

Miscellaneous.

Foreign Correspondence.

The Great Exhibition of 1851, and Incidents Connected therewith.

LONDON, April 10, 1851.

The Palace of Glass is at length completed, and almost hourly arrivals of goods are taking place from all the civilized quarters of the globe. The scene in the interior of the mammoth building is one of active industry, —and such a clattering, constructing, tearing away and refixing, knocking down and apporportioning, we never before witnessed. Every hand is busy, and there is no such thing as idleness, if we except the strolling scribes, who, like myself, pay a visit in order to find matter for their jottings-down. It is wonderful what a concourse of visitors there are every day to gaze upon the exterior of this extraordinary pile, and the panorama of life in the neighborhood of Hyde Park will vie with the most picturesque in the world. We have seen Russians, Chinese, Turks, Hollanders, French, English, and Americans, all in one group—and all straining after the same object, and doubtless acted upon by the same impulses.

London is filling up with strangers—literally filling up,—and it is a vast metropolis, with its thousands of avenues and arteries to show an increase of population, yet such is the case, as its crowded streets and thoroughfares will attest. As yet the great bulk of the foreign visitors have been French and Germans, and we not unfrequently see a "Down-East'er" inquisitively stretching his neck to get a view in the Palace windows. He must abide his time; in a few weeks the doors will be thrown open, and then he can gratify his love of the arts to his heart's content.

At every grant of favorable weather the painters and glaziers have been indefatigable in painting and stopping up the deficient parts of the roof. The "Chronicle," a few days ago, remarked, "The scene which some five hundred or more workmen presented, while creeping through the long unbroken valleys and over the gently undulating and seemingly fragile ridges, was exceedingly interesting. The irregular manner in which they were dispersed over the extended glassy surface, reminded visitors of a body of skirmishers or light infantry, preceding the main body of an army, while others mounted on the light ladders placed against the sides, would have led to the conclusion that a scaling party were mounting the crystal walls."

On Monday last a strike took place among the workmen of the Palace. It appears the men demanded additional time for meals to make up for that lost to them in coming down and going up to the roof of the building. A satisfactory arrangement was effected, and the greater number of the men returned to work. These differences are to be regretted, for, as a journal of the day truly observes, "one great anticipation of the Exhibition was the cementing a reciprocity of feeling between the artisan and his employer."

It has been decided that the prices of articles will influence the award of the juries; as at a large expenditure excellence may be produced, while a low-priced article may possess both quality and execution comparatively superior. This is as it should be.

Yesterday the Austrian ship "Anna VI." arrived in the Thames with an entire cargo of Austrian products. As they are not as yet unpacked we are unable to tell what they are, the Commissioner having produced no list.

The official catalogue of the Great Exhibition is very rightly considered here as a monopoly, and as such tending to lower the character of the Exhibition. The compilers, not content with the simple arrangement of the accounts filled up in due form by the exhibitors, but placing it in small type, have set, in large type, an account of their own opinion as to the facts of the description and the practical uses of the articles. It is said that one catalogue has been set aside and another is to be issued, and it will redound to the integrity of the Royal Commissioners and the Executive Committee, if this be true. Juries

have been appointed to decide on the merits of articles exhibited, and to these jurors belong that prerogative, without any interference on the part of interested compilers who seek to pass opinion with closed doors and without examination of the deposits.

We see advertisements continually in the German papers, of articles on exhibition previous to being sent to London to the Industrial saturnalia. In Mannheim, a gentleman named Hecket has invented and prepared two transparent plant-pictures of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, each of them eighty-one centimetres high and sixty-eight broad. The plants are made use of in the condition nature produces them, without addition of coloring or any other matter. The names "Victoria" and "Albert," the crown, and ornaments, are made of various kinds of mosses, carefully laid with due regard to size and color. We have no doubt that this ingenious and beautiful work will attract great attention when it arrives.

In consequence of a jealous feeling existing among the French contributors, in regard to their allotment of space, which they contend is insufficient for their wants, a meeting has been held in Paris to take into consideration the expediency of erecting a rival Crystal Palace in Paris. It was calculated that it could be done at a cost of 600,000 francs, and that an additional 200,000f. would cover all expenses. Much discussion ensued, but the meeting adjourned *sine die*, so that very little is to be feared, as the project comes at too late a day to be carried into effect. H. H. P.

LONDON, April 11th, 1851.

The machinery, goods, and articles are now in the progress of arrangement in the Exhibition Building, and that with great rapidity. The British and French departments are farthest advanced. Our exhibitors are somewhat behind in the arrangement of their goods; this is owing to the conduct of the Agent Mr. Stansbury, who, was sent along with the goods; but the matter is now arranged, and Mr. Riddle, our Commissioner, is attending to the business with all dispatch. I believe, from the specimens of American articles now unpacked, that our exhibitors need not be ashamed of their productions, so far as they relate to the really useful.

A number of grand specimens of sculpture—or rather works of plastic art—are arising every day from their boxes to astonish and command admiration. There is a gigantic plaster figure, from France, of Godfrey de Bouillon, and there is a monster bronze lion from Bavaria. Up to yesterday there were 10,000 packages of British goods received, and 9,322 from abroad.

A bill to protect designs, so as to benefit exhibitors, was read a third time and passed both Houses of Parliament on Monday the 7th inst. Prince Albert is unremitting in his attention and visits to the Exhibition. He is the real head and projector of it.

Considerable trouble was experienced for a while about raising the funds for decorating and fitting up the American department, but I understand that Mr. Riddle has managed to "go ahead" in this respect. It was not anticipated by our exhibitors that they would have to provide such fittings, and be at so much expense—but the true American is like an india rubber ball, the harder you throw him down the higher he bounds up.

Every day develops more and more the magnitude of the coming Show. All hands have volunteered and have departments of the preparations and decorations assigned them.

Mr. George Peabody, the American banker in London, has directed Mr. St. John, of Buffalo, who has charge of National Decorations, to procure as splendid a United States flag at his expense as may be desired. The United States coat of arms will occupy the east end of the great aisle. It is now contemplated that the eagle's wings are to be each sixteen feet long, and the rest in proportion, of course, the whole probably relieved by the Niagara Falls on the right, and the towering Alleghenies on the left, as back ground.

EXCELSIOR.

[It will be observed that our correspondents in London are awake to the importance of fur-

nishing us with important information connected with the Exhibition. We have some statements sent by each, exactly alike, these we prune and present only in one letter. Our correspondence will be very valuable for reference. It will be of the most interesting kind.

—[Ed.]

EXTRAORDINARY RIFLE SHOOTING.—The Ceylon Times gives the following account of some extraordinary experiments in rifle shooting. The two rifles used were made in Paris, and had each four grooves, and did not appear to differ in weight or length from the rifles in common use:—"A target, about six feet square, was pitched on the sea-road of the Galle face, which was placed the enormous distance of 900 yards from where the gentlemen practising stood. A tripod stand was used on which in a groove, the rifle was placed at a rest."

"After witnessing several shots from the stand we left for the target. To our surprise we noticed that, although the bull's eye was not pierced, there were several shot holes in a good direction above it, as well as below, perforating the inch planking of which the target was made with a well-defined round hole, similar to what a common rifle would make at a distance of 100 yards—a proof of the enormous range and power of the rifle used. We may instance a curious fact in accoustics on this occasion. On leaving the firing place for the target, when about 200 yards off, we heard the rush of the ball, followed at a perceptible interval by the sound of the rifle; getting farther off, the period between the two sounds visibly decreased, until at the target the sound of the explosion reached us before that of the ball. Sound, of course would travel at its accustomed rate of 1,080 feet a second; but where the balls had, at a range of 900 yards, the velocity necessary to pierce an inch plank and fly far beyond it, it would be a fair presumption that the velocity would even be greater than that of sound. The marvel of the vast range must consist in the form and make of the ball used. These were made in the shape of a pine cone, rather smaller than the bore, and with a hollow orifice in the centre running from the base to the apex. Before placing the ball in the piece a small capsule of iron is slightly affixed to the exterior of the hollow in the ball, which is then rammed down. In the act of firing the explosion of course, forces the iron capsule up the whole length of the hollow in the ball, and in so doing it expands the cone, which of course fills up the grooves of the rifles exposing the whole base of the bullet to the action of the powder, without allowing the slightest windage, which takes away, in ordinary rifles, so much of the explosive force of the powder. At first sight we imagined that the rifles used were the famed "needle guns" of the Prussians, which have so immense a range, and which bid fair to be such formidable opponents to field artillery, where the effective striking force of the rifle ball is 800 or 900 yards' distance, with equal certainty with that of the common musket or rifle—namely, 200 and 250 yards respectively."

MINOT'S LIGHT HOUSE.—During the severe storm at the East two weeks ago, the light house on Minot's Rocks, 17 miles from Boston, was swept away like a broken reed, and two men drowned. It was a building 75 feet high, and was built on piles sunk five feet in the rock, the diameter of which was 8 inches at the base, 4½ at the top. On these piles were nine iron pillars sustaining the keeper's house, the floor of which was 60 feet from the foundation. The breadth of the base of the structure was 25 feet; the keeper's room measured from out and out, 14½ feet. The keeper's house, resting on the pillars, weighed 30 tons, and was 40 feet from the sea. Although so heavy it would rock like a cradel in heavy storms.

The keeper of Minot's Lighthouse, Mr. Bennett, as well as most others acquainted with the case, are of the opinion that no Lighthouse can ever be erected on Minot's Ledge of any other material than solid rock, similar to the world-renowned Eddystone lighthouse. It is stated that the cost of Minot's Lighthouse was \$39,000. It was commenced in 1847—a sin-

gle pile only being laid that year. In the season of 1848 all the piles, the cap and the braces were put up, but nothing was done towards erecting the house or the lantern, as the entire season was consumed in drilling the holes into the rocks for the piles. During the year 1849, the work was completed, and on the 1st of January, 1850, it was lighted, and since that time the lighthouse has been regularly occupied up to the time of its destruction.

PROTECTING PLANTS FROM INSECTS.—Prof. Mapes says, "We last year procured from a snuff mill a barrel of dry, but damaged snuff flour, and prepared dredging boxes, covered with a fine bolting cloth, with which we sifted it over the surfaces of any plants attacked by insects, and with most signal success. The snuff should be applied, if practicable, while the plant is wet with dew, and repeated after every shower. If the boxes are properly made, (like a common flour dredge,) and the snuff is perfectly fine and dry, but a little time is necessary to go over an acre of plants. Even the rose bug, cabbage louse, thrips on grape vines, &c., all yield to the influence of snuff, and the most delicate plant of the hot-house is not injured by its application. For field vegetables, caustic lime, made into fine powder while dry, and applied before slacking by contact with the air, will produce similar results.

PRESERVATION OF VEGETABLES FOR LONG VOYAGES.—At the last meeting of the Horticultural Society, London, various dried vegetables, such as peas, haricot beans, Brussels sprouts, carrots, turnips, &c. were exhibited from Peyrusset, Moller & Co., of Paris. These were stated to have been dried by a process peculiar to M. Gannal, the celebrated embalmer of animal substances. This process is understood briefly to consist in dividing the larger vegetables into pieces, and placing them in an apparatus, into which dried air is driven, until they have parted with all their water, and have become perfectly dry. In this condition they may be preserved for any length of time, and it is said that their flavor is not at all interfered with, inasmuch as nothing is taken from them except the water they contained, and that, after they are cooked, they are as good as when fresh gathered. If these facts, therefore, are borne out by experience, the discovery is a very important one, even as regards vegetables, more especially to ship owners, for they can be furnished in this country in any quantity and at a very cheap rate; but, in addition to vegetables, fruits, as apples, pears, apricots, &c. and even flowers, may be dried and preserved by the same process, and, owing to the rapidity with which the drying is conducted, the latter retain their natural colors almost as brightly as when first obtained from the garden. In confirmation of this, several dried specimens were shown to the meeting; and it was stated that others would be present at the great Exhibition, when it is hoped that additional information will be furnished on the subject.

HOT SPRINGS OF ABYSSINIA.—In the last scientific voyages made by M. Rochet d'Herincourt into the interior of Abyssinia, amongst other discoveries he mentions that of many sources of warm water amongst the mountains. One at Guil, he says, made the mercury rise to 70 deg. centig. at Hatéfete. The sources are numerous; they there unite and form nearly a river, in which there are many little fish of from twenty to twenty-three millimetres (not quite an inch) in length, the water being at 40 deg. centig. The fish which live in this stream are named by Lacepede *Cyprinodon minime*. They live equally in soft water or in that of the sea, in warm water as in cold; they are distinguished, as the *pocillies* and the *fondules*, by their jaws, which are furnished with three rows of maxillary teeth, fourteen on each side.

The Great Britain steamship is now fitting up by Penn, of London, for the Atlantic trade, Captain Mathews is to command her.

A fine new steamship named the Pennsylvania has been built under contract by Captain Loper, of Philadelphia for the Philadelphia and R. F. Richmond, Va., Line.