ENGLISH ORATORY.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND LORD ROSEBERY.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
BIRMINGHAM, April 1.

Lord Salisbury has been speaking here for two days, but of him I shall not have much to say because I did not hear him. I gather that he made a good impression on Birmingham as a platform speaker and a very bad one as a statesman; which might be expected. This is not a place where Toryism has much root. People talk of it as a bold thing on Lord Salisbury's part to attack the Liberal enemy in his chief English stronghold. This sort of metaphor, like metaphors in general, is misleading. It requires no courage for a Conservative to address a Birmingham audience. He is not pelted nor even hissed. The radicalism of the Midland metropolis is robust enough to endure with patience all that Lord Salisbury can say against it, to its face or behind its back. People who have sat under Mr. Ashmead Bartlett or Colonel Burnaby might willingly lend their ears to a man who, whatever else may be said of him, can speak. The presence of the Tory chief in Birmingham is less a proof of his own valor than a tribute to the central importance of Birmingham in politics. I don't know whether his many audiences, or any of them, were largely composed of opponents. What I heard was that the Midland counties had been ransacked to provide him with hearers enough to fill the Town Hall. On Thursday evening, said an American friend who had come from London to sit at Lord Salisbury's feet (and who had to stand instead of sitting), the platform was covered with white ties, and the body of the house was filled with men more accustomed to using ploughs than making them.

Most of my pilgrimages to Birmingham have been made to hear Mr. Bright. This one was to listen to younger men. It is too soon to say that Mr. Bright belongs to the past, though his recent addresses, and especially his Corn Law speech at Glasgow the other day, might be taken to signify that he himself prefers living over the days when his fame was won and his great services performed, to striking out a new line in the days that are. He is to be heard only too seldom, and no pains or trouble are too great to hear him, for the number of speeches he will deliver cannot now be very great. But to one whose business it is to study, among other things, English politics, the men of to-day and of to-morrow are not less important than those of yesterday. I came to Birmingham to listen to Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Rosebery; two of that younger generation who are to have a hand in shaping English affairs for the next twenty years or more. They are both so well known to you that a fresh account of either at this moment would be thrown away. If I bracket them together, it is only that they happen both to speak from the same platform on the same night. They have almost as many points of difference as of likeness. Lord Rosebery is ten years younger than Mr. Chamberlain; the man of to-day in Scotland; of to-morrow in England; on the threshold of the Cabinet, to which he is every day gazetted by the newspapers. Mr. Chamberlain, among whose faults want of success is not to be reckoned—success won by abilities and his own efforts—always recalls the celebrated epigram of Talleyrand upon Thiers, long ago. Somebody called Thiers, as there are Tories angry enough to call Mr. Chamberlain now, a parvenu. *Non*, answered Talleyrand, *il n'est pas parvenu, il est arrivé.*

A Town Hall audience in Birmingham is of itself worth coming to see, especially if the comer be an American, as I dare say I have urged before now. Often as I have seen it, to see it again is always a fresh surprise, so unlike is it to every other audience in England. My American friend instantly described it as "so American"; and it is. American in keenness of feature, and still more American in its quite marvellous quickness of mind and rapid judgment on men and on what men have to say. There is no great manufacturing town in England where so many workingmen are their own masters. Their habit of thinking for themselves on public affairs, which has given Birmingham its political fame, was acquired by thinking for themselves about their own business and about the business of their town; for the wise conduct of which latter they have also a deserved celebrity, to which Mr. Chamberlain has contributed. It is the most difficult and critical audience a public speaker in this country can be called on to face,—some five thousand men extremely wide-awake and well-informed, and taught by Mr. Bright to be exacting in the matter of oratory.

Lord Rosebery was to address them as president of the Junior Liberal Association of Birmingham. He said later in the evening that if this was the Junior Association he should be glad to know what the Senior was like. It was enough that it was a Liberal meeting—no need to glean for hearers in the agricultural outskirts of the town, or disturb the patrician repose of three counties. Lord Rosebery was a stranger to them,—this is his first appearance in Birmingham,—but whether from his reputation, or his face and manner, or for whatever reason, they gave him the sort of welcome commonly reserved for old friends. It was expected of him to answer Lord Salisbury, and to Lord Salisbury accordingly the greater part of his speech was devoted. The answer was minute and effective, but it had the disadvantage of being an answer. Disadvantage because Lord Rosebery has a constructive power which may be put to better use than is to be found for it in controversy and retort. His talent for repartee may be employed on lesser occasions; here it would have been worth his while to state his own case from his own standpoint, and leave Lord Salisbury's sinister sarcasms to answer themselves; or to be answered by Mr. Chamberlain, since to him if to anybody the challenge from Hatfield was addressed. The account of the Conservative leader given in the opening sentences would have left a sufficient impression. After describing Lord Salisbury's first speech as dealing with politics "in a spirit I will not call captious but in a spirit of conciseness," Lord Rosebery proceeded:

He touched on every point very much as a sore throat is touched, with caustic. He dealt with every point in a single sentence, and pointed every sentence with a sneer; and when you remember that the late Lord Beaconsfield, the chief whose shade and whose memory the Tory party now vainly invoke, once accurately described his colleague Lord Salisbury as a master of flouts and sneers, it would not be decorous in humble people like ourselves to quarrel with the definition of so eminent a master.

That is a sentence to bring party cheers, and it brought them, as did most of Lord Rosebery's periods. But when he had passed from Lord Salisbury and entered upon a peroration devoted to a definition of Liberalism, and the worth of Liberalism to the country, the speech reached a higher level; and even its epigram became more glittering. It might be difficult to put more sense and wit into a phrase than are condensed in Lord Rosebery's summary of his own speech: "That the future of this country rests not with the wasps but the bees." His audience was swift to catch the point and to applaud; as they did this declaration, delivered with genial sincerity: "The difference between Liberalism and Conservatism is essential and eternal: the one can, the other cannot, trust the people. I cast in my lot with the party that can."

I have no space for any quotation that would convey a vivid notion of Lord Rosebery's method as a whole; and no quotation will give a hint of that charm of manner which won upon his audience from the beginning and carried it captive to the end. I must content myself with saying that he offers a most interesting example of the orator whose purpose is persuasiveness. The final secret of his success with an audience is sympathy, not authority, or not yet authority. His definition of Liberalism, good as far as it goes, does not go far enough to account for his own influence over the thousands whom he addressed for the first time. There he stands, remote in more ways than one from the generality of his fellow-men; by distinctions each one of them too commonly a cause of separation between him who possesses them and him who does not. Once in a while it happens that instead of widening the gulf they narrow it; when, as in Lord Rosebery's case, this favorite of nature and fortune does really look upon men as his fellow-men; not with mere civility, or sterile good manner, but with a profound feeling of good-will. I do not believe that the highest kind of oratory is possible to any man deficient in this feeling. Nobody would undervalue the oratorical endowments Lord Rosebery possesses: voice, presence, power of clear thinking, and the rest. But an orator who is to move the people must be a man of the people at bottom—not a democrat in the political sense, not by any means necessarily a radical, but one who holds with Jefferson that men are born equal, or, at any rate, are born men. This conviction will in the long run make him irresistible. Already a speaker of remarkable powers, he is destined to rank, if he cares to, at no distant date, as an orator in the high and rare sense of the word.

Lord Rosebery surprised his audience by speaking without notes. No scrap of paper was visible from beginning to end of the fifty minutes during which, in the not too elegant House of Commons phrase, he was on his legs. It turned out afterward that he had left his notes in London, including those from which he meant to complete the preparation of his speech: an accident which adds to the interest of the effort. There are few more awkward situations than that of a man who relies on a little manuscript help and finds himself obliged to speak without it. The rule here is notes. Mr. Bright always uses them, or almost always. Mr. Gladstone has, if nothing more, memoranda of the leading figures, and perhaps facts, he is going to use. Mr. Chamberlain spoke last night with the aid of four or five sheets of paper. No doubt Lord Rosebery's address lost something in finish and smoothness by his mishap. But it was worth all it cost as practice.

Mr. Chamberlain followed Lord Rosebery. It happens that I have not heard Mr. Chamberlain on a platform for some three years. I say on a platform because the oratory which moves a popular audience is a thing so extremely different from that debating dexterity which is more in demand in the House of Commons than anything else. In the interval Mr. Chamberlain, whom I had known as a clever speaker, has become an orator; in a very true if not in the very widest signification. The power and breadth of his address last night cannot be expressed by any word of narrower meaning than that. The point of view has changed. The measure and proportion of speech are no longer the same. The intellectual poise is more sure, the range greater, and the knowledge of his audience more intimate. Probably in Birmingham Mr. Chamberlain is to be seen at his best, but the essential qualities of his oratory as they were disclosed on Friday cannot greatly vary. He has studied Mr. Bright not in vain, yet between Mr. Chamberlain's methods and Mr. Bright's the divergences are more remarkable than the points of identity. That which gives Mr. Bright his incontestable superiority to all other English orators of this time is not to be copied by anybody. What his younger colleague has derived from him is an acquaintance with those processes of public speaking which are in fact imitable or communicable—the technical secrets due to practice, to knowledge of effect—not by any means the pathetic and sympathetic power of Mr. Bright, his sounding of the depths of the human heart, or his elevation of thought. Mr. Chamberlain's manner is now one of complete self-possession—a man, you would say at once, sure of himself and of his audience. He has shaken off the primness of his earlier days. There used to be a certain schoolmaster air about him, and a pedantry of diction, which have given place to greater freedom of bearing and freedom of speech. The phrases are still carefully picked, but they are fluent, and the man of the world has got the better of the student. The smell of the lamp has vanished. If ever there was a parochial tone of thought in the ex-Mayor of Birmingham, that too has vanished. The tone may now fairly be called statesmanlike. Familiarity with large affairs has been an education, as it always is to the man who proves equal to them, and Mr. Chamberlain's survey of Imperial topics is now such as might be expected from a Cabinet Minister.

Save for two passages, this speech of the President of the Board of Trade was as convincing and impregnable in substance as it was admirable in form. The personal attack on Lord Salisbury as an aristocrat and owner of landed property is indefensible: the more so because Lord Rosebery was sitting by, and some of Mr. Chamberlain's invective was just as applicable to one Peer as to the other. But the attack had a graver fault than want of taste; it was all but communistic in tone. Mr. Chamberlain assaulted Lord Salisbury as the spokesman of a class, "of the class to which he himself belongs, 'who toil not neither do they spin'; whose fortunes, as in his case, have originated in grants made in times long ago for the services which courtiers rendered kings, and have since grown and increased while they have slept, by levying an unearned share on all that other men have done by toil and labor to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the country of which they form a part." That is said with eloquence and energy, and is a perfectly misleading and mischievous statement.

The other point is of course an Irish point. Mr. Chamberlain renewed once more his already too oft repeated invitation to Irish agitators to persevere in evil doing. Again he denounced force as no remedy for discontent—as if anybody ever said it was. Again he referred to crime and outrage as only the expression of the causes of discontent—the extreme and unjustifiable expression, he called them; but what is the use of saying that the operation of a social law is unjustifiable? You might as well complain of the criminality of earthquakes while insisting that they were caused by Irish landlords. But Mr. Chamberlain's line in Irish matters is known, and right or wrong does not diminish the rhetorical merits of a speech which was impressive throughout, full of telling hits at foes and staunch defence of friends; the speech of a man with beliefs, and with abundant capacity of advocating them before the public.

G. W. S.

HOW STEWARD CRUMP DISOBEYED THE DOCTORS.

Washington Dispatch to The Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

Mr. Crump, the steward at the White House during General Garfield's Administration, and one of his most faithful nurses, is now keeping a dining-room in the old Club House building, on New-York-ave., in this city. He tells many interesting reminiscences of President Garfield's last illness, one of which is of the day when the President first asked him for a glass of cold water.

Crump relates that the physicians had forbidden him water, but the poor man begged so hard and so pitiful like that I had frequently to leave the room to keep from violating the doctors' orders. When he found that pleading would not serve his ends, then he assumed an authoritative tone, and I instantly became deaf. Then he tried persuasion and cajoling; but I wouldn't weaken, until he suddenly called me to him in a low voice and with tears in his eyes, said: "Crump, would you refuse a dying man a drink of water?"

"No, Mr. President," I answered, "but you are not dying."

"But, Crump," he added feebly, "if you do not give it to me, I will die," and he closed his eyes. I couldn't stand that, and I couldn't disobey the doctors. But somehow or another I just set a glass of spring water on the table by his bed, and went to the window; and, hang me, when I returned if that glass wasn't empty, and the President wanted to know, with a smile, what I meant by tantalizing him by putting a glass with no water in it within his reach, and he so thirsty. However, he never asked for any more that day, and I am certain that if he did drink that water it did him no harm.

OSCAR WILDE AND THE UNUTTERABLE WHEEL.

Paris Letter in The Chicago Tribune.

"You must have found yourself very little in sympathy with America and Americans, surely?" I remarked.

"Oh, no," condescendingly replied the generous Oscar. "I feel an interest in—er—all humanity. Even in Chicago I found much—much—of intensest interest—beauties—wonderful beauties. One day as I sojourned in that city I came upon—er—the water-works. A sort of—er—castellated atrocity, with pepper-box turrets and absurd portcullises. How came they (thought I, with amazement)—how came they to erect this hideous building in this most modern and utilitarian of cities? I must have a closer look at this horror. Perchance I shall find some beauty even here, I murmured, for we cannot live without Beauty, you know. We can do without food and—er—things of that sort, but not without Beauty. . . . Then it occurred to me that perhaps I might discover this Beauty I had sought for in vain so long, in American machinery. A wheel is in itself a very beautiful object. All the noblest forms of the ceramic art are derived from the potter's wheel. And yet in England I had always found machinery such a pitiful and ugly thing; a jumble of cranks and cogs and petty pieces, you know, without a touch of grandeur about them. So I entered that castellated horror at Chicago, and there at last I came upon a wheel—the wheel of the Chicago Water-Works—a mighty, majestic, unutterably harmonious wheel. I saw the beauty and the poetry of America in that revolving wonder; and I said to myself if ever America produces a great musician, let him write a Machinery Symphony. He could have no more worthy subject.

"But of course they never will have a great musician out there," continued Oscar, dropping from the clouds to earth with singular suddenness, "until they have abolished the shrieking steam whistle. Their tympanums have all been ruined by those whistles."

QUEEN VICTORIA.

AN ENGLISHMAN'S VIEWS OF HER PERSONAL, FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE.

[FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
LONDON, April 7.

All the time that can be spared from the discussion of dynamite is devoted to that lofty subject, the loneliness of the Queen. Society stands, or professes to stand, aghast at the isolation in which our Sovereign Lady is left by the death of her personal attendant, John Brown, esq. His position was incomparably greater than that of either Bloomfield or Knighton, the pages of his sainted Majesty King George the Fourth. Enough, however, has been said and written concerning John Brown, who was a good servant and handsomely rewarded. A far more interesting question is that of the Queen's future. Her utter loneliness is a condition which she owes entirely to herself, or rather to the advisers in whom she trusted. She has, just as Mr. Abraham Hayward, Q. C., declares he has, "outlived everybody she could look up to," the Duchess of Kent, her domineering mother, Leopold of Belgium, Lord Melbourne, Stockmar, the Duke of Wellington, the Prince Consort, and, must it be added, John Brown. She has not a friend in the world, and much sentimentalism is talked just now on this subject. I confess that I in common with a few others who know the ins and outs of the Royal existence am very unsympathetic upon this point. Poetic twaddlers talk of the throne being like a lonely Alpine peak, high above the world, cold and solitary. To me it seems that it is much the same with a sovereign as with an enormously rich man. If he choose to consider every man's hand against him, or eager to find its way into his pocket, he will be solitary indeed. And why not? If the personage does nothing to make you love him, and, and does not give you anything, why in the name of common sense should you love him and waste your time upon him?

To estimate fairly the character of the Queen and clearly understand her habits, thoughts and position, it should be distinctly kept in view that the Royal family, including the Queen, is not English at all, but entirely German in ideas, sympathies, and a whole mass of childish tradition and prejudice concerning etiquette and routine folly of all kinds. Readers of THE TRIBUNE are already aware that the home language of the Royal family is German, and that not one of the Princes and Princesses can speak English without a German accent, very strong in the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh. This, to Englishmen, is a ridiculous shortcoming, except to a few fashionable imbeciles who actually employ the guttural German "r" in imitation of Royalty. A foreign accent in a man who will one day be King of England is absurd enough; but is not half so much to be regretted as the intensely German mode of thinking which affects the Queen quite as powerfully as her children. It is not difficult to see how Her Majesty has become separated by a great gulf from her subjects, and has fallen into that well-known habit of despotic sovereigns of loving servants better than loyal advisers, adherents and friends. It is a vice of rulers to love, as far as they love anybody, their personal servants, their valets, their lackeys, their barbers, and such like. The difference in rank is so vast that it is thought there is little danger of the mere creature forgetting itself and asserting its individuality. In fact, however, Olivier le Daim and John Brown had very great power. Thanks to modern and liberal institutions, the dislike of the latter was not fatal except to a few poor souls who can only breathe freely in the atmosphere of a court; but sovereigns gradually weaken the allegiance of those on whose support they count by interposing a common servant between them as a kind of moral and, if necessary, material buffer. When a sovereign shuts herself up year after year at the Isle of Wight or in the Highlands with a confidential servant, an ordinary gillie, the "Venetian oligarchy," as Disraeli called the English nobility, naturally take umbrage, and complain, not without reason, that the Queen who finds levee or drawing-room, State concert or ball, a tremendous effort can travel many miles over the Highlands to be present at the wedding of some insignificant Scotch serving man or woman.

The German idea of sovereignty was early implanted in the Queen. Her father was a kind of idiot with a special tendency toward military drill and uniform. Her mother of the house of Leiningen had been first married to the Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg and had children, which explains how Prince Victor of Hohenlohe, better known as Count Gleichen, is her nephew. This amiable gentleman, by the way, is an admiral in the Royal Navy and a clever draughtsman and sculptor. The Queen's mother was a decidedly clever woman, very masterful and aggressive. She easily outlived both her husbands, was very fully impressed with her dignity as mother of the heir apparent to the English throne, and lived at daggers drawn with William the Fourth, on whom she looked with a contempt which was richly merited, for he was quite as imbecile as the Duke of Kent without being so respectable. Intellect and decency did not go together among the children of George the Third; but idiocy and indecency were combined in, at least, the Duke of Clarence, afterward William the Fourth. Charles Greville, the "Grumcher," has told us that the Duke of York, whose whole life was a scandal, was the only one of the Royal Princes who possessed the manners of an English gentleman; and it is significant that not one of our present princes wears the title of York, Kent, or Clarence. Greville has also told us of the indignation of old William at the seclusion in which the Duchess of Kent kept the Princess Victoria. This seclusion from a court full of the king's illegitimate children was perhaps wisely maintained, but it did not prevent the Queen's early romance—the Elphinstone affair, before Prince Albert's time—and her jealousy of the latter, which led to the cruel treatment of the unfortunate Lady Flora Hastings. In truth, Victoria was kept entirely in leading strings, and German leading strings, until the death of her husband. At first it was the Duchess of Kent, then Leopold of Belgium and Stockmar, and next the Prince Consort, who relieved her of the trouble of thinking on political subjects.

I was too young at the time to know much of the Prince Consort, but a relative of mine in whose judgment I have very great confidence tells me that the Prince was simply a "pragmatical German schoolmaster." Instead of listening to what Englishmen who knew their country had to say, this conceited foreign prig laid down the law in the dullest talk that can be imagined. Wit or humor found no resting place in a dull methodic brain crowded with half truths and dreary formulas. The English nobles whom he had the insolence to treat with remote hauteur felt toward him a mixture of hatred and contempt. He said one stupid thing and did several which settled his place in the English mind. His observation that in a country like England "constitutional government is on its trial," his interference in the dispatch-box matter, and his attempt to overrule Lord Palmerston, decided English opinion in spite of the army of sycophants who lifted their voices from South Kensington in solemn hymns of praise.

There can be no doubt that the Queen felt his loss far more acutely than wives generally do the death of their husbands. She was left absolutely alone, for the German division had completely segregated her from her natural friends. It is absolutely certain that, except to John Brown and Lord Beaconsfield, she has never spoken unreservedly to any person since Albert's death. She found herself left alone in her despair, and she remained alone. Her husband, on whom England looked as a milksop because he was a wretched horseman and cared little for field sports, was unbearable as a companion, and had gradually driven away every soul whose society was worth having. Thus far a certain amount of pity may be felt for the Queen; but beyond this it can hardly go. When her husband died she was of mature years, but not too old to form new friendships. What did she do? For six or seven years she dwelt in actual seclusion, signing indispensable papers but taking part in no public ceremony. She was in fact absolutely dead to her subjects. I am quite aware that I shall be reminded that during the whole period she saw her Ministers when it was necessary and her children frequently. I will explain how little of actual companionship this really signified.

When a Minister has audience of the Queen on affairs of state it must not be imagined that anything like a conference or any approach to an outspoken conversation occurs. Ministers are made to feel that they are literally as well as nominally "servants" of the Queen. They do not venture to recommend or advise a certain course of their own volition. They wait till they are asked, and then "submit" to Her Majesty what the state of the question really is, and listen to her observations thereon. Mr. Gladstone has never been a favorite with the Queen because he also is masterful in his way and is apt to hint that the course he suggests is the only one that will meet the support of Parliament. This he does of course with considerable deference, but he has never succeeded in "managing" the Queen as Lord Beaconsfield managed her by agreeing to the utter tomfoolery of calling her Empress of India and other acts of equal subservience. Like thorough Germans of the old school, the whole Royal family appear to ordinary people almost insane upon questions of dignity and precedence. Lord Beaconsfield, recognizing fully the late French Emperor's saying that "ladies must be humored," pleased the Queen by obeying all her little whims on such subjects. Moreover he was on John Brown's side in politics and knew how to propitiate that worthy servitor. Hence the Queen permitted him a freedom of address never endured from any other of her Ministers except Lord Melbourne, for whom she had almost as much regard as for the first Duke of Wellington.

It will be gathered from all this that her natural kindliness of disposition and yearning for affection have been chilled and perverted by the adverse influence of wooden German etiquette and Court traditions. How ridiculously great is the importance she attaches to such matters is perfectly well known to every one within the Court radius. Last year when the Duke of Albany was married the name of every person to be present in St. George's Chapel was submitted to her. She also actually edited the official programme of the processions or Order of the Ceremonial, making many alterations, additions and suppressions. Above all she was determined that the servants of her household should have a perfect view of the ceremony. Anybody would have thought that the members of the Houses of Lords and Commons would have been considered before a pack of menials, but this is not the Queen's way of looking at things. Very few of the really important people of England were placed where they could see the wedding ceremony, while every trumpery Windsor official was accommodated with a seat, and a special stand was erected for the actual household servants. It is still fresh in the recollection that when the Duke of Connaught was married Mr. Gladstone was not invited. Lord Beaconsfield was then Prime Minister, and Lord Granville and Hartington were invited as leaders of the Opposition, this course being according to precedent. Advantage was thus taken, incredible as it may seem, to exclude the greatest Commoner in England because he was not at that moment the nominal leader of the Opposition. The trashy traditions of the Court are very convenient for snubbing or insulting people, and when the public demand the reason an attempt is made to stop their mouths with a precedent.

The demeanor of the Queen toward her family is extraordinary and to ordinary mortals incomprehensible. Irreproachable as a wife and mother, except in letting her children acquire a German accent, she now keeps them at a distance in a very odd way. There is no doubt of the Queen's love for her children. When they want a start in life she induces the Premier to ask for as large a grant as he thinks the House of Commons will endure. Every item of outlay for the Royal family that can by any stretch of imagination be considered public is charged to the exchequer; and the Queen herself saves every shilling that she can out of her immense revenue. At this moment Her Majesty, considered as a private individual, cannot be worth less than a couple of millions sterling, so great have been the bequests made to her and so great the saving she has made out of income. This latter is not quite fair to the country, which pays liberally for *frais de représentation* and is, when foreign guests come, very shabbily represented, but it shows the Queen's love for her children. In the face of these facts is it not difficult to believe that none of her children dare go to see her without permission? Yet such is the undoubted fact. Not one of her children, except the Princess Beatrice, who is condemned to seclusion with her mother, can visit her without permission. Among themselves they are loving enough and extremely pleasant and free-and-easy together. Prince Christian, who looks very old to be the husband of the buxom Princess, is on the best terms with the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Albany; and the Duke of Teck, bating his dull stories, learned, I should think, from the late Prince Consort, gets on well with everybody, thanks to his own good temper and his charming wife, the Princess Mary, otherwise "the Queen of the Jingoes." But all of these, including the Prince of Wales, are at an immeasurable distance from the Queen, who is lonely, I must perforce conclude, because she wishes to be so, or has rather encircled herself with a hedge of etiquette which she is now powerless to break. That she is absolute monarch in her own family as she is in her own house is beyond all doubt; but there is no question that she has not now a single friend to whom she can speak openly and unreservedly.

THE ALSATIAN BENEFIT.

A BRILLIANT GATHERING FOR CHARITY IN PARIS.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
PARIS, April 7.

The fête given by the French press for the flooded Alsatians was a most brilliant one. It took place at the Opera House last night. M. Meyer, of the *Gaulois*, was its chief organizer. This is why *Figaro* disdains to notice it. A more brilliant house could not have been formed. As most of the ladies wore white and crowded on their jewels, the tiers of boxes had an unusually brilliant aspect. Rank and fashion were glad to crowd together into the topmost galleries. As a ball was to take place after midnight, all the pit which is not included in the amphitheatre was boarded over. The net profits of the representation are found to exceed 100,000 francs.

Of course the best boxes were occupied by Hebrew ladies. The whole of the Rothschild clan attended. Baroness Gustave Rothschild as an Alsatian took a lively interest in the fête. She was dressed in crême brocade with a moss velvet corsage and train. The garniture was of English primroses. Baroness Alphonse Rothschild was in black lace over satin, richly spangled with jet. Princess de Sagan was accompanied by her old friend the Marquise de Gallifet, by the pretty Marquise de Beauvoir and by Madame Montgomery. Princess de Brancovan (a daughter of Musurus Pacha) was in white, trimmed with yellow bugles. She wore a tiara, necklace and bracelets of diamonds, and looked splendidly handsome. This lady is one of the most accomplished musicians of the time. Gambetta, who was not fond of music, used to like to hear her play Chopin's waltzes and Mozart's airs. Madame Adam came in with Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, son of the Princess Clementine of Orleans. She was in dark velvet and daffodils. These flowers are too bright for her complexion. They only suit a decided brunette. Among the Hebrew ladies were Mesdames Ulmann, Ochon, Ephrussi Camondo, Pillet-Will, Heine, and the Princess della Rocca *née* Heine. Nor should I forget the Princess Alexandre de Wagram (*née* Rothschild) of Frankfort, and her sister, the Duchess de Grammont. American Judaism was represented by Mesdames Stern, Bemberg, Seligman and Nathan. Baroness Legoux wore a very short skirt embroidered in the old Spanish style, with a long and voluminous train, bordered with hyacinths. Its effect was very striking as she ascended the grand stairs. But when she was descending her ankles were well in view. Fortunately they are elegantly shaped, and her feet are like Cinderella's. Madame Floquet was in yellow, with amber bugles and yellow topaz ornaments. She is growing rather stout for beauty. Madame Hervey de St. Denis (the skating Marquise) wore silver tissue and diamonds.

A whole band of Faubourg St. Germain beauties agreed to dress in the same uniform. They were in white satin, and had for ornaments and garnitures lilies, diamonds made up into fleurs de lys, and pearls. Countess Potoka was in some silvery stuff and glittered in diamonds. Her great black eyes seemed to "devour" her pale face. Madame Gautreau was near her. The Italian brunette eclipsed the blonde beauty.

The entertainment was varied. Madame Judic led an orchestra. She was very prettily and brightly dressed, although she wore no jewelry. Madame Fides Devries was admirable in *Gallia*. She is the most delicious singer I ever heard. The chorus which sang the lamentation was admirable. Gounod led it. Madame Carvalho was warmly applauded. She was a "Charity" and was supported by a choral band which only included first-rate singers. The ballet had a distinct Spanish character. An estudantina fresh from Madrid served as an orchestra while the dancing was going on. Sarah Bernhardt was sufficiently recovered from her illness to act with Bertin in two scenes from "Adrienne Lecouvreur." She was listened to with wrapt attention and surpassed herself. When encored she recited the "Two Pigeons" of La Fontaine.

THE GENEROUS AMERICANS.

From "The Jewel in the Lotus."

"Americans have a very confident air," the duchess remarked.

"They are too confident," replied Glenlyon. "Their confidence in themselves and in others will be their ruin. I am troubled in mind for America."

"Why? you do not think them in danger?" exclaimed the lady with a sudden terror. War, financial distress, loss of fortunes, all started up before her mind. "She must have her money down before they marry," she was saying to herself when Glenlyon replied, "I am sometimes almost afraid that they are doomed," he said.

"Good heavens!" she whispered, waiting breathlessly.

"They are a noble and generous people," he went on. "They are at that period in their national existence where their whole style of thinking is large and frank. They are without rivals on their own continent, and they laugh at the idea of danger from Europe. If it were only from fleets and armies, they might well laugh, for they are invincible to any force from without. But they are open at every pore to subtle attack, and at this moment their whole national life is eaten through and through by inimical foreign influences. Boastfully conceited, they will not see that the army which they laugh at is already landed on their shores and recruited by dupes from their own ranks. In the whole fabric of their politics there is scarcely a single solid block of what made them a nation. With a mingling of generosity, short-sighted self-interest and vanity, they open their doors to all the world and share everything with the first-comer, and they think that naturalization papers make patriots. At this moment there is more influence exercised in the United States by foreign than by American ideas. It has been, and still is, for the most part, only an influence; but the time is not far distant when it will be an acknowledged power. They are like little Red Ridinghood who thought that the wolf in the bed was her grandmother because it wore her grandmother's night-cap. When they begin to find the eyes and the mouth too large, it will already be too late to save themselves."

"You think that there is a plot, then?" said the duchess breathlessly, trying to understand what was being said to her.

"No," he replied. "If there were, it would be easier to detect and defeat. There are plotters, undoubtedly; but many who will be, and are, most dangerous to America, believe themselves to be perfectly honest. They have a different view of life, that is all. If they could have the same money and liberty and power in Europe, they would prefer to live in Europe; but, since they cannot, they would be pleased if America should become a second Europe."

Wednesday is tree-planting day and a holiday in Nebraska, and the Governor of that State asks every citizen to set out at least one tree. After setting out one tree, the theory is that, according to holiday custom, the average citizen will get full enough to make that one look like an entire row.—[Lowell Citizen.

M. FERRY IN HIS CABINET.

A TALK WITH THE FRENCH PREMIER.

[FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]
PARIS, April 6.

There has been a widespread idea that we were, in the course of the week, threatened with a Ministerial crisis, and there was a substratum of fact in the report of a Cabinet dislocation. Profiting by a verbal invitation which M. Jules Ferry, at his last reception, spontaneously gave me "to go to the fountain head for political" news, I called on him on Wednesday morning. The ground floor saloons of his Ministry, where he holds his soirées, I found arranged as if for meetings of Educational Committees and Cabinet Councils. No domestic was visible. I then went to a side entrance on the other side of the courtyard and walked up stairs. In the lobby I found servants at work packing up in bales printed matter, to judge from its appearance, of various sorts. In an inner lobby a dignified and gray-headed usher came up to inquire whom I wanted to see. "M. le Ministre." "He does not receive to-day." "I think you are mistaken, for he told me that he was always at home on certain mornings, and Wednesday was one of the days he named." "That depends. If you have an audience-letter you can be admitted. If you have not you are to come on a Saturday." "I have no letter but send in my card, for I repeat the Minister invited me to call on him if I pleased this morning." This satisfied the usher. But he said: "It is a pity you did not call earlier, say at 9 o'clock, for the ante-room is already full, and each has to be shown into the Minister's cabinet according to the order of his arrival. You will have to wait perhaps half an hour, or maybe longer." With this he showed me into a waiting-room. It was an oblong apartment, with no windows and a flat toplight in opaque glass. The wall paper was of a dark olive-green pattern with a dusky yellow ground. There was no table; chairs and settees were stiffly ranged around the room, and nearly all of them were occupied. Although a big log fire blazed on the hearth some hot-air flues were open and rendered the atmosphere oppressive. On the centre of the tall mantel piece stood a bust of the Republic wearing a Phrygian cap. It was the only purely decorative object that I could see, and a very pleasing one it was. There was nothing conventional in the physiognomy but much life and piquancy. I thought of the grisette who sold the gloves to Laurence Sterne. Madame la République had a very impudent nose, slightly retroussé, and a mouth which nature had formed to chirrup at children and to say smart and amiable things to members of the rougher sex.

After I had taken a note of her peculiarities I looked round at my neighbors. Two of them were priests. I dare say they belonged to the College Stanislas, for they appeared intelligent and well-bred. The others were elderly men. Everything about them told me that they were pedagogues. A French schoolmaster has something in him which declares his profession. His path does not appear to have lain in pleasant places. The clothes are decent, but not well cut, and when he has a gray beard it not unfrequently happens that a violet ribbon decorates his buttonhole. An expression of timidity is in the eye. The poor fellow has had to be very wary. If he has been nearly independent of the fathers and mothers of pupils, he has been obliged to avoid giving offence to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the place in which his lot was cast, and yet to stand well with General Inspectors sent down from Paris. These gentlemen have often been in conflict with the bishops and other clergymen since 1879. But while ministers come and ministers go, the sacerdotal body does not stir. To obey cheerfully a ministerial circular might involve a quarrel. Not to appear to respect it might bring down a rebuff from an inspector. As I was observing and taking mental notes an electric bell rang, a door opposite to the one by which I entered was thrown open, and a general officer, who had been seeing M. Ferry, walked rapidly through the ante-room and disappeared. He looked neither to right nor left as he advanced. This military man was General Thibaudin, the War Minister. The old usher came in with a list and called out a name. A rather seedy-looking person answered to it. He was kept for less than five minutes, but this was the shortest of the audiences granted. Some of those who waited were received by the Minister's private secretary. An hour and a quarter elapsed before my turn came. Fortunately I had a volume of the pocket edition of Molière, which I read when I got tired of observing those around me.

The cabinet of M. Jules Ferry is a very big room, with three tall windows looking upon an extensive garden. If the large table-desk before which the Minister sat were taken away and some bric-à-brac placed on the consoles and mantel-piece, it would have the aspect of a drawing-room. The chairs and sofas are in dark carved wood and upholstered with ivy-green brocade. A Smyrna carpet hides the parquet. The bronze ornaments on the chimney piece are of a severe style. Some immense Sèvres vases furnish light notes in the decorative gamut. A portrait full-length, of M. Cousin in the robes of Grand Master of the University of France, hangs on the wall opposite to the hearth. Ary Scheffer was the painter. It is an interesting and valuable picture and the only one in the room. M. Jules Ferry sits with his back to the fireplace and his face toward the door by which his visitors enter. His desk is at the outer verge of an extensive hearth-rug. M. Ferry picks up flesh. He used to look his height, which is considerably above the French average stature, but now he appears less tall than he really is. He has wide shoulders and a deep chest. There is a good-natured and at the same time a shrewd expression in the face. His eyes participate in the action of the mouth when he smiles; they are dark brown. His nose is aquiline, depressed at the end and too fleshy to be Roman. The upper lip and chin are shaved. Both are firmly modelled and express character. M. Ferry is from the Vosges. He has a well-developed frontal sinus, but the upper part of the forehead retreats over-much. He is a man of observation and of action, but not of reflection.

We began with a lively conversation about the weather, the flower markets and the small picture expeditions; then we plunged into politics. M. Ferry asked me what England was going to do with Egypt. As I had seen during the Easter holidays leading members of the Liberal and Radical groups in the House of Commons, I answered that she was considerably embarrassed. The Gladstone Ministry would like to come away and leave Egypt to the Egyptians. But it could not do so at once. From what I had been told, Lord Dufferin's long exposé of the state of that country had not met with great favor. It contained suggestions which were not to the liking of the Radical wing of the Government, and which, if carried out, would meet with great opposition in the town constituencies. M. Jules Ferry asked why England did not return to the system of administration which had produced such excellent results between 1876 and the beginning of last year. My answer was because it terminated in Arabi's revolt and the Alexandria massacre. I said also that it had been too closely associated with Bourse and Stock Exchange interests for the English people to allow a return to it. The Control, under whatsoever form, had, I was assured, the bulk of honest public opinion in England against it, and was not to be thought of.

Clémenceau's speech, which upset the De Freycinet Government, was reverted to. M. Ferry blamed it, and spoke of its effects as being ruinous to French interests on the Nile. "And suppose," I asked, "it had never been delivered, what would now be the situation? Would it not be more than awkward? Would it not be dangerous? Would not France be exposed to the furious hostility of Italy and to the snubs of Turkey, which power would be strong in the support of Germany to insult you? Where (from a French point of view) the blunder was made was at Cairo and the Quai d'Orsay in 1881-'82. The blunderers were MM. de Blignières, Baron Ring and the Foreign Minister, who allowed himself to be dictated to by the *République Française*. Poor, great Gambetta committed the final blunder in bringing prematurely the national question to a head. Revolt was fomented by France in order to crush all opposition to the control of the European officials." M. Ferry responded: "What you say is perfectly true. Our action in 1881-'82 was premature. The situation we created was born before its time. It has become, alas! a source of embarrassment to everybody, and to Gladstone more than to anybody else. I cannot help seeing that, and I have the frankness to own it."

We then conversed about Tunis. Measures are being taken to provide that State with a French administration. M. Ferry is of opinion that all French money sunk in it, whether by the Government of the Republic or by private individuals, will return a large profit. He did not anticipate opposition from any of the great Powers save one, and