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O. D. MUNN, S. H. WALES, A. E. BEACH.

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THE FATHERS OF PHILOSOPHY.—III.

ROUDLY the conqueror plants his foot upon the vanquished land; proudly the mariner regards his craft when safely harbored after some rough and perilous voyage; and with a wholesome and honest pride do children in the streets recall their city's mighty dead. The feeling of success in the one leads us to admiration of the means in the other, and the climax is the applauding voice of posterity on the actor and the means at his command. If, as we do, we adore, with all the fullness of hero-worship that is within us, the memories of the great soldiers who have, from time to time, decorated their race or devastated countries, or the great poets who have sung sweetly to the entranced ear of genial man, how much more should we honor the remembrance of those who have lived lives of peace, inculcating honesty into men, and, by their example and teaching, improving humanity through all future ages! Should we not forever hold them in sweet memory's cells, and keep the recollection of them ever green? The voice of all mankind will respond "we should!" And it is with this idea and this respect that we proceed to enumerate the works and tell the story of the life of the founder of the Italic School.

PYTHAGORAS.

While the people of Athens were worshiping "THE UNKNOWN GOD" on Mars Hill, and the population of Ephesus cried "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" and six centuries and a half before Saint Paul, with his logical reasoning, told the inhabitants of both cities about the true God and the way of salvation, there was born on the island of Samos, not far from the latter city, the man Pythagoras, who was in some measure to prepare the Grecian mind for the reception of Paul's logic and wisdom. At eighteen years of age, in the year 568 B. C., he had, like most youths, a desire to travel and study the philosophies and acquire the learning of foreign lands. His first point was Egypt, where, by the interest of the king, Amasia, and after submitting to certain rites, he was admitted into the colleges of the priests. He passed twenty-two years in this country and then visited other lands, but the route he took or the exact countries he visited is so wrapped up in contradictions that it must be left in doubt. On returning to his native island he attempted to open a school to teach geometry, but the Samians were either too stupid or too lazy to profit by his instructions, and he relinquished his design. He then visited Delos, and after presenting cakes to Apollo, he pretended to receive from the god a code of doctrines for the government of men, and with the same purpose he repaired to Crete, and was initiated into the most sacred mysteries of Greece. It was in Greece, at Phlius, that he first assumed the title of "philosopher," or lover of wisdom, in modest distinction to the title of "sophist," or wise man, which had been conferred upon him.

Returning to Samos, he went into a semi-circular building used by the Samians as a place of public resort, and delivered, with assumed authority, the doctrines of his sect, and in a secret cave instructed his more chosen followers, But as his discourses had too much in them of individual freedom, he had to leave the island, and he passed over to the city of Crotona, now Otranto, in Italy, on the gulf of Tarentum, and it was from this that his sect received the title of the Italic School. The inhabitants of Crotona were licentious and corrupt in the extreme, but he quickly changed them into a sober and frugal people; and it is said that six hundred persons were prevailed upon to submit to his severe discipline, which required that they should throw all their possessions into the common stock, and acquire a habit of silence, docility and gentleness. After this the fortitude and self-command of the candidate for admission to the knowledge of his more profound doctrines had to submit to a long course of severe abstinence and rigorous exercise; and to teach them humility he exposed them for three years to the jeers, contempt and contradiction of their fellows. No animal food was eaten by him, and he abstained from pulse and beans. Clothed in a flowing white robe, with a crown of gold upon his head, he preserved a majesty of demeanor and a commanding gravity, and by these means was looked up to as a superior being. This we may honestly believe was not charlatanry on the part of Pythagoras, but as he lived in a superstitious age, and had to talk to a superstitious people, he adopted these accessories to obtain a respectful hearing. He married Theano, of Crotona, and had two sons, Telaugas and Mnesarchus, who took charge of the school after his death, which happened in the Temple of the Muses, at Metapontium, B. C. 497, whither he had fled when persecuted for urging the people to the strenuous assertion of their rights, against the encroachments of their tyrannical governors.

Some precepts of his sect are good, such as:—"Above all things, govern your tongue." "Quit not your station without command of the general." "Remember that the paths of virtue and vice resemble the letter Y." Persius, speaking of this latter precept, said:

> "There has the Samian Y 's instructive make,
> Pointed the road thy doubtful foot should take;
> There warned thy raw and yet unpracticed youth,
> To tread the rising right-hand path of truth."

We would not exceed our usual space, and so will defer our account of his musical and other discoveries until next week.

THE HAND.

The hands are *striking* objects of power and beauty. The ancient masters of painting—Michael Angelo, Raphael, Barry, and others—paid great attention to the painting of the hand, and always instilled into them a power of expression which harmonized with the features of the person represented. No one who has examined the works of these great men has failed to recognize this marvelous characteristic in their paintings; but modern artists generally concentrate all their genius upon the execution of the face and form, to the neglect of the *minutiæ* of the hands or arms; hence, many historic personages are painted with their own faces, but with the hands of other individuals quite unlike them in style or character. Great orators and actors have paid much attention to the effect which judicious movements of the hands always produce upon an audience, in the display of some passionate touch of feeling.

We have now in mind a clergyman whose beautiful hand and grace of gesture have given him an enviable reputation. He is the admiration of the ladies; and a female friend of ours once said to us that, if she had been born deaf, a visit to his church would always have been a rich intellectual treat to her; for he had such a handsome hand, and his gestures were so graceful and expressive, that they conveyed as much significance of thought to her as his language did to the rest of the audience.

The idea of beauty is not a mere whim of the mind, like the indulgence of a passion for dress, such as jewelry, laces, cashmere shawls, &c.; but it is based upon certain fixed principles, and does not change along with the ever-varying alterations in shapes and materials of wearing-apparel and ornaments that are constantly occurring in Paris, London and New York. As the effect of hands in pictures is rendered more or less pleasing to the eye in proportion to the degree of harmony existing between all the limbs and features of the figure, so the corporeal beauty of every living man or woman may be much increased by proper culture; the best cosmetics being cleanliness, air and exercise. In the finger-nails, for instance, when properly taken care of, there is much of beauty; but when neglected, they become, like weeds in a garden—a positive disfigurement, betraying an absence of taste and refinement. To keep them in proper order, the finger-nails should be cleaned daily and cut as often as once every two weeks; and these operations should be done with a sharp pen-knife, which makes a much smoother cut than a pair of scissors. A pretty hand may be much improved in appearance by careful attention to the nails, and even a hand which is not of the most graceful type may be rendered more endurable to the eye. If the hands and nails are not kept clean, and closely trimmed, their adornment with diamonds and emeralds will not render them beautiful to the eye of good taste.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE ARTS.

Another new application of photography has been brought to our attention, this week, in the *American Journal of Photography*, which contains the specification of a patent granted in England to G. Baxter, of London, for a new method of coloring photographic pictures. The coloring of lithographic and calico prints is executed with a separate block, roller or stone for each color, each block, &c., being so engraved that it only touches the parts of the pattern where the specific color is to be laid. The new application embraces this arrangement for putting the colors on pictures taken by photography. The engraved blocks for coloring such pictures are worked in a press.

In our last issue we stated, in reference to the character of the illustrations of bank-bills in "Hewet's Encyclopedia of American Bank-Note Currency," (published by Wm. Cousland & Co., this city) that the number then before us contained *fac-similes* of counterfeits upon 144 Massachusetts banks. We ought to have stated that it contained 144 illustrations of *genuine* bank-bills of banks in Boston; it being the publishers' intention to arrange the whole work in alphabetical order, commencing with Massachusetts, then giving the banks of the other New England States, and then those of the middle, western and southern States and Canada, in regular succession, each weekly number containing 144 specimens of good bills. We were led to make the erroneous statement above alluded to from a casual glance at the index of the first number, which enumerated, as we now find, only the counterfeits existing on certain genuine bills therein engraved. So far as the description given referred to photography applied to the detection of counterfeit bank-notes, the principle is the same—the specific object of the article was to point out a new application of the photographic art.

THE PICTORIAL WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY.—We have received the above work from the publishers, G. & C. Merriam, of Springfield, Mass., and it fully answers all our expectations. In looking through its pages, even cursorily, we soon discover the value of the pictorial additions; for thousands of obscure words, whose meaning can only be faintly explained by great circumlocution of definitions, stand clearly forth in their significance and use when the illustrations place their practical applications before the eyes of the reader. We did think that it would be of especial benefit to young folks, but we now think (to make an Hibernicism) that it will be of especial benefit to everybody. A valuable feature is the table giving the pronunciation of the names of distinguished persons, as there is nothing more awkward and grating to the ear as to hear the names of giants in science and literature wrongly pronounced. Nearly 10,000 new words have been added, and altogether it may justly claim the proud position of the king of dictionaries.

BLANCHARD'S STEAM-BOILER.—We learn from the *Eastern Argus*, of Portland, Maine, that a trial-trip has been made at that place with the steam-tug *Tiger*, fitted up with Mr. Blanchard's improvements (illustrated and described on page 412, Volume XIII., SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN), and the result was a saving of nearly one-half the fuel that would have been used had it been consumed in the ordinary manner.

NOT QUITE A HUMBUG.—The Vermont gold discoveries are not all humbug. A few men are regularly at work (according to the Springfield *Republican*, which has sent a special reporter there) and gold in small quantities is the result of their labors. One man with another to help him, got $2.75 in a day, and a person named Hankerson, a regular miner, had $5 or $6 in his troughs, as the result of a day's work.

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