SWEETNESS AND LIGHT.

GREAT COMMOTION IN CHICAGO.

THE CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE.

"MR. ARNOLD'S" OBSERVATIONS—A SOLID BASIS OF PHILISTINISM—A VARNISH OF CULTURE.

Reprinted from The Tribune of April 6.

LONDON, April 5, 1884.

Mr. Arnold begins the publication in *The Pall Mall Journal* of a series of papers embodying some of his impressions of American life. The first paper deals with Chicago, and will undoubtedly provide the inhabitants of that city with much food for reflection.

I remember reading in *The Saturday Review* some ten years ago a statement to the effect that in Chicago might be seen "the concentrated essence of Americanism." This remark happened to coincide with the opinion which I had already formed from other considerations, and the observations which I have made during my recent visit to America have only one to confirm its justice. For this reason I have chosen Chicago as the subject of the first of a series of articles in which it is my intention to record the impressions received while in the United States. Many of these impressions are of a fleeting, and all of them of a fragmentary character, and yet I have thought that they might throw a few rays of light upon the intricate problem presented by the civilization of the largest of English colonies, and that from them there might perhaps follow one or two of these leading principles of which criticism is ever in search.

"If we would really know our heart, let us impartially view our actions." I trust that I shall not too far tax the forbearance of Mr. Frederic Harrison by once more quoting from that most estimable of writers, Bishop Wilson. That which most impressed me during my stay in Chicago, as well as in the other American cities of the larger sort which I visited, was a certain assumption of culture, which upon close observation I found to be very superficially varnished over a very solid basis of Philistinism. This affectation of concern for the things of the spirit, which may very easily be seen to be nothing more than an affectation, is chiefly observed in its æsthetic aspect. Of ethical culture there is hardly any pretence. From sheer stress of habit the members of the clergy dispense from the pulpit their weekly modicum of diluted moralities, and from sheer force of fashion the more respectable classes of the population give apparent heed to what is said to them. But it would be safe to say that the condition of the trade in tinned meats, or in pork or in grain, has the largest share of their thoughts even during the hour of ostensible devotion. The inevitable curse of the money-getting spirit is writ large, as it were, in the action of this population of half a million souls. It is an easy matter to know the heart of such a community as this, when its actions are so open to the view of all men. As an illustration of the slight extent to which Englishmen of reputation are generally known in America, I may mention an amusing incident which happened in Chicago. I was conversing with an intelligent gentleman of commercial pursuits, and in the course of what was said I took occasion to remark that Mr. Herbert Spencer had lately been in America. My friend seemed a little surprised at first, and then said: "Oh, yes, he came back from Europe last summer." I learned upon further inquiry that reference was made to a Mr. Hibbard Spencer, who is a Chicago tradesman, engaged, I believe, in the iron business, and who had recently made a summer trip to Europe. I trust I may be pardoned if I relate also in connection with this a little thing about myself which I found quite as amusing as the one just mentioned. I was conversing with a lady who was kind enough to tell me that she had read my works and greatly admired them. I expressed my gratification at learning that the ideas of sweetness and light of which I have humbly endeavored to become an exponent had been so kindly received in this distant place, and ventured to ask which of my works she honored with her preference. A little to my surprise she mentioned "Tom Brown at Rugby" and "The Light of Asia."

But to take the matter more seriously, I gave myself the pains to ask a large number of the apparently cultivated people with whom I came in contact, whether they had read "Obermann." As the result of these inquiries I must state the melancholy fact that to all but one of those questioned, the name was wholly unfamiliar, and this one understood me as referring to a gentleman of that name who is the proprietor of a chemist's shop in Chicago. I do not know of any other little thing connected with my stay in America which gave me such a sense of the crudeness of American culture. What another alchemy was that of the author of "Obermann," than the art practised by the Chicago chemist in his daily dispensations!

During my stay in Chicago, I attended a very pleasant little reception given by the Literary Club of that city. I call it the Literary Club because that is the name by which it is known, and not in any way to imply that in so large a city as Chicago there is but one society of that character. I should judge, indeed, that there must be many similar nuclei of persons who are sufficiently released from the demands of the pushing business life of the city to be thus drawn together by the bond of culture, and as far as my recollection serves me, the greater number of the persons of literary pursuits whom I had the pleasure of meeting were not included among the members of the particular association of which I am speaking. This evening afforded me a curious illustration of that combination in the person of the individual, of business ability and cultured tastes which I so often had occasion to note while in the States. A pleasant little paper on the subject of Philistinism was read, and as the subject is one in which I have taken some interest, I naturally gave it close attention, for which I felt fully repaid. Wishing to learn the profession of the gentleman who had so intelligently handled the subject, I made inquiry of a friend, who informed me that the essayist was the owner of a large grocery business. I learned also upon making further inquiry, that besides members of the clergy and of the legal profession, whom I should naturally expect to find in such a society as this, there was a very large element consisting of successful tradesmen, such as mercers, iron-mongers and packers, which latter term is applied to dealers in the class of food products derived from the hog.

I was especially interested when at Chicago, as I was throughout my stay in America, in observing the various religious bodies, and in trying to get some insight into their spiritual life. It is quite unnecessary to say that in a country where there is no established church, there can be no such demarcation between the Dissenters and the members of the Church of England as exists in our own country. The mode of worship of the Dissenters has about it that bareness which is noticeable in England, but this may be seen to an almost equal degree in the bodies of non-dissenters. I attended one Sunday morning the chapel in which services are conducted by one of the most popular of the dissenting ministers of Chicago. The chapel was really nothing else than the large hall in which most of the more important concerts and lectures are given, and in which I had myself lectured but a few nights before. The audience in attendance upon this service seemed to be made up of a well-to-do and intelligent class of people, and I afterward learned that regular attendance here stands in Chicago as a sign of cultured tastes. So when afterward I tried to put my recollections together in some sort of order, I came to the conclusion that from all I had heard I should be justified in assuming the tone of these services to be fairly typical of the ideal of culture prevailing in Chicago. Here, I must confess, I was disappointed. I heard so much of the language of culture in the higher classes of Chicago society, that I was almost prepared to admit that I had been unjustly prejudiced in the statements which I have made from time to time concerning America, but if the discourse to which I listened on the morning of which I speak stands in any way as an expression of the Chicago ideal of culture, that ideal is, I regret to say, a low one. I shall venture to say that it is chiefly lacking in definition of aim, and yet, alas, I know how little right I have to indulge in such a criticism, for have I not been accused of being sadly to seek, myself, in "a philosophy with coherent, interdependent, subordinate and derivative principles." There was something quite pathetic to me in the thought that this discourse, with its dreary waste of unctuous commonplace, its diluted rhetoric and its judgments, many of them so ludicrously misconceived, should be to such an audience as I saw about me the embodiment of cultured thought, and from time to time I could not help thinking that Philistinism in its frank English expression was a less unpleasant sight than was afforded by the thinly-disguised Philistinism which was here imposing on itself and making pretence of culture.

Chicago society, I should say, although no one can be more painfully aware than myself of how inadequate were my opportunities for observation, has just reached that stage of its development at which the incompleteness of the commercial ideal of life is beginning to make itself keenly felt, and is somewhat uncertainly groping in search of the larger and finer things whose existence it dimly apprehends. But it has not yet reached the stage of clear discernment and is easily satisfied with the appearance of culture, even if the substance be wanting. Its great commercial success has given it, moreover, a certain impatience of temper which makes it incapable of going to work in the right way to acquire that of which it is just beginning to feel the need. A society that has lived in the flesh, so to speak, for so long, cannot at once and naturally come to live in the spirit. The change of heart which is the condition of the working out of such a change of life must be a gradual one. The prevailing attitude of Chicago society toward things of culture has about it an air of patronage. It seems to say: "These things are desirable, and we will make them the fashion." All that need be done is to build costly chapels, to purchase expensive pictures, to make the concert and the opera places of fashionable resort. How different is this from the humble attitude of the one who recognizes the real significance of culture and who knows that to be genuine it must grow up silently with the life of "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation." Nor, I fear, will the sweetness and the light of cultured life come to Chicago at the beck of the rich man.

Yet it would be ungracious of me to close these random observations without saying that the general aspects of society in Chicago, as it appeared to me, are very far from being aspects of much of the individual life with which I came in contact. Were I to base my criticism upon Chicago life as it was presented to me in the persons of the delightful friends whom I made while there, or in their charming homes, my picture would be a very different one.

THE AGONY THAT FOLLOWED.

AN EDITORIAL SCREECH.

From The Chicago Tribune.

The strictures of Mr. Matthew Arnold upon the social life of Chicago show him to be a very mean man; the manner of his strictures shows that he possesses neither "the sweetness" nor "the light" upon which he sets such store. We have no fault to find with his charge that Chicago society only affects and patronizes culture. It is true to a great extent. There is an affectation and a pretension to culture upon the part of a certain few, but it is harmless and soon dissipates itself in brie-a-brac and encyclopædias. So far as the main charge is concerned, that could be easily borne, because it is true of all large cities in this country, and the affectation is not unknown in London among a clique with Mr. Arnold at one extremity, Oscar Wilde at the other, and the Greek pair, Mr. and Mrs. Hawes, in the middle, who do not let their culture "grow up silently with the life," but proclaim it with offensive egotism and cherish it with Pharisaic exclusiveness. It is the manner of Mr. Arnold's strictures that gives offence. It is the thinly-covered malice that betrays him and shows the apostle of "sweetness and light" to be made of very common clay, and not above taking petty revenge even at the expense of those qualities which usually commend a man to the society of his fellows, and in violation of those canons of hospitality which even the Arab respects.

It is now unquestioned that Mr. Arnold's mission to this country was a failure. The most conspicuous locality of that failure was Chicago. Had he not been gratuitously entertained while here, had not his expenses been paid for him, his lecture profits would hardly have paid the board bills of the apostle of sweetness and light, his family, and the dog. It was not the fault of Philistinism, however, so much as unfortunate competition, as it happened that during the week of his engagement a countryman of his, with a still keener scent for the American dollar, and travelling under the special patronage of her Majesty, had outbid the literary huckster and offered a show which was more attractive to "the mercers, ironmongers and packers," whose money Mr. Arnold failed to get. Hence it is not strange that Chicago should come in for the hardest of the abuse. The malice which vents itself upon Chicago as a whole also shows itself in personalities. Matthew Arnold has a right to his opinions of Professor Swing, but one cannot help wondering if he would have expressed his views so freely, or if he would have had such views at all, if Professor Swing had not first criticised him publicly, and if he had not attended upon the Professor's Sunday services and witnessed two or three thousand interested people listening to the Professor in the same hall where two or three hundred bored people had listened a few evenings before to the great Matthew Arnold, of England, apostle of sweetness and light.

Mr. Arnold says: "The inevitable curse of the money-getting spirit is writ large, as it were, in the action of this population of half a million souls. It is an easy matter to know the heart of such a community as this, when its actions are so open to the view of all men." By the same token, it is not difficult to read Mr. Arnold and to know his heart when his actions were so open to view. Mr. Arnold came to this country for American dollars, and to make sure of them he intrusted himself to a manager who had made a great many of those same dollars for his employers with "Pinafore" and other shows. If "Pinafore" could make money, why not the great English apostle under the same management? The money-getting spirit was large and cunning in Mr. Arnold. To get all he could out of the Philistines and to spend as little as he could among them was his policy, but he only succeeded in one direction. He spent very little, but he got very little. His stay in the cities where he lectured cost him nothing. He was ticketed from place to place like a pedagogue boarding round or a good Methodist brother in attendance upon the General Conference, the hosts not expecting other compensation than such gleams of sweetness and light as he might be pleased to bestow upon them, and not always receiving even that. He spent not a dollar more than he could help in this country. There was no "affectation of concern for the things of the spirit" in Mr. Arnold's American tour. There was no concealment of the financial ideal even though its display might involve the amenities of social life, the canons of hospitality, or the proprieties of courtesy. He was a Philistine among Philistines without either sweetness or light. He had the desire for the money-getting without the capacity to gratify it, but this did not mitigate the keenness of the desire. He had the competition of Mr. Mapleson on the one hand and Mr. Irving on the other who took the lion's share, but he followed bravely along and gleaned, if not with the sweetness of Ruth, at least with a closeness to the ground that would have astonished both her and the lord of the harvest.

He went back to England a failure. He was a failure in his manager as a lecturer. His lectures had failed to make the impression he had expected. He had been a social disappointment, and many times vexation to a degree that strained the limits of courteous toleration. He returned with but $6,000 of the Philistines' money in his pockets. From that standpoint of view it is not surprising perhaps that he regards us with dislike, and Chicago with the most dislike, because in this city he made no money at all. But one is disposed to wonder what he might have said if he had gone back with as rich a treasure-trove as Mr. Irving found there. Would he not have written about us with surprising sweetness and regarded us all as children of light, even those of us who are "mercers, ironmongers, and packers, which latter term is applied to dealers in the class of food products derived from the hog?"

ANOTHER.

From The Chicago Inter-Ocean.

His talk had the usual disgusting insolence characteristic of people who think it aristocratic to pay politeness with impudence and courtesy with impudence. No British loon on Villard's railway excursion, trying to get all the expenditure he could out of Villard, and at the same time to perform the morning ablutions half dressed in the presence of ladies, ever showed the cockiness of the hog next his natural skin any more emphatically than the gawk and literary dude Matthew Arnold.

MR. ARNOLD A PROVINCIAL THINKER.

From The Chicago Inter-Ocean.

It seems that we are Philistines all. Even the fastidious gentleman who seem to be the embodiment of culture have in reality only a thin veneering of Mr. Arnold's specialty. He would like us better if we made no effort in that direction, but were delightfully barbaric in taste and manners. It is a sort of impertinence, he seems to think, in an American, especially a Chicagoan, to be a disciple of "sweetness and light." "Mercers, ironmongers and packers," the latter being, according to his dictionary, "dealers in that class of food products derived from the hog," and tradesmen generally, should aspire to nothing above their daily vocation. To make intelligence, or their avocation is quite preposterous. Their leisure should be spent in dining, drinking or some kindred pastime remote from the preserves of culture.

As a general thing the local news not gleaned by the ubiquitous Chicago reporter is not worth knowing, but for once the press of this city had to go abroad for a local item. That Mr. Arnold was received by the Chicago Literary Club was announced at the time, but what occurred on the occasion was not reported. Some newspaper men were present by members of the guild, but they observed the proprieties of the occasion. It was as private as a family character, and Mr. Arnold convicts himself of a serious breach of the amenities of hospitality in rushing into print. It seems, according to this amateur Boswellian, that in the felicitations of that occasion something was said about Philistinism. Three speeches were made, including the formal welcome extended to the guest by the president of the club. One of these, to the evident astonishment of the gentleman from abroad, fell from the lips of a grocer. No name is given, but it must have been none other than Franklin McVeagh, a graduate of Yale College. Mr. Arnold could not conceal his amazement at the prominence given a tradesman, or at the cultured eloquence of the remarks made. The smell of sugar and spices was offensive to his olfactories, but the exquisite refinement of the gentleman was irresistibly fascinating. No doubt some very agreeable personal references were made.

It would be difficult to conceive of a more provincial thinker than Matthew Arnold. With all his pretensions to culture he measures everything by the ideas which prevail in the set to which he belongs. The circle in which he lives, moves and has his existence is no doubt culture's hallowed sphere, but it sustains to the republic of letters about the same relation that San Marino does to France or the United States. The refinement of thought and its expression which does not conform exactly to his standard is to be condemned without hope of reprieve.

A PODSNAPPIAN CRUSHER.

From The Chicago Journal.

Matthew Arnold says, in order to test American culture, he asked many if they had read "Obermann"—a poem of his, published some years ago—and to his great astonishment he found that hardly anybody had ever even heard of "Obermann." Now, if the reading of Mr. Arnold's books, some of which are as heavy as lead, is a test of one's "culture," we fear the number of cultivated people is exceedingly small, even in his own country. We can conceive that there may be some very cultured people in the world, both in Europe and America, who have not even heard of the existence of such an individual as Matthew Arnold.

"DISGRUNTLED."

From The Chicago Inter-Ocean.

Matthew Arnold is disgruntled, and proceeds to rub his sores in public. Upon his recent visit to Chicago his audiences were somewhat slim, from the fact that there was great rival opera companies were offering greater attractions than lectures on "Sweetness and Light." But notwithstanding this he had fair audiences. But two dollar or dreadier lectures had not been delivered during the year. His affected and indolent manner was generally commented upon. No single person who heard the first had any desire to hear his second lecture. But he was a distinguished stranger and was treated with courtesy. Upon his arrival he was driven to one of the most hospitable and cultivated homes on the North Side. How he treats such courtesies can best be seen from his vulgar article written for *The Pall Mall Gazette*. If Matthew had stuffed into his breeches pocket a thousand more good dollars than he did as a result of his lectures we doubt not but that it would have had a marked effect upon his estimate of "the culture of Chicago."

IGNORANT OF CHICAGO'S INNER LIFE.

From The Chicago Journal.

Mr. Matthew Arnold is writing a series of papers for a London periodical, giving his impressions of America. It is amusing to note in what a very short time and under what very superficial circumstances these English tourists and writers master all there is of American and American life and character, and how quick they are to write them out for publication at home. Chicago is the theme of Mr. Arnold's last paper, and of course dude like, he sneers at Chicago's "culture," and social life"—of which he had scarcely any opportunity to form an intelligent judgment, except from what he chanced to see or hear at the public hotel, in the public street, and in a public hall.

It is fair to state that Mr. Matthew Arnold is, as a matter of fact, as ignorant to-day of Chicago's inner and better life as he was before he spent less than twenty-four waking hours in looking at its brick and stone walls or in interviewing less than half a score of its representative men. Indeed, it is fair to say that Mr. Matthew Arnold is as incapable of passing a correct judgment upon Chicago in any respect whatever since his brief visit here as he was before he had ever seen the city. His pretended criticism is simply a piece of impertinent presumption. He might as well undertake to describe the machinery and the elaborate structure of a steam-engine after taking a very hasty glance at the exterior of the boiler in which the motive-power is generated, as to undertake to pass judgment upon Chicago's intellectual and social characteristics after the exceedingly meagre opportunities he had of forming an intelligent opinion of anybody or anything whatever in Chicago.

The disgusting self-conceit and egotism of Mr. Arnold, as exhibited in his paper on Chicago, as in other of his writings, do not mark him as a man of very refined culture or of very nice sensibilities, and Chicago and Chicago's people need not feel badly at being sneered at by one who is himself evidently lacking in the first and best elements of genuine culture. He is a man of intellect, no doubt, but his case is not the first example of the fact that it is possible even for a man of intellect to be a vulgarian.

WOULD NOT DO SO UNGRACIOUS A THING.

From an Interview in The Chicago Tribune.

"The utterance, you may say, is a surprise to me," said General A. C. McClurg last night. "I am unable to reconcile it with anything I saw of Mr. Arnold while here. While a guest at my house for nearly ten days I had the best of opportunity to study the man. He seemed thoroughly pleased with the people he met here, and was so charitable and generous in all his judgments that I had concluded that he had been unjustly treated in those instances where he had met with adverse criticism. To me he seemed entirely free from harsh judgments and took lightly and easily many things that would have annoyed almost any one. In view of these facts I am wholly unable to reconcile this attack on our people with what I saw of the writer during his stay here. The article, as presented to us, is evidently an abstract or a condensation, and I prefer to withhold my judgment until I see the original over his own signature."

"It sounds like Mr. Arnold, does it not?" the reporter asked.

"The style is his beyond a doubt," was the reply; "but some changes may have been made by which the tone of the article was changed. There are some things in what we have of the article that could hardly be relieved by palliating statements elsewhere, but it is only fair that I should wait until I see the whole article in *The Pall Mall Gazette* before undertaking to criticise it. I am not yet prepared to believe that Mr. Arnold deliberately insulted the whole city by that article."

"Did he give you to understand that he intended to criticise the city in any way?"

"No; on the contrary, he said expressly that he would do nothing of the kind. I remember that one day while at dinner some one spoke of Lord Coleridge and suggested incidentally that it would be the proper thing for the lord to record his impressions in a book on his return to his native land. Mr. Arnold laid with some warmth that it was the last thing Lord Coleridge could do, and that it would be a most ungracious thing to do after the peculiarly kind treatment he had received all over this country, and that it would be a most ungracious thing. Some one else who did not agree with him said he hoped Mr. Arnold would do it, as he was anxious to read what he had to say of us. Mr. Arnold held both hands above his head and made a deprecating gesture as he vehemently stated that nothing could be more foreign to his purpose, and that he would under no circumstances write such a book."

"What do the people to whom you introduced your guest during his stay here say of the matter?" the reporter asked.

"I have received a great many calls to-day from persons in relation to the matter. My office has been thronged all day, and there is but one opinion among them. They think the article utterly unpardonable and in the worst possible taste. While I say I shall wait for the original I shall not be disposed to defend the writer if I find his observations were properly quoted. If the article as it has been presented to us in this morning's *Tribune* has been given one new meaning in its condensation, I cannot see how Mr. Arnold can well excuse himself. My first impression on reading it was to write him a letter, but I have concluded to wait for the original. The fact that he speaks well of the hospitality with which he was received shows that he is not without some conscience."

"How about his treatment of Professor Swing?"

"The language accredited to Mr. Arnold in this article could not have been called forth by anything I heard there. It is altogether too severe. But don't let me say too much until I know what the man's language actually is. I desire to read it above his own signature."

THEY DON'T THINK MUCH OF HIM.

From The Chicago Journal.

It is to be regretted, perhaps, that Mr. Matthew Arnold has not a very high opinion of those of Chicago's people whom he seems to regard as representative, but it may be that the dislike is mutual, and that our folks do not think very much of Mr. Arnold. As he has embraced the first opportunity to let us and all the world know just in what esteem or contempt he holds us, we hope he will not consider it an impertinence if some of our citizens shall say precisely what they think of him. Mr. Arnold's small audiences in this city were not at all flattering to his vanity, especially when he compared them with the one he saw at Professor Swing's church, and it may be a feeling of jealousy that induced him to speak so disparagingly of that reverend gentleman. The fact is, as a man of solid brains, Professor Swing is the superior of Matthew Arnold, and, besides, he has the good sense and the good taste not to parade his egotistical self-sufficiency before the world, as Arnold delights to do.

DID THEY NOURISH A VIPER?

From a letter in The Chicago Tribune.

Mr. Matthew Arnold, the apostle from the land of snobbery, records as the most melancholy proof of the utter absence of culture in this Western country that the few gentlemen of Chicago of whom he asked, "Have you read 'Obermann'?" had never read it. Mr. Arnold himself, however, in a note to his poem, "Obermann," states: "Senancour is little known in France, his own country, and out of France he is almost unknown." And Mr. Saintsbury, in his sketch of French literature, characterizes Senancour as a weak moralist who echoes the thought of Rousseau. Is this the sole test to decide our culture or Philistinism?

In Chicago there has been hoisted no pennant with emblazoned assuming stars of culture, but we have a standard of etiquette floating above us. We expect those who receive our entertainment will return us graciousness, but this expectation rapidly grows smaller and beautifully less the more that English celebrities rub against us.

All well, if Mr. Arnold's mission is to show "light" solely, but does he not call himself also an apostle of "sweetness"? The Chicago Literary Club threw wide its doors to receive and entertain him, it showed him affection and esteem, it brought tears to his eyes by affecting remarks recalling memories of his loved father. Yesterday in his article in *The Tribune* are critical slights, one day in his article in *The Tribune* are critical slights, alone, for such in characteristic English good taste. Does he believe the Chicago Literary Club is a dog who loves his master all the more for a few kicks?

More pointed than this attack, however, are Mr. Arnold's brutal thrusts at a beloved and cultured clergyman who had entertained Mr. Arnold and his family here. A like rudeness the commonest Chicago "fish monger" would blush to bear his "pork-mercer" (?) brother had committed.

Have we "nourished a viper?" Evidently the little appreciation felt in this country for Mr. Arnold as a lecturer had the criticism which our press has passed upon him has embittered that sweet soul and tarnished that serene eye.

THEY DON'T LIKE HIM NOW.

From The Chicago Tribune.

Mr. Arnold has evidently not forgotten the small audiences which greeted his presence in this city, and has a livelier imagination than most people have hitherto credited to him. It is unlucky for everybody that Matthew Arnold came to America at all. He had many admirers on this side of the water before his advent. Very few Americans like him now.

"MR. ARNOLD" ALL RIGHT; CHICAGO ALL WRONG.

From The Chicago Times.

Though Mr. Matthew Arnold's published comments on certain supposed types of Chicago culture are not manifestations of remarkably good taste, there is much more than a grain of wholesome truth in them. And the best evidence of this is furnished in the abundant bad taste, to say nothing of the bad temper, that has been displayed by a number of persons who come forward with confessions that they have been hit, and hurt, by the shafts plumed by the too critical apostle of "sweetness and light."

What rather plainly appears, but no more plainly in the comments of Mr. Arnold on Chicago culture than in those of Chicago culture on Mr. Arnold, is that the apostle of sweetness and light was rather unfortunate, at least in some instances, in respect of the representatives of culture and "gentlemanliness of mind" that came under his immediate observation.

OH! OH! "THE WAILS OF TOADIES."

From The Chicago Times.

The great city of Chicago is not deeply affected by the chagrin of a few toadies who obtruded themselves upon Matthew Arnold as representatives of the city's best culture. Mr. Arnold's inference from what he saw is unjust to the intelligent and unpretentiously cultured portion of society that he did not see, but an even more courteous man might have been misled by some of those he met, and Chicago will attend to its "tinned meats" and other flourishing industries but little disturbed by his criticisms and not greatly distressed over the wails of the persons who feel hurt.

STILL ANOTHER WICKED AUTHOR.

From The Chicago Journal.

If the article in question is a hoax, *The Journal* believes that it would put its hand upon the shoulder of the man who perpetrated the fraud by slapping upon the back the individual—a Chicago expreacher, ex-journalist and lecturer—who some years ago successfully perpetrated a similar hoax on the public by publishing an alleged letter from Thomas Carlyle, indignantly rejecting the tender of an honorary degree of LL.D. from Harvard College. The Carlyle letter was so characteristically in that great writer's peculiar style and temper that it deceived even those who were most familiar with his writings, and the same may be said of the alleged Arnold production.

A SHEDDER OF NITRIC ACID AND CHINESE MUSK

From The Chicago Inter-Ocean.

If Matthew Arnold had not scattered acidity and shadow instead of sweetness and light upon every subject he touched while in America, and if he had not won his previous reputation, such as it is, by saying acrid things, the *Pall Mall Journal* article would not have found such ready credit throughout America, and Matthew Arnold would not have had his books written up and the balance struck against him so peremptorily. The law of ethics, which applies in such cases, is that whoso shedderh nitric acid and Chinese musk on mankind in the name of fragrancy and molasses, by mankind shall his wool be gently lathered with tar.

IN A LITTLE TEMPER.

From The Rochester Democrat.

How so many newspapers from Chicago to Boston should have been deceived by the article said to have been written by Matthew Arnold and published in *The Pall Mall Journal*, criticising American civilization as exhibited in the Queen City of the West, can only be explained upon the theory that its charges against the American people are well founded. A more impudent, unskilful and feeble literary fraud was never perpetrated. Only the dullest intellect of Mr. Arnold's writings, and the most heedless perusal of the article itself, could have led any one to suppose for a moment that it was the genuine production of the apostle of sweetness and light.

External evidence alone should have aroused the suspicion of the victims of the vulgar imposture. In the first place, it purported to be from the columns of *The Pall Mall Journal*. There is no such paper in the world. There is a *Pall Mall Gazette*. *The Boston Advertiser* and *The Chicago Tribune*, thinking that some mistake had been made in the transmission of the article by cable, credited it to *The Pall Mall Gazette*. They seemed to have thought that Mr. Arnold was unprincipled enough to disregard his assertions made before he sailed home that he did not intend to write any articles or books on his visit to the United States.

The internal evidence of imposture does not seem to have struck with the slightest effect the minds of these two able representatives of Eastern and Western culture and civilization. Save the use of the words culture and Philistinism, which by the way do not have the meaning that Mr. Arnold attaches to them, there is nothing in the article to suggest the clear-cut, incisive, sparkling, robust style and thought of the great English essayist. From first to last it is feeble, flabby, incoherent and grossly egotistical. The attempt to analyze our civilization is impotent and ludicrous. The writer started out to find "one or two of those leading principles of which criticism is ever in search," but he forgot his aim, if he ever had any, as he dawdled along, and closed with a sickly piece of taffy, with which he supposed that he would be able to counteract in some degree the effect of his imbecile remarks upon the infuriated Chicagoans. How well he succeeded may be judged by the columns of editorial and epistolary abuse that the Chicago papers heap upon the head and shoulders of Matthew Arnold.

Can any one believe for a moment that Matthew Arnold wrote such commonplace "rot" as this? that he used the word "dispense" in the sense of preaching? that he combined the adjective "diluted," with the substantive "rhetoric" and produced a phrase that is destitute of any exact meaning? that he stole from the penny-a-liner's phraseology such a verbal combination as "writ large, as it were"? If any one can, he must attribute to Mr. Arnold the inexact writing and the silly efforts at witticism of a miserable scribbler. Judging from the fabricator's mention of "tinned meats," "pork," and "grain," he must be the market reporter on some metropolitan journal.

Possibly this market reporter has heard of Mr. Arnold; possibly he has read three or four pages of his nine volumes of essays and poems, but not more; for he has not the remotest idea of Mr. Arnold's conception of culture and Philistinism. He does not seem to know that Mr. Arnold never talks about "the things of culture." The apostle of sweetness and light always speaks of culture itself, and by culture he means familiarity with the best that has been thought and said in the world, a capacity to receive new ideas, assimilate them and act upon them. Philistinism is just the reverse of this. It means not only ignorance and stupidity but indisposition to become emancipated from ignorance and stupidity. The Philistine is impervious to new ideas. He loathes and abhors them. But such a creature Mr. Arnold did not, according to the article in question, find in Chicago. The members of the literary club, where he heard "a pleasant little paper" on "Philistinism," seemed to be anxious to get new ideas. Although they were "successful traders," as he found out by inquiry, that fact does not, as the fabricator seemed to think when he wrote his article, make them Philistines.

But there is little need of carrying the analysis of the article any further or point out that the author does not know how Mr. Arnold uses the English language. There is little need, either, of endeavoring to refute the story that Mr. Arnold went about Chicago or anywhere else seeking people if they had read "Obermann" and concluding from their ignorance of it that they were Philistines. The story itself is its own refutation. Mr. Arnold's standard of culture is not familiarity with a book that is almost unknown outside of France.

NO MATTER ABOUT THE GROCERY.

From The Syracuse Standard.

There was a time when Americans were exceedingly sensitive of the observations of Englishmen who made free of their hospitality and went back to England and sneered at them. That time, however, is past; and Mr. Arnold's contributions to *The Pall Mall Journal* will not cause much excitement. There is only one thing in the first column of impressions which we care to notice just now. It is devoted to Chicago, and it recalls an evening at a literary club, where a pleasant little paper on "the subject of Philistinism was read"; and Mr. Arnold admits that he was much interested in it. Upon inquiry as to the calling of the writer he was informed—as he tells this the British guest can easily be seen with single glass in eye and nostril elevated—"that the essayist was the owner of a large grocery business." Well, what of it? If the paper was good, did the grocery business make it worse? If it were any other than an æsthetic evangelist who told this, some people might say that the man who turned up his nose at the grocer was a "snob" or a "cad," or what do they call it, you know?

A PROBABLY TRUE CRITICISM.

From The Buffalo Express.

We do not see why any one should be angry about it. What Mr. Arnold says of American want of culture is probably true. We are not all up to the Arnold standard, and we do not profess to be. There are probably even in Buffalo people who do not know much about Obermann. But we are not above learning, even from the man who enjoys our hospitality, takes our money, and then says severe things of us. That Mr. Arnold himself could learn anything of America is probably too much to hope.

HE SHOULD VISIT OSHKOSH.

From The Buffalo Express.

Matthew Arnold has weighed Chicago in his "sweetness and light" balance, and finds it decidedly light weight. Its culture is superficial, and butchered hogs rule higher there than the divine afflatus. Matthew should visit Oshkosh before proceeding to sit on the country in any wholesale way.

WHO IS OBERMANN?

From The Buffalo Express.

Who can quietly pass around a little information about Obermann? He is a druggist in Chicago and a cigar-dealer in New-York. But he must be something else to Matthew Arnold. But what, who can tell?

WHAT HE THOUGHT ABOUT IT AT FIRST, WITH INCIDENTAL REFERENCE TO HIS OWN SAGACITY.

From The Buffalo Courier of April 9.

The people who are surprised at Matthew Arnold's account of Chicago evidently know very little about the man. Without doubt he found there a thin veneering of culture over a solid base of Philistinism, and as a matter of course he says so. The world expects him to give his impressions of America, and he will give them quietly, plainly and honestly. They will not be diluted with lies or mere compliments, and they will not be embittered by prejudice or hatred. They will be the perfect, because Arnold saw but a small part of America to and saw it hastily, but they will be worth the study of our people as far as they go. Arnold took no pains to make himself popular while he was here, and we feel tempted to repeat on this point what we said at the close of last December: "It is the habit of the man to be simple, straightforward and honest; and he told the truth to a people who like to be coaxed and deceived. The first thing he did after he landed was to declare that New-York audiences on the doctrine that the majority is always in the wrong, and that the only hope of the race is the mere remnant of the wise and virtuous. In a word, he attacked the fundamental idea of our Government. Of course there was a fallacy in his argument, and his main conclusion was wrong, as often happens with him; but, as always happens with him, he illustrated his argument with numberless side truths, presented quaintly and forcibly, and leavened the whole matter with the sincerity of a scholar. What he said was worthy of the study of the nation; but we chose to take it as coming from a politician, not a thinker. He becomes in the popular eyes the man who hates republicanism instead of the man who loves truth. He followed up this piece of honest gaucherie by going to Boston, where he had every reason to expect a strong literary coterie would rally round him, and there lecturing on Democracy with a judicial calmness that might become a critic of the next century, if critics will think. It worth while to lecture about the sage of Concord a hundred years from now. This was like spitting in the high priest's beard; and Arnold lost the support of New-England culture. He was treated politely, but all enthusiastic partisanship disappeared as it struck by a sheet of black lightning. As he did not descend to cant or calolery while he was among us, there is no reason to suppose that he will resort to either now that he has returned home. We regret that Arnold did not see more of America, but that part of it which he did see stands in the worst need of a little discriminating and fearless criticism and seems likely to get a salutary dose of it.

WHAT HE THINKS ABOUT IT NOW.

From The Buffalo Courier of April 10.

The letter itself purported to be the work of Matthew Arnold, and it was not published in THE TRIBUNE on the first of April, or quoted from a paper published on that day, but from one said to be published on April 5. We confess that if the letter was not written by Arnold, it contained opinions very like what we supposed his would be. If the letter was forged the man who wrote it is a clever fellow; but the journalist who printed it as original has advertised his natural bent toward deception so extensively that his utility as a campaign liar will be greatly impaired for several years to come.

NO ONE IN CHICAGO KNOWS.

From The Chicago Journal.

Matthew Arnold telegraphs that the article on Chicago attributed to him is a hoax. That settles the matter, and Chicago resumes the even tenor of her way. The hoax originated in New-York, and the author is unknown. The claim that it was concocted for instruction in a Chicago newspaper circle is a very cheap advertising dodge. No one in Chicago knows anything about its origin.

IS THIS A HUMORIST?

From The Hartford Courant.

THE NEW-YORK TRIBUNE printed, April 6, what purported to be Mr. Arnold's impressions of Chicago, written to *The Pall Mall Journal*. Many newspapers supposing that *Journal* was one of the ordinary imprints in THE TRIBUNE, and that *Gazette* was intended, accepted the paper as genuine—especially as the time for April fool jokes had gone by. It seemed incredible that Mr. Arnold would have commented on Chicago people in that fashion after receiving their hospitality, but it was almost more incredible that a newspaper of high character would indulge in such a hoax—a personal hoax, not creditable to American journalism, under all the circumstances of Mr. Arnold's visit. THE TRIBUNE'S confession of its imposition can hardly overtake and counteract its grave imputation on Mr. Arnold's good sense. It has voluntarily put itself into the list of newspapers whose news must be suspected.

A SAD WASTE.

From The Buffalo Express.

Can it be that it was all a hoax. . . . If this is true, Chicago has wasted a lot of Billingsgate that might have better served a better occasion.

KNOWS ANOTHER; MAN THAT DID IT, AND GENTLY REBUKES HIM.

From The Utica Herald.

As the truth dawns on the various and able journals which have fallen victims to THE TRIBUNE'S belated April joke their feelings and utterances may be imagined, but not described—in print. The paper was written in THE TRIBUNE office; this much is admitted. And we make no doubt the writer was W. H. McElroy, whose "Brazilian Diamond Wedding," perpetrated a decade ago through the columns of *The Albany Journal*, had a wonderful "run," and loaded the mails for years with letters to the mythical Brazilian, asking of his untold wealth a little here and there for less favored humanity. But while freely according it all the commendation its cleverness merits as a fiction or a joke or a literary effort or imitation of Matthew Arnold's style, we cannot think that Mr. McElroy's present effort to legitimate journalism. April fool jokes perpetrated six days after All Fool's Day has passed forfeit claim to that excuse. Nor can the use of the names and reputations of men, as in this case, be justified. Ability to deceive in cold blood is not confined to one person or paper. Not every man who has access to newspaper columns could equal Mr. McElroy's imaginary Arnold paper. But hundreds there are who could mislead the press and people.

KNOWS STILL ANOTHER LITTLE GAME ABOUT IT—THE PLOT THICKENS.

From The Detroit Post and Tribune.

At length the Editor of *The News* telegraphed to London inquiring as to its authenticity, and received the reply Tuesday evening that Mr. Arnold had "made no communication whatever to *The Pall Mall Gazette*."

That ended the first hoax clearly enough, and prepared the way for the second, for *The News* immediately discovered that it had been "setting up a job" on *The Tribune* for the purpose of exposing its dishonesty in pretending to have special cables from London when they were in fact only telegrams from New-York city containing matter already published in the papers there. *The News* of yesterday morning goes on to give a detailed account of its cunning scheme, saying that it "caused to be prep