OUR LONDON LETTER.

MATTERS OF INTEREST CONCERNING THE PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM.

Members of the House of Commons—Paying Their Election—Prices Paid—A Reform Bill—Etc.

LONDON, August 9, 1883.

A few facts with reference to the Parliamentary system may be of interest to your readers, for, notwithstanding the large numbers who annually visit here, and in spite also of the publicity given to English affairs in our newspapers, this, I have reason to know, is a subject on which the American people generally are by no means well informed. The Constitution provides for a general election of members of the House of Commons every seven years, and the election is for the full term, subsequent elections to fill vacancies being, of course, for the unexpired term. While, however, the nominal life time of a Parliament is seven years its actual existence for several decades past has averaged only five years. Usually, before the limit is reached, the Ministry who took office at the beginning of the period is modified in some way. They fail to carry some important measure to which they are pledged, or, on some matter of home or foreign policy, a majority of the House expresses a

A WANT OF CONFIDENCE

Also, and the Prime Minister in such a case either recommends the Queen to commission the leader of the Opposition to form a new Ministry, or else advises her Majesty to dissolve the existing body and allow an appeal to the country. Generally the latter course is recommended, and the Queen dutifully does as she is bidden. Those who accept Cabinet positions, as well as some who are called to minor places of trust, though they may have been elected only the week before, must at once seek a re-election, their constituents being thus given an opportunity to pass judgment on their fitness for these high posts. To represent a borough or county one does not need to be a resident of the place. In many instances those living far away are returned. John Bright, a resident of Rochdale, has represented Birmingham for twenty-five years, and he formerly represented Manchester. Mr. Gladstone holds his seat by the grace of a small constituency in Scotland. Mr. Bradlaugh, whose home is in London, has been thrice returned for Northampton; and these are but a few examples out of hundreds past and present. There have been cases, indeed, in which Englishmen whose habitual residence was in some foreign country have been elected to Parliament.

THE QUALIFICATIONS

Necessary to enable one to vote for members of the House of Commons were stated in a former letter. In counties the franchise is confined to freeholders and those who pay a yearly rental of $60. In boroughs all householders who are rated for the relief of the poor, and all lodgers whose rooms cost them $50 a year, can vote. The vote in counties include all qualified persons who reside outside of the boroughs. The borough voter does not vote for the county member, nor do those who are registered as belonging to the county have any borough suffrage. The number of electors in Parliamentary constituencies on the register now in force is as follows: England—Counties, 966,631; cities and boroughs, 1,351,761; universities, 15,831; total, 2,332,223. Ireland—Counties, 164,067; cities and boroughs, 57,784; universities, 4,048; total, 226,511. Scotland—Counties, 99,346; boroughs, 210,858; universities, 12,763; total, 322,967; grand total, 2,881,701, out of a population of about 38,000,000. These are represented in Parliament by a few less than 600 members.

AN ERRONEOUS IMPRESSION.

It is generally supposed on our side of the Atlantic that the House of Commons is a popular body, and that it fairly represents the English people. But no greater fallacy could be entertained. Look first at the large number who are denied the franchise. It may be safely said that there is not an agricultural laborer in the whole of Great Britain who has a vote. The $60 rental entirely cuts off this class, for the most that any of them pay, or can afford to pay, for a place of shelter is $25, and the majority of them do not pay more than $15. The same barrier excludes from Parliamentary representation many thousands of tradesmen. It also shuts out most of the country school teachers; not a numerous class to be sure, but one of great respectability and of high intelligence. That such a state of things should have been allowed to exist so long is simply amazing. Those whose lot is cast in villages and country places, where wages are low and rents of necessity, equally so, are debarred, without the least excuse in reason or justice, from a national privilege to all on the more fortunate, but no more deserving, or patriotic, dwellers in towns. The cities are indiscriminately admitted. Is this the only anomaly in the English Parliamentary system.

FLAGRANT AND SHAM REPRESENTATION.

One would think that having disfranchised such vast numbers, the law would at least provide for a fair distribution of political power among those who are allowed to vote. Instead of this, however, the seats are apportioned out in the most inconsistent manner imaginable. A vote in one place counts for as much again, or for three, four, five, or even ten or more times as much as in another. The aggregate result of this inequality is that one-fifth of the voters return one-half the House of Commons. Some of the instances that could be adduced in illustration of this unfair arrangement are most glaring, but one suffice. Birmingham, with a population of 400,000, and a very large proportion of voters, returns three members to Parliament, and only one less than that number are returned by the adjacent town of Warwick, which can boast but 12,000 inhabitants. Naturally there is a widespread feeling that this evil should be corrected. Not only is there a desire for an extension of the franchise, but an equitable distribution of seats is called for. Nor can this reasonable demand be much longer denied. In fact the present Government is under pledge to introduce a reform measure covering these points at the next session of Parliament. The bill will scarcely go as far as that introduced by Mr. Labouchere at the present session, which delivered manhood suffrage, but it will be sufficiently radical, no doubt, to arouse the intense hostility of the Tories, and despite all opposition it is sure to pass.

PAYING PARLIAMENTARY MEMBERSHIP.

Another reform for which many are clamoring, and which seems necessary to make the House of Commons a truly representative body, is the payment of members. At present the members of Parliament serve their country gratuitously, and in many cases pay enormous sums for the privilege. The cost of elections is, indeed, one of the darkest blots on the English Parliamentary system. Some astonishing figures are at hand. One member, who had no competitor, got into the present House of Commons only at an outlay of $10,000. As to contested elections, since 1880, the North Riding cost $75,000, of which the share of the winner was $47,000. North Durham cost $67,000, of which Sir George Elliott paid $35,000. The north division of the West Riding cost $65,000, the North Lincoln $50,000 and the West Cheshire $40,000. The Derry county election cost nearly $40,000. Mr. Dalrymple paid at the rate of about $19 for every vote he received, and Mr. Russell at the rate of about $13. Sir John Hay's votes cost him $8 each, and Mr. Micking's were obtained for $9 each. The Belfast elections cost the contestant over $55,000, and for every vote obtained in the agricultural borough of Wallingford nearly $10 was paid. These figures tell

A FEARFUL STORY OF CORRUPTION,

And give startling piquancy to the remark of a popular and witty member of Parliament, who, being asked what course he considered best to pursue to court a constituency having marine and aquatic interests, whether he would not favor giving cups for regattas, races, etc., replied, that "for an honest English voter there was nothing like an honest English sovereign." The enormous cost of securing an election, together with the fact that under the existing law members must pay their own expenses and give their time and labor without recompense, have, up to quite recently, completely barred out any proper representatives of the middle and working classes. Even now labor has but two voices in the House. Some of the others, it is true, profess to represent the interests of the working man, but being, like their fellow members, far above him in means and station, with no practical knowledge of his struggles and needs, they are not properly qualified either to give him sympathy or to do justice to his cause. This restriction of legislative functions to the rich and titled is one of the chief reasons why England has hitherto made haste so slowly in the direction of needed reforms, while the fact that these barriers are about to be removed and the shameful inequalities leveled to the ground, is one of the surest proofs that ere long political justice will hold sway and a brighter and more liberal future dawn upon the land.

A DECIDED STEP IN ADVANCE IS

Marked by the corrupt practices bill, which has already passed through committee and now only waits the formality of a third reading to make it a law. This measure, by reducing the cost of elections, will make a Parliamentary career possible to many who have heretofore been shut out as it were by a door of gold, and by removing from electors the temptation to sell their votes, will leave them freer to give expression to their true sentiments and to return those who may appear to be best fitted to represent them. Many anticipate a complete revolution from this law. An entirely different class of men will sit in Parliament, they tell us, and there will be a general overhauling of the country's affairs. That the change is not likely to be favorable to the Conservatives is sufficiently indicated by the fact of Sir Stafford Northcote, the leader of the Opposition, being already in the field seeking to prepare his followers beforehand for the new order of things. Speaking at Maidstone a few days ago this gentleman said: "The effect of that bill will be to introduce a very great change in the manner of conducting elections, and will render it absolutely necessary that, if elections are to be carried on properly, they should be carried on by a great deal of voluntary effort.

REFORM METHODS PROPOSED.

"Paid agencies there must be, to a certain extent, but it will no longer be upon paid agencies you must rely—it will be upon voluntary efforts and exertions, and I call your attention to the bill now, before it has passed into law, because you cannot begin too soon to organize yourselves and make ready." One of the most radical features of this bill is the stipulation it makes in regard to the amount of money a candidate may spend. If the borough contains not more than 2,000 voters he must lay out upon it, exclusive of his personal expenses and of what is paid to the returning officer, not more than $1,750, and an amount not exceeding $150 for every additional 1,000. In county elections he may spend $2,500 if the voters do not exceed 2,000, and for every 1,000 beyond $200 extra. Not only does the bill stipulate the maximum amount to be expended, but it also provides how and for what purposes it shall be disbursed. The legitimate

EXPENSES OF AN ELECTION

Are defined as follows: Personal expenses of a candidate; charge of returning officer; salaries of one election agent and a sub-agent for each polling place; salaries for polling agent, one clerk and one messenger for each polling place; expenses of public meetings; cost of stationery, printing, advertising, postage, and hiring of committee-rooms. In boroughs the candidate is allowed one committee-room for every 500 voters, and in counties a central room and one in addition for each polling place. These committee-rooms are not to be in public houses, in places of entertainment of any kind or in elementary schools. The election agent is to receive from the candidate the money necessary for these legitimate expenses, and when the election is over must make return of the amount received and how it has been expended, swearing to the same before a Justice of the Peace, the candidate likewise making an affidavit to its correctness. This report is to be published in not less than two newspapers within the county or borough, and is to be held by the returning officer, subject to public inspection, for the space of two years.

PENALTIES FOR ELECTION FRAUDS.

The penalties following an infraction of this new law are very severe. A candidate who is found guilty of bribery, or an attempt to bribe, of treating, or offering to treat, or of using undue influence of any kind, can never sit in Parliament for the borough or county in which the offense occurred, nor for any other place for seven years after the date of the offense, and, in addition, is liable, on indictment for a corrupt practice, to one year's imprisonment, with or without hard labor, or a fine of not less than $1,000. He also loses the privilege of voting for seven years. An election agent, or a private individual, guilty of a similar offense, is subject to the same punishment, and a candidate who commits bribery, or resorts to treating, or uses undue influence through his representatives, suffers substantially the same disabilities as though personally guilty. In the matter

OF TREATING AND BRIBERY

Those who accept are held to be equally criminal with those who give or offer. To employ more persons than those above named is to be guilty of illegal employment. To pay money for any purpose not distinctly stated in the bill, or to expend any amount beyond the stipulated maximum, is to be guilty of illegal payment. To hire any conveyance or horse to take people to the polls, or to hire bands of music, or to hire an elector to display posters, is called in the bill illegal hiring, and this, as well as both illegal employment and illegal payment, will keep the candidate out of Parliament for seven years, and will subject either him, or any one else, whether the first or second party to the transaction, to a fine of not exceeding $500. Such are the cardinal features of a bill which will soon become a law. There are many minor provisions of course, but from the sketch given a fair idea can be formed both of the measure itself and of its probable effect on future Parliamentary elections.

FAR APART.

Beneath the quaint old bridge you hear
The waves make music as they pass;
And winding to the elm tree near,
You see the pathway through the grass
Where we were wont to walk, alas!

The river wanders as of old
Beneath the shade of willow trees;
The sunlit waters gleam like gold,
And ripple to the gentle breeze;
But I am far from thee and these!

The sky bends over, broad and blue,
And in the soft and mellow light
You tread the lane our footsteps knew
In former times, when days were bright;
Do these days bring such sweet delight?

And still that lane with grass is green,
With fragrant flowers the banks are fair;
In golden gloss and silver sheen
The bees still haunt the balmy air;
But you fail to find me there.

Again, perchance, I may not see
The rustling rows of willow trees
(Which lent a leafy canopy
When we strolled underneath at ease);
For I am far from them and these.

Our joys forsake us. Soon does spring
Pass by and for the summer call;
Soon do the birds lose heart to sing,
When fading leaves in autumn fall;
And winter is the end of all.

AN EPISCOPALIAN HORSE.—Rev. Dr. Broadus, an old Baptist parson, famous in Virginia, once visited a plantation where the darky who met him at the gate asked him which barn he would have his horse put in. "Have you two barns?" asked the doctor. "Yes, sah," replied the darky, "dar's de ole barn, and Mas's Wales has just built a new one." "Where do you usually put the horses of clergymen who come to see your master?" "Well, sah, if dey's Methodis's or Baptists's, we gen'ally put 'em in de ole barn, but if dey's 'Piscopals we puts 'em in de new one." "Well, Bob, you can put my horse in the new barn; I'm a Baptist, but my horse is an Episcopalian."

IN SWEDEN.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT ENJOYED BY THE SWEDES.

Four Fundamental Laws—The Ministry—Diet of Riksdag—Crown Succession—The Standing Army.

[Correspondence of the RECORD-UNION.]

GOTHENBURG, Sweden, July 28, 1883.

In my former letter I promised a brief account of the form of government in this much eulogized liberal monarchy. Sweden has since pristine times had a monarchial form of government, which, with the exception of a few brief periods during the last century, has been limited in its rule, or, to use a modern expression, constitutional. It is true that Charles XI., Charles XII., Gustavus III. and Gustavus IV. possessed an almost absolute power, but no unlimited monarchy could take permanent root among a people who had become accustomed to take part in the management of their own affairs. The first question that arose on the death of Gustavus IV. was therefore the re-adoption of the former organic law, with such modifications as experience might dictate, and the constitutional convention which assembled at Stockholm in the year 1809 gave to the Swedish people what is known as

THE FOUR FUNDAMENTAL LAWS,

Which have up to the present time remained in force. The first of these vests the executive power in the King, and divides the legislative power between him and the representatives of the people, by giving him the right to recommend the enactment of such laws as in his judgment may be required and to veto those which do not meet with his approval. No legislative enactment becomes law until the same shall have been signed and "proclaimed" by the King. It further defines the duties, the prerogatives and the responsibilities of the Ministry, whom he is compelled to consult, and relieves the monarch of personal accountability for all acts done by consent of his constitutional advisers. His person is sacred and unassailable. The Ministry is composed of ten members, of whom seven are heads of the following departments: Foreign Affairs, Justice, War, Navy, Civil, Finance and Education. The three remaining are what are termed consultive members. One of their number is designated by the King Prime Minister, and he alone is entitled to be styled his Excellency. The highest Court of Appeals is composed of 12 to 18 members, and the King is himself entitled to two votes in such matters as he may desire to personally watch before it. The second of these organic Acts, relating to

THE DIET OR RICKSDAG,

And the manner in which the people were to be represented in four different branches—the nobility, the clergy, the burgers and the peasants—was soon found to be defective in many respects. None of these branches represented the will of the whole people, but instead of that their own selfish interests. In Sweden, as in the Democratic party of the United States, there is a very distinct line between the chivalry and the "shovelry," but while the former is largely in the minority it managed to control two, and sometimes three, of the legislative branches under the old system of representation, and this soon led to an ominous murmur among the "shovelry," or masses of the people, which the wise men of that period deemed it advisable to heed. Attempts were made in 1840-'44 and 1848 to modify this Act, but all proved futile until the Riksdag of 1860 memorialized the Government to draft

A NEW LAW OF REPRESENTATION,

Based as nearly as possible on the one existing in England. In spite of the bitter opposition of the nobles and clergy, an amendment was finally adopted on December 8, 1865, which provides substantially as follows: The Riksdag shall consist of two co-ordinate branches, to be known as the First and Second Chambers. It shall assemble in regular session on the 15th day of January each year, and in extra session whenever the King may deem fit to call it. To be eligible as a member of the first chamber, one must be 35 years of age, possessed of at least 80,000 crowns in taxable property, or paying an income tax on not less than 4,000 crowns annually. Members of the First Chamber are elected to serve for nine years, on the basis of one representative for 30,000 inhabitants in communes or incorporated cities, and receive no pay for their services.

QUALIFICATION OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Every citizen owning real estate valued at not less than 1,000 crowns, or who has leased for a period of five years or more landed estate valued at not less than 6,000 crowns, or who is paying an income tax on not less than 800 crowns annually, is eligible to a seat in the Second Chamber. These members are elected for three years, and apportioned as follows: One for every 1,000 inhabitants in country districts and one for every 10,000 in towns and cities. A member of the Second Chamber must have attained the age of 25 years and have been a voter in the same precinct at least one year preceding his election. His compensation is 1,200 crowns for each session and traveling expenses to and from the capital. The King selects two members in each house to act as Speaker and Speaker pro tem., but those bodies appoint their own Secretaries and committees.

THE MINISTRY

Have a right to participate in all debates, but are not entitled to vote in either house, except when the Minister is also a representative, something which very often happens to be the case. A bill passed by one house has to be concurred in by the other before it can seek executive approval, except in the case of appropriation bills, which are determined in joint session. In the event of a vacancy on the throne, where the King has no male offspring, the succession is determined by both houses, and when they fail to agree the question is submitted to a joint committee consisting of thirty-two members from each house, whose decision is final. A similar committee also selects one, three or five guardians for the heir-apparent, when the King dies before the former's maturity. The third of the fundamental laws relates to

THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION,

From which all the female members of the royal family are secluded. The fourth is the Press Act, which permits of the free expression of thought, only holding the publisher amenable under the law after due trial and conviction before a competent tribunal. The revenue is derived partly from rentals of public lands and other property, and partly through taxation. The taxes, which are levied under various names, may be classed into two general divisions—ordinary and extraordinary revenues. The former comprises incomes from the rent of public domains, railway traffic, telegraph service, etc. To the latter class belong customs duties, postal receipts, internal revenue stamps and the tax on distilleries. The deficiency which afterwards may arise is provided for through a direct income tax on all subjects, the amount of which is determined by each Riksdag. The budget for 1882 shows that out of the necessary 76,000,000 crowns 54,500,000 had to be raised through direct taxation, or, in other words, the people had to pay nearly seventy-two per cent of the expenses of maintaining the Government. To this heavy taxation may, in a great measure, be attributed the steadily increasing emigration of the "bone and sinew" of the country. Then there is that indispensable (?) appendix of all monarchial Governments,

THE STANDING ARMY.

Just think of it, a country with less population than the State of New York maintaining a regular army of 36,000 men, in addition to a militia and reserve of nearly 85,000! The Swedish navy consists of a total of 52 steamers, among which are 4 monitors, carrying 137 guns, and 9 sailing vessels, with a total of 48 guns. They have a crew of 6,906 men, and a militia reserve of about 20,000 men, trained for service in case of need. One of these monitors was sunk in the vicinity of Norrkoping by running on a rock some ten days ago, and the corvette Vanadis has been ordered to prepare for a trip around the world. One of the sons of King Oscar II. will accompany the Vanadis, and as she will visit several ports in the Pacific it is more than likely that she will call at San Francisco as well. The start will be made from Karlskrona early in December.

A. L. M.

FAMOUS ESCAPES FROM INDIANS.

Dr. Edward Eggleston, in the *Century*, on "Indian War in the Colonies," recounts the following exploits: "Stories of marvelous and ingenious escapes were the romance of the colonies, and such adventures date back to the earliest Indian war in Virginia, where a man and his wife, who had been spared in the wholesale slaughter, found their opportunity while the Indians were dancing for joy over the acquisition of a white man's boat that had drifted ashore. These captives got into a canoe, and soon afterward surprised their friends in the settlements, who had believed them to be dead. Very like this was the escape of Anthony Bracket and his wife in Maine. They were left to follow on after their captors, who were eager to reach a plundering party in time to share in the spoil. Bracket's wife found a broken bark canoe, which she mended with a needle and thread; the whole family then put to sea in this rickety craft, and at length reached Black Point, where they got on board a vessel. A little lad of eleven years, named Eames, taken in Philip's war, made his way thirty miles or more to the settlements. Two sons of the famous Hannah Bradley, previously mentioned, effected an ingenious escape, lying all the first day in a hollow log and using their provision to make friends with the dogs that had tracked them. They journeyed in extreme peril and suffering for nine days, and one of them fell down with exhaustion just as they were entering a white settlement. A young girl in Massachusetts, after three weeks of captivity, made a bride of bark, and catching a horse, rode all night through the woods to Concord. Mrs. Dean, taken at Oyster river in 1694, was left, with her daughter, in charge of an old Indian while the rest finished their work of destruction. The old fellow asked his prisoner what would cure a pain in his head. She recommended him to drink some rum taken from her house. This put him to sleep, and the woman and child got away. Another down-east captive, with the fitting name of Toogood, while his captor during an attack on a settlement was disentangling a piece of string with which to tie him, jerked the Indian's gun from under his arm, and, leveling it at his head, got safely away.

"Escaping captives endured extreme hardships. One Bard, taken in Pennsylvania, lived nine days on a few buds and four snakes. Mrs. Inglis, captured in the valley of Virginia, escaped in company with a German woman from a place far down the Ohio river. After narrowly avoiding discovery and recapture, they succeeded in ascending the south bank of the Ohio for some hundreds of miles. When within a few days' travel of settlements, they were so reduced by famine that the German woman, enraged that she had been persuaded to desert the Indian flesh-pots, and crazed with hunger, made an unsuccessful attack on her companion, with cannibal intentions.

"The most famous of all the escapes of New England captives was that of Hannah Duston, Mary Neff, and a boy, Samuel Leonardson. These three were carried off, with many others, in 1697, in the attack on Haverhill, Mrs. Duston's infant child having been killed by the Indians. When the captors had separated, the party to whom the two women and the boy were assigned encamped on an island in the Merrimac river. At midnight, the captives secured hatchets and killed ten Indians—two men, two women, and six children—one favorite boy, whom they meant to spare, and one badly wounded woman, escaping. After they had left the camp, the fugitives remembered that nobody in the settlements would believe, without evidence, that they had performed so redoubtable an action; they therefore returned and scalped the Indians, after which they scuttled all the canoes on the island but one, and in this escaped down the Merrimac, and finally reached Haverhill. This was such an exploit as made the actors immediately famous in that bloody time. The Massachusetts General Court gave Mrs. Duston twenty-five pounds, and granted half that amount to each of her companions. The story of their daring deed was carried far to the southward, and Governor Nicholson, of Maryland, sent a valuable present to the escaped prisoners."

THE NEWHAVEN FISHWIVES.

Most picturesque of all the figures to be seen in Edinburgh are the Newhaven fishwives. With short, full, blue cloth petticoats, reaching barely to their ankles; white blouses and gay kerchiefs; big, long-sleeved cloaks of the same blue cloth, fastened at the throat, but flying loose, sleeves and all, as if thrown on in haste; the girls bareheaded; the married women with white caps, standing up stiff and straight in a point on the top of the head; two big wicker-work creels, one above the other, full of fish, packed securely, on their broad shoulders, and held in place by a stout leather strap passing round their foreheads, they pull along at a steady, striding gait, up hill and down, carrying weights that it taxes a man's strength merely to lift. In fact, it is a fishwife's boast that she will run with a weight which it takes two men to put on her back. By reason of this great strength on the part of the women, and their immemorial habit of exercising it; perhaps also from other causes far back in the early days of Jutland, where these curious Newhaven fishing folk are said to have originated, it has come about that the Newhaven men are a singularly docile and submissive race. The wives keep all the money which they receive for the fish, and the husbands take what it pleases them—a single reversion of the situation in most communities. I did not believe this when it was told me, so I stopped three fishwives one day, and, without mincing matters, put the question direct to them. Two of them were young, one old. The young women laughed saucily, and the old woman smiled, but they all replied unhesitatingly, that they had the spending of all the money.

"It's a' spent i' the hoos," said one, anxious not to be thought too selfish—"it's a' spent i' the hoos. The men, they cam hame an' tak their sleep, an' then they'll be aff agen."

"It 'ud never do for the husbands to stoop in tha city, an' be spendin' a' the money," added the old woman, with severe emphasis.

Whoever would see the Newhaven fishwives at their best must be on the Newhaven wharf by 7 o'clock in the morning, on a day when the trawlers come in and the fish is sold. The scene is a study for a painter.

The fish are in long, narrow boxes, on the wharf, ranged at the base of the sea wall; some sorted out, in piles, each kind by itself; skates, with their long tails, which look vicious, as if they could kick, hake, witches, brill, sole, flounders, huge catfish, crayfish, and herrings by the ton. The wall is crowded with men, Edinburgh fishmongers, come to buy cheap on the spot. The wall is not over two feet wide, and here they stand, lean over, jostle, slip by to right and left of each other, and run up and down in their eager haste to catch the eye of one auctioneer, or to get first speech with another. The wharf is crowded with women—an army in blue, two hundred, three hundred, at a time; white caps bobbing, elbows thrusting, shrill voices crying, fiery blue eyes shining—it is a sight worth going to Scotland for. If one has had an affection for Christie Johnstone, it is a delightful return of his old admiration for her. A dozen faces which might be Christie's own are flashing up from the crowd; one understands on the instant how that best of good stories came to be written. A man with eyes in his head and a pen in his hand could not have done less. Such fire, such honesty, such splendor of vitality, kindle the women's faces. To spend a few days among them would be to see Christie Johnstone dramatized on all sides.—[H. H., in September Atlantic.

RELIABLE help for the weak, nervous and debilitated dyspeptic sufferer found in Brown's Iron Bitters.

FREEHAND NOTES.

OUR CORRESPONDENT TAKES IN THE SIR KNIGHTS.

The Special Service of Last Sunday—Various Notes of Incidents During the Conclave Week.

SAN FRANCISCO, August 22, 1883.

The Conclave is in full blast, and the city is teeming with pleased and curious visitors. Ever since last Thursday the decorations have been growing more and more complete and ubiquitous, until to-day even the streets farthest from the business centers show sentences of welcome, and Knights' figures and Templars' flags, while the great thoroughfares are gay with abundant drapery and garlands, and every considerable store or wareroom shows cross or picture of enormous dimensions, an armed Knight on horseback or on foot, charging, with lance in rest or in the shock of combat, or merely out for an afternoon stroll, being the favorite subject, though the seal of California and a huge portrait of Grand Master Dean are also to the fore. It makes one feel as mediæval as reading Bulwer does, and "Ivanhoe" is suggested at every step. One's stock of Latinity is also called upon by the various mottoes, and one is thankful to the Knights for arousing the dormant interest in the history of the famous order whose name they have taken.

PLUNGING INTO HISTORY

A little, it is hard to see why a modern organization should wish to be Knights Templars, for the real defenders of the Temple seem to have had very little that was amiable to recommend them. They were hard fighters, but the present Templars do not seem to be particularly military in spirit, and indeed there is nothing just now for Americans to fight about. The Mechanics' Pavilion was never as prettily decorated as it is now. Indeed, in view of its present dress, one might say it has never been decorated at all until now. At the west end of the gallery the "Garden of Welcome," which the ladies of the Triennial Union use as their reception-room, is constructed of large painted "flats" of California scenes, and the east end of the gallery is covered by a fine picture of mounted Knights of the middle ages, galloping on the plain before a castled city—a canvas painted specially by Voegtlin for this occasion, and full of spirit and good color. Sunday I heard a part of the Knights Templars' service at the Pavilion. Having but vague ideas when the worship began, we started early, reaching the doors at 2 o'clock; but already a dense crowd of humanity was besieging both the main and side entrance. The crowd was inclined to be orderly, though determined, but the police and a

LANTERN-JAWED REPRESENTATIVE

Of Knighthood were inclined to be decidedly cross. Sir Sauflsky Smithianus frequently addressed the crowd, and grew very warm and hoarse about it, and looked very funny opposing his single will to about a thousand massed wills. It is nervous work to do duty of exclusion; it was no wonder Sir Knight was agitated, though. It was a relief to get out of the struggling, perspiring, sturdy crowd into the cool pavilion. The whole floor was reserved for the Knights and looked as inviting as the cleared space for the parade looked to Mr. Pickwick. Five or six rows of benches rose in graduated tiers on three sides of the Pavilion, the fourth, the west end, hooded by an immense sounding board, being arranged as the chancel. Below the stage a full orchestra was stationed. Upon the benches every place was taken; the galleries also were packed, and promptly at 3 the Knights marched up the centre aisle of the space reserved for them. Even in the face of much maudlin enthusiasm that has been felt or affected about

THESE GOOD GENTLEMEN,

It must be confessed that they really looked imposing, especially when they were massed together and stood each in his place facing the entrance until all should have arrived. The ritual employed was the Episcopal, and a band of surpliced little choristers preceded the Knights. They sang "Onward Christian Soldiers" as they marched to their places. There followed a number of clergy, also in flowing white robes, and Bishop Kip walked alone, with his dignified and aristocratic face and bearing, like nothing in the world but an English "lord bishop," which, by some strange mistake of fate, he is not. A prettily-printed little pamphlet was procurable from youths at the entrance, and one found therein an adaptation of those portions of the prayer-book which were to be used, to the occasion, with rubric telling how the Knights were to handle their swords, as well as how to respond to the Grand Prelate, and the necessary changes were made, as in the general intercession a special blessing was invoked upon "the Orders of Knights of Malta and of St. John, the Knights of the Red Cross and of the Temple," etc.

THE GROUPING IN THE CHANCEL

Was very effective. Highest up and farthest back were the chorister boys, a white line, followed by the next two or three tiers, dark with the singers of the choir; lower still another white line, the assisting clergy, and in the foreground the separate figures of Bishop Kip and the Grand Prelate. The scene was deeply shadowed by the low-leaning sounding-board, which roofed in the whole chancel. Monday was the day of the procession, and men, women and children were on the streets bright and early, and professed themselves not disappointed in what they saw. The San Francisco and Sacramento Commanderies made quite as good a showing as any of their distant visitors. The Sacramento banner had a particularly rich, substantial appearance. Besides the Boston caged eagles there was a live eagle carried on a perch, by a negro, after the Illinois Commandery. He opened and drooped his wings to balance himself as he was borne along, and looked very impressive.

THE MOST SENSATIONAL VISITORS

We have are the members of the Lyon & Healy band, which accompanies the St. Bernard Commandery. Such hight of white fur cap, such gold lace, such high boots over white trousers, and such a drum-major with such a staff, surely never were seen in our midst. That drum-major can throw that staff fully twelve feet into the air, and, catching it again, cause it to twirl uninterruptedly in his hand fully five minutes at lightning speed. There is also a band of bell-ringers with the St. Bernard Commandery. They rang popular airs at the reception given by the Illinois ladies at the Baldwin Tuesday afternoon. Tuesday evening the St. Louis ladies

HELD A RECEPTION

For the Knights of San Francisco, "Ivanhoe Commandery, No. 8," was legible on the satin banner at the upper end of the dancing-room. The St. Louis men and women certainly dance beautifully, and their feet did not seem as large as the comic papers have given us to understand. One of the most enviable attentions our guests receive from their friends is the constant tribute of flowers, which are literally snowered upon the Knights and their wives, morning, noon and night. Among well-known visitors from the interior are Hon. and Mrs. J. S. Cone, from Red Bluff, and Mr. and Mrs. Boggs, of Colusa, at the Palace, and Mrs. Dr. Harvey, of Galt, at the Grand Hotel.

PHILIP SHIRLEY.

In excavating under a building in Los Angeles last week, some curiously-fashioned stone implements were found at a depth of ten feet.

Forty-five sacks of wheat belonging to William Ogden were set on fire at Hanford Saturday night by sparks from a thrashing machine.

The Sonoma County Fair opened at Santa Rosa Tuesday.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

Six Little Maidens.

I'll tell you a story, I'll sing you a song—
It's not very short and it's not very long—
Of six little maidens: in white they were dressed,
And each was the sweetest and each was the best.

Invited for four—well, now, let me see:
Waiting was dull, so they got there at three.
There were little Miss Katie and Nellie and Sue,
And little Miss Bessie and Polly and Prue.

It might have been June, if it hadn't been May,
The first of the month, and a beautiful day;
They kissed when they met, as the ladies all do—
Kate, Susie and Nell; Bess, Polly and Prue.

They danced and they skipped and they sang and they p'ayed,
And they formed pretty groups in the sun and the shade;
And I said, when they asked me of which I was fond—
"Brunettes are the dearest, and so are the blonde.'

And that night, as I bade them adieu at the gate—
Bess, Polly and Prue, and Sue, Nellie and Kate—
How I wished that "good-bye" could have been "how-d'y'-do!"
And I said: "Come at three!" so as to get them at two!

—[R. W. Lowrie, in St. Nicholas.

A Music-Loving Squirrel.

You told us once that hunters of seals sometimes manage to draw close to their game by whistling tunes to engage their attention. And now I have just read about a sportsman who one day in the woods sat very still, and began to whistle an air for a red squirrel on a near tree. "In a twinkling," says he, "the little fellow sat up, leaned his head to one side, and listened. A moment after he had scrambled down the trunk, and when within a few yards sat up and listened again. Pretty soon he jumped upon the pile of rails on which I was, came within four feet of me, sat up, made an umbrella of his bushy tail, and looked straight at me, his little eyes beaming with pleasure. Then I changed the tune, and chut! away he skipped. But before long he came back to his seat on the rails, and, as I watched him, it actually seemed as if he were trying to pucker up his mouth to whistle. I changed the tune again, but this time he looked so funny as he scampered off that I burst out laughing, and he came back no more." Now, that man had much more enjoyment out of his music-loving squirrel than if he had shot him; and perhaps after this you will hear of the boys of your neighborhood piling up rails to sit on, and whistling to the squirrels who come to talk with you. And if they don't whistle well enough send for me, for I can whistle nicely, if I am a girl.

Nanny's Chocolate Creams.

"Dear me," said Cousin Prue Johnson, yawning, "I'd give half a dollar for a paper of chocolate creams."

Cousin Prue wasn't a very old young lady, and she had a sweet tooth. Nanny looked up quickly from the corner of the lounge where she was sorting over her last year's magazine.

"Will you, honest, Cousin Prue?" she asked; "will you give me fifty cents for fifty creams?"

"Yes," said Cousin Prue, "for twenty-five. But it's snowing too hard to go out, dear."

Nanny laughed brightly, and ran up to her mother's room, because the first step was always to ask mamma. In a minute she was down again with a long apron on that reached from her chin to her toes. She went straight into the kitchen, and this is what she did there: She mixed half-a-cupful of cream with two cupfuls of sugar, and boiled the whole for five minutes. Then she took it off the stove and put in just a teaspoonful of lemon and stirred it until it began to get white and creamy.

It was in the very first place that she filled the big platter with corn-starch, and pressed it full of little hollows as thick as they could be, with her new silver thimble. Then she filled the little hollows with the cream.

"Oh, good!" she cried; "I've got sixty-nine."

But they weren't chocolate creams yet, you know—not until Nanny had cut up a piece of chocolate and melted it in a saucer, without putting in any water, over the tea-kettle. Then she rolled the sixty-nine sugar thimbles in the melted chocolate and set them away to harden.

Half an hour afterward she carried fifty of them to Cousin Prue Johnson, who tasted very gingerly at first.

"Why, they're delicious," she cried, then. "You never, never made them yourself, Nanny Grever!"

"Yes'm, I did," said Nanny. "Anybody can that's a mind to, and it's lovely fun."

That's what Nanny said about it; and you'd never guess that she gave her fifty cents to little Joe Spooner to buy a chicken for Joe and his mother and his sister Dolly. [Youth's Companion.

HABITS OF THE CUCKOO.

Of all birds, the habits of the vagrant cuckoo have afforded the widest—we had almost said the wildest—field for speculation. Among ornithologists there is hardly a writer of note, an author or compiler, who has not brought to the general heap his stores of facts and fancies. As Mr. Harting truly says: "Considering the amount of attention which has been bestowed upon the cuckoo by naturalists in every age down to the present, one might readily suppose that every fact in connection with its life history was now pretty generally known. But such is not the case. There are still certain points which require investigation, and which, owing chiefly to the vagrant habits of the bird, are not easily determined." He might have expressed himself in stronger language, and said, with Prof. Newton, that, "of no bird have more idle tales been told." But we wish the author had recorded more of these "tales," for though some are most fanciful—like the theories of the learned German who, having discovered thirty-seven varieties of the egg, asserts that the cuckoo deposits them according to their form and color in the nests of thirty-seven species of bird—other "tales" are by no means "idle," but are the result of observations which yet remain to be verified, or facts for which no reasonable explanation can be afforded. By what process of "development," for instance, has it become the invariable habit of this singular bird to transfer her maternal cares to foster-parents of another species? It has been argued—not very logically—that the bird leaves this country too early, that in the short time it remains it could not properly care for its offspring, nor would they be, at the time of its departure, sufficiently advanced to shift for themselves. Anatomists have proved—and their theories, if not convincing, are at least ingenious, though they unfortunately omit the argument from disuse—that from physical causes the bird is not fitted for the usual duties of maternity. Apparently there is sufficient proof that the cuckoo lays its egg upon the ground and carries it in its mouth to the nest of its foster-parent whom it designs to honor; for, not only has the action been observed, but the egg or young are not infrequently found in nests into which the parent bird could not have introduced herself. But is there any selection exercised? Does she carry it about until she finds a nest with eggs so far resembling it that the contrast will not excite too particular attention? Or, like a visitor at the seaside, has she already tested the merits of various "apartments" before she arranges for her young ones? When placed under other care does she desert it utterly, or does she revisit the cradle to eject the rightful occupants if she finds there insufficient room for her own intrusive progeny? Or is that murderous business invariably undertaken, as has been asserted, by the vigorous chick itself?—[Saturday Review.

CURIOUSLY DEFORMED HORSE.—The Chico *Record* of August 20th says:

Yesterday, at the Fashion Stables, crowds of people gathered to see a rare monstrosity that had been placed on exhibition by Hercules Vermet, of the A. B. Collins ranch. The curiosity was a deformed horse, three years of age. The animal is of a magnificent build, having beautifully formed limbs and a rich brown color, its defect being in the neck, which has only grown six inches in length. This brings the animal's head down on a range with its knees. It cannot raise its head, it being necessary to place its feed on the ground, and when it eats, one of its forelegs is nearly straight out in front of it, and the other is extended backward. Mr. Vermet is endeavoring to dispose of his curiosity. The horse is finely bred, and is a fleet-footed animal.

Wallace is the name of a new town in Missoula county, Arizona.

UNEXPECTED CRITICISM.—One of the most eloquent and popular clergymen of Austin, Texas, being about to ascend the steps leading to his church a few Sundays ago, was asked by a partially blind old lady, who did not recognize him, to help her up the steps. With his usual urbanity he complied with her request. Just as they reached the top steps she asked him who was going