranged with Longmans, Green & Co., for the publication, both in New York and London, of an account of his recent Greenland expedition. The book will be ready early next spring, and will be illustrated with maps and plates.

MR. NAAKE of the British Museum has lately discovered some printing in Polish which, so far as is at present known, is the earliest specimen of printing in that language. It is a hymn addressed to the Virgin Mary, and it was usually sung by the Polish troops before engaging in battle, and bears date 1506.

THE manuscript Journals of David Livingstone, from which his first work, "Missionary Laurels and Researches in South Africa" was compiled, are said to be missing, and his sisters are said to be the more anxious for their recovery from the circumstance that Livingstone declared that out of these journals he could write three books as large as the one actually published.

ASKED to name his favourite novels, T. B. Aldrich, after specifying several others, writes, "and anything of Walter Scott except his poems." Although this is an *obiter dictum*, it will be considered about as effectual to dismiss "Marmion" and "The Lady of the Lake" from the repertoires of lovers of romantic verse as Howells' dictum against Scott's novels.

THE first number of the new magazine, *Santa Claus*, will be issued simultaneously in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Toronto, and London in October. Its chief aim will be the industrial education of the young people, and its endeavour to promote manual training among boys and girls. Although the magazine is to be so practical in its aim, fiction is not to be excluded, and serials by Miss Jewett and Mr. Johnson are already secured.

BRENTANOS, of New York, will publish, during the latter part of August, a novel, "Priest and Puritan," the plot of which turns on the love of a Methodist minister's son for the niece of a Catholic priest. The characters of the two clergymen are boldly drawn, and their nobility of heart plainly brought out by the difference of religious convictions which divides those dear to them. The book will be a welcome addition to wholesome, pure, yet interesting, literature.

MR. RUSKIN tells an amusing little story concerning Carlyle at a Scotch church. The minister, David Gillespie, was a quaint person, accustomed to speak his mind very plainly from the pulpit, and while preaching a sermon on "Youth and Beauty being laid in the Grave," something tickled Carlyle, and he was seen to smile; upon which Mr. Gillespie stopped suddenly, looked with a frown at Carlyle, and said: "Mistake me not, young man; it is youth alone that you possess."

A REMARKABLE chapter of Napoleonic history will appear in the September *Century*, consisting of letters and journals of British officers describing Napoleon's voyage to Elba, also to St. Helena. The first part of the article is a letter written by Captain Ussher, who commanded the *Undaunted*, which took the exile to Elba; the last part is by Lieutenant Mills, of the *Northumberland*, and consists partly of a diary which the young lieutenant kept while on the way to St. Helena in the same ship with the emperor.

THE author of "Micah Clarke," the historical novel dealing with the Monmouth rebellion, of which we recently spoke in high praise, is an English physician who is only thirty years old, and who has been a writer of magazine stories for ten years past. Dr. A. C. Doyle is a tall, athletic young man, who not only attends to a good practice and writes novels, but is a famous cricketer. He has, moreover, seen service on the West African coast, and has roughed it in a whaler. He is a nephew of Richard Doyle, the "Punch" artist and illustrator of "The Newcomes."

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

THE ART OF EATING.

THERE is little if any doubt that cooking has been employed by man in the preparation of food from the remotest ages. It is probable also that empirical ideas of what conduces to comfort in diet early formed the basis of a gastronomic art not without some relation to some physiological truth. It has been reserved for later times, however, and for civilized man, to discover and formulate a regular method of dining. By a process of natural selection the work of elaborating this system has in great measure passed into the hands of our French neighbours, who have thus been able to develop an art characteristically their own. Our simpler national customs relating to the table have, in common with those of most other peoples, attracted less attention, though it is not likely that they will ever disappear. It is needless here,

however, to discuss in detail each local peculiarity. We should rather aim at understanding those common principles which underlie all rightly constituted systems, and give to each its value as an aid to wholesome nutrition. The time of eating is a matter of no small consequence. This is to some extent subject to individual convenience, but we may take it that as a general rule not less than five hours should separate one meal from another. The short interval of rest usual after meals will commend itself as being in strict accordance with physiological necessity. The quantity and quality of food taken also require careful attention, and these again must be regulated by reference to the work to be done by a given person. Some difference of opinion has always existed as to the proper daily allowance of meat. We shall probably do justice to the digestive powers of most persons, however, by advising that only one substantial meal be taken daily. More than this would tend, if continued, to overload the tissues with digestive products, and less would hardly suffice for full nutrition. Drink, if alcoholic, should be sparingly taken or not used at all. Cookery has in these days been elaborated almost to excess. Variety and delicacy are carried to an extreme, and we should probably gain rather than lose if plainness combined with care were adopted as our rule of practice in such matters.—*Lancet*.

THE PETROLEUM SUPPLY.

PROFESSOR JOHN F. CARROL, assistant geologist for the State of Pennsylvania, is quoted as saying that the supply of petroleum was last year 5,000,000 barrels less than the demand, and that the shortage is bound to become more pronounced, in consequence of the failing condition of the different oil fields. A few years ago stocks were piling up at the rate of 2,000,000 barrels a month, or almost that, whereas they are now being decreased by something like 1,000,000 barrels a month. There are now, it is true, about 12,000,000 barrels of petroleum in tanks in the Ohio field, but this is because Ohio oil has not been used extensively as an illuminant. But the Ohio field, Professor Carrol believes, will not prove to be so extensive or productive as many suppose. No field thus far known, or likely to be ever known hereafter, will equal the yield of the Bradford, which has produced 56,000,000 barrels of oil, and at one time yielded as high as 105,000 barrels every twenty-four hours. Its production is now down to 18,000 to 20,000 barrels a day, and the pool is being drained to the dregs. Possibly there are some pools of 1,000,000 to 3,000,000 barrels in some of the old fields, and in new territory not yet opened up, but the prospects that such is the case are growing less every day. Kentucky may become something of an oil producer, though nothing great, for the oil-bearing sands underlie a portion of that State, and lap over into Tennessee. Texas has some oil, but the experiments undertaken in that State by Professor Carrol for others convinced him that the petroleum does not exist in paying quantities.—*Age of Steel*.

A MOUNTAIN ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

ONE of the most interesting achievements in modern engineering is the electric mountain railway recently opened to the public at the Burgenstock, near Lucerne. The rails describe one grand curve formed upon an angle of 112 degrees, and the system is such that the journey is made as steadily and smoothly as upon any of the straight funicular lines. The Burgenstock is almost perpendicular from the shore of Lake Lucerne the Burgenstock is 1,330 feet, and it is 2,800 feet above the level of the sea. The total length of the line is 938 metres, and it commences with a gradient of 32 per cent., which is increased to 58 per cent. after the first 400 metres, this being maintained for the rest of the journey. A single pair of rails is used throughout, and the motive power, electricity, is generated by two dynamos, each of twenty-five horsepower, which are worked by a water wheel of nominally 125 horse-power erected upon the River Aar at its mouth at Buochs, three miles away, the electric current being conducted by means of insulated copper wires. The loss in transmission is estimated at 25 per cent.—*Scientific American*.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

AT the present time there are two schools in our army; the first, and by far the smallest, consists of those who have carefully studied the features of modern campaigns, and have become convinced that the system adopted by the French and Germans is the only effective training for the battle-field, whilst the second and larger school consists of those who cling to the old close order and mechanical drill of the British army. We believe, however, that in time this latter school will disappear, and the British soldier will be trained solely for action and not chiefly for show. It has been said that the British army, having to carry on war in all parts of the world, and to contend at considerable disadvantage in point of numbers, requires a different system of drill and tactics to those adopted by Continental armies, but we have before asserted, and still maintain, that the German system, in which drill has been reduced almost to its elements, is as applicable to a force acting in the Soudan as to one campaigning in Europe. The most unpleasant criticism, because there was a good deal of truth in it, that was ever directed against British soldiers was the criticism of the German officer who witnessed the Delhi manoeuvres. He said that when the attack commenced "all the outward forms of discipline