

to stand in his chariot, and keep whispering in his ear that he was only human, after all ; and it speaks volumes for the stern self-restraint of the Roman nature that the officious truth-teller was not promptly kicked out into the dust. In the same grudging spirit, Mr. Thomas Hardy, after conducting one of his heroines safely through a great many trials, and marrying her at last to the husband of her choice, winds up, by way of wedding-bells, with the following consolatory reflections : " Her experience had been of a kind to teach her, rightly or wrongly, that the doubtful honor of a brief transit through a sorry world hardly

called for effusiveness, even when the path was suddenly irradiated at some half-way point by day-dreams rich as hers. . . . And in being forced to class herself among the fortunate, she did not cease to wonder at the persistence of the unforeseen, when the one to whom such unbroken tranquillity had been accorded in the adult stage was she whose youth had seemed to teach that happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain." " What should a man do but be merry ? " says Hamlet drearily ; and, with this reckless mirth pervading even our novels, we bid fair in time to become as jocund as he.

Agnes Repplier.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

SEVENTH PAPER.

XIV.

MORALITY.

IN the last paper I made some reference to morality in literature and life, drawing attention particularly to one point. I said that the morality of literature is not always very closely connected with practice, that people especially seek interest and excitement in fiction, and that immoral subjects may often be superior to moral ones in the dramatic interest of the situations. The English argument about French immorality is founded chiefly on the nature of the subjects treated in French novels. This argument usually assumes one of these two forms : —

(1.) Novelists draw from life ; consequently, as adultery is almost universal in French novels, it must be equally common in French life.

(2.) French people purchase novels about adultery in great numbers ; conse-

quently, the readers of these books must be *practically immoral*.

With regard to the first of these propositions, I should say that crimes of all kinds occur more frequently in all literature that tries to excite an absorbing interest than they do in the dull routine of every-day existence. Murder, for example, is much more frequent in Shakespeare than it is in ordinary English life. Even stories that are considered innocent enough to be read by the young, such as the *Arabian Nights*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and, in recent times, Mr. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, are full of villainy and homicide, introduced for no purpose in the world but to excite the interest of the reader. If we think of a few famous English novels, we shall find that they often describe situations which are certainly not common in the ordinary life of respectable people like ourselves. We are not generally either bigamists, or seducers, or wife-slayers, yet *Jane Eyre* turned upon an intended big-

amy, Adam Bede turned upon a case of seduction and infanticide, and Paul Ferroll fascinated us by the wonderfully self-possessed behavior of a gentleman who had quietly murdered his wife as she lay in bed, early one summer morning. In *Daniel Deronda* the most polished gentleman in the book has a family of illegitimate children, and the most brilliant young lady becomes, in intention, a murderess, whilst the sweetest girl is rescued from attempted suicide. These things *may* happen, which is enough for the purpose of the novelist. In France, the great difficulty of that artist is the uninteresting nature of the usual preliminaries of marriage, so that he is thrown back upon adulterous love as the only kind that is adventurous and romantic.

The immorality of French novels may be accepted as evidence that there is a demand for that kind of reading, but it proves very little else. As for the material in real life that suggests the stories, it need not be abundant. The cases which come to light in the newspapers are sufficient to supply a good part of it, and invention, or the private knowledge of some adventures in real life, may do the rest.

Now with regard to the second proposition, that the readers of immoral stories must be themselves immoral, observation of actual cases entirely fails to confirm it. People read these stories because they feel dull, and seek the interest of exciting situations. Here is a case well known to me. A lady lives in a very out-of-the-way country house, and sees very little society; so reading is her only resource. Fiction is naturally an important part of her reading, and as she is not a linguist she is confined to the works of French authors and a few translations. In this way she has read a good deal about adultery, but her own life is unimpeachable.

It is unnecessary to go to France for a proof that one may read about crimes

without practicing them. French novels have a great circulation in England, but nobody supposes that all the English ladies who read them imitate the conduct of their heroines. A writer in the *Saturday Review*¹ speaks of those music halls and restaurants which are chiefly frequented by the *demi-monde*, and then he goes on to say: "There is the same fascination in going to these places that there is in reading French novels of more than doubtful morality. Let it be but known that there is a book that is hardly decent, and the rush for it is immense among our young married ladies, and even among some of the elder spinsters. Indeed, not to have read any book that is more indecent than usual is to be out of the fashion." This is probably exaggerated, as many books are perfectly decorous in expression whilst depicting an immoral kind of life, and a life may preserve the strictest purity of language though given over to unbridled desires. But, however bad may be the books they read, no one supposes that Englishwomen misconduct themselves in a practical manner because they have read them. Would it be more than fair to extend the same charity to Frenchwomen?

Again, there appears to be a mistake about the reading of novels in France. It seems to be assumed that, because their sale is great, all French people read them. The great sale is partly accounted for by exportation, and it always seems astonishing to an Englishman, because the system of bookselling is not the same in France and England. In fact, however, the sale of an immensely successful French novel scarcely equals that of a single number of the *Daily Telegraph*, and there are millions of English men and women who never read that newspaper. Many French people do not read novels at all; others are extremely careful in their choice. All pious women naturally avoid impure

¹ In the number for July 23, 1887.

literature, and they are a numerous class. Girls are usually limited, in fiction, to translations from English stories and to a few harmless French ones. The habit of novel-reading seems even to vary with localities. The Prefect of the Seine procured some interesting statistics, last year, about the lending libraries on the outskirts of Paris (for a purpose connected with the budget of the department); and from these it appears that there are the most surprising degrees of variety in the habit of novel-reading in different localities. At Asnières, out of a hundred volumes asked for in the libraries, eighty-six are novels, whilst at St. Denis we find them suddenly falling to twelve in the hundred. At Courbevoie the demand for this class of literature is represented by eighty-two per cent., at St. Ouen by twelve and three quarters. Other places vary between these extremes.

The Saturday Review, never very charitable in its judgments about France, and not often very well informed, has spoken as follows about public education in that country: "France has taken a great step forward in these days. It has gone all the way to an expenditure of ninety millions of francs a year, and although Mr. Matthew Arnold does not say so, has materially added to its now permanent deficit by lavish outlay on schools, in which it trains thousands of children to read" — (Well, surely there can be no harm in teaching children to read, but international malevolence is ingenious enough to find evil even here. I resume my suspended quotation:;) "Thousands of children to read who *will never use their knowledge again, or will use it only to read obscenity, to the great and manifest advantage of their minds and morals.*"

This is the kind of information about France which appears to satisfy the readers of the Saturday Review. It is on a level with the surprising statements about the English that we find in the

most ignorant French newspapers. Writing of that kind is not done by men who know the country they write about. The principal reading of the lower classes is the newspapers published at one sou. Some of these are very ably conducted (for example, the *Lyon Républicain*), some others at the same price are much inferior, but the better class of these journals have a great circulation, and are doing more good than harm. The inferior ones publish the sort of trash, in the way of novels, that suits an uncultivated taste. The principal difference between these novels and those read by educated people does not seem to be so much in morality as in the more abundant variety of horrible situations supplied by the writer for the populace. In France, as in England and elsewhere, the taste of the beginners in reading seems to turn naturally to harrowing scenes. But the poor Frenchman is not confined to his newspaper. He has now plenty of opportunities for purchasing cheap scientific and literary works, and also for borrowing them. The collection of *Cent Bons Livres*, published by Félix Vernay, contains books of both classes, issued in a legible type at two sous, and not one of them is immoral. The *Bibliothèque Populaire*, also at two sous, consists of selections from French and foreign literature. The texts are very accurately printed, the translations are good, and the publishers are strict in the exclusion of immoral works; yet the sale of the collection is extensive, and it is found in the dwellings of the humbler classes. The same may be said of the *Bibliothèque Utile*, published by Alcan. But perhaps the best evidence on this subject is in the popular lending libraries instituted by the government. The books for these libraries are specially examined by a commission appointed for the purpose, which excludes indecent publications. There are also the *bibliothèques scolaires* or lending libraries in the schools, and regimental libraries

in the barracks, besides the older town libraries, often extensive and valuable, which are open to all. With regard to the providing of literature in a form suitable for readers of limited education, I may add that this class of literature, simple in expression, yet neither deficient in intelligence nor behind the age in knowledge, scarcely existed in France twenty-five years ago, but is now produced in constantly increasing quantity. Even in former times, however, when facilities were so few, men of the humbler classes frequently rose in the world, and they could not have done that without reading. A well-known Parisian publisher, who was a personal friend of mine, began life as a working joiner.¹

The difficulty about evidence concerning morality is that the sexual vices are so much concealed that the investigator can ascertain only a small part of the truth about them. If the whole truth could be known, it would probably be hideous enough, but there would at least be a basis for recrimination. As things are in the actual world, with truth brought to light here and there in specimens and fragments, we know very little more about it than we do of the interior of the earth. Novels are not evidence, the opinion of foreigners is not evidence; the testimony in the divorce courts is evidence, and, for adultery, that is nearly all we have. But who knows what proportion the cases that become public bear to those that remain forever unrevealed? Considering that for many years there had been no facilities for divorce in France, it was anticipated that when M. Naguet's law came into operation the suits would be for a time like the rushing of pent-up waters; but in reality the world of injured hus-

bands made no overwhelming clamor for deliverance, and soon they came in that quiet succession that reveals only a moderate average of misfortune. The objection that only a part of the cases are ever known applies equally to England. What do we really know? Some men are believed to be quite moral when in fact they are not so good as their reputation, and others are considered to be vicious when they are no worse than the first. Really to *know* that a man leads a moral life, we should require an unimpeachable witness, watching him day and night like a guardian angel. It is for this reason that comparisons of morality are so unsatisfactory.

Having premised, then, that we know very little, and have not the means of knowing much, I will proceed to give an opinion that is founded on what I have been able to ascertain. For convenience, we may divide the population into classes, and begin with the clergy. There are a few flagrant cases of immorality every year amongst the French clergy; but although surrounded by enemies eager to publish every fault, they keep, on the whole, a reputation equal to that of the Catholic clergy anywhere. The clergy in England have an equally good reputation, and there is no reason for supposing it to be undeserved, but they have the possibility of marriage. With the armies the case is different. Soldiers and sailors enjoy a reputation for bravery, but not for sexual morality, in either country. There is very strong medical evidence on this subject, which I cannot go into. The English evidence is very serious, as it points to a danger to the military strength of the country; but it may be argued that the English army is but a part of the nation, whereas

is a delight to me." I asked if he knew that it was an English book. "Yes, sir, I am aware that Defoe was an Englishman." On further inquiry, I found that the lad had read many other books besides. According to the Saturday Review, he ought not to have been taught to read.

¹ During the composition of the present paper I happened one day to be at work upon a boat, when a poor French boy looked on and made a remark. I said, "You must have read Robinson Crusoe to say that." "Yes, sir," he answered, with a look of the keenest pleasure; "I have read it twenty times. The book

the French army represents the nation itself. Another difficulty in the comparison arises from the fact that, although the French may be quite as immoral as the English, their sanitary legislation is more rigorously prudent, so that the consequent physical evils are diminished. With regard to the agricultural populations in both countries, it is difficult to know very much even when you have lived amongst them; but those who know them best believe in the existence of a great deal of virtue, and a great deal of vice, also. I do not think that the rural population in either France or England is anything like generally vicious. You hear now and then of the birth of an illegitimate child, but very rarely of a case of adultery.

A large class, both in France and England, whose general good conduct is doubted by nobody who knows the countries, is that of unmarried girls in the middle and upper classes. Here a fall is so rare as to be practically unknown. The English girl is less retiring than the French *jeune fille*, and she knows more, but she is equally safe. It is something that the two civilizations should have produced at least one class that is so very nearly immaculate.

One cannot say so much of the brothers of the young ladies in either country, but here England has probably the advantage, for a particular reason. French student life is very much concentrated in Paris, and is there surrounded by all the facilities and temptations of a capital city. France has no Oxford and Cambridge, where young men live under a certain gentle restraint, and in places of comparatively small size, where the army of vice is not in full force, but represented only by a detachment. French student life is more like that of medical students and art students in London, whose morality, in the midst of facilities and temptations, depends entirely upon themselves. Student life in Edinburgh has the same lib-

erty as in Paris, but is probably more moral on account of the greater seriousness of the Scottish character and the intellectual ambition of Scottish youth. Both in England and France the errors of young men are very lightly passed over and excused, but in France they are more *expected*, more taken as a matter of course, and there is more of a settled tradition of immorality amongst French students than amongst English. Still, there is nothing in the French system to prevent a young man from living like a good Scotchman, if he likes. It is impossible for us to be just if we overlook the struggling student who is at Paris for his work, and has neither time nor money for much else. The reader is probably aware that amongst Scottish students there are striking examples of courage and self-denial, but he may not know that Paris abounds with instances that, for a richer country, are really of the same kind. I will mention two cases, those of young men whom I know personally, and regard with all the respect which they deserve. One of them, in consequence of a family misfortune, was dependent upon his mother's labor, and by hard work and close economy she was able to support him when at school. She could not undertake the expense of his student life at Paris, but she had a relation there who offered two great helps, a bed and one meal every day. This was absolutely all that the young man had to count upon; the rest had to be won by his own labor. He contrived — I have not space to tell how — to earn all the money necessary for everything else, and became an army surgeon, after which, by further hard work, he gained the medical *agrégation* (a sort of fellowship won by a severe competitive examination). During his student days, I know from his companions that he carefully kept aloof from idle and dissipated society. The other case is that of a young man whose mother, a widow, could do nothing for him.

His earlier education was paid for by the bounty of a rich lady, but as soon as he could earn money by teaching he did so, and went on vigorously with his studies at the same time. He even managed to keep his mother by his labor, without hindering his own advancement. He won a fellowship, and is now occupying the chair of a professor of history,—I do not mean in a school, but as a *professeur de faculté*. He is one of the most cultivated men I ever knew, and probably one of the happiest. Such a career as his is not the usual consequence of a frivolous and dissipated youth. I was talking, an hour before writing this page, with a Frenchman whose own life has been a remarkable example of labor and self-denial, and he told me that there are at this moment hundreds of students in Paris who are supporting themselves, at least in part, by means of lessons and humble literary work, in order that they may enter the professions.

One or two indications have reached me which seem to imply that in England there exists a belief that French school life is immoral. This may be founded on the mutual amenities of the clerical and lay parties in France, which profess a complete disbelief in each other's morality, and would equally accuse each other of murder, if that were as difficult to test. Nobody knows much about the morality of boys, but I may observe that the government of French schools, both lay and clerical, is too strict for any immorality that can be detected to make way there. The very few instances of it in school life that have come to my knowledge have been followed by instant expulsion. I have heard something about school immorality in England coupled with an expression of the desire that the rigorous French system could be established there, not in all things, but for this one safeguard.

With regard to the class of domestic

servants, my own experience (that of a householder living in the country) has been as nearly as possible the same in France and England; that is to say, the girls have been generally well conducted, with one or two instances to the contrary. I am told that in Paris the morality of servants is lower; but never having kept house in Paris, I know nothing about it, except by hearsay. Statistics, however, show a remarkably large proportion of illegitimate births for the capital. An ecclesiastic of high rank, who has had exceptional opportunities for studying the moral aspects of Paris, told me that he attributed the greater immorality of domestics there to the system of lodging, by which the servants are often separated from the family life of the household, and sent to sleep up in the attics, where they are in a world of their own.

Vicious women are of two distinct classes, professional and amateur. The professional class is numerous both in England and France; the amateur class is said to be more numerous in Paris than in London, but of this we cannot really know very much. To know the true condition of a society inwardly corrupt, yet outwardly decorous, you must be an immoral man yourself, living in the midst of it, and judging the women in it by your own personal experience of their frailty. Byron said that the English high life of his time was as profligate as the Italian, and he was in a position to judge; yet the very ladies whom Byron knew to be immoral might have appeared immaculate to Sir Walter Scott.

The latest piece of really significant evidence that has come to me about Parisian society is this. A country gentleman, who sees the polite world of the capital every year, tells me that during recent visits he has been surprised and shocked by the looser tone of conversation now prevailing there, even in the presence of ladies. He expressed his

disapproval of this quite as strongly as any English moralist might have done. The moralist in the Saturday Review says exactly the same thing of London.

Before bringing this unsatisfactory subject of morals to a close (unsatisfactory because most of the facts are kept so secret that one is writing in the dark) I take the precaution of answering in advance the kind of criticism that will be applied to me. The English theory is that England is a moral country and France an immoral one; that the difference between them is the difference between white and black. If an English writer ventures to point to certain facts, such as proceedings in divorce courts, medical evidence about the health of soldiers and sailors, or the statistics of prostitution in both countries, and if from this evidence he deducts the inference that the two are not white and black, but that their color would be more accurately described by different shades of gray, then will that English writer be accused of unpatriotic sentiments, and of preferring French people to his own countrymen. My own attitude in this matter is one of the most open impartiality. Some time ago a series of terrible accusations against the morality of the upper class of Englishmen appeared in a newspaper, not in Paris, but in London itself; and if I had desired to make out a case against the English, nothing would have been easier than to affect belief in these accusations, and treat them as a sort of confession of national iniquity. I have made no reference to such statements, because, on examination, I found them to be no more supported by adequate evidence than Zola's disgusting picture of rustic morals in France. There is evidence going to show corruption in both nations, but we have no real evidence that it is so general as sensational novels and newspapers represent it. In writing for Americans and Englishmen, one naturally draws their attention to facts and considerations that they

are likely to overlook, and so it happens that my remarks on this subject of morality have rather taken the form of a defence of the French, or at least of some classes in France. Had I been writing for French readers, I should have supposed that they knew these things, and have felt at liberty to omit them. I have been represented as holding the opinion that France and England are exactly on the same level in morals, but that is not my view. I have no doubt that England is the more moral country of the two, even in practice, and still more in principle and feeling. The great difference (and it is most profound) is that the English are still capable of stern and austere feeling about these matters, which they have derived from Puritan ancestors; whereas the French, even when practically chaste in their own lives, regard adultery, in the male sex at least, with a sort of amusement not always unmingled with admiration for the address and audacity of the sinner. A certain incident in the early life of a former prime minister of Egypt may be taken as a test of the feeling of the two countries. In England he is looked upon with serious respect, as an example of chastity in youth and wisdom in maturity; but in France all the ability of his administration cannot efface the recollection of his "*niaiserie*" in the well-known interview with "*Madame Putiphar*," and shamefaced youths are called after him to this day.

XV.

ENGLISH AND FRENCH UNTRUTH.

Both in England and France each political party accuses the other of continual mendacity. Like political parties, the nations themselves are enemies, and consider it a legitimate part of the chronic warfare that is maintained between them to say whatever may be to each

other's disadvantage, provided only that it has a chance of being believed.

I notice, however, a difference in kind and quality between French and English lying. The French are daring enough, but they are not really clever in the art. They have much audacity, but little skill. They will say what is not true with wonderful decision, and they will stick to it afterwards; but the English surpass them infinitely in craft. The typical French lie is a simple, shameless invention; the typical English lie is not merely half a truth; it is entangled with half a dozen truths, or semblances of truths, so that it becomes most difficult to separate them unless by the exercise of great patience and judicial powers of analysis. Besides this, if the patient analyst came and put the falsehood on one side and the semblances of truth on the other, the process of separation would be too long, too minute, and too wearisome for a heedless world to follow him.

The French writer who publishes a falsehood always relies greatly upon the ignorance of his readers. He is audacious because he believes himself to be safe from detection; or he may be merely reckless in his statements, without intentional mendacity, knowing that any degree of carelessness is of little consequence in addressing his own careless public. The English writer, on the other hand, is aware that *his* public knows a little of everything, though its knowledge is inexact; and he pays some deference to this sort of inexact knowledge by referring to those facts that an indolent and confused memory may retain. His assertions have therefore a sufficiently good appearance both of truth and of knowledge, and they satisfy a public that has some information and a great theoretical respect for truth combined with much critical indolence.

The first example I shall give is of the reckless French kind. The critic has malevolent feelings towards England

(the shadow cast by his French patriotism), and he indulges these feelings to the utmost by writing what is unfavorable to the country he detests, without stopping to inquire if it is true.

Toussenet is a very popular French author. His name is known to every Frenchman who reads, and he has a great reputation for wit. His book entitled *L'Esprit des Bêtes* appeared first in the year 1847, and is now almost a French classic. I find the following paragraph on page 35 of Hetzel's popular edition. After speaking of the horse in past times, Toussenet directs our attention to the present:—

“Which is the country in Europe where the blood-horse plays the most brilliant part? It is England. Why? The horse continues to reign and govern in England because England is the country of all the world where oppression is most odious and most revolting. There we find a thousand Norman families which possess, by themselves, all the soil, which occupy all posts, and make all the laws exactly as on the day after the battle of Hastings. In England the conquering race is everything, the rest of the nation nothing. The English lord esteems his horse in proportion to the contempt he has for the Irishman, for the Saxon, inferior races that he has vanquished by his alliance with his horse. Take good heed, then, that you offend not one hair of the tail of a noble courser of Albion, you who care for your money and your liberty; for the horse is the appanage of the House of Lords, and these lords have caused the law to declare their horse inviolable and sacred. You may knock down a man with your fist, you may take your wife to market with a halter round her neck, you may trail the wretched prostitute in the mud of the gutter, the daughter of the poverty-stricken artisan whom misery has condemned to infamy. The law of Great Britain tolerates these peccadilloes. For the Norman race of Albion, the English

people has never formed part of humanity."

What strikes us at once in writing of this kind is the astonishing confidence of the author in the ignorance of his readers. The confidence was fully justified. There are few Frenchmen even at the present day to whom anything in this passage would seem inaccurate or exaggerated. The statement that only the Norman families can be lords and landowners is quite one that the French mind would be prepared to accept, because it implies that England is in a more backward condition than France. I have met with an intelligent Frenchman who maintained that serfdom still exists in England, — the serfdom of the Saxon, the serfdom of Gurth and Wamba; and when I happened to mention an English estate as belonging to a certain commoner, another Frenchman, a man of superior culture and gentle breeding, first looked politely skeptical, and then raised the unanswerable objection that in England, as everybody knew, land could be held only by peers. Others will repeat Toussnel's statement that all the public posts (what we call *places*) are held by the nobility.

The kind of falsehood of which Toussnel's statements are an example arises from complete indifference to truth. He pays no attention to it whatever, has no notion that a writer who fails to inform himself neglects a sacred duty, but sets down in malice any outrageous idea that comes uppermost, and then affirms it to be fact.

My next example is of less importance, because it is not spread abroad in a famous and permanent book; still it shows the kind of falsehood to which French malevolence may have recourse. A Frenchman had been staying in England, and on his return to France he told any one who would listen to him that the

English have a strange custom, — the family bath. All the members of an English family, without regard to sex or age, bathe together every morning, in a state of perfect nudity.

This, I think, is a good specimen of a French lie. It is a pure invention, suggested by anger at the superior cleanliness of the English upper classes, and by a desire to make them pay for their cleanliness by a loss of reputation for decency.

By reckless invention on the one hand, and complete carelessness about verification on the other, the French have accumulated a mass of information about the English which is as valuable as the specimens here given. But there is no real interest in the study of artless French mendacity. It is but the inventiveness of children, who say, no matter what. English falsehood, on the other hand, is an inexhaustible subject for the most watchful and interesting analysis. Nothing can surpass the ingenuity with which that marvelous patchwork of truth and its opposite is put together.

The following example has remained in my memory. I found it in an English newspaper of repute, but am unable to give the date. This, however, is in some degree indicated by the passage itself.

"The present atheistical government of France, after expelling the religious orders, has now decreed that the crosses shall be removed from the cemeteries."

The adjective "atheistical" is here quietly substituted for the true one, which would be "laic." The French government is not more atheistic than a board of railway directors. There are four antagonistic established religions in France, and the right to freedom of thought is recognized by law,¹ so that a French government is necessarily non-

¹ An essential difference between France and England. "No one," says Professor Dicey, "can maintain that the law of England

recognizes anything like that natural right to the free communication of thoughts and opinions which was proclaimed in France, nearly a

theocratic and neutral. French cabinets no more profess atheism than they profess Judaism or Romanism.

The expression "after expelling the religious orders" was intended to convey the idea that the religious orders *in general* were expelled *from France*, that being the recognized English view of the Ferry decrees. In reality not a single monk was expelled from France, nor were the orders generally disturbed in any way. The unauthorized orders which were turned out of their houses might have remained there by conforming to the law, which merely requires every association, lay or clerical, to ask for a prefectural "authorization." This is hardly ever refused, and in the case of the "congregations" it would have been willingly granted to all except the Jesuits.¹ Sir Robert Peel said in 1843, "If a church chooses to have the advantages of an establishment, and to hold those privileges which the law confers, that church, whether it be the Church of Rome, or the Church of England, or the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, *must conform to the law.*" The French cabinet was therefore only acting upon a recognized English principle.

We may next examine the statement that the French government ordered the crosses to be removed from the cemeteries. As the decree is stated to be from the government, the impression produced is that it would take effect throughout France; and as no distinction is made between one cross and another, the readers of this and similar paragraphs in the English press inferred that the crosses

hundred years ago, to be one of the most valuable rights of man." (The Law of the Constitution, first edition, pages 257, 258.)

¹ The ordinary law about associations, applied in this instance, was declared by some English journals to be "obsolete," and revived only for persecution. It was so little obsolete that it was steadily applied to lay associations. I was at one time an honorary member of a French club, limited to eighteen in order that an "authorization" might not be required; and I have been vice-president of another club,

on the graves were intended. What an unholy outrage on Christianity and on the feelings of pious relatives! What a perfect subject for indignant denunciation of republican tyranny and violence! However, English travelers still find the crosses on the graves, and the stone-cutters near the cemeteries continually carving new ones under their sheds.

The explanation is very simple. The decree did not issue from the government, but from the town council of a single city, — Paris. Even in Paris it had no application to the graves, but referred exclusively to the crosses on the gateways of the Parisian cemeteries. These crosses, which are very few in number, the municipal council decided to remove, because they appeared to indicate that Christians alone (or, perhaps, even Roman Catholics alone) had a right to interment in the public burial grounds, whereas these were in fact open to Jews and unbelievers as well as to Catholics and Protestants.

Now, I would ask the reader to observe in how few words the false impressions are conveyed, and how many have been needed for a reply. And how can one count upon the sustained attention necessary for the reception of the truth? The truth on French affairs has to penetrate a wall of adamant before it can get into England. The English newspapers suppressed the truth about the application of the Ferry decrees until Mr. John Morley, who was at that time editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, impartially inserted a plain statement of the facts which I sent him.

not limited in numbers, so that we had to send our statutes to be approved by the prefect, and whenever the slightest change was made in them they had to be submitted again to the same authority. It was a very simple formality, costing a postage-stamp. Meanwhile, the unauthorized religious orders refused to conform to the law. Had we done the same, we should have been dissolved as they were, and turned out of our club-house as they were turned out of their establishments.

For my part, I believe neither English statements about French matters, nor French statements about English matters, until I have tested them. National animosity is too strong. The Frenchman invents, the Englishman quietly gives a wrong impression.

Here is another example of this gentle perversion. Mr. Matthew Arnold visited some schools in France, and some time afterwards I found that Mr. Lowell, trusting to statements in the newspapers, and of course in perfect good faith, spoke as follows at the Harvard celebration in November, 1886: "Mr. Matthew Arnold has told us that in contemporary France, which seems doomed to try every theory of enlightenment by which the fingers may be burned, or the house set on fire, the children of the public schools are taught, in answer to the question, 'Who gives you all these fine things?' to say, 'The state.' Ill fares the state in which the parental image is replaced by an abstraction."

"The public schools" is a general expression including the *lycées*. No such question and answer being known in the *lycées*, I caused inquiries to be made for me in the elementary schools, and with this result: that the question and answer were wholly unknown in those schools to which the application was made; but the masters added that, since many manuals were used (no single manual being imposed by the government, as implied by the newspaper statement), there might possibly be some school in which a manual might contain something resembling the question and answer quoted. I then wrote to Mr. Arnold himself, but was unable to obtain from him the name of any school; he only remembered that "in some school in Paris" he had made a note of the matter. Finally, Mr. Arnold frankly

acknowledged that the word "state" (*l'état*) was not used at all. The phrase really used was *le pays*, which is not an abstraction, but a reality, — the land of France with all its inhabitants. The question and answer seemed to Mr. Arnold to exhibit "the superficiality, nay, silliness, of the French in treating religion and morals." I see in it nothing but a truthful account of a matter of fact. The children were reminded that they owed their education to the country, as a reason for serving the country when the time came.

A very few princes have recently been expelled from France; so few that, Orleanists and Bonapartists included, they can all be counted on the fingers of one hand. Until the Duc d'Aumale wrote an intentionally offensive letter to the President of the republic, in a form which no head of a state would have tolerated, only two members of the House of Orleans had been expelled, — the Count of Paris and his heir, the Duke of Orleans. The English newspapers, in order to augment the appearance of tyranny on the part of the French government, had the ingenuity to pervert this into an expulsion of the entire Orleans family, ladies, children, and all. This was done so cleverly that English readers would hardly notice the speciousness of it, whilst fully receiving the calculated impression. See how neatly it is managed in the following extract from the *Saturday Review* for July 9, 1887: "About the time of the expulsion of himself *and his family* from France, the Count of Paris advised his friends to abandon the practice of indiscriminate opposition." The daily papers announced the expulsion of the Orleans family in capital letters, and the illustrated journals impartially engraved portraits of them all as interesting and illustrious exiles.

Philip Gilbert Hamerton.

AT PINNEY'S RANCH.

JOHN LANSING first met Mary Hollister at the house of his friend Pinney, whose wife was her sister. She had soft gray eyes, a pretty color in her cheeks, rosy lips, and a charming figure. In the course of the evening somebody suggested mind-reading as a pastime, and Lansing, who had some powers, or supposed powers, in that direction, although he laughed at them himself, experimented in turn with the ladies. He failed with nearly every subject until it came Mary Hollister's turn. As she placed her soft palm in his, closed her eyes, and gave herself up to his influence, he knew that he should succeed with her, and so he did. She proved a remarkably sympathetic subject, and Lansing was himself surprised, and the spectators fairly thrilled, by the feats he was able to perform by her aid. After that evening he met her often, and there was more equally remarkable mind-reading; and then mind-reading was dropped for heart-reading, and the old, old story they read in each other's hearts had more fascination for them than the new science. Having once discovered that their hearts beat in unison, they took no more interest in the relation of their minds.

The action proper of this story begins four years after their marriage, with a very shocking event: nothing less than the murder of Austin Flint, who was found dead one morning in the house in which he lived alone. Lansing had no hand in the deed, but he might almost as well have had; for while absolutely guiltless, he was caught in one of those nets of circumstance which no foresight can avoid, whereby innocent men are sometimes snared helplessly, and delivered over to a horrid death. There had been a misunderstanding between him and the dead man, and only a couple of

days before the murder they had exchanged blows on the street. When Flint was found dead, in the lack of any other clue, people thought of Lansing. He realized that this was so and remained silent as to a fact which otherwise he would have testified to at the inquest, but which he feared might now imperil him. He had been at Austin Flint's house the night of the murder, and might have committed it, so far as opportunity was concerned. In reality the motive of his visit was anything but murderous. Deeply chagrined by the scandal of the fight, he had gone to Flint to apologize, and to make up their quarrel. But he knew very well that nobody would believe that this was his true object in seeking his enemy secretly by night, while the admission of the visit would complete a case of circumstantial evidence against him stronger than had often hanged men. He believed that no one but the dead man knew of the call, and that it would never be found out. He had not told his wife of it at the time, and still less afterward, on account of the anxiety she would feel at his position.

Two weeks passed, and he was beginning to breathe freely in the assurance of safety, when, like a thunderbolt from a cloud that seems to have passed over, the catastrophe came. A friend met him on the street one day, and warned him to escape while he could. It appeared that he had been seen to enter Flint's house that night. His concealment of the fact had been accepted as corroborating evidence of his guilt, and the police, who had shadowed him from the first, might arrest him at any moment. The conviction that he was guilty, which the friend who told him this evidently had, was a terrible comment on the despatch of his position. He walked