

which is the native name for revelation.

We have one advantage over you that I must mention. In our little garden cucumbers and musk-melons are ripe, and we had string beans for Christmas and New Year's dinners. The vines are loaded with tomatoes and in the near future we expect to have beets, cabbage, turnips and squash. NEMO.

AUNU, Samoan Islands, February 5, 1880.

LONDON LETTER:

A good story is told of Lord Midleton, the brother of the Mr. Brodric who had to do penance the other day in the law courts. He is under a permanent conviction that he is the Squire in "Robert Elsmere." "I am credibly informed," he always tells his friends, "that I am the original for the Squire." His friends doubt it, but he is so far from sharing their doubts that one day, when he was calling upon Mrs. Ward and found her "out," he asked the servant to "tell Mrs. Ward that the Squire had called!" The humor of this family is always incomplete without an affidavit.

Mr. Gladstone's cough has entirely disappeared in the bracing air of Dolfs Hills, from which he always derives benefit and to which he is greatly attached.

The health of Mr. W. H. Smith is not in any way seriously affected, though he is still troubled with want of regular sleep and a sense of fatigue. The indisposition from which he suffers originated, it is said, at Windsor, and was probably the result of the inhalation of foul gas.

The first volume of the Rutland Letters, edited by Mr. Maxwell Lyte for the Historical Manuscripts Commission, has been issued, and includes a mass of matter which antiquarians and historians will read with avidity. The discovery of these Rutland Manuscripts at Belvoir Castle tends to show how highly probably it is that masses of mediæval correspondence exist in many of our historical castles and towns which have never yet seen daylight. Possibly it may even encourage the lingering belief—that last infirmity of the Shakespearian student—that some of the immortal William's correspondence will yet be brought to light from some unsuspected hiding-place. Mr. Lyte had been informed of the existence of a number of old documents in a lumber-room of Belvoir Castle, and while turning them over he discovered a key labelled, "Key of old writings over stable." The stables were accordingly explored, and the door which the key fitted was opened, when the discovery was made that lifted the antiquarian heart of Mr. Lyte to the seventh heaven of happiness. Jumbled up amongst old newspaper files of the early part of the present century was a mass of heterogeneous documents, beginning with State papers of the time of Edward IV, and coming down through several subsequent centuries.

One of the most interesting is a letter from Warwick the king-maker to Henry Vernon of Haddon Hall. This letter bears date 25th March, 1471. Vernon was body squire to King Henry VII., which monarch, in entrusting his daughter to his squire for conveyance to Scotland on the occasion of her marriage, charged him to have his retinue suitably attired, and "not in any mourning or sorrowful clothings." There is also a letter from Thomas Randolph, English envoy to Scotland in 1563, containing a brilliant description of the "four virgins, maydes, Maries, and damoysselles of honor, or the Queen's minions, cawle them as please your honor." This, of course, refers to the court of Mary Queen of Scots, and bears witness of the cordial relations existing between the Queens of England and Scotland. Many of the letters also refer to the stirring times of the Armada invasion. There are more volumes of these Rutland letters to follow.

Mr. Harris will not issue his Royal Italian Opera prospectus until after Easter. By the engagement of Mlle. Schlager, the popular dramatic soprano of the Vienna Opera House, he has filled up the only important gap remaining in his troupe, and it is now more than ever unlikely that Madame Albani will sing at Covent Garden this year. The London debut of Mlle. Schlager, who is almost as great a favorite with the Viennese as was Pauline Lucca in her time, will be awaited with considerable interest. As regards the repertory of the coming season (which begins on Saturday, May 18), it will probably be found that "Tannhäuser" and "Robert le Diable" are not in the list. With "Die Meistersinger," "Romeo et Juliette" (in French), and "Le Prophète" to mount afresh, Mr. Harris has about as much in hand as he can fairly manage. By the way, the "cuts" in Wagner's opera are being very carefully arranged, and will be a happy combination of those employed in Mannheim, Mayence, and Frankfort. The rumor that Mr. Carl Rosa will give Italian opera in London this season, in opposition to Mr. Harris, is authoritatively denied. The only other operative enterprises yet projected other than the Covent Garden is the production of Verdi's "Otello" at the Lyceum, for which Mr. Mayer has definitely arranged; and as this will begin when the other is nearly over, it seems probable that Mr. Harris will practically have the field to himself once more.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward, who is at present enjoying a well-earned rest in Italy, has received a very pleasant letter from Mr. Gladstone on her article in the *Nineteenth Century*, in which he criticises that production on very much the same lines as he criticised "Robert Elsmere" in the same review. The new novel upon which Mrs. Ward is engaged is to be in no way concerned with any religious or political problem, but to be a frankly human piece of fiction.

At Mr. Dunbar's auction rooms

in Dumfries a holograph letter of Burns, addressed to a Mr. Watt, and expressing his thanks for the loan of an unnamed book, has been sold for £2 to Mr. Brown, Edinburgh. The letter was dated from Dumfries, on January 6, 1794. Two short business notes in the handwriting of Sir Walter Scott were acquired by Mr. J. C. McNaught, Dumfries, one for half-a-guinea, the other for half-a-sovereign. The copyright and stereotype plates of "Burns in Dumfriesshire," by the late Mr. William McDowell, were sold at the same time to Mr. Maxwell, bookseller, for £12.

Mr. Raikes, postmaster-general, was compelled to answer many questions in asking the voting of £1,785,516 for expenses of the postoffice telegraph service. He was sanguine as to the future of postoffice finances. Last year there was a respectable profit carried, the deficit of £6,000 for the year before having been turned into a much larger sum on the other side of the account. He could not hold out any hope of cheaper telegraphic rates, and he thought the present system worked well, though it barely paid its way as yet. He was unable to hold out any hopes in the direction of giving free addresses for six penny telegrams, as the yearly loss which would be incurred was estimated at £400,000.

The question of bringing the Duke of Edinburgh into the admiralty as First Sea Lord, is by no means settled. The professional admirals say that the duke has held three commands and that he ought to be satisfied. The courtiers urge that such experience is next to the best of his qualifications. The candidate of the regular service is said to be Admiral Vesey Hamilton. The salary of the office is £2,256. The opinion of the admiralty seems to be that the duke will, as likely as not, obtain admission to the board, now that he is retiring from command of the Mediterranean fleet. It is said that there has been a good deal of extra cost, owing to the exalted position or the admiral in this command, but the accounts of the admiralty are so involved that it is not possible to obtain any clear views upon the matter; and in reply it is urged by the duke's friends that he has been obliged to perform political and international duties as belonging to his princely rank and in connection with the fleet.

"That is not in Macbeth!" shouted one of the "gods" the other night at a critical part of Mr. Irving's performance of the "court-yard scene," when he was embellishing the text with some of his own histrionic interpretations. The sally nearly upset the house. It reminded one of what happened once at the first night of a piece really due to Miss Braddon, and "damned" it beyond saying. There was introduced a scene in which a child was kidnapped, and, when the mother was restored to happiness, the restoration of the child was not represented on the stage—the incident had to be taken for granted. It was the fault of a novelist. The curtain went down with a burst of