

which, perhaps thinking it had done enough in printing Mr. Smyth's work, declined the offer.

"So much for Tasmania and Victoria; and it may be asked, What has been done in this matter in New South Wales? This is a question not easy to answer fully. The earliest work undertaken in any part of Australia appears to be the *Australian Grammar* of the Rev. L. E. Threlkeld, printed at the *Herald* Office so far back as 1834; and there is a second little work by the same author. In 1866 the government printed, in excellent style, the Rev. W. Ridley's scholarly work on the Kamilaroi, Dippil, and Turuwul dialects, the last-named being the language of the now extinct tribes of Sydney and Botany districts. The government was so satisfied with Mr. Ridley's work that it published a second edition in 1871, with additions, the result partly of journeys made by Mr. Ridley at its special request to the localities of the various tribes. The language of the South Australian blacks has received some attention at the hands of the Rev. G. Taplin and others.

"Still, the work which has been done both by private and public effort, up to the present time, in all these colonies, falls far short of what is required for a complete treatment, or even survey, of the aboriginal tongues; and, as time is of supreme importance in this matter, there can be no harm in reviving the question of their preservation for scientific purposes. The mother-colony of the Australian group has recently covered itself with honour by sending troops to serve with Walseley. There remains for it now to draw upon itself the approbation of the scientific world by a national undertaking of high import and comparatively little cost by taking measures to collect all it is now possible to gather of the fast-disappearing aboriginal languages. There can be small doubt that the governments of the other colonies would offer every facility, and perhaps be eager to share in a work of such a character. The urgency for early action is obvious. Not only are the tribes dying out, but unwritten language is subject to such rapid alteration as to materially change in many instances its vocabulary and structure in a single generation. Especially is this the case among mountain and woodland tribes, such as the Australian aborigines mostly are. It is very improbable that a private individual could accomplish a work like that of reducing to writing the languages of the still existing tribes in the various colonies; but if the government were to entertain the suggestion, made in the first instance by Prof. Max Müller, of preserving the dialects while it is possible to do so, it would not be difficult to carry it out on a well-considered plan.

"I am conscious that, in venturing to make the foregoing remarks, I have pleaded the cause of the aboriginal languages but feebly, and that the proposal to initiate a national and scientific undertaking would meet with more attention if it came from an influential quarter. Still, I am inclined to think, when I look round at the rapid material progress of this prosperous colony, that there must be at least a section of the people who would welcome such a movement as that contemplated, and who would prefer to see New South Wales take the lead in so very natural and laudable an enterprise. It has been well for these colonies to show the older nations that they can send forth athletes and soldiers able to hold their own with all comers. It has been still better to publish accounts of our educational efforts; but it will be more conducive to that honourable repute a young nation should aspire to if the Australian people show their willingness to add something to the world's common stock of knowledge, as they may, by rendering available for the purposes of comparative philology and allied science the linguistic treasures which still lie around them.

"JOHN W. ROGERS."

SELECTED FOREIGN BOOKS.

GENERAL LITERATURE.

- BERLAN, F. *La introduzione della stampa in Milano*. Venice: Visentini. 4 L.
BOFFI, L. *Il Palazzo dei Vitelleschi in Corneto-Tarquini*. Milan: Hoepli. 60 L.
CAVALLUCCI, C. J. *Vita ed opere del Donatello*. Milan: Hoepli. 100 L.
DUVAL, A. *Souvenirs, 1829-30*. Paris: Plon. 3 fr. 50 c.

- STENDEL, E. *Private u. amtliche Beziehungen der Brüder Grimm zu Hessen*. 2. Bd. Marburg: Elwert. 6 M.
STERN, A. *Die deutsche Nationalliteratur vom Tode Goethes bis zur Gegenwart*. Marburg: Elwert. 1 M. 20 Pf.
THIRBACH, M. *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der Handfeuerwaffen*, bearb. nach den in den deutschen Sammlungen noch vorhandenen Originalen. 1. Bd. Dresden: Höcker. 15 M.

HISTORY, ETC.

- HEINEMANN, O. v. *Geschichte v. Braunschweig u. Hannover*. 2. Bd. Gotha: Perthes. 9 M.
LUCE, S. *Jeanne d'Arc à Domremy: recherches critiques sur les origines de la mission de la pucelle, accompagnées de pièces justificatives*. Paris: Champion. 10 fr.
LIEBENAU, Th. v. *Die Schlacht bei Sempach*. Gedenkbuch zur 5. Sicularfeier. 1. Lfg. Lucerne: Prell. 2 M.
VIOLLET, Paul. *Précis de l'histoire du droit français, accompagné de notions du droit canonique et d'indications bibliographiques*. Paris: Larousse et Forul. 10 fr.
VOSS, A., u. G. STIMMING. *Vorgeschichtliche Alterthümer aus der Mark Brandenburg*. 1. Lfg. Brandenburg-a.-H.: Lunitz. 2 M. 50 Pf.

PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

- HUEPPE, F. *Die Formen der Bakterien u. ihre Beziehungen zu den Gattungen u. Arten*. Wiesbaden: Kreidel. 4 M.

PHILOLOGY, ETC.

- GARRUCCI, R. *Le monete dell'Italia antica*. Rome: Loescher. 150 fr.
GRIMM, J., u. W. GRIMM. *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. 7. Bd. 7. Lfg. Bearb. v. M. Lexer. Leipzig: Hirzel. 2 M.
MERGUET. *Lexikon zu den Schriften Cäsars u. seiner Fortsetzer*. 5. Lfg. Jena: Fischer. 8 M.
ROEMER, A. *Ueb. die Homerrecension d. Herodot*. München: Franz. 2 M. 40 Pf.
STEUR, J. *Thukydidische Studien*. 2. Hft. Freiburg-i.-B.: Mohr. 2 M. 40 Pf.
UNTERSUCHUNGEN, philologische. 8. Hft. *Quaestiones Phaethontaeae*. Scripsit G. Kraack. Berlin: Weidmann. 2 M.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A "DIET" FOR IRELAND.

Tangier, Marocco: Jan. 10, 1886.

All readers know that the ACADEMY is not a political paper, and that communications on other than literary subjects are uncommonly apt to find their way into the limbo of the waste-paper basket. Perhaps, however, the doom may be avoided when politics are connected with literature.

Every province of Austro-Hungary (the Dual Empire which should, and will, be tripled to Austro-Hungaro-Slavonian) enjoys the greatest advisable amount of "Home Rule" by means of its own Landstag or Diet. The little volumes, each in the local dialect, containing the rules and regulations for legislative procedure are broadcast over the country; and I would especially recommend those which concern the Diet of Istria and—a thing apart—the Diet of Trieste city to the many who are now waxing rabid with alarm at the idea of an Irish Parliament in the old house on College Green.

In 1883, I undertook a detailed study of Diets in general; but first sickness and then a decidedly more interesting work intervened. Englishmen who are willing to take a lesson from abroad will find such a task the reverse of unprofitable. A certain school of politicians, which aims mainly at destroying whatever is, and to whom an aristocratic empire is a red rag to a raging bull, have ignored the fact, still true as when the saying was first said, that if Austria did not exist she would have to be invented. Even they may be interested to learn that the tie by which she connects such a host of various nationalities—differing in speech, religion, manners, customs, and interests—is the local Diet, which satisfies the aspirations of every reasonable man to "Home Rule."

The local Diet (Landstag) offers the immense advantage of submitting to the discussion of experts provincial questions which, in the shape of Bills sent up to the much over-worked Imperial Parliament (Reichstag), would be disposed of by a "Massacre of the Innocents."

Otherwise the great assembly in Vienna, as in London, would be placed in a false position, which, "like a wrong focus in photography, distorts every object."

The local Diet encourages decentralisation; the growing evil of Europe being that of crowded cities and over-populated capitals, where wealth may prosper but where man decidedly decays—in fact becomes non-viable. Hence Mandarin Tseng is reported to have said that the strength has gone out of England; and it surely will go when we have a great majority of town population.

The local Diet acts as a distributor to wealth; and we all know that questions of self-government rest mainly on the solid base of £ s. d. When absentee landlords carry their money to, and never fail to spend the season in, the metropolis, reserving their economy for home residence, local industries cannot but suffer. The provincial Diet meets, we will say, two months before the Imperial Parliament; and creates a kind of sub-season in the provincial capital, which, like Dublin and Edinburgh, never forgets that she was once a real capital. The deputies take their families into them and part of the revenue and income drawn from the land is returned to the land.

As with us, dire consequences were predicted for Magyar Home Rule in Pesh and for Czech Home Rule in Prague, which would soon swamp the German element and eat up the landlords. Now there is a notable social resemblance between the Magyar and the Irish Kelt, nor will anyone pretend that the animosity in the sister island against foreign rule is hotter in 1886 than was that of the Magyar against Austria in 1848-50. Yet the latter learned only moderation from Home Rule, and he is now a loyal subject. If, however, any especial defence for the landlord-class be temporarily necessary, this can be done by counting acres instead of noses, till increased national prosperity, and a sense of having had justice dealt to the people, shall allay the ill-feeling.

The local Diet has at times proved troublesome by intermeddling with Imperial questions; for instance in Croatia, which has produced a Slavonian Parnell—men both to be honoured for the energy and persistency with which they have claimed liberty for their fellow countrymen. But these troubles are good in one point: far better an outburst in open air than in confinement, where the strength of the explosion is immensely increased. In normal times the limits of local authority are studiously kept, as they are exactly laid down, and every member knows his competency or incompetency to lay a measure before the House. A law officer of the crown, appointed *ad hoc*, attends every meeting of the local Diet, and can veto debate upon questions beyond its legislative sphere.

I believe that the study of these little volumes, treating upon the local Diets of Austria, will suggest to England not only a Parliament in Dublin, but a similar assembly in Edinburgh and in Carnarvon; furthermore, that if they prove useful and important, as they promise to do, England will presently be distributed into circuits or districts, each provided with its own Diet.

RICHARD F. BURTON.

THE DATE OF "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

Dublin: Jan. 11, 1886.

The only clear external evidence of the date of "The Merchant of Venice" is the 1598 entry in the Stationers' Register; but the date 1595 or 1596 has been generally accepted. It has not, as far as I know, been noticed that a sonnet in Griffin's "Fidessa" (1596), is, perhaps,