THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, TUESDAY, MAY 10, 1870.

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

-Translating Homer is probably as innocent an amusement as scholarly gentlemen with nothing better to occupy their time can probably engage in. But the interest in Homer is, to say the least, limited, and it looks a little like a waste of good ink and paper for every person who gets off a new version of "The Iliad" for the amusement of leisure hours to rush into print with it, unless the mere satisfaction of seeing himself in print is a compensation for the obvious risk that the books will remain unsold upon the shelves of the publishers. A translation of Homer that will represent at once the letter and spirit of the original, and that will reproduce the "movement" of the Greek verse in all its integrity, would doubtless be welcome, but until such a version appears the translations already before the public are amply sufficient to give a general idea of the "tale of Troy divine" as sung by the blind old bard, and among these Pope's paraphrase, although it may be the farthest removed from Homer, is likely to retain its popularity with the mass of readers. These remarks are suggested by "The Iliad of Homer," translated into English verse by W. G. Caldeleugh, which has just been issued from the press of J. B. Lippincott & Co. We are informed that this translation, "the desultory occupation of a few years, was written principally for the amusement of the translator and his friends, and that he makes no claim to the qualifications necessary for the success of such an undertaking." This last proposition is true enough, for while Mr. Caldeleugh's version is probably faithful enough so far as it goes, he has succeeded in turning Homer's poetry into the baldest possible prose, and we have no hesitation in setting it down as the worst attempt of the kind that has ever come under our notice.

Messrs. J. B. Lippincott & Co. have also just published "Only a Girl; or, A Physician for the Soul," translated from the German of Wilhelmine von Hillern by Mrs. A. L. Wister. Mrs. Wister has introduced a number of very charming German romances to the American public, and her taste can be relied upon to select such works as are really worth translating. "Only a Girl" is a more elaborate performance than anything she has yet attempted, and as a story of German life, full of admirable sketches of character and highly dramatic incidents, it will be found to amply repay a perusal.

From the same house we have received "The Private Life of Galileo," published by Nichols & Noyes, Boston. This book is a compilation, the principal materials for which have been drawn from the correspondence of Galileo with his eldest daughter, Sister Maria Celeste, a nun of the Franciscan convent of St. Matthew, at Arcetri. This is one of the most interesting biographical works that has lately been put before the public, and it supplies a great amount of important information with regard to the career of Galileo, and throws much light upon the story of his philosophical investigations and the persecutions to which they subjected him. The affection of Galileo for his daughter, and the tender care with which she always watched over his welfare and interested herself in his great plans, as set forth in their letters, make a most affecting narrative, and this book will doubtless attract as much attention in this country as it has in England, where its publication was considered as one of the literary events of the season. -Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger send us. "The Life of Bismarck," by John George Louis Hesekiel. Translated by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, F. S. A., F. A. S. L. Published by Harper & Brothers. Count Bismarck occupies such a prominent place in the public attention at the present day as one of the chief of living statesmen, and the worktenant, £600; captain, £800; and major, he has performed in raising Prussia to the position of a first-class European power is of such magnitude, and is pregnant with such mportant results for the future, that a careully prepared biography like the present is sure to find an appreciative audience. The author commences with the origin and rise of the family about the commencement of the thirteenth century, and in a few brief but graphic introductory chapters brings its history down to the birth of the present representative of its greatness. In relating the story of Count Bismarck's life Herr Hesekiel writes with an evidently sincere and hearty admiration for his subject, and a certain "gushingness" of style that suggests in some degree that adopted by J. S. C. Abbott in his "Life of Napoleon" will probably suit the tastes of many readers better than a more classical severity. This, however, is really a much better and more reliable work than Mr. Abbott's remarkable performance, and it may be accepted as a correct if somewhat partisan review of Bismarck's career. A great number of interesting incidents of Bismarck's early life have been collected, which add greatly to the value of the harrative, and in relating the recent events that established his fame, the story is told in a clear and graphic manner that sets the main features of the great political manœuvres by which the power of Austria was broken and Prussia made the exponent of the German idea before the reader in an understandable shape. The work is illustrated with all the original German engravings, and the translator has added an'introduction, explanatory notes, and appendices that greatly increase its value. From the same house we have received "A Memoir of the Rev. John Scudder, M. D., by Rev. J. B. Waterbury, D. D. Published by Harper & Brothers. Dr. Scudder was for thirty-six years a missionary in India, where his labors were spread over an immense territory, and where he achieved a success that ritory, and where he achieved a success that has been accorded to but few. One of the secrets of this success was that he was able to minister to the bodily as well as to the spiritual wants of those whom he sought to

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power that he wielded with great effect in carrying out the main objects of his enterprise. The work before us is a brief sketch of the life and labors of Dr. Scudder, and we commend it to the consideration of all who are interested in missionary work, or in the career of a really great and good man.

-From T. Ellwood Zell, Nos. 17 and 19 S. Sixth street, we have received parts 17, 18, 19, and 20 of "Zell's Popular Encyclopedia," which brings the work down to page 800 and the title "Eger." This Encyclopedia is intended for popular use, and the design is to compress as much information as possible into a small space. The editor, Mr. L. Colange, has succeeded admirably in doing this, and while the majority of the articles are very brief, they nevertheless contain all the information that the majority of readers will need. The more important subjects are treated extensively, and some of the articles contain much new and valuable information that is not given in any other work of this class. The very low price of this Encyclopedia and the manner in which it is published place it within the reach of every one, and it is a work that will be a valuable addition to any library, or to those who cannot afford to buy many books it will be a library in itself. The illustrations are numerous and are introduced whenever they are needed for the explanation of the text, and in this, as in all its other features, all the promises made by the publishers at the commencement of the enterprise have been more than carried out.

- Van Nostrand's Eductic Engineering Magazine for May presents as usual an interesting series of articles from the best foreign publications. The leading paper in the present number is a valuable dissertation upon "The Bessemer Flame Spectrum," by Dr. H. Wedding, translated by E. F. Enrich.

-The Manufacturer and Builder for May contains a number of valuable practical papers on matters of art and industry.

The British Army.

FURCHASING COMMISSIONS-THE LAW AND THE BATES. From the N. Y. World.

In the days of Charles II commissions in the English army were sold like divers other State appointments, and from this origin it passed into a practice that where a captain, for instance, obtained his majority, the lieutenant who came into the captaincy paid the major what he, the major, had paid for it in his day, the major in turn paying to the lieutenant-colonel the price of the majority. The sums thus demanded being purely arbitrary, and frequent disagreements as to what they should be impairing the good of the service, a scale of prices was, after some years, laid down by the government, and has continued in force up to this day. By this scale a young man on entering the British army pays for his commission as ensign £450, and then on his promotion through the grades as follows:

Lieutenancy, £250 additional, or total £700. Captaincy, £1100 additional, or total £1800. Majority, £1400 additional, or total £3200. Lieutenant-colonelcy, £1300 additional, or total £4500.

By the operation of this scale, if the lieunant-colonel, say, were promoted, then the major paid him the price of the lieutenantcolonelcy, and received in return, from the senior captain the price of the majority, and so on down to the ensign, who paid the junior lieutenant the price of his lieutenancy, and received in turn from the new ensign who was commissioned the price of the ensigncy; by which system no officer was ever out of pocket more than the price of his grade, and, if desirous of leaving the service, could make himself whole by the sale of his commission. With this as the original scope of the purchase system, it came to pass, as money became less valuable and wealthy men eagerly sought commissions for their sons, than an additional price, called the "over-regulation," was added to the governmental scale. Usage gradually settled this also into fixed proportions, just as Government had prescribed the regulation scale, and at this time it stands pretty much as follows:-Ensign, £100; lieu-

physician, and his medical knowledge was a barian's patience must be required for the power that he wielded with great effect in task. Perhaps it is the labor thus spent upon gongs that renders them so expensivo.

Mining in Nevada.

The San Francisco Chronicle gives the following facts in relation to mining in Nevada, which is attracting so much attention at this time:

"The small amount of capital required for the grection of smelling works enables men of small means to undertake it, while the building of quartz mills of the same capacity would cost tens of thousands of dollars, and could only be built by capitalists. For instance, we may assume that \$5000 will construct smelting furnaces of a capacity to reduce thirty tons of ore per day, while the cost of building a mill of the same capacity would be \$50,000. There are also some other advantages in favor of smelting over which we have milling, not space to particularize. As from two to three tons of crude ore produce one of base bullion, the item of freight in seeking a market is an important one. In this city there is so little competition among purchaser, that but seventy-five per cent. of the assay value of the silver and \$70 to \$80 per ton for the lead is obtained here. The freight charged by the railroad from Elko is \$22 per ton, and in that proportion from other stations. But a large pertion of the base bullion is shipped direct to New York for a market, where ninety-five per cent. of the assay is paid for the silver and \$130 per ton for the ead. The freight charged from Elko to New York is \$54. The extraction and shipment of crude ores to this market are also attracting attention. There is a market in this city for any quantity of argentiferous lead and copper ores that is likely to be sent here. We have firms who receive consignments of ore, paying freight and other incidental charges thereon, crush and sample it, and sell it to the highest bidder for cash. The charge for this varies from \$5 to \$15 per ton, according to quantity and quality. The ore brings about the following prices:-That assaying \$100 per ton in silver brings 56 per cent. for the silver, beside the lead and copper; \$300 ore brings 74 per cent., and \$000 ore brings 80 per cent. The lead is worth about \$40 per ton, and the copper brings \$2.50 per unit for 30 per cent. ore, increasing or decreasing about 10 cents per unit, as the percentage is greater or less. Thus, ore assaying \$100 in silver and 30 per cent. in copper will bring \$56 per ton for the silver and \$75 per ton for the copper; total, \$131. Silver ore is reckoned at 2000 pounds per ton; lead ore at 2200 pounds, and copper ore at 2352 pounds. The railroad charge for freight is \$16 per ton from Elko, or \$14 from Carlin.

-Returns furnished by the London water companies to the Registrar-General show that the average daily supply of water to the London population during the month of February last ounted to 95,812,688 gallons, of which 48,878,012 gallons were drawn from the Thames and 46,934,676 from the Lea and other sources. In the month of January the average daily supply from all sources amounted to 94,878,164 gallons.





£1000. Now, Mr. Cardwell, the English War Minister, or, in the curious British style, Secretary of State of War, is no friend to the purchase system, and would abolish it; but, this not being in his power, lately introduced a bill in Parliament proposing to consolidate the grades of cornet and ensign with the junior lieutenancies respectively on horse and foot. On this the Gladstone ministry have just been beaten, the vast social influence of the English army being so unitedly thrown against the measure that Mr. Cardwell was forced to withdraw his bill. The officers argued that while they would not object to an abolition per se of the purchase system, whether in whole or in part, yet it was but fair that, as the Government has for over two centuries allowed purchase, it should save them from any loss consequent upon its abrogation. This being but fair, and the ministry, which perhaps put the measure forth as an ad captandum measure of reform, not caring to take any new load on its shoulders, the scheme failed. The incident reveals a curious feature in English polity, and perhaps may indicate that the ministry finds it safer to disestablish Irish bishops than to cashier British grenadiers.

The Art of Making Gongs.

None but Chinamen could heretofore make gongs to perfection. It used to be supposed that they possessed the secret of mixing the alloy of which the clamorous instruments are formed, or else some means of tempering the metal to allow of its being beaten into shape. and afterward hardened to a sonorous density. For a genuine gong is brittle; it will crack if struck with a hard substance, and yet it bears hammer marks all over it. We do not know whether English musical instrument-makers have not supplied gongs because there is no demand for them, or because they could not make them. But if the latter, there need no longer be a scarcity in the market, for a French metallurgist has been experimenting upon the gong and cymbal metals, and has revealed the Chinese secret, if secret it has been. The nature of the alloy has long been known; it consists of eighty parts of copper to twenty of tin. But the shaping; attempt to beat this compound into a disk form and it flies like porcelain. The trick lies in first epiritusi wants of those whom he sought to convert to Christianity. He was a skilfal there must be incessant reheatings. A bar-ALTIANDER OATTELL ELSIAE CATTELL.

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