

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE PLAY.

Not seated in a curtained box,
Nor dressed in latest style;
In semblance come to see the play,

A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

"I'm sorry I can't go to London with you," said Mr. Bridgforth, who had just crossed the Channel with me, as we stood chatting at the Dover railway station,

"Our brief acquaintance, struck up the night before on the Calais packet, had been rendered so agreeable by Mr. Bridgforth's affability that I was more than half prepared, if not to dispute the dogma that gruffness is the predominant feature of English manners, at least to admit that it is a rule not without exceptions."

"It would afford me pleasure," he added, "to act the part of guide, philosopher and friend on your first visit to the great metropolis; but since that cannot be—business before pleasure, you know—I've written a letter to a chum of mine in town, which you would do well to present to him as soon as possible, for he's a connoisseur in city life, and will see you suitably bestowed."

"I thanked my new friend for his kindness, put his letter in my pocket, and bidding him many warm adieux, hurried at the call of the guard to take my place aboard the train."

"I was followed up the steps by a thick-set and rather coarse-featured man, whose name, beside myself, was the sole occupant of the compartment. The door was locked, and the bell rung, and the train set in motion."

"The stout gentleman busied himself for a time with his newspaper, and then threw it down with a grunt. The next half hour he looked out of the window, his face betokening anything but pleasure at the prospect, the charms of which are not heightened by the effect of a dull autumn drizzle."

"Turning about with another grunt, his deep-set gray eyes glanced me over keenly. 'Do you know the—the gentleman you were talking with just before the train started?' he asked, in a quick, sharp voice."

"Sorry to've kept you waiting, Mr. Hanley," he said, seizing my hand cordially. "Have read Bridg's letter—capital fellow, Bridg. Any friend of his always welcome. Just going to dine with a few friends. Must join us! Good way to introduce you. Come, come, Dick,"—turning to his surly servant—"run ahead and tell them to put another name in the list."

Cutting short my acknowledgments, Mr. Fitz Quag took my arm, and we sauntered leisurely along. As we turned a corner to go down a street less inviting, if anything, than the one we had left, I caught a glimpse, I fancied, of a form on the other side of the way, much resembling the burly form of MacGrumlie.

We stopped at length before a door at which my companion knocked peculiarly. We were at once admitted, and Mr. Fitz Quag led the way to a room lighted by a dim lamp, where half invisible in an atmosphere of smoke, sat three of his familiar spirits, each one with a pipe in his mouth."

"I say, Dick," said Fitz Quag, the ceremony of introduction over, "fill up the glasses while we're waiting for the solids." Soon each man had a tumbler of punch before him.

"Here's to our better acquaintance—no heel-taps, mind," called out the hilarious Fitz Quag, rising and draining his jorum in honor of the sentiment. Out of sheer politeness I swallowed the abominable stuff, though the taste half sickened me. In a few seconds my head began to whirl. Fitz Quag and his friends seemed to be spinning round the room. The clouds of smoke thickened. My temples throbbled. A dull heaviness settled on my brain, and then came unconsciousness."

How long it was before my faculties returned I do not know; but when they did, my companions disappeared. I felt for my watch to note the time. It was gone, and my pocket book and money with it. The truth flashed upon me. "Drugged and robbed!" I exclaimed. "You've hit it exactly," answered a voice which I had heard before; and, turning around, my eyes fell on the impassive face of the gruff MacGrumlie.

"Never mind," he continued; "your property and the robbers are both safe at the station house. The fellow you parted with this morning is a noted thief, whose face having grown too familiar in London, he has been plying his trade on the Continent of late. Ascertaining, probably, that you had a large sum about you, he came across the Channel in your company, but finding no safe chance to pick your pocket by the way, and not daring to follow you farther he commended you to the kind offices of his city friends, trusting to their honor to remit him his share of the spoil."

"As an old detective, I had little difficulty in fathoming his scheme, as soon as I had learned that he had given you a letter. So I kept a close watch of your movement from the time you left the cab, which I dismissed a moment after. The waiting till things had gone far enough to ensure the rogues a good term of penal servitude, I summoned assistance, and pounced upon them before they could make off with their plunder."

Eugenie de Montijo, Countess of Teba, was a beautiful woman of 27, who had had a youth of vicissitudes, and was well known in many capitals for her beauty, grace and rank, which, having no fortune to support them, gained her and her mother only the undesired title of adventuresses. The malice of party has raged fiercely against this lady's name, but there is not a particle of proof to sustain it. Her ability, her affectionate devotion to the interests of her family, and her religious fervor are, so far as the world knows, as unquestionable as her beauty and her personal charm. No Queen in history has better fulfilled a Queen's duty as leader of the fashions; while she reigned the dress of women was at once beautiful, decent and convenient. Here was the prettiest face, the most graceful bearing, the most winning smile, in all that dazzling court of the Tuileries. But she had a Spaniard's love of political intrigue, and an Andalusian's bigotry, and she contributed powerfully to engage her husband in the evil way that led his policy to Rome and his army to Sedan. There is a story told by Arsene Houssaye—certainly no unfriendly chronicler—that at the Cabinet Council called to decide the question of peace and war after the final interview of Benedetti with King William at Ems, the peace party carried the day, and the Emperor went to bed. But the Empress, being left behind with the council, won over to her warlike views the gallant De Grammont and the absurd Lebonf, and reversed the decision, and then went in triumph to the Emperor's chamber, where he was sleeping the sleep of the just, and gained his assent to the fatal declaration which was made next day by the jaunty De Grammont, with his hands in his pockets, and by Oliver, with his cœur leger.—Harper's Magazine.

BRIEF MISCELLANY.

SABBATH READING.

There is a by-and-by,
Beyond this transient life,
Where spirits never die,
Nor ventures toil, nor enters pain nor strife.

There is a by-and-by,
That we must trust beyond—
When dust again we lie
The soul will soar away to God again.

There is a by-and-by,
'Tis no delusive hope,
That's fraught with pain, to die
With earth's fair bit of clay, and pass to naught.

There is a by-and-by,
Proclaims the shining sun,
As now he mounts the sky,
Fit emblem of the high and holy One.

There is a by-and-by,
Or else why from within
The breast of fallen man
This yearning for a home that's free from sin?

There is a by-and-by,
The savage, too, will say;
The hunting-ground is nigh
Where now sport the warriors brave and free.

There is a by-and-by,
Whispers low the flower
That blooms to please the eye,
Then dies, but lives again in spring's bright hour.

There is a by-and-by,
So says the soul within;
It will not, cannot die,
But lives with God in heaven, or hell with sin.

There is a by-and-by,
And oh! how sweet 'twill be
To meet our kindred there,
And live and love with Christ eternally.
W. H. COFIELD.

A Gambler's Story.

Rev. W. J. Smith preached a sermon in San Francisco on the text, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." He pictured, graphically, Babylon and Belshazzar's feast, the handwriting on the wall, the King's consternation, the explanation by Daniel, and his overthrow and death. After driving home the practical lessons of the subject, he closed by relating the following incident: Just one year ago I preached from this text in the southern part of California. At the close of the service, as I walked to my hotel, a gentleman said, "Your sermon to-night has awakened in my heart some memories of the past. If you will sit down I will give you a leaf from my history. I will try to give it to you, my friends, as nearly as I can in his own words, hoping God may bless it to some heart in this audience. Said he: 'I knew every trick and dodge of every game. I went to San Francisco and paid out a large sum of money for lessons from an expert, until I was perfectly at home at any game. It was on New Year's eve I had played well and won heavily. Near midnight I rose from the table to start home. As I reached the door an old farmer, whom I had known well, stepped up to me and said, 'John, I wish you would play my hand. They have fleeced me out of everything. I've just got \$17 left. I wish you would take it and throw for me. Perhaps you can win some of it back; if not, lose the balance.' It made me pity him in his sad dependence, so I took his money, and sat down where he had lost. There were three of them, and they were throwing dice. I took a hand, and in half an hour had won back the old man's money and had quite a surplus over. After handing over his amount, amid profuse thanks, I thought I would just play away the balance. We changed to cards, and the luck seemed to turn against me. I lost at every deal. This nettled me. I staked a larger sum and lost again. Thus elated, they drank heavily; I never drank. I dealt recklessly; but the luck was on their side, and they won every time. I say, luck, because it is simply such among players who know the game and cannot cheat. I was dumfounded. I had never known my fingers to serve me so before. I could see no trick in the game; but I was not to be baffled in that way, so I determined to play one dodge and sweep in the stakes. I went to the bar, tender for a cold drink. He understood me, for he was trained. He called the attention to the bar, and as he passed, he dropped the deck on my lap, slipping the others up his sleeve. As they sat down again I shuffled the cards, and knew every one they held. The first man laid down his pile, the second raised it, and the third went still higher. When it came to me I doubled the highest. They each, then, confident of success, brought figures up to mine. As the cards were lifted three hands were outstretched to rake in the money; as 'four play' rang through the room, I sprang upon the middle of the table and drew my revolver, saying: 'Gentlemen, you touch that money at your peril. You know the rules of the game; you have fouled me, now prove it. Let the bartender hold the stakes and you search me. If you find a marked card about me then draw your money. If not, then the pile is mine.' They finally agreed to that, and went through me from head to foot, but of course found no cards. I swept in the pile of some \$500 or \$600, called up the roomful, treated all around, and then said, in tones of injured innocence: 'Gentlemen, I have played a long time; this is the first time I was ever fouled. If I cannot play without being called a cheat this is my last game.' Then they cheered and laughed all around and called it a good joke. It was 3 or 4 o'clock now and I started to leave the room. As I walked across the floor under the dim light of the flickering lamps a form seemed to step across my path that made me start. I put my hand to my eyes, for still it confronted me—the form of my old father—and he seemed as real now as years ago, when the morning I left home he put his trembling hand on my shoulder and said, in tones tender with feeling: 'Dear boy, you're going out to yon world now. A new life opens to you. Give me your promise that you will avoid bad company and never touch cards.' 'Yes,' I gave that promise. Long, long had it been forgotten; but memory brought it back, all

back now, and I saw the tear on the cheek and the white hair on the shoulder, just as then; and a voice, audible it seemed to me, the voice of God, spoke: 'You have broken that promise; you have lied to God and man, and you have stolen that money you hold to-night.' I don't know how I got out of the room that night. My limbs seemed too weak to support me, and as I staggered along that money seemed to weigh me down, almost crush me. I cannot tell my feelings, or why, having gone on all untroubled for years, I should be so affected, unless God Almighty spoke to me that night, like Belshazzar, and showed me my black heart as I never saw it before, and saved me from a gambler's grave and a gambler's hell. And when that New Year's sun rose I was a changed man, and I promised God that that which I had said in jest should be carried out, and that should be my last game of cards. Sixteen years have passed since then, and I have, by His grace, kept that promise. God only knows how I have been tempted, but I have never dealt a card, and I feel like thanking our Heavenly Father every day that above the click of the dice and the shuffle of the cards I heard this voice that night calling me from death to life."

Who was the speaker, do you ask? One whom, if I would speak his name, many of you know. One whose character and ability have placed him in a position of honor for two terms; one whose life and Christian activity have made him a ruling elder in one of our churches. And I tell you this little incident to encourage any one present who may, like him, find himself wanting, and to point you to the same Savior who came "to seek and to save that which was lost."

Keeping the Boys on the Farm.

In an extended argument as to the desirability of farmers' sons sticking to the farm, the Cincinnati Commercial observes that there is a feature in this matter of sons following the calling of their fathers that is not sufficiently regarded.

"The calling of the father may rise to a higher dignity when the sons adopt the business, thoroughly learn it, and proudly pursue it. The accumulated reputation, capital, and business of the parent can be inherited and preserved by the sons."

Again, it is a law of nature that holds good in all the animal kingdom, that aptness for any business may be inherited, or may be bred, as we say of stock. The great desideratum in developing a race of trotters is to insure an aptness to trot. And this comes not from stock that has habitually been used for the draught or chase or race course. If the dam trots and the sire trots we do not expect the offspring to be a running horse."

"The old Spartans understood this law of developing an aptness for a given calling in the children. The Germans of olden times developed a race of warriors on the same principle. 'The law of heredity is so broad and so powerful in its influence that it extends not only to color and form of our race, but it extends to the temperament and even to the tastes. The taste, though like the muscle and reasoning faculties, may be improved by education. Still the taste and aptness for any calling may be increased from generation to generation.'

"Then, if we are to reach the highest development as a race of farmers, we must expect it through the line of descent. The sun must inherit the fitness of the father, and take up the calling and business where he left off, and his son after him, and so on. When this shall become the custom in our farming families, then shall we see greater stability in society and a higher type of civilization. Every parent has the chief power to bring this work about. The very independence of the farmer's life is to be the germ which develops a race that cannot be other than an independent people. Our nation is to achieve its greatness in the development of agriculture. Its power at home and abroad is to be established and held through the arts of husbandry, practiced by a skillful and virtuous race of farmers. All that can be done by the State or family to ennoble and to dignify the calling, and to entail its blessings and influence from father to son, will add to the stability and grandeur of the nation."

French Phrases.

The French have a great tendency to cherish sayings and phrases which were uttered or are believed to have been uttered by celebrated men. This proneness is due in part to a pardonable kind of national vanity and in part to a certain fitness in the French language to adapt itself to brief, telling, epigrammatic sentences and phrases. Multitudes of such examples are to be met with, found on sober scrutiny to lack verification; nevertheless they live and seem likely to live in spite of criticism. "La France est assez niche pour payer sa gloire" is attributed to Guizot, the statesman, when he signed a treaty of peace with a vanquished power without asking for a money indemnity. France has truly shown herself in recent years to be rich enough to pay for defeat if not for glory; but the question is whether Guizot uttered the words attributed to him—words which brought upon him a taunt for boastfulness by the Opposition. It has been shown that the phrase was put into his mouth by a French journalist—in fact, a downright invention. "La Garde meurt, et ne se rend pas!" said to have been exclaimed by Gen. Canrobert, has, in like manner, been traced to a Parisian journalist; yet the French will doubtless continue to believe that the General, in relation to the condition of the famous Imperial Guard at a critical moment, heroically declared that the Guard would die rather than surrender.—Chambers' Journal.

Lady (stopping with her husband at a seaside fishing village)—"And is Mr. Smith at home?" Girl—"Yes, m'm, he has been home, but has gone out again."

Lady—"O, did he say where he was going?" Girl—"I don't know, m'm, but he said something about going out to get shaved and bamboozled, m'm."

A DOUBLE-SHELL RACE—Clams.

An English clergyman writes from India: "I will tell you a very curious and melancholy incident that happened on one occasion in a church where I was conducting the service. The windows and doors were, of course, all wide open, and through one of these open doors a cobra slipped into the church. "I did not notice it myself, but several of the congregation did, and were, not unreasonably, much alarmed. The cobra, a native, was fortunately on the alert, and he managed to procure a tulwar, with which he cut off the creature's head before it had time to do any mischief. "Tranquility was restored, and the service proceeded to its close, when many of the congregation went to look at the dead snake as it lay headless on the ground. Among them was a man who, in his curiosity to examine the reptile,

THE TRIAL-HOUR.

If there should come a time, as well there may.
When sudden tribulation smites thine heart,
And thou dost come to me for help and stay,
And comfort—how shall I perform my part?
How shall I make my heart a resting place,
And shelter safe for thee when terrors smite?
How shall I bring the sunshine to thy face,
And dry thy tears in bitter weeping's shade?
How shall I win the strength to keep my soul
Steady and firm, although I fear thy sob?
How shall I bid thy fainting soul rejoice,
Nor mar the counsel of mine own heart throbs?
Love, my own love teaches me a certain way
I must live higher, nearer to the reach
Of Angels in their blessed trustfulness,
Learn thy unselfishness, ere I can teach
Content to thee, whom I would gladly bless.
Ah! what were mine if thou shouldst come.
Troubled, but trusting unto me for aid,
And I should meet thee powerless and dumb,
Willing to help thee, but confused, afraid!
It shall not happen thus, for I will rise,
God helping me, to higher life and gain
Courage and strength to give thee counsel wise,
And deeper love to bless thee in thy pain.
Fear not, dear love, thy trial hour shall be
The dearest bond between my heart and thee.

PITH AND POINT.

The latest thing in boots—Stockings.
At a spelling match one man spelled "paspin," and got beat.

A post in the ground becomes decade wood at the end of ten years.
THE barber's razor took hold of his beard with a vengeance, when he looked up and said, apologetically: "My dear sir, I came in to get shaved—not to get a tooth pulled!"

A LITTLE girl, on being told something which much amused her, exclaimed, emphatically: "I shall remember that the whole of my life, and when I forget it I will write it down."

The donkey is a pretty bird,
So gentle and so wise;
It has a silky little tail
With which to frisk the flies.
Open its head two ears it bears,
So silky, long and soft,
That, when its tail can't reach the flies,
The ears can whisk them off.

"CAN you cure my eyes?" said a man to Dr. Brown. "Yes," said the doctor, "if you will follow my prescription." "Oh, certainly, doctor," said the patient; "I will do anything to have my eyes cured. What is your remedy, doctor?" "You must steal a horse," said the doctor, very soberly. "Steal a horse, doctor?" said the patient, in amazement. "Fow will that cure my eyes?" "You will be sent to State prison for five years, where you could not get whisky; and, during your incarceration, your eyes would get well," said the doctor. The patient looked somewhat incredulous, but he did not adopt the doctor's remedy.

"You play poker, of course," said one gentleman to another, who was shuffling a pack of cards in such a scientific manner as to betray an intimate acquaintance with the articles. "No, I never do," was the response. "Indeed," exclaimed the questioner, "I thought everybody in Eureka played poker." "I am the solitary exception," "And how is that?" "Well, you see, I got into a big game; had an ace full and lost \$300; then I held four queens and got beat out of \$600 more. I then said to myself, 'Old boy, this ain't your game; there's no money in it; you'd better stick to solitaire; it ain't so exciting, but it's safer;' and so I've stuck."

Gen. Hooker and the Michigan Man.

The following story is told by the Cincinnati Enquirer:
I served on Gen. Hooker's staff for nearly a year, and on one occasion was assigned to duty as Judge Advocate of a general court-martial before which a private soldier of a Michigan regiment was brought, charged with desertion. The evidence showed that the prisoner had deserted three times, on the last occasion "in the face of the enemy." The court-martial sentenced him to be shot, and the record of his trial and conviction was forwarded to Gen. Hooker for his approval. A short time subsequently Gen. Hooker came to my quarters, which adjoined his own, and said:

"Bond, in this case against Private —, what do you think had better be done? Are there no extenuating circumstances?"

"None that I know of, General. He has deserted three times."

"Isn't there something in the case upon which you could base a recommendation of mercy?"

"Not a thing. The proof against him was positive, and not denied, and the witnesses say further that when he was with his regiment he was a worthless fellow and a constitutional coward."

"That's just the thing," said the General positively. "The man is constitutionally a coward, and you recommend him to mercy on that ground. I'll tell you what's the matter, Bond—his mother is at my quarters begging for her son's life, and I want to spare him."
In accordance with this suggestion the recommendation for leniency was written, and a few minutes thereafter a feeble old lady with silver-gray hair and a tearful face was bowed out of the General's door by the brave old hero, and, turning away, she exclaimed, with uplifted hands: "God bless you, Gen. Hooker."

Killed by a Dead Snake.

An English clergyman writes from India: "I will tell you a very curious and melancholy incident that happened on one occasion in a church where I was conducting the service. The windows and doors were, of course, all wide open, and through one of these open doors a cobra slipped into the church. "I did not notice it myself, but several of the congregation did, and were, not unreasonably, much alarmed. The cobra, a native, was fortunately on the alert, and he managed to procure a tulwar, with which he cut off the creature's head before it had time to do any mischief. "Tranquility was restored, and the service proceeded to its close, when many of the congregation went to look at the dead snake as it lay headless on the ground. Among them was a man who, in his curiosity to examine the reptile,

put his foot on the head and rolled it toward him, when he instantly uttered a loud exclamation and drew his foot away. By some means or other he had contrived to set in action the muscular apparatus attached to the poison fangs, which had darted violently forward and struck him on the foot. All remedies were useless; in half an hour the poor fellow was a corpse, proving, with a vengeance, the awful virulence of the poison of the cobra da-capello."

Napoleon's Marriages.

The marriages of the Bonapartes play an important part in the story of their fortunes, and none of them were so significant and important as those of the Emperor. To one who, like him, looked upon the world as made for him, and upon laws as merely something which were good for him to impose upon others, it must have appeared that his two wives were admirably planned for his use. Josephine de Beauharnais was an ideal wife for a young and rising man of genius. She had everything which would appeal to a fancy like his, at once selfish and passionate. She had beauty, rank, the power of pleasing, and a certain indolent grace that promised an obedience reasonably free from jealousy. Up to the time that he met her by his side, she was all that his narrow heart and boundless ambition could desire. But after the marvellous victory of Wagram had opened up to his fevered imagination still wider prospects of dominion, he looked for another style of wife, and found her in Maria Louise of Austria. Her blonde beauty, formed of pink and white color and roundly curling lines and the golden floss of a child's hair, appealed strongly to his jaded taste. He was not old, but, as he said to the Directory, "one ages fast upon the field of battle," and he wanted some such solace as this soft, unintellectual beauty (somebody had called it the Alderney style of prettiness) in his home, if such a word may be used of the Tuileries. Besides, he doubtless felt that an emperor should have an emperor's daughter to wife, and this was a young girl who had a hundred monarchs for her ancestors, and yet she would be gentle and obedient, and not argue with him or answer him, and would give him heirs. He was genuinely attached to her, and if he knew nothing about her, and had no premonition of Count Neipperg, it was all the better for him. She also was quite taken by storm with him, and for a while the novelty of being loved by an ogre—for such she had always considered him—was agreeable to her. But his tumultuous glory was too much for the daily food of such a human small being as the Empress, and she was doubtless relieved when the indignant soul left his body at Longwood, and she was free to follow her ignoble little heart and marry Neipperg.

Josephine would have had her revenge if she could have foreseen the course of history for even a few years. It is she, and not the pretty Austrian who will be known forever as the wife of Napoleon. It is her statue that rises in marble in the public places of Paris. It is her name and those of her children that mark the great avenues of the metropolis—Avenue Josephine, La Reine Hortense, Boulevard du Prince Eugene. Though she was ousted remorselessly from a throne to make room for Maria Louise, it was her children—the children of the creole proscrip— who should become the tenants of palaces, and not those of her rival. The Duke of Richstadt was to pass a youth of inglorious pleasure, and was to die before his prime, and leave no son to inherit his claims to empire; while the Beauharnais line was to stretch out like the swarm of kings seen by the Thane of Cawdor in his vision. Eugene, her heroic son, after the fall of the Napoleons, returned to the court of his father-in-law, the King of Bavaria, and became Prince of Eichstadt, Duke of Leuchtenberg, and first nobleman of the kingdom. His daughter, united to the son of Bernadotte, became Queen of Sweden; another became princess of Braunschweig, a third Empress of Brazil. His oldest son won the hand of the Queen of Portugal, and a younger married a daughter of the Czar Nicholas of Russia. And whatever doubt might be thrown on the purity of the Napoleonic descent by which the Emperor Napoleon III. claimed the throne, he was unquestionably the son of Hortense, and was Beauharnais, and Tascher-la-Pagerie beyond challenge. The grand son of Josephine, Louis Napoleon, ruled France in peace with a sort of splendor for the space of twenty-two years, while the period of the first Napoleon's reign, counting Consulate and empire together, was but fifteen—though so powerful was the personal imprint made by the uncle, and so vague was the individual character of the nephew, that the shorter reign seems like an age, and the longer like an episode.

Millions of Pigeons.

The most celebrated pigeon roost probably in the country is in Scott county, Ind., where, it is said, acres of timber are covered nightly with wild pigeons. For the past seventy-five years this noted locality has been a roosting-place for pigeons, and millions of these birds congregate there nightly during the seasons of their visits to that section of the country. They fly away of mornings to their feeding places in the woods and fields of Indiana and Kentucky, distant from the roost in many instances from 100 to 300 miles, returning again at night, arrivals often continuing up to midnight. The timber on thousands of acres covered by this roost is broken down badly, large limbs being snapped off like reeds by the accumulated weight of the birds upon them. Throughout the entire night there is heard the cracking and crushing of limbs, the hum and flurry and drumming of wings, the explosion of firearms and the confusion and bedlam thrashing sounds caused by people beating the birds from the trees with long poles. Thousands of pigeons are killed nightly, but all this slaughter seems to make no diminution in the vast flocks that congregate at this roost.

In Paris kitchen utensils used by all hotels, restaurants, confectioners, etc., are periodically inspected by public officers, with a view to saving the public from poisoned pies, etc.