From the London Saturday Review, The figure of Hernan Coftes stands out in noble and pleasing relief among the early records of Spanish conquest and dominion in the New World. His name may have suffered in vulgar estimation from its juxtaposition with those of filibusters or coarse and ruthless adventurers like Almagzo and Pizarro. The impartial voice of the historian, however, and the still more emphatic evidence of his own despatches and achievements, combine in securing justice for Cortes as a man of rare breadth of intellect, great powers of statesmanship, and a liberality of spirit vastly in advance of his age. Mr. Preseott has done much to set in to true light the great work compressed into so marvellously brief a space by Cortes' energy and daring. Mr. Helps is only at a loss whether to compare him most nearly with Casar, with Augustus, or with Charles V. Of late years the publication of much important and interesting matter long kept back from the light has brought forward this here to tell as it were from the tomb the hero to tell as it were from the tomb the episode in a career of brilliant courage and adventure. One of the least understood or appreclated of these passages in the life of Cortes was his wonderful expedition to Honduras. The letter containing the record of this romantic and daring, but skilfully planned and eventually fruitful, exploit was known to have formed the fifth of a series of despatches written by Cortes to the Emperor Charles V. This, however, to-gether with the first, which gave an account of the hero's landing at Vera Cruz, had long been missing. Robertson was the first to suspect that they might probably be found amongst the archives at Vienna, Charles -inving been in Germany when one of them at least reached Europe. Such turned out to be the case. manuscript volume in the Impecial Library an attested copy of the first letter was found, of which that diligent historian forthwith pubtished an abstract among the notes and illustra-tions to his "History of America." Along with it in the same manuscript volume was Cortes' fifth letter, or Carta quinta de Relacion, which was printed for the first time in 1844, in the fourth volume of the Coleccion de Documentos ineditos para la Historia de Espana. The first letter had previously appeared in the first volume of the same series. Both have since been reprinted, first by Don Enrique de Vedia, in Riba-deneyra's Biblioteca de Autores Clasicos, and subsequently by Don Pascual de Gayangos, of the Spanish Academy. Doubts have been enter-tained concerning the earliest of these letters. Though signed with Cortes' name, it appears to been addressed to Charles V by the Justicia y Regimiento, or municipal corpora-tion of Vera Cruz. A separate, and proba-bly fuller, report it is thought likely must have been sent from the conqueror's own pen, in accordance with his known habit and bent of mind. It was the opinion of Gonzales Barcia, who was the first to reprint the second, third, and fourth letters, that this independent despatch of Cortes was no other than the one suppressed by the Council of the Indies at the request of Pamphilo de Narvaez, or that which Juan de Flores took from Alonso de Avila. No such doubts, however, attach to the fifth letter the most valuable of all in a geographical point its tale of hazards and adventures, or the

light it throws upon the mind and character of the merator himself. The Council of the Haklayt Society have done well, in our opinion, in excluding it from the list of their publications; and they have been fortunate. or rather let us say judicious, in their choice of a translator, the editor of the original text of the "Cartas de Hernan Cortes al Emperador Carlos V" (Paris, 1866). The second, third, and fourth letters had been translated by an American writer, Mr. George Folson, in 1843; but M. de Gayangos is the first, as far as we know, to turn into English the curious despatch before us. His version is marked by clearness and freedom, and though we have not the original at hand as a means of verification, the scholarlike style of the translation gives us thorough confi-dence in its fidelity. A concise but clear introduction puts us in possession of the chief points connected with the bibliography of the subject,

together with the causes which led to the expe Cortes, it is well known, shared the idea then common with his countrymen and many of the leading men of adventure, that a strait was to be found connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the latter being no other than the far-famed Indian Ocean. "Most of all," he writes to the Emperor. in his tercera Relacion. "do I exult in the tidings lately brought me of the Great Ocean; for in it, as cosmographers and those learned men who know most about the Indies inform me, are scattered innumerable isles, teeming with gold and pearls, abounding in precious stones, as well as in spices, and where I feel confident secrets and admirable be discovered. in 1524, he writes, "Your Majesty may be assured that, knowing as I do how much you have at heart the discovery of this great mystery of the seas, I shall postpone all interests and projects of my own-some of them of the highest moment-for the fulfilment of this great object." No sooner had be entered Mexico the second time than return, while still in the monastery where he Cortes fitted out two expeditions, which, after

reaching Mechuacan, penetrated to the borders of the Great Southern Ocean, even bringing back gold and pearls from the Gulf of California. Another exploring party pushed along the south-ern coast as far as Florida. A third and larger squadron was next despatched under Christoval de Olid, a brave officer, with orders to form a settlement at Honduras, and thence to cruise along Its northern shore towards Darien, in quest of the mysterious strait. Olid, however, proved unfaithful, and on reaching the Havannah declared himself, under the promptings of Velasquez, the bitter enemy of Cortes, independent of On hearing this, Cortes despatched forthwith his kinsman, Francisco de Las Casas, with a small force in three vessels, with orders to seize and bring back the rebel. Las Casas, having been wrecked upon the shore, was thrown by Olid into prison. Aided, however, by Gonzalez Davila, another victim to Olid's tyrauny, a plot was faised by Las Casas which ended in Olid's being seized, tried by court-martial, and beheaded at Naco. Meanwhile Cortes, having no tidings as yet of the death of Olid, resolved to go in person to Hon-duras, not only with a view to restoring his lost authority, but with the hope of realizing his

darling vision of an inter-occanic communica-tion. On October 12, 1524, he left Mexico on the expedition described in the graphic despatch before us. The leading outlines of the journe have been pursued by many historians, and most recently by Mr. Helps. But there is a vigor and a reality in the hero's own simply-told tale which give an interest to every detail. verify throughout the spots visited by Corres this marvellous march through almost Impene trable forests, swampy plains, or lofty mountains, seems all but a hopeless task. Mr. Prescott, after examining the best maps French, and Dutch geograph could identify no more than four or five of the places indicated by Cortes. The diary of his stout-hearted lieutenant, Bernal Diaz, gives us little additional help in this respect. Mr. Arthur Morelet, an enterprising French traveller, who, about ten years ago, traversed a great part of Cortes' route, either falled to recognize the landmarks indicated by him, or was without know-ledge of his letter. The difficulty of representing or identifying in writing the local proper names is a main element in the problem, en-hanced as it is by the fact of the record being written after an interval during which the names of Indian localities and chiefs may have escaped the writer's memory. The small village of Tres Cruzes, near Palenque, retains in its name some traces of his visit. We know also that he crossed the Sierra de los Pedernales by a dangerous pass, to which he gave the name of Puerto del Alabastro, and after a march of five days reached a large lake, which could be no other

than the Laguna de Peten, otherwise called

Itza, in the country of the warlike Lacandones. The ruins of the "teocallis,"

or native temples, here long marked his passage

Beyond the sites of the two towns of Naco and Nito, where the miserable relics of the former

expeditions were found, little else of the route,

FIFTH LETTER OF HERNAN CORTES. | which extended over a thousand miles, can with certainty be determined. It must have led the ertainty be determined. It must have led the explorers more than once over the Rio de San Pedro, and perkaps, too, across the Uzumazinta, over one of which rivers Cortes speaks of a bridge having been thrown 934 spans in length. Native writers speak of some of these bridges being long known as Las Puentes de Cortes, though they neglect to specify their exact sites. Of the engineering skill, no less than the chivalrous spirit, patient courage, and powers of command exhibited by Cortes, through all the perils and hardships of this march, we can hardly form too high an estimate. Of his own prowess, he seems indeed all but unconscious throughout. It is the hand of Providence that extractes thim from the most desperate that extricates him from the most desperate straits. 'It was after having previously commended our souls to God," that "we threw," he writes, "a bridge over a morass three hun-dred paces in breadth." Over these terrible morasses, from the depths of which nothing could be seen but the patch of sky over their heads, his slender party constructed within the space of about twenty leagues no fawer than fifty bridges for the passage of men and horses His-entire force at starting consisted of "ninety-three horse, besides cross-bowmen and arquebusiers and thirty and odd foot, making in all a total of 230 men." From Bernal Diaz we learn that Cortes' little force—which he raises to 250 lighting men, including Guacacualcan and Mexican settlers—was supplemented by a butler and steward, several musicians, dancers, ingglers, and buffoons, besides the leader's per sonal retinue of several pages, young men of family, amongst whom was Montejo, the future conqueror of Yucaian. Cortes also enjoyed the society and aid of his famous mistress and interpreter Marina, concerning whom his own narra-tive keeps silence. A map furnished to him by the people of Tabasco and Xiculango enabled him to prosecute his route through the province of Cupilco to another called Cagoatan, where the provisions came to hand which he had, with much forethought, arranged to meet him. They had been forwarded in a great caraval to the mouth of the Tabasco river, and sent up the stream in native canoes. The natives, as a rule, fled at the approach of Europeans, burning their dwellings, and what the Cortes terms their mosques," even getting drowned as they crowded to cross the river, till reassured, in art, by his friendly overtures. He seems to mye shown tolerance, with much earnest zeal n pointing out to the Indians the errors of their dolatry, and the trath of the Catholic faith, but against canaibalism he would observe no uarter:-

"It happened, however, that a Spaniard saw one of the Indians who had come with me from Tenaixtitian eating a piece of flesh taken from the body of another Indian, whom he had kilfed on entering Iztapan. When the case was reported to me, I had the Indian arrested, and there, in the presence of the chief, had him burnt alive for having slain and afterwards eaten of his fellow-creature—an abomination which your Majesty, and I myself in your royal name, have repeatedly deprecated, ordering the people of those parts to abstain from it. I therefore made the lord understand that if I punished that man with death it was because, in disobetience to your-Majésty's commands, he had slain and afterwards eaten of the flesh of his fellow-creature. That my wish was that no-body should be hurt, having been sent to those parts merely for the purpose of protecting them and taking care of their property, as well as showing them the merely for the burpose of protogting them and paking care of their property, as well as showing them the way of worshipping one only God, who is in heaven, creator and Maker of all things, by whose will all living creatures are governed. In order to do this, they were to relinquish all their idols and their abo-minable riles, because they were nothing more than lies and deceptions of the devil, who, being the sworn enemy of mankind, had devised those and other similar arts to ensure their perpetual damnation in the midst of heirible and everlasting tortures. That the devil was thus trying to lead them away from the knowledge of one only and true God, shatting them from the path of salvation, and preventing, by all means in his power, that they should partake of that glory and blessed happiness awaiting those who be-lieve in God, in an abode of everlasting bliss, which the devil himself had lost owing to his disobedience, and make."

At one point, where all progress was barred by a wide and deep lagoon which it would have taken twenty days to round, the idea of a retreat gained so much ground among his Spaniards that they "almost dared." Cortes writes, "to whisper it in my presence." The hero's resource here lay in the Indian chiefs, whom he so inspired with his energy, combined with promises of reward, that they "agreed to work rivibus et posse" at a bridge, over which in less than four days the whole of the men and horses passed. So solidly built was it, the writer boasts, that he I no doubt till would stand unwards of the years without breaking, unless it burned down." It was formed o Vears. burned down." It was formed of up-wards of one thousand beams, the smallest of which was as thick round as a man's body, and measured nine or ten fathoms in length. construction was mainly due to the skill of the native engineers. "I can assure your Majesty," Cortes confesses, "that I do not believe there i man in existence capable of explaining in satisfactory manner the dexterity which these lords of Tennxtitlan and the Indians under them displayed in constructing the said bridge. only say that it is the most wonderful thing that ever was seen." Cortes' despatch displays throughout his enlightened sense of the capacity, the bravery, and the loyalty of the native races, and his belief that by mild and just treatment they might be firmly attached to the Spanish stayed six days, "until he had confessed all his sins," superseded by virtue of the royal mandate in charge of Ponce de Leon. Here the narrative ends with a manly assertion of the writer's loyalty and fidelity, as well as an indiguant denial of the charges of rapacity and malversation brought against him by his enemies. In a charpassage, not without a tinge of irony, "from fear that His Majesty might imagine that he asked too much in order that his proposition might be rejected," he under-takes—"though the sum was hardly sufficient for his decent maintenance at Court"-to be contented with ten millions of reals of yearly revenue, surrendering to the Emperor every thing he possessed in the New World. W know too well what treatment awaited the man who had enriched the Spanish momarchy with the fairest of its colonial possessions. It is a ign of the dogged resolution of Cortes that we find him closing his letter, dated at Tenuxtitlan, September 3, 1526, with the aunouncement of his having just started another expedition to the country he had already so laboriously versed, in the full assurance of having shortly to apprise his Majesty of the triumphant discovery the all-important strait. As a record of human prowess and daring, no less than a con tribution to our knowledge of geography, this curious letter deserves to be read with close at-

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tion will be made. ALFRED C. HARMER, President.
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TO THE STOCKHOLDERS OF THE PENNSYL-VANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. All Stockholders, as registered on the Books of this Company on the 30th day of April, 1809, will be entitled to subscribe for 25 Per Cent, of their respective interests in New Stock at Par, as follows:-First. Fifty per cent. at the time of subscription,

between the 15th day of May, 1869, and the 30th day of June, 1869. Second. Fifty per cent, between the 15th day of November, 1869, and the 31st day of December, 1869; or, if Stockholders should prefer, the whole amount may be paid up at the time of subscription, and each

instalment so paid shall be entitled to a pro rata of the Dividend that may be declared on full shares. Third. That every Stockholder holding less than four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for one share; and those holding more than a multiple of four shares shall be entitled to subscribe for an additional share.

Fourth. All shares upon which instalments are yet to be paid under Resolution of May 13, 1868, will be entitled to their allotment of the 25 Per Cent. at par, as though they were paid in full.

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DIVIDENDS, ETC. PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY. TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT. PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 3d, 1869.

NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS. The Board of Directors have this day declared a semi-annual dividend of FIVE PER CENT, on the capital stock of the Company, clear of National and State taxes, payable in cash on and after May 30,

Biank powers of attorney for collecting dividends can be had at the Office of the Company, No. 238 S. Third street. The Office will be opened at 8 A. M. and closed at

4 P. M. from May 30 to June 5, for the payment of dividends, and after that date from 9 A. M. to 3 THOMAS T. FIRTH, P. M. Treasurer. 5 3 60t7

Note.-The Third Instalment on New Stock of 1868 is due and payable on or before June 15, DIVIDEND.—OFFICE OF THE WAL-LACE OIL COMPANY, No. 319 WALNUT Street. PHILADELPHIA, May 8, 1869.
The Board of Directors have this day declared a Divi-dend of ONE PER CENT (making the seventeenth dividend), payable on demand.

5 10 31.\* FRANK H. STEEL, Secretary.

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