

LANGUAGES.

It is said that the various nations of the earth speak about ninety different dialects. These dialects can be traced to a smaller number of languages, which can again be divided into three classes, namely—the Indo-Germanic, embracing the ancient classical languages and those of modern Europe; the Sanscrit, embracing all the various languages of India; and the Semitic, embracing the Hebrew, Chaldaic, Syriac, etc. The Hebrew, Latin and Greek are no longer living languages. Hebrew is written from right to left so that, in writing, it is the direct opposite of English. The Latin and Greek languages are written the same as English. The Latin alphabet is the same as the English, or, to speak more correctly, the Latin alphabet is employed in writing all European languages except the German and Greek. The old Grecian alphabet is still used in writing Modern Greek. Although the Modern Greek language is, with exception of the introduction of modern and Turkish words, essentially the same as the old language, still the form of conjugating the verbs and declining the nouns has been vastly changed. The Hebrew is said to be the oldest and most poetic language; the Latin the most copious and sonorous; and the Greek the most expressive and sublime. From the time of the Babylonian captivity the old Hebrew seemed to have received a check, but it is supposed that it did not—in the Syro-Chaldaic form—differ as much from the old Hebrew as Modern Greek does from the ancient language. Of modern languages the Chinese is the most difficult; the Italian the softest; the Spanish the most pompous; the French the most polite, and English the most copious and energetic. Language is one of the strongest bonds of nationality, as the native accent and tone can be rarely acquired by the foreigner.

A salt mine has been discovered near Slazburg, Austria, which is supposed to have been worked at least two thousand years ago. Besides a number of miners' tools, there were found a basket of untanned leather, a piece of coarse woolen cloth and a torch.

Dr. Peters, Director of the Observatory of Hamilton College, is an indefatigable astronomer. Forty-one asteroids have been discovered by him. He has also located trigonometrically 14,000 spots of the sun and is now preparing a great chart of the heavens.

According to the calculations of Dr. Siemens, the eminent scientist, the yield of all the coal mines of the earth would only serve to keep up the fire of the sun for the forty-millionth part of a second, and, if the whole earth were made of coal, it would serve as fuel for about thirty-six hours.

An ancient tomb has been discovered near Malmo, Sweden, in which was found a stone sarcophagus, which is said to belong to the bronze age, and to be at least 2,500 years old. A massive bronze ring was on the right arm of one of the two skeletons found in the tomb. This is said to be the only tomb of the kind ever discovered.

ART CORNER.

The new American Minister to Rome, Mr. Astor, is an amateur sculptor.

"The Lion at Home," Rosa Bonheur's picture, will not be at home next year, as it is coming to these shores.

Massive gilded sunflowers are at the top of the lightning rods on Senator Pendleton's new house in Washington.

Madame Modjiska uses in Rosalind the spear which Adelaide Neilson used in the same rôle.

A colossal group in granite has been designed by Mr. French of Concord, N. H., son of the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, for the new post office at Philadelphia.

Queen Olga of Greece wears her fair curling hair drawn back from her forehead with a comb such as one sees in the pictures of "Alice in Wonderland."

The choice of the London Fine Arts Society to engrave one of Alma Tadema's paintings has fallen upon William B. Closson of Boston.

The sculptor, biographer and nearest friend of Charlotte Cushman, Miss Emma Stebbins, has lately died from ill health contracted during her residence in Rome.

At Tel-el-Kebir one of Arabi's tents was embroidered with forget-me-nots, pomegranets and other flowers and fruits in excellent needle-work, while another was lined with crimson damask silk.

Launt Thompson has modelled a large eagle with spread wings for a memorial in the National Cemetery at Nashville, Tennessee, to the soldiers who fell in the battle of Stone River, the survivors paying for the work.

An old clock, with chimes playing air every three hours, nearly nine feet tall, made by John Green of London in 1715, and which for ninety years has belonged to the Rees family of Lynchburg, Virginia, was lately sold to a Philadelphian at the low price of a hundred and fifty-five dollars.

Miss Mary Grant has executed a marble cenotaph, with portrait bust, which is to be placed in Dunfermline Abbey as a memorial of Lady Charlotte Locker, sister of the late Lord Elgin, sister also of Lady Augusta Stanley. She was a direct descendant of Robert the Bruce, and one of her children has married one of Tennyson's.

The Marchioness of Lorne is a member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colors, and exhibited a portrait last year at the Grosvenor gallery. Her sister, Victoria, belongs, as well as the Princess Beatrice, to the Institute of Painters in Water Colors, and has also exhibited her works. The Duke of Edinburgh is a notably fine violinist, and the Princess Alice of Hesse did some good work in sculpture.

The apostle of æstheticism has to receive hot and heavy buffets. Mr. Herbert Spencer says: "Oscar Wilde is an outlandish person who attempted to reconcile idiocy with art;" and Mr. Freeman, the historian, on having an Indian introduced to him as the last of the Mohawks, told him that he resembled "a dear and distinguished friend Mr. Oscar Wilde."