There is to occur this year, on the 17th of August, one of the most imposing solar eclipses that an observer on this earth is in a position to behold. Remarkable phenomena of the kind have happened be ore, and will hap-pen again; but this one possesses a special interest. There are partial ecupses and total eclipses; in some the totality lasts but a very lew seconds, and the spectator has small time to study the startling phenomena that the occasion manifests; in others, however, the obscuration endures for several minutes, and good opportunity is afforded for observing and recording the attendant appearances. Now, in the eclipse in question the sun will be hidden for more than six minutes, nearly the maximum possible interval, and the astronomers are on the qui vice with preparations for making the best use of this time in settling moot que-tions now existing, and in gleaning new facts for the advancement of their comprehensive science.

One unfortunate circumstance is that the speciacle can only be witnessed in situations far removed from the great centres of European civilization; for the shadow path of the moon passes over India, the Matay Peninsula, and the Oriental Islands. But this has not deterred the savons from their search atter knowledge; India, at all events, offers a vantage ground for the observers, which ample preparations have been made to occupy. Schemes have been discussed, expensive instruments have been made, and eyes and hands carefully trained to use them; and well-equipped expeditions have been nited out. Learned societies have given their brains, and governments their moneys, and all that for eight and foresight can do has been done to make the event a fruitful one to science; for it may be centuries ere an eclipse of such magnitude will occur again.

In times when minds were dull and uninquir-

ing, and when eyes had no telescopes to aid them in prying into the half-revealed secrets of nature, a solar echose was a thing to be wondered at, frightened at, and passed over. The five years' war between the Medes and Lydians was brought to a close by an eclipse, which so cared the rival armies that they made peace. The fears engendered by such a turning of day into night lasted for centuries, for William of Maimesbury relates of an eclipse that occurred in 1140, that persons while sitting at their meals were so frightened by the sudden darkness, that they ran out from their nouses, fearing that the ancient chaos was about to return; and later historians tell of similar effects. The vague and awe-inspired accounts that were in former times given of those phenomena gave way to others having some pretensions to foliness and precision, about the commence-ment of the last century; probably the first well observed eclipse was one which took place on the 12th of May, 1705. But the telescopes of at time were poor tools, and the records refer anied eye. In the sky the plane's near the sun and the brighter stars were seen, and the phenomeoon known as the corona, which had been noted by previous observers, and of which we shall have more to say presently, was promi-nently visible. On the earth the recorded effects were those which are always seen and lelt on such occasions. The bats flew as at night; the fowls betook themselves to rest; the singing birds silenced their notes; the laboring animals stood still; inanimate nature assumed a cadaverous aspect; animate nature was appalled. The depressing influence of the unnatural darkness caused by a total eclipse has been remarked and commented upon by every observer down to the last occasion of witnessing it. It is a darkness to be felt; a gloom that brings 'a silence deep as death," and makes

"The boldest hold his breath for a time." Arago tells of a poor shepherd child that cried and called for help at the total phase of the eclipse of 1842; but children of larger growth have felt a thrill of horror rus through them when the last beams of a meridian sun have been suddenly extinguished, and a livid black pall has descended upon the face of the earth. The same observer describes in graphic language now a crowd of twenty thousand people, including a body of soldiers, was affected on the same occasion. During the progress of the eclipse all had been excitement and lively curtosity. But when the sudden darkness came, "the phenomeuou in its magnificence triumphed over the petulance of youth, over the levity which certain persons assume as a sign of superiority, over the noisy indifference of which soldiers usually make profession. A protound stillness reigned in the air; the birds ceased to sing." The English Royal Astronomer, Halley, in relating the effects of the eclipse of 1715, passed over the concern, observable in all kinds of birds, animals, and dshes, as a consequence too obvious to be noticed when even he and others could not escape from a sense of horror; and cool, experienced observers. knowing what to expect, have been a ve-stricken at the coming on of the unearthly gloom. For the darkening is not like that of night; although it is nearly as intense, it is of far different character. The sky assumes a purple black color, and appears to fall upon the earth; the atmos-phere at d terrestrial objects take a strange tint that some have described as a livid yellow others as dark green, others as an olive hue.

Mrs. Airy, who observed with her husband at Tourin, 1842, said that the effect was like that produced by looking at a landscape through very dark greenish glass. Of several explana-tions which have been offered to account for this apparent change of color, that which refers it to physiological causes is the most plausible. This theory attributes the effect to contrast; the change from one state of illumination to another is very sudden, and the duration of the darkness is too short to allow the eye to recognize the specing hue of colored objects. It may be that during an eclipse of long totality, like that which is coming, the optic nerves may have time to recover from the sudden shock caused by the instantaneous dark-ening, and towards the end of the obscuration may see objects as under an ordinary twilight aspect. This is a point to be determined.

Glancing from earth to heaven, the most palpable peculiarity in a total solar eclipse is the hato of white phosphorescent light that entirely surrounds the black disc of the moon. Halley aptly pictured this feature to the popular eye by comparing it to the radiating appearance with which painters surround the heads of saints. The historians of the ante Christian era who were fortunate enough to behold solar eclipses make mention of the phenomenon; they gave it the name of the corona, by which it has since been known. Observers who have seen it upon recent occasions give the most varied descriptions of it; some have called it fibrous, and comparable to entangled thread; others have described it as brush-like and feathery; and others have attributed to it a circular motion like that of some varieties of theworks. Very carious and irreconcilable are the drawings which have been given by different observers of the same eclipse. Some have isolated beams or rays of ght shooting in ore direction, others, similar beams durting an opposite way; some show the rays emanating radially from the black moon, while others make them tangential, and again others exhibit them carved like a sickle or a The Astronomer Royal expressed himself bewildered at the discordances in the depictions he had received of the corona visible during the last great coline. I have seen many of these diagrams, and their dissimilarity forces one to suspect that different eyes have received vastly different impressions from the same

But rejecting what is doubtful, there remains the certainty that, when the sun is completely obcured by the moon, the disc of the latter is encompassed by a glory the breadth of which is generally equal to about one-sixth of the moon's diameter, but extended in some places into brushes or luminous streaks, fully as long as the moon's diameter. The question then arises, To what is this feature due? If there was an atmosphere surrounding the moon, it was an atmosphere surrounding the moon, it would be abundantly explained; but the more crucial tests for such an appendage negative its existence. Is it a widely extended atmosphere of the syn, or a luminous vapor surrounding the solar globe? This it can hardly be; for, if it were such the varying positions of the moon in her passage across the surrounding would recommission. pessage across the sun's disc would not sensibly affect its features; whereas it is found that these changing conditions do vastly after the appear-

own light but by reflected light—that it is not phosphorescent, but borrows its illumination from the sun. The fest of polarization shows this. A ray of reflected light behaves very differently from a ray of direct light when both are passed through a doubly refracting prism. The direct beam is split into two sections, which, in all positions of the prism, are of count intensity; while the reflected beam, are of equal intensity; while the reflected beam, similarly divided, shows two spots of light which, in certain positions of the prism, differ considerably in brighiness. An analysis of the corona of the last eclipse was made upon this principle, and it was then determined that it shone by reflected hight, and was therefore not self-luminous. From these observations, and from other considerations, the Astronomer Royal has arrived at the opinion that there must be an attenuated atmosphere encom passing the earth to such an extent that it reaches even to the moon and that it is the lighting up of the regions of this atmosphere in the immediate vicinity of the moon that gives rise to the corona and its vary-

The late Mr. Baily excited curiosity for a time by his announcement that just before the com-mencement and just after the end of totality of a solar eclipse, or in other words when the limbs of the sun and moon are just touching internally, the narrow line of solar light breaks up into luminous points, and presents the appearance of a string of bright beads. This phenomenon, which has since been recognized as "Baily's beads," is sometimes, but not always, seen; it is very easily accounted for. The moon's edge is not perfectly smooth; mountains and valleys give it a perrated outline, and when the margins of the moon and sun are just overlapping, the sun's margin is just visible through the chinks and crannies of that of the moon, and gives the appearance of a chaplet of beads. A sheet of paper laid under a saw, so that its edge just peeps between the teeth, repeats the appearance which, as it leads to nothing, may be dirmissed forth with.
But by far the most interesting and suggestive

of celipse phenomena are the red-colored masses of light that are seen to exude apparently from the moon's circumierence. These protuberances were first cursorily noticed by one Captain Stanyan, during the eclipse of 1706. Flainsteed, England's first Astronomer Royal, says in a letter to the Royal Society that "the Captain is the first man I ever heard of that took notice of a red streak of light preceding the emersion of the sun's body from a total eclipse, and I take notice of it to you because it infers that the moon has an atmosphere." Then at the eclipse of 1773 two other observers saw something of the same character. But, curiously, these records for a long time escaped the attention of astronomers, and when they turned their eyes and glasses upon the eclipse of 1842, they were ignorant of what their predecessors had seen and noted. They gazed at the slowly disappearing sun in anxious expectancy, prepared to see something strange, but knowing not what. Imagine their surprise when, as the last glimpse of the solar disc was shut out by the advancing moon, they saw the black edge of the latter gar-nished in some parts with a blood-red border, and in others with sheaves of reseate light and mountains of glowing flame. The observers were electrified with this apparition; they were unprepared to measure or to depict; and before they had time to collect themselves, and satisfy their eyes and minds that neither had been under illusion, the sun reappeared, and the marvellous phenomena vanished. All anxiety then came to be centred upon the next great eclipse. This happened in 1851. The experiences purchased upon previous occasions were turned to account in preparing instructions and laying down schemes of observation The British Association, with the ce-operation of some foreign astronomers, drew up and circulated a pamphiet of suggestions to intending observers and instruments and eyes were made ready for action. All the phenomena of an eclipse were provided for, as regards observation and record of them; but the "red prominences" were literally the prominent points of interest. The shadow path of this eclipse passed over northern Europe, and along it, chiefly in Sweden, the observers, like a party of skirmishers, disposed themselves. This time they were forewarned, and so forearmed; knowing what to look for and how to see it. Circumstances proved favorable, and when the totality came on, the anxiously exglory. Many observers saw them, estimated their size, and mapped and drew them. Several of the questions that had been raised were decided. Foremost among these was, whether the prominences were attached to the moon or to the sun? Well, some observers asserted that protuberances on the eastern side became quickly hidden, while others sprang up on the western side: that is, they were respectively covered and revealed on the eastern and western borders of the sun by the advancing moon. So it was established almost to a certainty that the prominences were part and parcel of the sun.
But other bewildering questions arose,
When the drawings of diderent observers were compared, discrepancies were
revealed that were scarcely attributable
to errors of observation. Upon the
forms and characteristics of some of the more remarkable of the red masses no two observers were in agreement. Pictures and descriptions were atike irreconcilable; they left an impres sion, upon the minds of those who examined them, that there was some mirage-like effect that manifested itself variously to different

Nine years passed away, and at their end came the famous college of 1860, which was most favorably visible in accessible parts of Spain. During the nine years a valuable adjunct to telescopic observation had been pressed into the astronomer's service. Photography, in its youth in 1851, had been wrought to perfection by 1860, and has been successfully applied to the depiction of celestial objects, notably the spots on the sun and the surface irregularities of the moon. The suggestion had been made in 1851 of the great advantage that would follow from photographing the details of the eclipse of that year, but little action was taken, as the art was then so young. But when preparations were in progress for the Spanish eclipse, it occurred to Mr. De la Rue, the father of celestial photography, to ut a suitable apparatus for making the celipse phenomena record themselves, and thus avoid the vagaries and imperfections of eye and hand delineation. This was done. A "photo hellograph" and the pertaining apparatus and chemicals formed a prominent feature in the expedition which H. M. S. Himalaya bore from Plymouth to the northern ports of Spain in July, 1860. This expedition comprised a goodly band of European astronomers and observers; for all who were prepared to do any good were made welcome on board the transport, which had been liberally placed by the government at the disposal of the Astronomer Royal. Every-thing turned out favorably for the observers, and Mr. De la Rue was fortunate enough to secure two negatives during the totality, on each of which the red protuterances were vigorously impressed. Two more valuable photographs, from a scientide standard of worth, were never produced. Some less pretentious impressions were taken by a Roman astronomer, Padre Secchi, at a station considerably removed from Mr. De la Ruc's, and some others by the Spanish astronomer, Senor Agailar. The differ-cot pictures were submitted afterwards to rigorous comparison, when it was found that the prominences were identical, although observed from distant place ; and thus the discrepancies of eye delineations were shown to be the results of different impressions upon the observers' minds, due to haste, prejudice, or methods and powers of scrutiny. Besides these photographs. a vast mass of observations was accumulated by the scores of observers who watched the eclipse. Very many accounts have been published; some remain in manuscript, and as yet no collation of the whole has been made. Per-haps the eclipse of this year may afford results the light or which the facts and features of the list one may be more easily read and

One thing was definitely settled by Mr. De la Rue's photographs: this was the connection of protuberances with the sun. doubts may have previously existed upon the point were removed by the evidence which the measurement of these pictures has afforded

And now the question comes, What are these rosy prominences? This brings us to the college ance and conformation of the corona. It is rosy prominences? This brings us to the eclipse pretty well concluded that it shines not by its of this year, because it is from observations of

it that the question, it is boped, will receive at least a partial sciution. All have by the time heard of spectrum analysis, the wondersul power by which the physicist, armed only with a wedge of glass, can tell us the source of light coming from sun from star, from comet, from

Kirchoff, the honored discoverer of this means of research, has told us that the sun is sur-rounded by an intensely heated atmosphere, charged with the vapors of metals and other ingredients which the prism has enabled him and bers to sort and separate, and thus to identify with metals and ingredients common to our globe. Are these red, cloud-like masses skimming apparently over the solar surface, aggregations of this vapor, flames of burning metals? Do they glow with their own incandese at light, or are they lit by the bright sea on which they float? Are they solid masses of matter, or are they attenuated gases? These are the points which it is hoped will be settled in whole or in part on the 17th of August on the hills of India. The observers will ply their polariscopes to de-termine whether the light be original or re-Then they will pass its beams through the prism; if they see a long spectrum, colored with all the tints of the rainbow, they will know that they are looking upon masses of solid or liquid matter in combustion; if this spectrum is crossed by black lines, they will know that its light on its way to the earth has been intercepted by the vapors of certain metals and by certain gases, which they will recognize, by the positions of the lines; but it, instead of the rainbow-tinted ribbon, they see only certain isolated bright lines, like colored threads stretched across the fields of their spectroscopes, they will know that they are looking upon materials so intensely heated that they have assumed the gaseous condition; and by the positions and colors of these threads of hohi they will be able to ascertain to some extent what these materials are. And what they will do for the red excrescences, they will eadeavor to do also for the corona, that they may learn something of the light where with it shipes. So something of the right waste and bearing upon that the most important questions bearing upon the sun's constitution and structure are to be solved when he is out of sight! A strange anomaly; but nature is forever playing at hide and-seek with man.

and seek with man.

To do justice to these observations, two well furnished expeditions have been organized in this country, respectively under the auspices of the Royal and the Royal Astronomical Societies. Lieutenant Herschel (a son of Sir John), of the Indian Survey staff, takes charge of the former, and Major Tennant, of the same service, directs the latter. Both have been supplied with excellent telescores and polarizing and with excellent telescopes and polarizing and spectralizing apparatus; Major Tennant, in addition, having secured the manufacture for the occasion of a valuable reflecting telescope of large size, for the purpose of photographing the eclipse phenomena. Other officers of the survey staff will be dispersed along the track of the eclipse, and will be armed with spectroscopes, and such appliances as the country may afford, in order that what is lost by bad weather in one spot may be secured elsewhere. Other countries, too, will have their expeditions. France furnishes two and Prussia one, and for the handsome sums of money have been voted; and possibly his Holiness the Pope may send Padro Secchi to the spot, though at present pecuniary difficulties stand in the way. Altogether, we may hope that an important page of scientific history will be that which records the results of the great eclipse of August 17, 1808 .- Gentlemen's Magazine.

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Fare, 10 cents between all points.

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Leaves Arch Street Wharf Leaves South Trenton.

Saturday, July 25 55 A.M Saturday, July 25, 9 A.M

Sunday July 28, to Burlington Bristol, and intermediate landing a leaves Arch Street wharf at 8A.M., and 2 P.M.: leaves Bristol at 10 A.M. and 49 P. M.: Monday, July 27, 65 A.M. Monday, July 27, 10 A.M. Monday, July 27, 10 A.M. Tuesday, 28, 11 A.M. Tuesday, 29, 29, 29 M. Thorsday, 20, 10 A.M. Thursday, 30, 2 P.M. Thorsday, 31, 2 P.M. Thorsday, 31, 2 P.M. Fare to Trenton, 40 cents each way: Intermediate places 25 cents.

OPPOSITION TO THE COM-Stranger JOHN SYLVENTER will make daily excursions to Winnington (sundays excupted), touching at Chester and Marcus Hoek, leaving ARCH Street what fat it A. M. and 4 P. M. returning, leave Wirrings at A. M. and 4 P. M. Light freights taken.

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