

Editor's Easy Chair.

THERE is one duty we had forgotten, and of which, as a gallant old Easy Chair, we are heartily ashamed. In the midst of a loud outcry for woman's rights, and in a day of eloquent conventions and prolonged discussions to achieve the triumph of that cause, we have omitted to pay homage to the one noble woman who, not at all distressed about the feminine right of suffrage, nor in the least anxious to command a ship, or direct an army, or occupy a pulpit, or open an office, has gone quietly into the very heart of the Crimean horrors, and is there having her rights without talking about them, and wreathing her name with the immortal laurels not only of fame, but of affectionate remembrance. It does seem a great deal better to go to the seat of war, to go any where, where you can be of actual use to mankind, and to show that heroism, knowledge, and endurance are not the monopoly of men—a great deal better to do this than to go to Syracuse and Worcester and earn a cheap notoriety by disagreeable declamation. Many of the delegates of the Woman's Rights Conventions are doubtlessly noble women, women who have gained knowledge through suffering, and who, having been abused by brutal husbands, are naturally indignant at their condition. But a congress of hen-pecked husbands, on the other side of the street, would be rather absurd. There is a great waste of fury and fine eloquence in the whole matter. If any woman is pining for a sphere, let her take passage and follow Florence Nightingale, and do good as extensively and as silently as she.

In the May number of *The Newcomes*, Thackeray gives the name of this lady to the immortality of fiction, as it had already secured that of history. "I believe," he says, "that the world is full of Miss Nightingales." It is a noble tribute to women; and it is a fine expression of his own faith in gentleness and human goodness. There are, as every man knows, Sisters of Charity all around him. Tender hands are wiping aching brows in every house. Loving lips are breathing soft prayers for passing souls in every village, and grave and thoughtful minds are calmly directing necessary details in the midst of the wildest confusion. Over all the great battle-field of life ministering angels are hovering, sighing, and smiling, and pouring balm. But there is a peculiar and beautiful heroism in the spectacle of a woman of the loftiest nature and of the tenderest nurture—whose mind has been fed by all that is rarest and loveliest in the results of human genius, and by all the various splendors of nature, which it was especially fitted to perceive and enjoy, before whom lay all that is most alluring in the social life of the first nation of the world—putting it all aside, showing that her soul was so noble that it loved a truer nobility; so cultivated, that it required a higher culture than that of the most tasteful social elegance, and, leaving home and its happiness behind, going out into remote regions to fulfill her career.

Certainly we should have observed and read to very little purpose, if we had not long ago felt that there is something in the conditions of modern society which bears very severely upon women. The civilized world is purely Hindoo in its social organization. And the women's rights movement is a blind effort to grasp what women feel is denied to them—although it would be hard to say how, why, or by whom. Every woman, in modern society,

who has strong character, great intelligence, a fine and fastidious taste, a nature which demands unusual scope, and a heart capable of all that makes the love of woman the theme of poetry and the substance of history, feels the want of a career. They try to find it in a hundred ways. Most women marry and do the best they can in that way. Many take to literature, and call upon the world to stand and deliver its sympathy—very much as reduced gentlemen took to the road and demanded your money. Many pine in an inexplicable apathy—caring for nothing, asking for nothing, hoping for nothing, and quietly despairing. We suppose no man but easily finds several illustrations of all these classes within his own experience. Perhaps it is not fair to attribute this state of things to any especial social organization. Men make the world as they are. Laws, both political and social, represent the average moral conviction of the legislators. And this apathetic sadness is to be sought in a metaphysical, rather than a physical, condition.

Florence Nightingale has chosen her career, and among those of all famous women none is lovelier. It is more suggestive of Madame Roland than of Madame de Staël; and certainly it is more beautiful than that of the latter. Margaret Fuller was never happier than in the hospitals of Rome; and no one who loves her memory but rejoices that she demonstrated there how capable and executive a practical actor in life she could be. For, in this world, we instinctively wish to see that people are fitted for this world in which God has seen fit to place them. That a man converses with the stars and can not pay the butcher; that a woman draws tears from the prosperous by her pathetic lyre, and from the poor by her inability to help them or to give them their dues—is a fact as contemptible on the one side as it may be beautiful upon the other. Florence Nightingale, superior to the society in which she moved in England, is a spectacle which could not fail to sadden, from the feeling of unsatisfied and unoccupied powers which it suggested. But Florence Nightingale writing to the Minister that she would direct the hospitals at Scutari, and receiving his letter, which crossed hers upon the way, and which asked her to direct them; Florence Nightingale asking an official for beds for the suffering, and, when delayed by him and by stupid official formality, ordering the soldiers to break down the doors of the storehouse and bring the beds, which they did with enthusiasm; Florence Nightingale intelligently managing, organizing, and supervising; Florence Nightingale blessing and blessed by lonely and forsaken soldiers, is not a spectacle which saddens but inspires; and every noble man thanks God for the sight.

"Would you like to have your sister do so?" inquires young Kid, who wears primrose gloves and respects his shirt-collar.

"No, Kid. We should like to have our sister graduate at a French boarding-school, and speak irreproachable Parisian. We should like to have her wear the loveliest dresses, and bonnets low in the neck. We should like to have her go to the Opera in the selectest society, and never appear to enjoy too much. We should like to have her drive in a carriage down Broadway, and only nod to the proper people. We should like to have her 'so lady-like,' 'such a sweet girl,' 'with so much style.' We should like to have her say, 'Who are those people?' when she saw any one she did not know, and believe that her little clique of little

people was the very point and crown of the world. We should like to have her speak French and Italian, and know nothing of literature and life. We should like to have her think it wicked not to go to church on Sundays, and a very becoming thing in the higher classes to respect religion; and, finally, we should like to have her make a good match, marry a son of one of the oldest and best families, live in one of the newest and best houses, and sing at charity concerts behind a curtain. That, we think, would be lady-like and feminine. That, dear Kid, is what no one could talk about, particularly that dreadful Mrs. Grundy, whom we all so love and conciliate. That would be all that a noble man could ask of a noble woman. That is what Shakspeare thought of when he imagined Miranda and Ophelia, Imogen and Cordelia. Wordsworth, too, meant what we mean, my Kid, something not too *prononcé*—‘your sister,’ of course—and not such a lady as Florence Nightingale, a lady for knights like Sir Philip Sidney and the brave Bayard to love, and bards like Shakspeare and Wordsworth to sing:

‘And now I see, with eye serene,
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveler between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.’”

THERE are certain mysteries, entirely common, and forever inexplicable, as why black satin waistcoats must not be worn in the morning—and by certain people, never; why a coat or bonnet which is to-day pleasing, and, in a sense, necessary to the eye, is next year an object of derisive laughter; why a human being must, under no circumstances, convey food to his mouth with a knife; why the legs of a piano should be mentioned only in cases of extreme necessity; why some people's clothes never fit them; why other people always say the wrong thing at the wrong time; why Mrs. Bat says to Mrs. Cat that she was very sorry not to find her in on Monday morning, when she only called on Monday morning because she knew that Mrs. Cat was out; why old Biggins smokes ten cigars a day, and warns Biggins junior—who smokes twelve in private—that he must never acquire the pernicious habit of tobacco; why people buy stock that must fall; why people go sleighing, and declare, with blue noses, and feet like specimens of the *mer de glace*, that it was delightful—“so fresh and exhilarating;” why people who don't like music go to the opera; but, chiefly, why any body ever undertakes to manage an opera. That is, after all, the great mystery of society. Under certain circumstances, it is possible to fancy a man making a small bundle of money, and throwing it into the river unobserved. But why he should cast his coin into the sea, and be blackguarded by every body into the bargain—that is even more inexplicable than why the turnip crop depends upon boiled legs of mutton.

But it is not infrequently done. There is always an opera in every great city, and in no “long run” was the opera ever known to pay. Individual artists and certain pieces are popular, and fill the house; but, even with government aid, operas

languish, prima donnas starve, members of the chorus go privately and drown themselves, the houses are empty, the press and the public rail, and jeer, and sneer; and yet a constant succession of enterprising men demand to manage an opera. The opera down-town doesn't pay—therefore let us have an opera up-town. Two operas at a time do not pay—let us, therefore, have three operas. This is the cheerful logic that prevails in the enchanted region of the opera. Charles Lamb said that Congreve's comedy was beyond the domain of conscience; in the same way, the opera is beyond the region of common sense. There was never an opera failed but the manager could expound the reasons of the failure in the most philosophic manner. It was the weather—which was too hot or cold, too dry, or too wet. It was the time of year. It was the crisis in business affairs. It was the unfortunate situation of the house. It was that unlucky benefit at the other house. It was the great ball at Mrs. Malaprop's. It was what A put in the B journal. It was what C said in private conversation with D's confidential friend. It was clearly this; it was plainly that: any fool could see it was the other. And, meanwhile, Mr. Manager?—“Ah! yes; meanwhile, I am out of pocket!”

That is always the net result, whatever the explanatory steps may be. But nobody is dismayed. “Once more unto the breach”—es pocket! cries the intrepid man; and cries on, until both pocket and breeches are no more.

This immortality of the manager is a consoling fact in social history. *Le roi est mort! Vive le roi!* The man perishes, but the manager survives. It does not at all concern us that every opera enterprise fails. We are not in the least dismayed that the very eminent and incredibly distinguished Signor Basso Profundo, and Signor Primo Tenore, and the peerless Signora Soprano Sfogato, who has sung behind all the round backs in Europe, arrive upon our hospitable shores, have a grand dress and most select rehearsal, make a grand *début*—fail utterly, publish very long cards in very fine print, and return to the round backs in disgust. We are not at all alarmed. There will be plenty of managers, plenty of most unprecedentedly celebrated prima donnas, and tenors, and barytones; there will be plenty of trumpeting, rehearsing, debuting, failing; *feu-de-jointes* of cards, and sudden retreat. We are like those who have taken a season seat for the entertainment. *Alarum! Enter an army. Flourish. Eceunt omnes.*

The operatic history of the last ten years in New York—in the very purloins of our Chair—is instructive, if not amusing. Its last chapter is not unedifying. What fierce feeling, and what small result! There is one cardinal truth which many people, and especially our fellow-beings of the dramatic persuasion, have yet to learn, and that is, that the public does not care in the slightest degree for all the collected woes of sopranos, sfogatos, tenors, basso-profundos, mezzo-sopranos, and barytones, including managers. Therefore it does no good to publish criminating and recriminating cards; on the contrary, it is an expense; for the advertising tariff is very exorbitant. The public are perfectly heartless, so far as amusement is concerned. They go to the opera-house to be amused, to hear music, to see a new or famous opera, and to see each other. They do not care a straw for what they ought to do. They went much more enthus-

siastically to see Brignoli and Steffanone in *Il Trovatore*, than they did to see Grisi and Mario in any opera whatever. It did no good to malign them; to declare, in pathetic periods, that there was no musical taste in the country; that there was no hope of the American people; that we didn't know what was good; and that we would pay as willingly for the worst as for the best. Nobody lost his sleep nor his appetite for all that ob-jurgation. It might have been true. But we might have replied logically, "If there is no musical taste, if we do not know what is good, why berate us so terribly for acting as we do? It is only the intelligent in art who should be scourged for not recognizing and supporting great artists. It is surely very unfair to blame a man who has no ear for music that he does not enjoy a symphony in many parts, or an opera in five hours."

The fact was, and is, and always will be, that he who blames the public in these things will always have his labor for his pains. No man feels it to be his serious duty to like music and patronize the opera, or to know about paintings and support the Academy; and therefore the solemn, ob-jurgatory style of reproach and criticism is only very droll and useless.

The public knows very well that if Mr. Bobbs retires from the management, Mr. Cobbs will assume it. It is quite sure there will be an opera; and if there is not, it will go to the theatre, or to some other place. And newspapers will not help nor mar it. For the last operatic chapter there has been a resounding warfare, and an ominous silence in the journals. There were vague stories of foul play behind the scenes, of unfair management, of overreaching and underreaching, and the most astute diplomacy. Suddenly several papers, which had always noticed the performances at the opera-house, ceased to speak of them. The indignation, of whatever kind it might be, did not extend to the business department. The editorial page was silent, but upon the advertising page appeared the notice (at — per line) of the evening's opera. The houses fell off? The opera pined? The company entreated the attention of the press? Not at all. The audiences were never better, nor more enthusiastic. Palmy days and nights fell upon the Academy. New and brilliant operas were produced, and the season closed in triumph. The papers saluted every new success with silence, and a philosophic Prima Donna must have smiled in her sleeves (when her costume allowed them) to behold the empty journals and the full houses.

Was the public to lose good singing and new operas because there had been even dishonesty (we will suppose) behind the scenes? Was the public going to deprive itself of pleasure because the predilections of the managers were not those of other gentlemen? Shall we decline to read Child Harold because the author is not altogether an irreproachable, but, on the contrary, a very naughty, man? If Brignoli sings sweetly, and *Il Trovatore* is the most recent success of Verdi, shall we nail our Easy Chair to the domestic hearth because Brignoli, we may be given to understand, swears, or chews tobacco, or beats Mrs. Brignoli in private, or because Mr. Brignoli's manager tries to manage an unmanageable and notoriously incorruptible power in the state, called the press? Not at all. And the full houses echoed, Not at all.

We have heard, of course, that the full houses were the result of a lavish generosity in giving

away tickets. But we had heard the same thing in the case of Mr. Barnum and Jenny Lind's concerts, upon the net proceeds of which we should nevertheless have been willing to receive a moderate percentage.

Now, certainly the papers had a perfect right to be silent. But the facts showed that the audiences were very little dependent upon what the papers said or did not say. The mistake was in supposing that any paper had, in such matters, any sufficient influence to make it worth regarding. How many of the delighted audience of to-night will read what is said of the opera to-morrow? How many will heed it; how many will not abuse the notice, if it differs from their own view? Not all the newspapers in America could have spoiled Jenny Lind's success, nor could they have secured the same success to Catherine Hayes. They pleased themselves by not speaking of the opera; and if moral or aesthetic considerations regulated the attendance there, they might have reduced that attendance by censure or silence. But as it depends upon a thousand other things, and as the public cares not a fig-leaf for the quarrels of actors, managers, and editors, the wiser way is to stand above them all (if you can), and talk about the performance as if it were a matter of history.

When the Academy was built and people took stock, they did so because they wanted to have an opera-house, and a good seat in it. Wise people, who cared nothing for music, and couldn't understand buying stock if the way was not clear to seven per cent., thought it—and naturally—the height of folly to burn their fingers with an opera-house; as if every man hadn't his opera-stock in some form or other. The house was built, and the grand opening was a great failure. It was laid to a hundred causes, which, perhaps, explained the difficulty. Then came Grisi and Mario, and sang through a dull season. There was no crowd, no enthusiasm, no striking success. The house was blamed, the prices were blamed, the singers and the audience were blamed. Every little gentleman had his little theory, and understood all about it. Then followed a blank interregnum, broken by brilliant promises of combined and overpowering talent, proposals for grand original American operas, embassies to Europe to secure "the first artists," placards, with superb promises, in the greatest variety of type and ink. Then another grand opening. Alas! act the second was but the echo of act first: *Alarum; flourish. Enter an army; skirmishing; exeunt omnes!* It was only a grand opening into entire chaos and dissolution, and as total and instructive an operatic crash as is furnished by theatrical annals. Then came "the Committee," whoever they might be, who imparted all their proceedings with the utmost naïveté to the public, and lost the sympathy of many influential papers. Negotiations of a high diplomatic character followed with other troupes; but under a constant fire of caustic criticism or scornful silence, "the Committee" held along to a very decided success.

We sit in our Chair, and are forced to this moral: managers can hardly have greater difficulties to surmount than managers have surmounted—and yet managers have never failed to appear; the public has a taste for the opera, and will go to hear what it likes, if it likes the price, without the slightest regard to the character of the singers. We conclude, therefore, that we shall have an opera, and

enjoy it. There will be always a brave man to tempt fortune—there will be always a generous man who sincerely desires the establishment and permanence of the opera, who will expose himself to the skeptical jeers of those to whom public spirit is inconceivable. Yet we wish the singers could learn that we do not care for their quarrels, and that they only excite the contempt, and not the compassion, of the public by their constant appeals. By some sad fatality, the professors of the arts seem to injure them more than any other influence.

Seraphina, who sings so sweetly, and whose musical cultivation is so elaborate and remarkable, is a very disagreeable person to meet at the opera, or at a musical party. She is solely intent upon the technicalities of the performance. While the heart of this Easy Chair is melted by the woes of *Lucia*, and our tearful eyes hang upon the whims of her sweet madness, Seraphina suddenly exclaims, "Oh, dear! she did not take the fiddle G well. It was not round and full!" To our dismay we discover that Seraphina is attending to the Prima Donna as a jockey looks at a horse, and is on the bright look-out for her imperfections. It shows, either that the Prima Donna is no artist, or that Seraphina, with all her fine cultivation, has no soul for music. For if it were an artist who sang, the general excellence and reality of the *rôle* would overbear an occasional fault of detail; or if there were a soul for music, it would follow with chief interest the musical development and progress of the opera, and not have time for little nervous criticisms. It is much the same thing in the other arts. Who wants to visit the Academy Exhibition with Dobb, N. A.? This old Easy Chair is content to roll about, pleased with the pretty pictures. It likes to speculate upon the *Portrait of a Lady*, and sneer privately at the *Portrait of a Gentleman*. It likes to contemplate the woolly family-pieces of Shegogue, and the soft summer beauty of Baker's women. Church takes this Easy Chair up the Cordilleras, to see the sun rise. Kensett plunges it into cool wood-nooks, where waters plash, and golden-green moss tapestries old rocks; while Cropsey tempts it into a bright ideal and impossible world, the landscape of poetry and dreams. Why should Dobb, N. A., insist upon going round and putting his hand like a spy-glass to his eyes, and bend his head about, and stoop over, and look under, and grunt, and humph, and ha! and say "Very well" with an air that says, "Pitiable!" Dobb, N. A., calls things "too cool," and "too warm," and "dirty," and "dodge-y," and a great many other things that sound very disagreeably. Meanwhile there are pretty pictures all about the walls. The Easy Chair, if its castors creak, is very glad to get smoothly oiled again by the view of portraits and landscapes. It would like to pitch Dobb, N. A., head-first down stairs, and his pictures after him. If a landscape sends the spectator to Italy; if a portrait recalls a loveliness that, seeming too lovely, long ago faded; if there seems to be every where more grace, more gayety, more beauty, for the sight and presence of the pictures, shall it be endured that Dobb, N. A., sniffs, and sneers, and smiles patronizingly; and finds this nose too long, and that finger too short; this shadow too black, and that light too bright?

This critical want of enjoyment appears to be the dreadful penalty attached to proficiency in any art. It would seem that the necessary attention

to details in the acquisition of skillful practice destroyed the consciousness of the aim intended through the details—the end beyond the means. In truth, as a matter of experience, how uniformly artists criticise the technicality, and not the spirit of a performance. How they tell you that the Prima Donna sang sharp or flat, and how they do not tell you whether *Lucia* was well represented. How learned Dobb, N. A., is about Gobb, A., who uses his "grays" too much, while children stand silent and women weep before his canvases. The positive good done by criticism of any kind might perhaps be very justly reckoned at very little. To the true artist, of whatever art, improvement comes through his own perception of his own shortcomings, and that, rather by the lights shed upon his course by his own development, than by the foreign light of suggestions. For, the true artist being sincere, his faults have a certain sincerity, and can only be corrected as the man's whole perception and power advance.

Be gracious, therefore, gentle critics. Seraphina, who singest so sweetly! smile sweetly when others sing. Dobb, N. A.! revile Gobb, A., less fiercely, remembering that effort is better than contempt, and that, although you find a too free use of "grays," this Easy Chair, and a hundred not so easy, find pleasure, and beauty, and peace, in the pretty pictures.

OUR country friends, if they read the city newspapers, may be sometimes amused at the beginning of summer with the suggestions, warm as the season, that people should betake themselves out of the city into the country. They are reminded of the brindle cow they milked in the happy days of childhood—of the sequestered school-house under the shady elms or wide-spreading oaks—of the village church with the open windows on summer Sundays—of the field, and the stream, and the purple hills—in fine, the same agreeable picture of rural life is painted at the corner of the busiest city street, that has from immemorial time been painted of the country in the city. A little investigation reveals that these pastoral pleas are written by men who have chosen the city, and have not the slightest intention of taking their own advice. And naturally enough. For the countryman who comes to the city usually comes to seek his fortune there. He is not a man to whom the village church, and sequestered school-house, and purple hills have ever been romantic or agreeable. The brindle cow always kicked over his pail, and he had a rough cursing from the sulky farmer for whom he worked. In the church he heard long and dry sermons; and, sitting upon a hard seat, was very drowsy on the summer Sundays; and was, as a small boy, flipped on the head if he fell asleep or forgot the text. Under the shady elms and the wide-spreading oak an intimacy with the birch was forced upon him; the fields were the arena of his daily toil—he hoed potatoes there, and in the sweltering June sun he swung his scythe upon the river meadows. The country, to the countryman who has been compelled by circumstances to choose the city as his abiding place, is not that agreeable remembrance, sweet with clover-blossoms and fresh with morning air, which the newspaper articles would persuade us.

We have before remarked that the poets and other people who have been so enthusiastic about the country have lived in the city, and wrote their

eulogies within brick walls. Observe, also, how few people are brave enough to confess that they do not like the country; how every man has a vague dream of retiring to the country at that remote period when he shall have made money "enough"—and how few people ever reach that Arcadia to which their whole lives have been the voyage. Then again, it is plain that the great things in history have not been done in the country. The triumphs of literature, of art, and of general affairs, have always been achieved among the multitude of men. Genius seems to require attrition in order to shine. When Wordsworth "retired to the mountains in order to construct a work that might live," his tastes, his studies, and his friendships, still kept the world and society around him, and he only lived farther from Charing Cross than Lamb or Coleridge. But the real denizens of the country—the fathers and the mothers of the Simple Susans for whom the poets sigh in coffee-houses, and to whom they write sonnets from taverns—they hardly understand the sighs and the sonnets; they see no purple hills, and emerald meads, and silver streams. Their lives are very humble prose, not poetry. Can we truthfully say that their lives are more lofty, more noble, and inspiring than the life of the citizen? The country is Arcadian because it is unknown. Is it probably very poetic to the factory-girl, to the plow-boy, to the milk-maid? The statistics of the Insane Asylum show a proportionate majority from the country. The silence, the seclusion, the drudging toil, the long monotony of the year, the mental idleness, lead gradually to such results.

It certainly is not surprising that the chances of the city tempt a youth whose life in the country has been an unintermitted toil from dawn to dark, rewarded with a slight pittance. A few uncertain weeks' schooling at a miserable school in winter, do not satisfy his thirst for knowledge, if he has any; and the rough, coarse life of the farmer's home, although he does have as much fried pork as he wants, is neither amusing nor satisfactory, if he be more than rude and coarse himself. The city, by its very artificial multiplicity of luxuries, offers a thousand chances for employment and success. If he has talent and ambition, he will surely burst away from the relentless tedium of potatoes and corn, and earn more money in an hour by writing a paragraph exhorting people to go and hoe corn and potatoes, than he would by hoeing them for a day.

We are far from advising country boys to come to the city. Contentment and character, which are really better than fame or fortune, are quite as attainable in the country as in the city. But, as enterprising youths always will try the town, and as many of the most successful citizens were originally country boys, it is useless to deny that here is the great arena. If they fail, they may return, but the reader of newspapers and other poetical works should understand that the poetry of the country is only visible from the city.

Of course we know that the pleasantest life is the union of the two—the country enlivened by the intelligence and amenity of the city. Many a country-born and city-bred man retires upon his farm or his country-seat, and counts every day a gain. But the fields are fair to him because he has known the streets; and the easy grace, the elegance, the intelligence, the repose of the pourer of his tea and the superintendent of his shirt-buttons,

are derived from contact with society and the world. Man is not a tree, after all. Cowper, who is guilty of that meaningless line—

"God made the country, man made the town,"

was morbid; and Byron, who longed for a desert with one fair spirit for his minister, was sentimental and always lived in cities, where he was always sure to find his one fair spirit or more. Man is a social being, we venture to assert. The whole world was made for him. The charms of solitude, the excitement of society; the sweet air, the placid farm, and general mental recovery of the country, and the splendor of all human achievements, also, which congregate in the city.

If editors and other poets would consider that, as in their own case so in that of most men, milking a brindle cow is not the height of happiness, they would greatly assist the cause of general virtue and public common sense.

OUR FOREIGN GOSSIP.

THE tremor that passed over the Paris world when it was heard that Pianori had fired on the Emperor, is now gone by; but not so far gone that we may not lend to it a line of record. It is rather a thing to make one breathe short and quick, when we hear that Mr. Smith, the head of a large family, has been fired upon by a crazy, or an indignant man, in the open street. We straightway fall to thinking of how it would have been if the fire-arm had carried true, and the man fallen stone dead, and the crowd gathered, and the pockets been searched, and the name of Smith made out, and the body carried home, and the door-bell rung, and the family startled with such fearful news borne with the litter.

Is it not something more for the Parisian world, that the present head of the great French family (more in need of a head than most families we know of) should have been fired upon, and escaped by a hair's-breadth the ending of his life and reign?

Newly-arrived observers from America tell us that the matter was received more quietly than the story of Bill Poole's death in the city of New York. Very much less noisily it may have been; for it must be remembered that open expression of feelings is nowadays outside of the habit of Parisians; street-groupings and the earnest talk at corners is forbidden; that omnipresent police says to excited people, "Why are you here? Move on!"

And so the world does move on—quietly outside—even in that turbulent France; but he knows little of the current of Paris life, who has not been made aware, in these months last gone, of very much and earnest talk under private roofs—talk which was weighty with forebodings, and whose current eddied fearfully around those twin shots of Pianori at the Emperor.

If he had fallen! For our own part, we can not share at all in the complacency of those foreign correspondents for our own journals, who talk of this matter in a tone of pleading for the assassin—for all the world, as if they might be Pianori's friends; finding excuses for the culprit, and never hazarding a gratulation that the blow did not take effect. We do not envy any man those sympathies which are put in a glow by the daring of such criminal endeavors.

We profess to no profound admiration of the moral worth of Louis Napoleon. We believe him capable of great bad things, but we have even less

admiration for those Republicans who would go about the achievement of their ends by secret assassination; or who, by a prurient sympathy with crime, would seek to give the criminal the glory of political martyrdom.

There is one feature about this affair which we gladly take up again, though the story is old; for it is a bright spot of imperial history, since it shows us for once a real glimpse of the domestic affection which lives so rarely in such palaces as that of the Tuileries.

They carried the story of the Emperor's escape to Eugénie, who was riding beyond in the park; and they tell us she forgot utterly her high position in the shock which the tidings gave her, and yielded to such womanly tears of joy and thanksgiving as quickened the on-lookers into a sympathy that was deep and silent—silent for a moment only, and then broke out in long shouts of greeting. We pity the man who would not have shared in doing honor to that true, womanly heart.

The crime, if consummated, would have made but a poor rallying-point for the European lovers of liberty; and we believe that every Republican and every Italian of noble aspirations must regret that their nation or their party should, by remote associations even, be linked with the dastard who has gone to his account.

It was on Monday only of the week following the crime that he suffered the extreme penalty of the law. There were very many curious to see how the man would bear his fate; and when upon Sunday at midnight they began the erection of the scaffold upon the little square fronting the prison of La Roquette, the wine merchants who keep late-opened shops in that quarter sent off their runners to announce the fact to those who had promised a *douceur* for the terrible intelligence.

By gray dawn, a considerable crowd had gathered around the fatal machine. It is a quiet quarter of the city, upon a broad, open place planted with trees, near to the cemetery of Pere la Chaise. The prison is upon one side; and upon the other, a great house of confinement for young vagrants. Ordinarily, the passers are few, except those who have dismal business with the tombstone makers who abound in the neighborhood, or still more dismal business with the funeral processions which go and come to the burial-ground beyond.

All day long a sentinel paces back and forth before the prison gates, and another before the great door-way which opens upon the court of the young Paris vagrants. The few soldiers who make up the *Corps de Garde* sit on benches beneath the trees, smoking their pipes or playing at *piquet*.

At this early hour, however, they were stealing out one by one from the guard-house, looking with sobered faces upon the red scaffolding, and upon the gathering groups of women and strangers.

The always-present police were there, warning off the curious from too near an approach; and a solitary lantern, after the street-lamps were shut off, showed a fitful red gleam upon the scaffolding itself.

As the morning broke, a company of the Paris Guard, some two hundred strong, came and took up position around the spot, pressing back the throng, and leaving an open space of sixty or seventy feet around the guillotine. A mounted company also tramped up to the scene, and formed in line at a little distance, to be ready for all emergencies.

Between four and five there was a stir around the prison gates; and presently the foremost among the spectators could see the man in white, with a black veil over his face, coming out, with his arms tied behind him and his feet bare. An official held him by the shoulder on either side. He mounted the half-dozen steps which lead to the scaffold with an assured air, muttered a stifled cry of *Vive la République* as they thrust him down upon the plank; then there was a crash, and it was over.

The next day the Palace of Industry was opened, with not so much splendor as had been hoped. The cortège of the Emperor was splendid indeed, and his famous Hundred Guards had never worn so dazzling armor; but the enthusiasm of success did not in any sense belong to the undertaking; the goods were incompletely arranged; the palace itself wore an unfinished look; the grounds about it wore the raw edges of yesterday's delving; the newly-transplanted trees had none of the rich greenness of luxurious health; the parterres with their marble basins, though promising much, were stiff with newness; the officials themselves—bating some few exhibitors of showy trifles—wore the air of those whose thoughts and anxieties were elsewhere; Sebastopol overtopped the Crystal Palace. So it is now, and so it has been from the beginning. War is louder-tongued than peace; a red coat is more killing than the black.

The friends, and friends' friends of one hundred and fifty thousand full grown men who are living in the eye of Sebastopol (but who may die there to-morrow), have thoughts and aspirations nearer to their hearts than any triumphs in furniture-making or successes in jewelry. The Emperor has tried hard to live two lives at once—that of peace and that of war—but he can not; none of us can. He has kept bravely to his street-making, and the Rivoli is even now a more brilliant show than that of the Commission of Industry. The water in the Park of Boulogne is shining too, these spring days, and is reflecting to the eager eyes of Parisians such stock of young wood, of rocks, as they never saw before.

If indeed the indolent Prince Napoleon, who drives about with his tooth-pick in his mouth, and his roller-brimmed hat slightly on one side (the very figure of a lust-loving good fellow), had shown an energy equal to his dear cousin, the result might have been different. As it is, we may almost write down, thus early in the history of the summer, the epitaph of the Industrial Commission: "Buried under the Crimea."

Yet the palace is there, and will be (as epochs count in this fast age) always. Not so marvelous for its lightness and its space as the kindred one over channel, on the heights of Sydenham; but strong, beautiful in its details; with gorgeous glass paintings, allegorical of what France hoped to do, taking in the Eastern and the Western light.

We scarce know whether the great avenue of the Champs Elysées, which all strangers loved so much, has lost most or gained by this new architectural display. The observer still finds the great sea of foliage floating between the Arch of Triumph and the Place de la Concorde; but one who has lost five years of Paris out-look, will find the square itself retouched by the same active hands and brain which have pierced the great avenue of Rivoli, and joined the huge masses of the Tuileries and the Louvre.

The little sunken gardens, which he remembered in the orderly and quiet times, when Louis Philippe sat upon the throne, have gone by—no trace of them is left. The balustrades which bounded them now shine upon the terrace of the Tuileries gardens, or stretch in whitened lines around the skirts of the great square, where the trim fountains glitter, and the needle of Luxor pierces the sky.

The little corner pavilions upon which the queen cities of France sit in sculptured pride still remain; but their old coating of smoke and the dust of years is gone; and they are restored to the whiteness of fresh tombs. The paving stones, which kept up a continuous rattle, have given place to a smooth and clean surface of Macadam, over which the omnibuses roll with the easy sway of pleasure-going phaetons. The street which traversed the place nearest to the Champs Elysées has disappeared, and the forest of the Elysian wood has been stretched over it with new planted trees.

The great avenue itself, stretching toward the Arch of Triumph, is now one undivided surface, as smoothly and cleanly kept as the court of a palace, and the thousand carriages roll over it so smoothly and quietly that one can talk to his neighbor upon the sidewalk without raising his voice above an in-door tone.

The quaint little rush-bottomed chairs, which the visitor of five years gone will remember, have given place, along the whole line of the avenue, to gayly painted *fauteuils* of iron wire, presided over by the keen-eyed old ladies, who pass hither and thither in neat caps and pinafores, demanding their little charge of two sous a sitting.

As in the old time of kings, or of republic, the great avenue is lined, upon these summer evenings, with thousands who lounge, and smoke, and watch the passing equipages. Young girls in Leghorn flats and embroidered *pantalons* frolic around the chairs of *maman*, or *bonne*, or plead for drives in the little goat-drawn carriages; boys in tartan leggings (one fruit of the alliance) trundle hoops under the trees; the old woman still tends the scales under the pavilion, where you may seat yourself and be weighed for a penny; the lay-horses still traverse their circuit with adventurous provincials bestride them; and the blind fiddler, with his pewter pot for pennies, still saws the cat-gut under the trees as he did ten years ago.

There is the same juggler, too, who throws two staves in the air, and catches them on his chin; and although he has grown so rich by his craft as to live in a princely country house outside the barrier, his love for his tricks still drives him, on every fair day, to the open spaces among the trees of the Champs Elysées, where the soldiers and nurse-maids gape at him with amazement.

We must not forget, while we are wandering in this region of Paris indulgence, the great *cafés*, with their outlying temples, where the cast-away opera nymphs sing in yellow and crimson brocade. They tell us that now they have furnished up these temples with gilded ornamentation, and set up painted statues, each one bearing a gorgeous chandelier, which in the night flames through the trees, and makes the whole scene like some wood-palace of genii.

Another change which the stranger notes is a new English garden (a delicate compliment to the Island visitors), established in the very middle of the wood. Mounds of green grass have risen about the bolls of the old chestnuts; tufts of evergreen

shrubs serve as background for delicate blossoming azalias; rustic arbors are covered with newly-transplanted ivies; ponds of water float whole troops of aquatic flowers; the richest roses fling perfumes around one, and exotics breathing languid odors are growing in a miniature palace of crystal in the midst of this sudden wonder.

And it is just opposite to this Jardin Anglais—so quickly and deftly accomplished—that you see upon the old vacant square of the Champs Elysées (where the poles were set and greased for fête-day climbers) that the white façade of the Palace of Industry now rises. France (in white marble) crowns the edifice, holding in her extended hands two crowns of gold, with which she promises (in marble) to reward the deserving of every nation.

Below this colossal figure are *bas-reliefs*, showing a little crowd of representative men and women coming from either land to put a garland on the brow of his Majesty Louis Napoleon (who looks, as you see him from below, like a he-goat upon the altar of sacrifice). A cumbersome archway—flanked by two angels blowing trumpets of fame or glory—spans the great portal, looking toward the north.

Passing beneath this, and under the galleries supported by a cloister, like series of arches, you find yourself before the sparkling fountain which glitters in the middle of the Palace. Above you—by we know not how many feet—the crystal span of roof hangs like a milky cloud; on either side it touches the top of a light series of iron arches, which rise from the floor of the galleries, and these in their turn are hung over by their milky roofs of glass, resembling the middle and larger crystal vault which covers the crystal area. Looking west and east you see the flaming colored glass, of which we have already spoken, forming two immense semicircular *tableaux*, with designs so colossal, that you lose the idea of distance, and find the immense fabric dwarfed to a splendid hall.

Thus much for the material changes in and about the new West-end of Paris; and who is there to see it all?

Americans enough, to be sure, led off by some score of commissioners, who find their labors reduced to the setting forth of a few pictures and pistols, and an immense stock of India-rubber boots.

As for the Austrians, although their gorgeous furniture has full representation, they are staying in Vienna and the Principalities. We think they will stay there for a long time to come.

The English, indeed, have crossed the Channel in troops: they have even begged the loan of the French Protestant Church for a special service of their own; and it is pleasant to perceive, amidst the changes and animosities of the war, and in contrast with our own religious bickerings at home, that Protestants and Papists are so quietly and amicably following after each their own faith, within sight of the belfry from which rung out, once on a time, the signal for the Bartholomew slaughter!

Here and there a Russian still lingers about the *purveys* of the metropolis, little known, and shunning attention; pursuing quietly his old commercial interests, and slipping from time to time to the little Greek chapel of the Rue de Berry where the Russian priest—bereaved now of his flock and of the costly gifts of the Russian Princesses—still devotes himself to the ritual of the true church of St.

Nicholas. Italians are to be found as usual in their old haunts—closely watched now since the affair of Pianori—and eating their macaroni and pinched suppers with a gloom on their faces, and great distrust in their hearts. The eagerness with which the Sardinian Court has joined hands with the monarchs of the West, has dampened many of their best hopes, and has put farther than ever away from their anticipations that unity of Italian interests and of Italian hopes in which they have dreamed of nationality and of liberty.

Mazzini, with his wild, extravagant visions haunting him—lurking secretly among the mountain fastnesses—still finds means to speak his thought upon every measure of the hour, and to alienate some of the most ardent friends of Italian liberty by the eccentricity and exaggeration of his views. And were every yoke of foreign states withdrawn from Italy to-morrow, it is ten to one but the altercations of Italian patriots would involve that unfortunate country in a wilder and more bloody confusion than befalls her now.

The Poles, of whom very many threadbare representations live always in the French metropolis, have been latterly taking hope and heart. Those notions of Polish nationality, which have been so long floating over the mind of the world in a nebulous, loose state, seem now to be congregating into luminous and definite form. A Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, under such lead as that of Napoleon III., promises more for them than has been promised for them this many a year before. There would seem, indeed, to be no possible solution of present European bewilderments, except in the reinstatement of one or two of the extinct nationalities; and certain it is, that new elements must be brought into the great strife before it is ended.

We believe, from the stray testimonials that come to us over ocean, that this is the growing type of belief; and that the curious ones, who two years ago counted upon the conquest of the Crimea, are now drawing their penmarks around what must be given up by Prussia and Austria, as well as by Russia.

Americans, who throng in the gay capital this summer, are watching all changes of opinion and of strategy with their wonted air of inquisitiveness and assurance; and provoking all earnest Allies—whether English or French—by their imperturbable indifference. They do not blush even for the poor show we are making in the great Palace of Industry; nor do they disturb themselves in respect to the abuses heaped upon our "Crystal" management of New York, by a public meeting of English manufacturers. Yet is there not some badness in this thing? And sadly as our Palace of Industry has fallen short of its manifests, should there not be, in the name of common honesty—to say nothing of national honor—a fulfillment of its obligations toward those who have innocently contributed what they could to swell its attractions?

Must it be not only a bubble that has burst, but one that leaves a taint behind it?

Apropos of American growth in Paris, we do not know that we have yet signaled upon our record the establishment of an American newspaper in that city, which journal must be now fairly entered upon its second year of issue. It is a sheet broad enough, and fairly printed; but, in apt illustration of our trade character as a nation, more than two-thirds of its space is given over to advertising. Nor has the balance any great succulence of opinion,

but is made up mostly of a compact and valuable guide for sight-seers, and occasional innocencies of journalism copied from the British or Continental prints. We conclude from this, that its projectors have not as yet deposited with the Minister of State that amount of bond-money which alone (in Paris) will warrant the expression of political opinions of any sort.

WHILE we speak of news and newspapers, we can not forbear to chronicle that new miracle of the lightning which places the over-night news of Balaclava and the trenches upon the breakfast-tables in Portland Place, London. Not only does it carry the mysteries which belong to the head-quarters of Raglan, but they have stretched a branch of the wire to the very bottom of the trenches where the night-watchers lurk—in such sort that an officer of ordnance or of the engineers may communicate his observations from between the embrasures directly to Lord Hardinge at the Horse Guards.

And yet, with this wonderful machinery of civilization astir at one end of London, we find at the other (by the Tower), only a little time since, a man so badly hanged that the executioner was compelled to cling to the feet of the wretched culprit to end his struggle. If men could only be hung by telegraph!

Not that we have any desire for a rapid succession of hanging; we even waive the great ethic query, if killing should be part of the law; but if done, why on earth should it not be done well? If it is not worth doing well, it surely is not worth doing at all. There is no more reason for killing a man badly than there is for making his shoes badly. Is it not a little odd, that while the English and ourselves, to a large extent, persist in using punishment by death, we should obstinately keep by the most inhuman, the most clumsy, and the most uncertain mode of inflicting it?

The guillotine has a bad name, to be sure, because it came into use at a bad time; but compared with a hempen rope, such as only half strangled, the other day, poor Buranelli, it is a charming invention. Of physical suffering under its blade there can not be ten seconds duration.

The day is dark without, as we write, and we have unconsciously slipped into the use of dark material for our record; but the best we can do is to return our pen to the ink-pot.

Editor's Drawer.

WE hope some of the two hundred thousand readers of the Drawer, after they have appropriately welcomed in our "glorious Fourth of July"—a day which we trust shall be celebrated and honored to remotest time—will turn over these pages, and scan the following lines, extracted from a very long patriotic poem, for which, ample as is our space, we still can not find room.

The song from which our extracts are taken is as old as the hills, but is now very rare. The copy from which we quote is scarcely readable. It is apparently—from the yellow, coarse paper, and quaint types—from some number of the ancient *Boston Centinel*.

We well remember the first time we heard it sung. It was at the country-house of an old revolutionary patriot, now nothing but dust in the grave whither we hasten, who had about him many