

seas, over which move vast bands of clouds. Two white caps cover the poles. The oceans have a bluish green colour and appear darker than the land. The contour of the disk, more luminous than the inner part, is reddish under the influence of atmospheric refraction. Europe and Africa, Asia and the Indian Sea, the Pacific, the two Americas, and the Atlantic defile in turn every twenty-four hours. The earth thus forms a marvellous celestial clock that may be consulted by but a glance at the heavens, and to which the succession of the terrestrial phases adds another base for the measurement of time. Seen from the centre of the visible hemisphere of the moon, the earth hovers always in the zenith. In measure as an advance is made toward the edges of the disk, our globe appears to descend progressively, and, from the circumference of the lunar hemisphere, it is observed to oscillate at the horizon. In the course of the long lunar night of 354 hours, which forms half of the diurnal period and succeeds daylight, the earth soars majestically in the heavens, undergoing her phases from the first to the last quarter, and at midnight shines with intense light fourteen times stronger than that of the full moon. With so strong a light do we illuminate that part of our satellite which is dark at this epoch that it becomes visible from here, owing to the reflection of the terrestrial rays from its surface. The reflection of a reflection is styled ashen light. The earth, an enormous globe of ever varied aspect, suspended at a fixed point of space, therefore presents to the selenites a charming spectacle. The inhabitants of the visible hemisphere of the moon, where our globe is unknown, have to take a long voyage in order, from the lunar face turned toward us, to contemplate that magnificent star which we call the earth, and which up there must bear names that express all the admiration that she inspires.—*La Science Illustrée*.

MUSIC.

ST. GEORGE'S SOCIETY'S CONCERT.

THE battle-cry of "St. George for Merrie England" drew a fairly large audience to the Pavilion on Thanksgiving evening. The usual enthusiasm which accompanies comparatively small numbers was exhibited, as nearly every number was encored. Mr. Torrington's orchestra made its first appearance of the season, and rendered a most satisfactory account of itself. The intonation of the orchestra has improved, and while minor faults are not absent, the ensemble seems to promise steady improvement. The establishment of this body is one that reflects the greatest credit on Mr. Torrington's energy and ability as a conductor. It fills a much needed niche in the row of our musical institutions, and will become a powerful agent in musical matters if the public will give it the support it deserves. Its contributions to the programme were Lavalley's "Bridal Rose" overture; Bailey's waltz, "Till We Meet Again;" Meyerbeer's "Coronation" march, and the "Winter Frolics" galop. Its efforts were received with hearty and prolonged applause.

The instrumental solos by Messrs. Clarke, Arlidge, Spacey, and Smith were well rendered and received the inevitable encore. Miss Robinson sang "The Song for Me" and "Good Bye," receiving a recall for the former. She was in good voice and sang her songs very well, the only fault being a tendency to injure the true pitch. Mr. Warrington was at his best and gave a splendid rendering of Mr. Torrington's "Canada the Gem in the Crown" and the "Three Jolly Brothers." Mr. Sims Richards also sang well, but the effect of this gentleman's singing would be much better if he would keep himself a little more quiet on the platform. The agony of unrest was on him.

MRS ALICE J. SHAW.

THIS lady, whose fame as a whistler preceded her advent to Toronto, gave a concert at the Pavilion on Monday evening, and was received by a large and apparently kindly disposed audience. Mrs. Shaw has a great ability in this unique branch of the musical art. She whistles in a rather thin tone, approaching that of the piccolo. Fluency and shrillness are its most noticeable qualities. Next is a tendency to go off the pitch, an attribute specially in evidence when she whistles rapid passages. Her performance is interesting as a curiosity but utterly devoid of any real musical value. The company that came with her was headed by Signor Tagliapietra, who carried off the honours as far as applause went. He sang "Il Balen," and "The Heart Bowed Down," and was encored in each instance.

Of the other members of the party, Miss Edith Pond was the favourite. This lady recited several pieces to a piano accompaniment very effectively, the best of these being the "Minnet." Miss Jessie Foster, a light soprano, and Mr. Gustave Thalberg, a light tenor, were the other vocalists of the company, and sang their pieces in a very amateurish manner. Miss Ollie Torbett played several violin solos with a pleasing tone, but rather erratic execution. Altogether there was a general feeling of disappointment at the poor standard of the concert in view of the high prices. B. NATURAL.

WHILE the question of the origin of the Aryans is under discussion, Mr. G. Bertin suggests that we may learn something of it by looking further than we have yet done into the roots of their languages. Even in the oldest specimens they bear evidence of being hybrids—in inconsistencies of syntax; in the promiscuous use of prepositions and postpositions; in having many words and roots to express the same objects, and in the use of three genders. Hence the original tongue may have been a fusion of two languages—say of Accadian or some closely-related speech and some Semitic language. The supposition is supported by the fact that a great many resemblances have been observed between Accadian and Sanscrit.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

AMERICAN COMMONWEALTHS: INDIANA. A Redemption from Slavery. By J. P. Dunn, Junior. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company.

To the Canadian reader the most interesting part of this volume, as in the case of the other issues in this series of American Commonwealths that form part of the Border and Western States, is that which deals with the pre-settlement era, when the French explorer or *coureur de bois* was first threading his way over what was then a wilderness, and subsequently, in the case of Indiana, became a fighting-ground between the French and Indians. The author, who is secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, and evidently well up in the annals of his State, has given us a minute but graphic narrative of this outlying region during the French period, locating the trading-posts, from those of La Salle downwards, and reciting the history of the long border contests between the French and English nations. In the preparation of the chapters devoted to this early period, Mr. Dunn, we notice, makes acknowledgment of having drawn material from Canadian sources. In this portion of the narrative the author seems to us to have omitted no fact of importance. What he has related, moreover, he has related well. The bulk of the remaining chapters deals with the contest over Slavery, and the long controversy on the subject of the Ordinance of 1787, which prohibited the "peculiar institution," curiously enough with the consent of the slave-holding States, in the North-West Territory. The history of the emancipation of Indiana from slavery is here for the first time told with fulness and evident knowledge. Mr. Dunn does not deal with the modern annals of his State.

FIFTY YEARS AGO. By Walter Besant. New York: Harper Brothers. Toronto: Williamson and Company.

It is no surprise that the author of the novel "The World Went Very Well Then," and the many other charming stories from the pen of Mr. Walter Besant, of Besant and Rice fame, should give us a sprightly, graphic and entertaining volume full of delightful as well as instructive pictures of London Society as it was when Queen Victoria ascended the throne. Not only from a literary, but from a patriotic point of view—being by birth, culture, training, and temperament, a typical Englishman—was Mr. Besant admirably fitted for the work he has undertaken. Of the many products of the Jubilee year this, in a certain sense, is by far the best. It is the best, we mean, as a picture of the social and intellectual life of the era in England, which, though it saw our still reigning Queen succeed to her royal inheritance, had not yet escaped from the national characteristics and social environment of the eighteenth century. In point of time, it is the London of but "Fifty Years Ago"; but in point of manners and customs it is the London of the previous century that we are called upon to look at. In dress and fashion, in pursuits and amusements, in class distinctions, in the mode of travel, and in most of the features of its civilization, it was still the age of the Georges. It was the age of satin stocks, knee-breeches, swallow-tail coats, and high-arched velvet collars. It was a drinking, clubbing, gaming, and play-going age—the age of Almack's, Crockford's, and Vauxhall. It was the age before reforms swept away penal laws that were the shame of the nation, that brought relief to the wretched child-life that laboured in the factories, and in mines, and abolished flogging and the legislative making of paupers and criminals. It was the age when the stage-coach was in its glory, and when the Londoner was then, practically, as far from the Scottish moors as he would be to-day in the heart of *A. A.* Yet all roads then, as now, lead to the British metropolis, and there gathered every noted man of the period, whatever was his walk in life. Into the many and varied circles, professional and social, that flourished at the period of the Accession, are we introduced by Mr. Besant, and most charmingly does he descant on their characteristics, and confide to us the privileged gossip on which they fed. Among all classes do we mix, at the play, in the Assembly, in Parliament, in the courts, with statesmen and politicians, with *littérateurs* and schoolmen, wits and *beaux*, gamblers and play-goers, costermongers and high-born ladies of fashion, and all the varied cliques that made up the London world of the time. All this, of course, is not history, but it is the rough material of which history is made; and to the historian in search of material, nowhere, we should say, could he find a better or more genial chronicle of the period than in the work before us. We have found it not only most instructive but most delightful reading.

PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION; their Practical Solution the pressing Christian duty of to-day. By Bishop Cox, President McCosh, and others. New York: Baker, Taylor Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.

This earnest and timely little volume had its origin in the discussions of the General Christian Conference, held at Washington last year, under the auspices of the American Evangelical Alliance. It consists of a series of eleven papers read before the Conference on many of the more prominent social questions which now confront the Churches. The Misuse of Wealth, the Estrangement of the Masses from the Church, Relation of the Church to the Capital and Labour Question, The City as a Peril, The Saloon and the Social Evil, Immigration, and Ultramontaniam, are some of the subjects treated of. All are strong, practical utterances on their several topics, illustrated by not a few startling facts, with much sensible counsel as to the mode of dealing with the problems by the Churches, in a broad, evangelical spirit. Many of them have their lessons for our own communities, secular and religious, particularly the paper of the Bishop of Western New York, on Ultramontaniam, dealing with the perilous encroachments of the Jesuit Order on the American continent.

CHILDREN'S STORIES OF THE GREAT SCIENTISTS. By Henrietta C. Wright. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons; Toronto: Williamson & Co.

Of the many entertaining books for boys, designed as presents for the coming holiday season, this volume of Miss Wright's is one of the most entertaining. It has one chief merit, of being simply and attractively written, with no parade of learning, and as little as possible of scientific jargon. The subjects treated of are to a youth of intelligence and scientific or mechanical taste the most absorbing that an author could well deal with. They embrace astronomers, electricians, botanists, geologists, biologists, chemists, and other workers in the varied field of nature. The author seems to have followed a chronological order in her biographies, beginning with Galileo, Kepler, and Newton, and coming down to Faraday, Lyell, Agassiz, Tyndall, Darwin and Huxley, of our own day. The volume well-nigh covers the whole range of scientific investigation, and the presentation of its varied subjects is clear, lucid and graphic. Its entertaining and instructive character may be gathered from the caption of a few of its chapters: Newton and the Finding of the World Secret; Linnæus and the Story of the Flowers; Herschel and the Story of the Stars; Cuvier and the Animals of the Past; Faraday and the Production of Elec-