

Kars, which, according to all the rules of strategy, they must carry before advancing further, as they cannot afford to leave such a point of menace in their rear. Hence after much manoeuvring around this city, they appear to have invested it completely at last. How long the siege will continue remains to be seen. Kars is said to be pretty well garrisoned, and properly victualled for at least six months.

That the Turks, however, are not disposed to allow the peaceful siege of Kars is evidenced from the news of the first conflict on the open field, intelligence of which reached us last week. The battle took place at Delibaba, a little place not marked on the map, but which is only ten miles from Kopruck Kaleb, a point indicated in both maps published by us, and which will be found on a line between Erzeroum and Mount Ararat. The details of this engagement, so far as we can make them out, are as follows:—The Turkish artillery was not strong, their infantry not above 5,000, and they had little or no cavalry. The Russian left had 10,000 infantry, plenty of cannon, beside an effective cavalry force. The Turks brought on the fight by advancing on the 15th instant. The whole day was spent in an artillery duel, but on the 16th the Russians began the execution of what was a settled plan. Six bodies of Russian infantry advanced at 6 o'clock, under cover of a terrible artillery fire; notwithstanding that the Turks returned a steady fire, the enemy continued to advance, and finally, by detaching a strong body, stirred the Turkish right flank, seized a commanding hill, and quickly threw up breast-works, and then established four field guns, which enabled them to rake almost the entire front of the Turkish line. From this moment the losses of the latter were serious; the men fell rapidly, the artillery were dislodged, and the infantry exposed without support to a murderous fire for over twenty minutes. The Ottomans stood before this new attack, and at this crisis their commander, Mehemet, fell. Ammunition then became short. At ten o'clock, the height which the Turks held at the opening of the battle, was no longer tenable. By midnight the last Turk was driven off. The cavalry charge converted the defeat into a rout.

On the Danube, no engagements have taken place for the excellent reason that the Russians have not yet crossed the Danube. It has been a standing joke with newspaper readers, for the past weeks, to find the unfailing daily telegram announcing that the Muscovites are about to cross the great river. First the want of pontoons was urged to excuse the delay. Then blame was thrown on the rising waters of the Danube. Next, diplomatic negotiations looking to peace were urged as a palliation. Finally, it is admitted that the want of supplies was and is the real cause. However, it now appears plain that, perhaps before these lines are published, the Russians will have crossed the barrier, and then we may look out for the prosecution of the war in earnest.

On the river itself, we have nothing to note except a little harmless cannonading and the frightful destruction of a gunboat by a torpedo, a view of which, with full description, appeared in our last number. As, however, that description, based upon erroneous information, was incorrect, we append to-day the accurate version. A detachment of forty Russian soldiers, commanded by Lieutenant Dubascheff, left the northern shore of the Danube in three or four small boats, and proceeded towards the point opposite Braila, at which point there was stationed a large Turkish monitor. The night was very dark, and they managed to surround the monitor before being discovered by the Turkish look-outs. When finally observed by the sentries on board they were challenged, and "Who goes there?" rang out on the night air. Major Murgescu replied in Turkish, "Friends." The Turks, evidently not satisfied, commenced firing in the direction of Matchin, not knowing where these boats came from. The shots flew wide of their mark, and did no damage to the daring men in the boats. During the firing several of the Russian soldiers, under the direction of Lieutenant Dubascheff, plunged into the water, swam silently to the hull of the iron-clad vessel, and placed the deadly torpedo in close contact with the bottom of the monitor. After the destructive machine had been securely fastened and the wires of an electric battery accurately adjusted, the men retired to the neighboring shore of the river, and at half-past three in the morning the monitor was blown into the air, with all the officers and crew. The explosion was terrific, and, as nothing is said of the crew being saved, it is supposed that all on board perished with the vessel.

REVIEW AND CRITICISM.

We have before us a little volume entitled "Prince Pedro, a Tragedy," by J. H. Garnier, M.D., issued from the presses of Belford Bros. If this were the production of a foreign author we should pass it by with only a few words; but as it is the work of a Canadian, and it is a principle with us to give all due attention to the march of Canadian literature, we deem it our duty to go over these pages in detail. An author should be very careful about putting his first work into type, because a first work is often set down as the measure of a writer's powers, and by that standard he is apt to be judged throughout life. A first publication thus often becomes a dead weight which hangs about a man, sometimes impeding his advance, and sometimes crushing him altogether. We are not prepared

to say that this will be the fate of Dr. Garnier with the present volume, but we do think that he would have done well to withhold his work until he had produced something more likely to give him instant popularity. It is because we see traces of talent, and a promise of better things, that we thus pronounce on "Prince Pedro." The work has much merit in conception and execution, but the subject matter is revolting and no one can read it with pleasure. A mother and a queen pursuing her son with relentless hatred for marrying a lady that is not her choice, carrying that hatred through ten long years, and culminating the horror by assisting at, if not partaking in, the murder of the young wife and her two babes, is a ghastly story which no reader can contemplate with other than feelings of horror. It is no palliation that the story may be true, or even probable, because the answer is at hand—that the author was not obliged to choose it. If it is argued that similar and even worse atrocities have been handled by the great tragics, we are afraid we shall be obliged to say that Dr. Garnier should have imitated these great writers and risen to the full height of his subject. But this he has not done, nor do we believe that such is his pretension. Having made these necessary reservations, however, it is not to be inferred that the writer's tragedy is not a meritorious production, under several aspects. On the contrary, he shows many qualifications as a dramatic author. He has much of the instinct of the stage, elaborates his plot with much dexterity and with a fine eye to ultimate effect, draws several characters well, notably those of Ludro, Inez and Sebastian, and throughout manages his scenes with simplicity, serenity, and a freedom from straining. As a rule his blank verse is good, although the sense is frequently marred by atrociously bad punctuation, which he will doubtless set to the account of the proof-reader. Several of the passages rise to eloquence. We have scant room for citation, and must limit ourselves to a couple of examples. Here is a picture of jealousy drawn by the monk Ludro:—

"Is there a demon ever sprung from hell  
That is more potent than deep jealousy?  
Wouldst thou but see that demon of thy mind  
Standing before thee as a spectre grim,  
His face is pale, save when a hectic fire  
Burns in the eye or flashes on his cheek;  
His lips are thin and parched—his breath is hot—  
He moves with slouching pace—his bosom heaves  
And boils with agony, with rage, with love—  
In fear's dark cauldron, sinking with despair!  
Then mark! within the fiery serpent hiss,  
And with that flame that rises from its eye,  
Keeps that black children boiling evermore.  
Then see, Pontico, how his body shakes!  
How his legs tremble! on his visage hangs  
A ghastly grin, as if *flung there by chance*.  
He clutches in his grasp a broken blade,  
And craves in his heart, dares not to strike."

The fatal dream of Inez is likewise told with poetic power:

"I dreamed that I was sitting by a stream,  
And all was happiness, for thou wert there.  
I saw the blue waves dancing merrily,  
When suddenly the river turned to blood!  
Behold! a human hand of giant size,  
Bony and gaunt as of a skeleton,  
Rose from the bloody stream and seized on us,  
Dragging my boys and me beneath the waves.  
I called aloud for thee, but thou wert gone,  
And then that bony hand rose up on high  
And vanished in the air."

Upon the whole the work of Dr. Garnier reveals talent, poetic feeling and dramatic fervor. Beyond the choice of his subject, we consider his tragedy an acquisition to the ranks of Canadian authorship, and we trust we shall soon hear from him again.

There is perhaps no more satisfactory means of arriving at a knowledge of a country than through a study of its commercial and financial standing, and, singular to say, in many cases such study has a particular charm for men of letters, who practically know nothing about business. This reflection has occurred to us on perusing, as we have at length had the opportunity of doing, a pamphlet issued lately by Robert S. White, Commercial Editor of the *Gazette* of this city, containing a general review of the trade of Montreal, and a synopsis of the commerce of Canada. The work of compilation is extensive, and the official statistics are not merely copied, but reasoned out by the author. An essay on the Progress of Banking in Canada conveys in a few pages a mass of information not easily accessible. The work is further supplemented by the republication of the able address of Mr. Thomas White, Jr., delivered some months ago in London, Ont., on the Canadian National Policy. We congratulate Mr. Robert White on the appearance of this useful pamphlet, and we trust he may continue the series from year to year, as is his present intention.

APPLETONS' JOURNAL for July gives considerable space to a novelette by Christian Reid, entitled "A Work of Retribution." It is given complete, and accompanied by a good illustration by Mr. Sheppard. The illustrated article is based upon Russell's volume, "The Prince of Wales's Tour in India," being devoted principally to the hunting adventures of the Prince. Colonel Baker's "Turkey in Europe" affords the groundwork for another Eastern paper, in which there are some striking pictures of life and notable adventures in the Turkish provinces. There is a pleasing description of the Farne Islands, the "land of gulls and guillemots," off the east coast of England, which is spiced with a love adventure. An amusing paper on "Osculation" gives the history, philosophy, and poetry of kissing. This article alone must make the number a favourite with ladies. An entertaining paper, by Wirt Sikes, entitled "The True Story of Owen Glondower," is based

upon researches and discoveries recently made at Cardiff, where Mr. Sikes is now United States Consul. A very graphic and striking sketch, entitled "Lighting a Match," records some strange adventures in a German inn. Mr. H. M. Robinson describes in an entertaining manner the characteristics of the Blackfoot Indians, and the peculiar method of trading with them.

THE HISTORY OF THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY, by Sandford Fleming, is really a monumental work, which deserves to be preserved in every library, reflecting as it does not only the energy and resources of the country, but testifying to the splendid professional skill of Mr. Fleming and his staff. It is published in a fine quarto by Dawson Brothers, of this city, while the illustrations are made in the usual elegant style of the Burland-Desbarats Lithographic Company. In a few weeks we shall begin a series of illustrations, with appropriate letter-press, of the whole line of the Intercolonial Railway, and shall have occasion to consult the great work of Mr. Fleming continually throughout our labours.

CANNOLLES is the name of an historical romance published by Belford Brothers. The author is J. Esten Cooke. The book is what it purports to be—a military story, with the smell of the pines about it, the ring of the moss-trooper's charge, and all the wild charm of camp-fire yarns. It has faults, but these do not detract from the merits of the story as such, and one reads it through at a sitting. The story is connected with that stirring revolutionary period, just before the surrender of Yorktown, when Virginia was invaded by Cornwallis, and Tarleton's terrible dragoons scoured hill-side and valley. In Mr. Cook we have an example of the caprices of fate respecting authorship. This novel is far superior to the kindred story of Bret Harte, entitled "Thankful Blossom;" and yet he has to seek a publisher away up north as far as Canada, while Harte has the pick of metropolitan publishers, and his book appears in all the glory of blue and gold.

One of the best printed and carefully read books issued by Belford Brothers, is HOURS WITH MEN AND BOOKS, by Professor Matthews. This little book is the fruit of wide reading and a happy knack of collection. It is full of information for young students of literature, while for the busy man it supplies many hints, examples, and citations which may be used to advantage. The author is not an old fogey, but has modern ideas of his own, as evidenced in his treatment of the subject of early rising, the study of modern languages, and physical exercise.

EPHEMERIDES.

Another word must be said for the Caxton celebration. A paper such as ours, which aims to foster art and literature, as well as to promote a certain perfection of typography, may be said to be particularly interested in the success of this commemorative movement. Perhaps the people of Montreal are not aware of one fact—that theirs will be the largest, and altogether the best celebration of the kind in America. Strangely enough, the United States have done nothing in the matter, so that we have the advantage of receiving many treasures from there which would otherwise not be available. It is a notable instance of what a few able, energetic and devoted men can accomplish. To four or five gentlemen whom I could name is due the whole merit of this exhibition, and it rests with the inhabitants of this city to show their appreciation of these labors by a full attendance at the *Conversazione*, and the succeeding evenings when the exhibition will be kept open. The large card of invitation, in old English colored text, is a beautiful specimen of printing, which deserves to be preserved for its own sake and in perpetuum rei memoriam.

I have been expecting it for months. I knew it would come, and it has come. Certain musicians professing dissatisfaction with and even disgust at the notices and reviews of ordinary newspaper men on current musical events, have undertaken to edit a column of their own and set down the true modus of criticism. Personally I have liked this weekly column, reading it regularly with edification and profit, but I have always doubted that it could undertake independent criticism, or that if it did, it would succeed in holding its own. The event has not belied my fears. The musicians have fallen foul of the critics, and they are abusing each other like pickpockets in two papers. The editors of the column known to me, especially one, as among the most learned adepts of their art in this city, are accused by a Doctor of Music of writing "arrant nonsense," and by others of not knowing a note of the score which they profess to review. Meantime the public laugh or are bored as the case may be. Musicians are proverbially a ticklish body of men, and, as in other classes, the least instructed are the most blatant. Your acknowledged artist, master of an instrument, or your thorough theorist, who deserves a degree, even if he has it not, can afford to keep out of the arena, and is all the happier for doing so.

Since I am on the musical tack, perhaps I may as well keep on. I beg to adhere to the opinion that, all things considered, the newspaper man is as good a critic of musical performances as the public need have. As a rule, my brother journalists are gentlemen of taste and culture. They

are susceptible of aesthetic impressions, and are capable of reproducing these impressions on paper in clear and elegant language. Nothing more is required of them to judge fairly of a song, an instrumental performance, a concert or an opera. They only need furthermore to be conscientious and independent of outside influence in the shape of managers and sociable artists, and of inside influence such as is brought to bear through copious job-work and profuse advertising. It will be well too if they write their notices after the performance, not before it, and sit through it all instead of simply "dropping in," and trusting to a treacherous programme for further information. These little "inadvertencies" sometimes occur, but on the whole, it were well if all men were as honest in their judgments as are our overworked journalists in their musical and dramatic criticisms.

After all, what is this hubbub about musical criticism? Art is the language of the soul. Music is an art. Hence any man that has a soul must love music and understand it. He may not always understand it according to preconceived theories, but he can understand it so as to explain his meaning to others, hundreds of whom will be found to feel exactly like himself. There are many musicians beside them that play upon strings or that blow through reeds. He is a musician who loves and feels and appreciates the murmur of hidden springs, the sigh of the wind in the pines, the song of the bird on the branch, the buzz of bright insects on the wing, the chirrup of children, the laughter of rosy girls, the rustling of the loved one's dress, as through mottled shadow and sunshine, she glides up the lane that leads to the sweetest of all destinies. I would turn such a man loose in a concert-room, and rely on his judgment as soon as I would on that of the oldest professor of thorough-bass in the proudest of European conservatories. This is not rhapsody. It is wrote in sober earnest, and I doubt whether many will gainsay me.

An excellent plan, which you will get to like the more you practice it, is to keep your eyes closed when listening to music. The purely material or mechanical is thus eliminated, and the voice of inspiration becomes thoroughly idealized, as it should be if we would enjoy all its significance. Opera-glasses are sadly out of place in a concert. They discountenance the performer, and distract and fatigue the gazer. When Prume plays one of his masterly solos, close your eyes and test the effect. The man and the instrument disappear. There remains only a sound. The room becomes filled with vibration, and, after a time, you feel as though you were rocked on waves of rhythm. Gradually you drift away and away, till to your absorbed senses it seems that you hear

"The horns of Eldland faintly blowing."

The sensation is delicious. When an orchestra plays, I never look at the small, spectacled man bent double over his contra-bass, nor at the trumpeter whose cheeks are blown and whose eyes bulge out, nor at the forest of violin bows moving up and down irregularly together. These sights break up attention. Neither do I care to look at a man singing. But women, as in everything else, are an exception. I keep my eyes distended whenever a lady sings. Why? Because the whole woman sings, or ought to sing. The play of the features, the swaying of the form should be in unison with the modulations of the voice. Hence a female vocalist should always be handsome, or at least well-shaped. It is a sin to put an ugly woman on the stage, no matter how well she may sing. One is always disposed to depreciate her voice because of her looks. On the other hand, we shall almost always feel inclined to swear that a pretty woman sings nicely, or at least we shall judge of her with mercy. Never, however, if she is affected. Then, were she as lovely as Récamier, and as sweet a nightingale as Persiani, she must expect no good word from me. If I had my way with an affected singer, I should ascend the platform, take her tenderly in my arms, carry her into the green-room, lay her down on a sofa, and smother her with the vengeful pillow of the Moor.

A. STEELE PENN.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

MISS ADELAIDE NEILSON has made \$70,000 by her late starring tour.

SIGNOR BRIGNOLI and Signor Ferranti are about to undertake a Canadian tour.

It is said that Anna Dickinson is writing a new play which is to be produced next season.

FRANK MAYO has ceased travelling. He has played *Davy Crockett* 1,011 times.

It is said that Mr. Charles Santley has now definitely resolved to sing no more in opera.

BUFFALO BILL's share for his first week in San Francisco amounted to \$1700 and for his second \$1200.

ERNESTO ROSSI, after an enormous success in St. Petersburg, has made more than 25,000 roubles in Moscow.

THE French journals report that Patti is to sing in America this winter at \$2,000 gold per night, and that Nicolini, who of course goes with her, will have \$1,000 nightly.

THE mode of notation employed in the Greek music was peculiar. It consisted in placing the letters of the alphabet in various positions—straight, sideways, etc.—and sometimes even fragments of letters were used. The scale of the Greeks was similar to our minor scale, although it contained no sharp seventh. Play on any pianoforte the notes A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and you have played the Greek one-octave diatonic scale.