THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 1869

LITERATURE.

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BEVIEW OF NEW BOOKS ENGHT YEARS' WANDERINGS IN CEYLON. By Sir Samuel W. Baker. Published by J. B. Lip-

pincott & Co. This book may be considered as a supplement to Sir Samuel W. Baker's "Rifle and Hound in Ceylon," which was noticed in these columns some time ago. Having in that work treated very fully of the sports of Ceylon, in the present book he has but little to say on the subject, but gives an animated description of the beautiful island, its people, customs, scenery, and remarkable ruins. Sir Samuel W. Baker is an enthusiastic traveller as well as a sportsmen, and he writes in a graphic and forcible style that engages the whole attention of the reader. The record of his eight years' wanderings in Ceolon contains much interesting and curious information.

We give the following description of the ancient city of Pollanarua:-

"The remains of these cities sufficiently attest the former amount of population and the com-parative civilization which existed at that remote era among the progenitors of the present degraded race of barbarians. The ruins of 'Anaradupoora,' which cover two hundred and fifty six square miles of ground, are all that re-main of the noble city which stood within its walls in a square of sixtgen miles. Some idea of the amount of population may be arrived at, when we consider the present density of inhabi-tants in all Indian houses and towns. Millions must, therefore, have streamed from the gates of a city to which our modern London was comparatively a village.

There is a degree of sameness in the ruins of all the ancient cities of Ceylon which renders a description tedicus. Those of 'Anaradupoora' are the largest in extent, and the buildings appear to have been more lofty, the great Dagoba having exceeded four hundred feet in height; but the ruins do not exhibit the same 'finish' in the style of architecture which is seen in the remains of other towns.

"Among these, 'Topare,' anciently called the 'Pollanarua,' stands foremost. This city ap-pears to have been laid out with a degree of taste which would have done credit to our modern towns.

"Before its principal gate stretched a beautiful lake of about fifteen miles' circumference (now only nine). The approach to this gate was by a broad road, upon the top of a stone causeway, of between two and three miles in length, which formed a massive dam to the waters of the lake which washed its base. To the right of this dam stretched many miles of cultivation; to the left, on the farther shores of the lake, lay park-like grass-lands, studded with forest trees, some of whose mighty descendants still exist in the noble 'tamarind,' rising above all others. Let us return in imagination to Pollanarua as it once stood. Having arrived upon the causeway in the approach to the city, the scene must have been beantiful in the extreme—the silvery lake, like a broad mirror, in the midst of a tropical park; the flowering trees shadowing its waters; the groves of tamarinds sheltering its many nooks and bays; the gorgeous blossoms of the pink lotus resting on its glassy surface; and the carpet-like glades of verdant pasturage, stretching far away upon the opposite shores, covered with countless elephants, tamed to complete obedience. Then on the right, below the massive granite steps which form the causeway, the water rushing from the sluice carries fertility among a thousand fields, and countless laborers and catle till the ground: the sturdy buffaloes straining at the plough, the women, laden with golden sheaves of corn and baskets of fruit, crowding along the palm-shaded road winding towards the city, from whose gate a countless throng are passing and returning. Behold the mighty city! rising like a snow-white cloud from the broad margin of the waters. The groves of cocoanuts and palms of every kind, grouped in the inner gardens, throwing a cool shade upon the polished walls; the lotty palaces towering among the stately areca trees, and the gilded domes reflecting a blaze of light from the rays of a midday sun. Such let us suppose the exior of P The gates are entered, and a broad street, straight as an arrow, lies before us, shaded on either side by rows of palms. Here stand, on either hand, the dwellings of the principal in-habitants, bordering the wide space, which continnes its straight and shady course for about four miles in length. In the centre, standing in a spacious circle, rises the great Dagoba forming a grand coup d wil, from the entrance gate. Two hundred and sixty feet from the base the Dagoba rears its lofty summit. Two circular terraces, each of some twenty feet in height, rising one upon the other, with a width of fifty feet, and a diameter at the base of about two hundred and fifty, form the step-like platform upon which the Dagoba stands. These are ascended by broad flights of steps, each terrace forming a circular promenade around the Dagoba; the whole having the appearance of white marble, being covered with polished stucco ornamented with figures in bas-relief. The Dagoba is a solid mass of brickwork in the shape of a dome, which rises from the upper terrace. The whole is covered with polished stucco, and surmounted by a glided spire standing upon a square pedestal of stucco, highly ornamented with large figures, also in bas-relief; this pedestal is a cube of about thirty feet, supporting the tall gilded spire, which is surmounted by a golden umbrella. "Around the base of the Dagoba on the upper terrace are eight small entrances with highly-ornamented exteriors. These are the doors to eight similar chambers of about twelve feet square, in each of which is a small altar and carved golden idol.

sun still falls from the great Dagoba; but it is the 'valley of the shadow of death' upon which that shadow falls like a pall over the corpse of a

nation. "The great Dagoba now remains a heap of mouldering brickwork, still retaining its form, but shorn of all its beauty. The stucco covering has almost all disappeared, leaving a patch here and there upon the most sheltered portions of the building. Scrubby brushwood and rank grass and lichens have for the most part covered Its surface, giving it the appearance rather of a huge mound of earth than of an ancient build-ing. A portion of the palace is also standing, and, aithough for the most part blocked up with ruins, there is still sufficient to denote its former importance. The bricks, or rather the tiles, of which all the buildings are composed, are of such an imperishable nature that they still adhere to each other in large masses in spots where portions of the building have fallen.

"In one portions of the ruins have failen. "In one portion of the ruins there are a number of beautiful fluted columns, with carved capi-tals, still remaining in a perfect state. Among these are the ruins of a large flight of steps; near them, again, a stone-lined tank, which was evi-dently intended as a bath; and everything denotes the former comfort and arrangement of a first-class establishment. There are innumera-ble relies, all interesting and worthy of individual attention, throughout the ruins over a surface of many miles, but they are mostly over-grown with jungle or covered with rank grass. The apparent undulations of the ground in all directions are simply the remains of fallen streets and buildings overgrown in like manner with tangled vegetation.

-From Turner Brothers & Co. we have received "Pendennis," the second volume o the "Household Edition" of Thackeray's works, published by Fields, Osgood & Co. This is the best moderate priced edition of Thackeray's writings that has yet been given to the pablic, and the entire set, which will be com pleted in six volumes, will make an attractive addition to the shelves of any library. -"The Dance of Modern Society" is the title of a tirade against popular amusements in general, and social dancing in particular, by W. C. Wilkinson. The author professes to have considered the matter in an impartial and unprejudiced spirit, and he doubtless imagines he has. There is a good deal more of vituperation than argument, however, about his performance, and although his objections to dancing and other amusements have considerable truth in them, he is too obviously influenced by strong preconceived opinions for his objections to have much force with the class of persons that he most particularly desires to convince. For instance, he says:--

"Is it recreation for an editorial writer to rush from his mental workshop, with the anvil of his brain red-hot under the swift and ceaseless blows of thought, to a place of public entertainment, and there rob sleep of the precions hours before midnight by diverting himself with a spectacle? No doubt such diversion is better for his overtasked brain than it would be to con-tinue the tension which the change partially relaxes. But, manifestly, rest is his true medi-

Mr. Wilkinson is evidently oblivious of one fact in the editorial experience, which is that the brain sometimes will not rest unless the mind is wholly distracted from the exciting subject. Reading will only aggravate the evil; and in order to obtain rest it is necessary to become completely absorbed in some other occupation. We know of two instances lately where men, engaged in very different but equally exciting branches of mental labor, devoted several hours each day to painting, so that their minds might be wholly diverted from the subjects that agitated them; and the experience in each case was that an hour or two spent at the easel had the effect of a mental anodyne. Others will spend an hour or two in a theatre with the same beneficial effect, and Mr. Wilkinson, who evidently does all his brain work early in the morning before breakfast, and to whom a theatrical performance, if he ever visited one, was a source of agitation to his mental and moral nature, is obviously unable to comprehend the position of those whose most valuable writing hours are those which cluster around midnight, and who derive mental rest instead of excitement from a

THE COINS AND COINAGE OF CHINA

An Essay Read Before the Numisunatic at Antiquarian Society by Henry Philips, J

At the stated meeting of the Numismat and Antiquarian Society, held last evening. report of the proceedings of which will I found on our eighth page, Henry Phillips, Jr Esq., the Corresponding Secretary, read th following paper:-

The most ancient of civilized nations deserve and claims of us no small degree of note: While Europe was plunged in disorder and ign-rance, the arts and sciences, protected by law order, and religion, reigned supreme in the C lestial Empire. The attention of scholars we early directed to this strange land, and many in vestigations, which even at the present day ar not yet ended, were made into its condition The difficulties of acquiring the once almost in possible language now no longer present an impediments to learned zeal.

A short sketch of the currency of this yas region may not prove uninteresting, and I sha venture to-night to trespass for a short tim-upon your indulgence, although for the matte bout to be submitted to you no claim of orig mlity is presented.

Who amongst us has not seen the uncout Who amongst us has not seen the uncontra-coins with which the Chinese buy and sell? Who has not contemptuously laid them aside in some obscure corner of their cabinets? And yet, a a symbol of immutability, so thoroughly the characteristic of the oriental mind, the coins de serve some greater consideration.

The currency of China consists only of silve and copper; the latter, however, is the onl metal which is coined, as silver passes from hand to hand in Ingots and by weight. Gold i no more a currency among the Chinese than ar precious stones in Europe, but is considered

precious stones in Europe, but is considered in mere article of merchandise. The fear of having the coin injured felo-niously by elippers, etc., is the reason why the precious metals are not coined, but only the baser sort, although they acknowledge the con-venience that would result from such a course Copper money is the only kind that is coine there, and bears a character stamped thereon; is in round, small pieces, with a square hol through which they place strings, and the colu thus arranged they wear around their neck like necklaces. Whenever a purchase is to b made, the payment is effected by cutting off th required quantity from the string. The ind vidual value of each coin is about the sixth pa of a cent.

The coinage of China has always consisted of such and similar pieces, and of the earlied dynasties, according to Pere du Halde, som specimens are known to be still in existence which have either been handed down from family to family, or have been found among th ruins of houses and cities.

The word used by the Chinese to designal money, according to the same authority. *Tsuen*, which is said to properly signify if water of a fountain that runs without ceasing a very appropriate and symbolical designation of the function for which a currency is in tended.

The metal used for this small coinage is a allow usually containing four (4) parts of least to six (6) of copper, which is the cause that the to six (6) of copper, which is the cause that the red copper loses its color, and is no longer sono rous. The ancient writers of China assert tha formerly silver and gold money were coined a well, and that money had been used which wa made of tin, lead, iron and even baked earth or which figures and characters were imprinted.

It is related that after the reign of Han, prince caused money to be made of sealed eart united with a strong glue, and taking it into h head to put down copper money, he got togethe as much of it as he could collect, buried it ver deep in the earth, and killed the workmen whe the task had been performed, that none might know where it was hidden.

In very ancient days, it is said in the very first dynasty, the money was carried in the shape a cutlass, and was mied a Tao, a word which reported to bear that signification. Anothe kind was of a bulging form resembling the bac of a tortoise, and thence called *Kovei*; othe kinds of irregular shapes and figures also existed, but being found inconvenient for practical purposes, their use was discontinued. At one time coins were used so small as to be called ganders' eyes, and so thin that they swam on

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"This Dagoba forms the main entrance of the eity, from which streets branch off in all directions, radiating from the circular space in which It stands.

"The main street from the entrance-gate continues to the further extremity of the city, being crossed at right angles in the centre by a similar street, thus forming two great main streets through the city, tetminating in four great gates or entrances to the town-north, south, east, and west.

"Continuing along the main street from the great Dagoba for about a mile, we face another Dagoba of similar appearance, but of smaller dimensions, also standing a spacious circle. Near this rises the king's palace, a noble building of great height, edged at the corner by narrow octagon towers.

"At the further extremity of this main street, close to the opposite entrance-gate, is the rock temple, with the massive idols of kuddha flanking the entrance. "This, from the form and position of the

existing ruins, we may conceive to have been the appearance of Pollanarua in its days of prosperity. But what remains of its grandeur : It has vanished like 'a tale that is told;' it is passed away like a dream; the palaces are dust; the grassy sod has grown in mounds over the ruins of streets and fallen houses; nature has turfed them in one common grave with their inhabitants. The lofty palms have faded away and given place to forest trees, whose roots spring from the crambled ruins; the bear and the leopard cronch in the porches of the temples; the owl roosts in the casements of the palaces; the jackal roams among the rains in vain; there is not a bone left for him to gnaw of the multitudes which have passed away. There is their handwriting upon the temple wall, upon the granite slab which has mocked at Time; but there is no man to decipher it. There are the gigantic idols before whom millions have bowed; there is the same vacant stare upon their features of rock which gazed upon the multitudes of yore; but they no longer stare upon the minimumes of the glorious city, but upon ruin, and rank weeds, and utter desolation. How many suns have risen and how many nights have darkened the earth since silence has reigned amidst the eity no man can tell. No mortal can say what fate befel those hosts of heathens, nor when they vanished from the earth. Day and night succeed each other, and the shade of the setting

ar ar

The whole question of amusements is this, that if used in moderation they are beneficial, while if abused they are injurious, just as gluttony and drunkenness are injurious; and admitting the rather inane character of modern "parties," we should be sorry to see dancing abolished from our social economy, and there is happily but little fear that it will be unless some more forcible arguments are directed against it than those of the author of this little essay.

visit to the theatre.

-From Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger we have received Thackeray's novel of "The Virginians," in a cheap paper-cover edition, with all the original illustrations by the author.

-From Turner Brothers & Co. we have received the first number of "The Mason's Home Book," for the use of the Masonic fraternity, and which it is designed to make the standard of reference in all things that relate to the teachings, traditions, and government of the fraternity. Published by Leon Hyneman, No. 814 Chesnut street.

-The same house sends us Appleton's Journal for June 12, containing an instalment of Victor Hugo's romance, "The Man who Laughs," and other interesting articles; and No. 8 of The Vocalist, which gives the "Cruiskeen Lawn" and other popular ballads and songs

-"Zell's Popular Encyclopedia" has advanced one stage on the road to completion. The proof-sheets of the forthcoming numbers which have been sent us show that the letter "B" has been reached. This work contains a vast amount of useful information in a very small space, and as a popular digest of knowledge on all imaginable subjects, it is certainly one of the cheapest and most valuable works published.

-From A. Winch, No. 505 Chesnut street, we have received the latest numbers of Punch, Fun, and Reynolds' Miscellany.

-The King of Bayaria intends to crect a magnifi-cent statue of Goethe in the city of Munich.

-Pittsburg has an amusement known as "parlor daucing.

-Vermont, though by no means a sleepy State, is raising opium. -Of the 700,000 children in Missouri only 100,000

attend Sunday School. -A scamstress' sign in Springfield, Mass., boldly

announces "Sowing done here. -The German Pioneer Society of Cincinnati cele-

brated their first anniversary last week.

-A British officer in Quebec had an eye knocked out by a cricket ball the other day. -Lafayette (Ind.) married men who stay out after

10 o'clock at night are fined \$3.

water, and could not be handled without danger of being broken. Of these it took ten thousand (10,000) to purchase a measure of rice sufficient lo last a man ten days.

The stamp on the coin has no relation to the prince on the throne, because they think it inde cent and disrespectful that the image of the prince should constantly pass through the hands of merchants and the meanest of the people and be used for the commonest and vilest of pur poses. A notion wherein the Asiatic seeludedness of the higher ranks of the nation is presented again under a new garb. The inscription which we find on these coins are merely pompous titles given to the different years of th reign of each monarch, as for instance:-Elernally shining, sovereignly peaceful, magnani-mous, etc. etc. A new title does not necessarily denote a new emperor, a matter which has caused error to arise among the Europeans, and from which they have greatly multiplied the number of the reigning princes.

On other coins may be seen the names of the reigning family, of the tribunal that presides over the mint or over the city where they were struck-a custom that will recall to mind the early mint masters of England and the moneyers of the middle ages, to say nothing of the family coins and mint marks of the Romans. Sometimes they bear the value set upon them a particular prince, which may be greater than it really was, and in instances was larger than the true one.

The characters on the very ancient coins it is now impossible to understand; even the learned among the Chinese themselves are forced to confess that they are unable to comprehend their meaning.

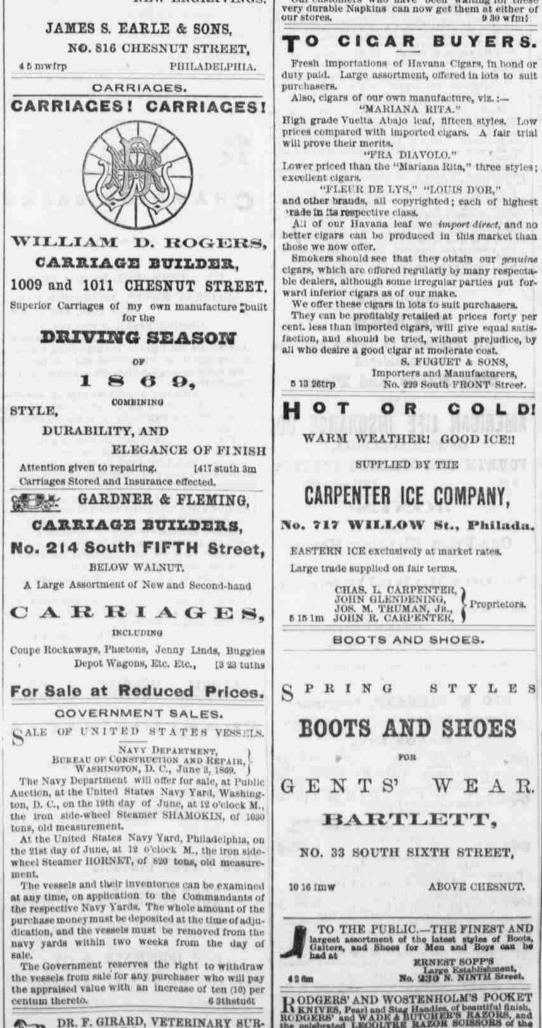
Scarcity of coln sometimes obliged the Emperors to place upon the coins a higher value than their intrinsic one-a measure which often gave rise to popular tumults. This searcity happened either through an unusual concourof foreigners, who, trading for specie, carried it away in their vessels, or through the precaution of the people, who in time of war tool care to bury their hoards, and died without revealing the secret of the place where they were deposited. Once copper was so scarce that to procure it the emperor demolished fourteen hundred (1400) temples of Fo, and melted down the images which they contained, to turn them into money.

Sometimes all private persons were strictly prohibited from keeping any vessels or utensils of copper, and were obliged to deliver them at the places where the money was usually coined

to proper officials appointed to receive them. In the reign of Hong Vou money had become so scarce that the mandarins and soldiers were paid partly in silver and partly in paper, sealed with the imperial seal, on which the value was designated by characters. A translation of this designated by characters. A translation of this paper money is as follows:—"The Court of Treasury having presented their petition, it is decreed that the paper money thus marked with the Imperial seal of Ming shall pass current, and be put to the same use as copper coin. Those who counterfeit it shall be beheaded. He who shall inform against and secure them shall have a reward of two and secure them shall have a reward of two hundred and fifty taels. Besides, he shall receive the goods of the criminal, as well immovable as movable. Dated — year, — month, and — day of the reign of King Von."

Painting the rose and perfuming the lily have been considered as pursuits which to follow would be but a waste of time; so much for European knowledge. The superior civilization of the Chinese has discovered yet another equally profitable employment. Incredible as it may appear, Chinese rogues are able to turn an honest penny counterfeiting the brass colnage

of their country. The pleces are skilfully made, and resemble the genuine as to outward appearance, but the metal is of a baser kind, and they are deficient in weight.



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