HOLY WEEK IN SPAIN.

MEDIÆVAL IDEAS AND CUSTOMS—SCENES IN MADRID.

[FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

Madrid, April 5.

The aspect of Madrid, and in fact of all other Spanish cities, during the Holy Week is of a nature which carries one back to the middle ages. So curious are the various ceremonies which take place during the eight days preceding Easter that large parties of tourists, which this year include a number of well-known New-Yorkers, visit the Peninsula for the purpose of witnessing them. From Thursday evening until Sunday morning no carriage, cart, tramcar or omnibus is allowed in the streets. All the sentinels and troops when on duty carry their arms reversed, as if at a funeral, and the officers have crape on their sword-hilts and epaulettes. Women of all classes are dressed in sable hues, and wear the National mantilla. Music and the sound of bells is forbidden during the whole of the Passion Week. On Thursday, Friday, and Saturday strict fast is observed from one end of the country to the other, and during these three days more than 2,000 men, dressed in long white linen robes, with white linen veils, pierced with three holes for the mouth and eyes, drawn over their faces, patrol the streets of Madrid and Seville, carrying crosses and lighted wax-tapers in their hands, and chanting psalms.

On the last three days of Lent the Archbishop of Madrid, followed by hundreds of priests, walks in procession once a day through all the chief thoroughfares of the city, sprinkling holy water on the crowd assembled there, and praying in a loud tone of voice for the people. The procession, which is composed of monks, priests and members of various religious orders, is over two miles in length; and litters draped with gold embroidered red velvet bearing the wooden images of saints are carried by men hired for the purpose, who are gorgeously attired in mediæval costumes. In front march twenty-four monks, carrying on their shoulders the statue of Our Lady of Almudena, the patron saint of Madrid. This statue is literally ablaze with superb jewels, lent for the occasion by the Queen, and all the ladies of the aristocracy, who deem it an honor and a privilege to be allowed to send their most costly gems to adorn the image of the Virgin. On the head of the statue sparkles the Queen's crown, and around its neck, arms and ankles are string after string of priceless pearls, chains of enormous diamonds, collars of emeralds, sapphires and rubies, which fairly dazzle the eye as it is borne along in the brilliant Southern sunlight.

One of the strangest jewels which figure around the neck of Our Lady of Almudena is a ring which bears a curious connection to the misfortunes which have afflicted the royal house of Spain during the last two decades. It is a magnificent opal surrounded by diamonds. The late King, Alfonso XII, gave it to his cousin Mercedes when he was betrothed to her, and she wore it during the whole of her short married life. On her death the King presented it to his grandmother, the Queen Christina, who died soon after. Then it passed to the King's sister, the Infanta del Pilar. The latter at once began to sicken, and in a few days breathed her last. Alfonso then handed it to his sister-in-law, Christina, the youngest daughter of the Duke of Montpensier, but in three months she also was dead. His Majesty now resolved to retain the baleful jewel in his own keeping; but he, too, soon fell a victim to its mysterious malignancy. By order of the present Queen it has now been suspended by a chain around the neck of the Virgin of Almudena.

In front of the Palace of the Cortes a large platform is erected for the Queen and the members of the Court. As the procession advances all the occupants of the grand stand fall on their knees, and remain in that position until the last of the pageant has gone by. Occasionally foreigners refuse to uncover and kneel when the procession passes. Last year it was an Englishman from Manchester who deemed it undignified to follow the example of the crowd among whom he stood in the streets in Seville. Two gendarmes immediately advanced toward him with drawn swords, and in a threatening manner ordered him at least to remove his hat. On perceiving their menacing attitude the worthy Briton squared up his fists and prepared to receive his assailants in accordance with the rules of the Marquis of Queensberry. He was, however, at once seized by the crowd, who forced him down on his knees, and then kicked and pounded him into unconsciousness, convinced that in so doing they were accomplishing an act pleasing to the Church.

A curious ceremony takes place on Good Friday at noon, in the Throne-room of the Royal Palace at Madrid. This ceremony is observed in commemoration of Christ's washing the feet of the Apostles. Twelve old people are brought before the Queen, who, assisted by the Grand Mistress of the Robes, kneels before them in turn, and, dipping a richly embroidered silk towel in a gold basin, washes their feet. They are presented with suits of clothes, purses of money and huge baskets of provisions at the conclusion of the ceremony, which all the members of the Court are invited to attend.

On the same day, in accordance with a pious tradition, the Minister of Justice submits for the Queen's signature the free and full pardon of three prisoners lying under sentence of death. These documents are placed on a table in front of the high altar of the palace chapel, and at the end of the vespers the Court Chaplain, approaching the sovereign, pronounces these words:

"Madame, does Your Majesty grant her pardon to these criminals?"

"I pardon them, so that God may pardon me," answers the Queen Regent.

In every church tables draped with black velvet and bearing gold and silver plates engraved with splendid armorial bearings are presided over by ladies belonging to the very highest ranks of society, who every now and then give the money in the plates a slight rattle, in order to attract the offerings of the faithful. A few days previously the ladies in question send out engraved cards to all the friends and acquaintances who figure on their visiting lists, informing them that they will preside at the offertory tables in such and such a church. And woe betide the senor who fails to appear at the church mentioned and to deposit his offering on the plate. He can be certain that the next time he calls at his fair friend's palazzo the porter will inform him that the senora does not receive. The final function of the Holy Week takes place on the Saturday night, when in the dimly lighted churches a weird and plaintive "Miserere" is chanted by the clergy, choristers and congregation.

One of the most surprising things in Spain is the strong opinion held by its inhabitants concerning their superiority over the rest of the world—an opinion which, by-the-by, is carefully fostered and kept alive by the clergy. Only three weeks ago an eloquent preacher called upon the congregation during the course of his sermon in one of the principal churches of Madrid to join in a prayer of thanksgiving to God and to the Blessed Virgin, who had thought fit to cast their lot in a country so different from benighted foreign lands. "Look at us," shouted the holy man. "Are we brigands, as the Italians; wretched and starving, as the English; uneducated and superstitious, as the Germans, and atheists, like the Americans? No, my brethren, we are more prosperous and happy than all these; for God has chosen us as His own and special people." Thereupon the congregation stood up and joined in the "Te Deum" of their own virtues, and the preacher, having wiped the perspiration from his brow with a handkerchief of English make, gathered his cassock of woollen stuffs from Germany close around him and kissed the gilt cross of Italian workmanship carried by the acolyte, descended from the pulpit constructed of American marble, leaving his audience enraptured with their good fortune in being at the head of civilization and so vastly superior to all other men.

NEWSBOYS RECOGNIZE THEIR LEADER.

There is a rosy-faced, square-jawed lad of about sixteen years, who can be seen on the Park Row side of the Postoffice almost every day between noon and 3 o'clock, when the small newsboys are rushing up and down the sidewalks with their "extras." He could appropriately be called "The Newsboys' Protector," "Umpire," or "Dictator," for he has constituted himself a committee of one to prevent fighting and wrangling, and to act as mediator in the thousand and one disputes in which the "gamins" become involved almost every hour of the day. His method of procedure, while sometimes a trifle rough, is generally effective, and when he steps between two combatants, the battle ceases instantly.

It doesn't matter how big or strong the boys are, they recognize the superior authority and obey without question. On a recent afternoon there was a loud and angry quarrel in progress between two urchins in the roadway of Mail-st. They clinched and rolled in the mud, while their papers were strewn all around by the wind. The "Protector" separated the flushed and excited youngsters, and pushing them both up to the Postoffice wall, resolved himself into a Solomon.

"Wot's de row?" he asked.

"Mickey sthole six o' me papers," shouted one in reply, "an' I guv it to him in de neck!"

"Naw," said Mickey, wiping a tear and a streak of dirt from his face, "dat's all wrong. I had a cust'mer, see? He want's a paper, see? An' he guvs me a nickel and don't ax fur no change. Swipey said I had a right to guv up two cents out'n de nickel ter him, an' I kicked. Den he guv it ter me in de neck."

"Youse are both wrong," said the modern Solomon. "Mickey, yer keep them five coppers, and guv back dem six papers yer stole. Swipey, yer ain't got no business in yer. You want Mickey to give up some o' that air nickel? What fur? Youse ain't no pardners. Now git away f'm here and sell yer papers. If I hev ter come to youse kids agin I'll put youse on de list."

There must have been something extremely serious in this threat, for both boys gathered up their papers and ran in opposite directions. The "Protector" watched them for awhile, and then resumed his duties as guardian of the peace, by cuffing the ears of a youngster for stealing a rival's cap. One finger held up warningly was sufficient to bring the offender back from the other side of the street.

BERLIN PERSONALITIES.

CURRENT CHAT FROM THE GERMAN CAPITAL.

[FROM AN OCCASIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.]

Berlin, March 30.—Dr. Von Lauer, ex-Surgeon-General of the German Army, who died a few days ago, was one of the best known characters of the German metropolis. Tall, slender, somewhat stooped, his breast covered with decorations, a face that was beardless and not unlike Moltke's in appearance, he was a familiar sight along the streets of the capital. He was a great favorite of the old Emperor William, who appointed him years ago to be his court physician. In this capacity he was obliged to visit the ruler twice each day and subject him to a rigid examination. These visits lasted usually several hours, for the monarch was especially fond of hearing his talented friend and adviser converse, and was loath to allow him to depart. The physician gained great control over his master in the course of time and was in fact the only person whom he would obey. The Emperor often spoke of his tyranny in a playful manner, but was ever grateful for his thoughtfulness and care. There is little doubt that the great age which the monarch attained was due in part to the strict rules of diet and exercise which Dr. Von Lauer always enforced. The good old physician celebrated the seventieth anniversary of his entrance into the service a few months ago. It was the occasion of a great demonstration in his honor, in which the grandson of the man whom he had served so faithfully was most conspicuous. He received the thanks of the young Emperor, and was placed upon the retired list of the Army. He remained, however, a familiar figure to the Berliners, who greatly regret his death.

Professor Emil Dubois Raymond, the renowned scientist, who died a few days ago, was one of the most eloquent men who ever read from a lecturer's chair. He was one of the most popular professors of the university, his only rivals being Professors Curtius and Von Treitschke, the deaf orator and statesman. "Dubois's" lectures—the students spoke of him as Dubois—were always crowded. It was difficult to obtain a seat, or even standing room. It was the fashion to attend his talks, and the students of all branches met in his room. Officers of the Army too, gay young lieutenants and bronzed warriors who had seen three wars, men of science and members of the Civil Service were often conspicuous members of the audience which gathered to hear him discourse. In appearance he was massive. Long, bushy white hair covered his head, a long white beard grew from his chin. His complexion was ruddy, his eyes blue and his nose large and prominent. There was a kind expression in his face which made friends of all who were brought in contact with him. The professor was one of the few Germans who were in favor of the higher education of women. A few years ago he excited the ire of the Berlin professors by giving a young lady, now tutor in one of the women's colleges at Oxford, permission to attend his lectures. He was a great friend of Helmholtz and Virchow, and the famous trio were often seen together. His place in the University will be difficult to fill.

When attending a mass at the Festung's Church in St. Petersburg in honor of his murdered father, the Emperor Alexander, it is reported here, was approached by the priest, who held out the cross for him to kiss. Before allowing the Emperor to kneel, however, to the surprise of all present, the priest began a speech recalling the significance of the day and the divine office of the Czar, closing with the assertion that the greatest enemies of the Empire were Count Woronzoff-Dashkoff, an intimate friend of Alexander's, and Pobedonoszeff, Procurator of the Synod. The Emperor said nothing at the time, and received the blessing in silence. After the mass was ended, however, he ordered a physician to examine the priest, who was declared to be insane and placed in an asylum. His friends declare that he is the victim of a conspiracy.

On March 28 a concert was given here for the benefit of the proposed American church. Among the artists who took part in the successful entertainment were Professor Scharwenka, the pianist; Emil Sauret, the violinist, and Miss Catharine Willard, the friend of Mrs. Grover Cleveland. All the performers received much praise.

ANSWERING THE PRESIDENT'S MAIL.

From The Washington Star.

The manner in which the mail is handled is interesting to any one who admires method and industry. It is brought from the postoffice in a capacious letter bag by one of the two mounted messengers—John Welch or Edward Beckley—three times a day, and is taken to the room occupied by Major Pruden, E. F. Tibbott and Miss Sanger, where the two latter proceed at once to investigate the contents. It is hard work, but they make rapid progress, and in a couple of hours they have reduced the great mass of office-seeking chirography to something like order. Every letter has to be acknowledged. Rapidly as possible they read each communication and decide where it ought to go. Those which should be referred to one of the Departments are sent into the room which is sacred to Warren Young and B. F. Montgomery, and Mr. Young makes record of their receipt and disposition. Fully three-fourths of the correspondence is referred to the various Departments.

Then comes the work of acknowledgment, and here the swiftly formed hieroglyphics of Pitman and the incessant rattle of the keys of the typewriter play an important part. The reply is written in shorthand by Mr. Tibbott on a corner of the letter which is to be answered, and it is sent in to Colonel Crook's office, where R. V. LaDow and an aggregation of keys and wires can be found at almost any hour of the day or night. Mr. LaDow reads with great facility the shorthand notes made by Mr. Tibbott, and with the aid of his little typewriter, in the management of which he is an expert, he writes hundreds of replies and addresses hundreds of envelopes daily.

A great many letters go to Secretary Halford and these he puts on one side until the afternoon rush is over, when he dictates suitable but not always satisfactory replies to Miss Sanger. Some few of the more important letters are laid before the President by the secretary and replies are dictated at the earliest possible moment. Then, while the President is out taking his afternoon ride, Miss Sanger goes to work with her note-book and typewriter and taps off replies by the score. Miss Sanger's presence has very materially brightened up an otherwise gloomy apartment. She is somewhat sedate yet pleasant in her manner and in her Quaker-like gray dress and spotless white apron is a decidedly attractive personage. As an operator on the typewriter she is rapid and accurate and every one at the White House accords her the respect due to fidelity and ladylike deportmennt.

HE DIDN'T FIT.

From The Youth's Companion.

Little Johnny witnessed a military drill. One of the officers rode a horse which was unruly, and in some of his antics nearly threw his rider, whereupon little Johnny exclaimed excitedly, "Mamma, mamma, Mr. Fissels's horse don't fit him!"

HE KNEW WHAT WAS COMING.

From The Chicago Tribune.

"As being appropriate to the occasion," remarked the chairman, "and as a deserved compliment to the distinguished veteran to whose speech we have just listened, the band will now play a selection."

"Where's my hat?" exclaimed General Sherman, excitedly.

And the grizzled old war-horse escaped by a door in the rear just as the opening strains of "Marching Through Georgia" smote on his ear.

A STARTLING EXPERIENCE.

From The Electrical Review.

Private Secretary Pearson, of Governor Beaver's office, Harrisburg, Penn., had a curious and somewhat startling experience with the graphophone. He began to turn the crank and supposed that he was about to cause the machine to give out to the young lady typewriter a message which the Governor had talked into it the evening previous. The young lady was all attention and the private secretary began solemnly to turn the crank, which works by a treadle. To his horror and the intense embarrassment of the young lady, the following amorous jumble was given out with decided emphasis:

"Now, don't, George. . . . There; somebody will come. Of course I love you. There; somebody really is coming, and you have mussed my hair all up. . . . Please, love, I'm so afraid that some one will come in, and, besides, I can't work this crank if you insist upon kissing me all the time."

The periods represent sounds too familiar to be mistaken. They were the smacking of lips and other sounds which accompany the interchange of caresses between lovers.

It was some little while before the matter could be satisfactorily explained, either by the young lady or by Mr. Pearson, who at first were disposed to imagine that somebody had been playing a practical joke upon them. The matter was finally straightened out, however, when the executive clerk came around, and, upon hearing of the incident, laughed heartily. He had on the evening before been showing a bride and groom about the executive department, and, being called away a few minutes, had left them in the private secretary's room to amuse themselves with the graphophone while he attended to the business which had called him away.

ABSENT-MINDED GUESTS.

VAGARIES THAT VEX THE HOTEL-CLERK.

MISFIT TRAP TO CATCH A THIEVING CHAMBERMAID—AN OVER-THRIFTY BRIDEGROOM.

"We see a great deal of the queer side of human nature," said a New-York hotel-clerk the other day, "and I think absent-minded people give us as much trouble as any other class of customers, but there is generally so much to amuse one in their mistakes that they are willingly forgiven. I can generally 'spot' absent-minded people by the quickness with which they assume a pre-occupied air whenever the conversation or their surroundings do not interest them. It is not often, however, that a perfectly sane and sober man forgets his own name, yet such a case once came under my observation. A stranger to New-York came in here one day, seeming to be a little dazed with the bustle of the crowded streets. He was one of that kind of men you often bump against in Broadway, as he walks backward with his mouth a little open and his eyes fixed on the ninth story of some building. As he came up to the desk I pushed the register toward him. He took the pen, dipped it in the ink, and then hesitated, scowled, and then blushed. Thinking that perhaps he could not write, I pulled the register toward me to write it myself and said: 'What name?' 'I'll be hanged if I haven't forgotten it,' he said, as mad as a hatter. I looked at the man in astonishment and said 'Give me your card.' This brought it to his memory in a flash. Probably that part of his 'thinker' that recollected sounds was taking a rest, but that part which remembered how his name looked when it was written out was on duty.

"We had a wealthy old lady staying with us last winter. She was sitting in the parlor all alone, musing in front of an open grate fire one day when she began to call loudly for the parlormaid. Receiving no answer, she rang the electric bell, which she could reach without rising, so long that I thought something must be wrong, and I sent two bell boys upstairs 'on the dead run.' When they reached her the fire was burning fiercely and her face was red with the heat and with indignation. 'Bring me the fire-screen,' she almost screamed; 'such lazy servants I never saw. I have been calling for an hour. Bring me it at once before I am roasted to death.' 'Certainly, ma'am,' said one of the boys, with a grin, 'but mightn't you have pushed back your chair a little?' 'Upon my word,' she replied, 'I never thought of that.' And then she burst out laughing. 'If my friends hear of this,' she added, 'they'll think I'm in my dotage,' and she gave the boys a half-dollar each and made them swear to keep it all a secret.

COMBINING BUSINESS WITH PLEASURE.

"I had a fussy man of middle age come here last fall with a young wife. They were on their wedding tour. She was a timid, little, pale, lonely-looking, sickly thing and kept her room nearly all the time. He was out all day visiting the wholesale places, buying goods for his store in a Western city, thus combining business with pleasure in a thrifty Chicago way. He spent his money freely though and had no end of traps and trunks and parcels sent to the hotel. When he got ready to start for home he counted over the whole pile with great care and checked them off on his fingers. 'Look here, porter,' he snapped out, 'there's something missing.' 'I think not,' said the porter; 'what is it?' 'I don't know,' replied the bridegroom, dubiously, 'but I feel sure there's something else. I know I'm forgetting something. Four Saratogas, two leather trunks, one linen covered; three big travelling bags, one grip, two bundles in shawl straps, one hat-box, bunch of sticks and umbrellas—that seems to be all, but I feel sure I'm leaving something behind, and yet I can't think what it is.' 'Well,' I broke in, 'you'll miss your train if you delay any longer. If you discover your loss wire us at once and we'll keep it for you till your return or send it to you. Your wife has sent down word that she is in the parlor and—.' 'My wife,' he ejaculated, slapping himself; 'Of course, that's it. I had forgotten all about her. How absurd. Well, the laugh's on me this time. Good-by.'

"I have known a man," continued the hotel-clerk, "to go to his room to dress for a dinner at the house of a friend. By the time he had got off his business suit the dinner had vanished from his mind, which was still running on business and plans for the morrow. The gas being lit and the process of undressing evidently suggested bed-time to him, for he continued to disrobe, turned out the light and got in bed. As he did not appear at the dinner, where he was fully expected, the host telephoned down to the office to know if Mr. B. had suddenly been taken ill or if we knew where he was. A boy went to his room and found him sleeping soundly.

LEAVING MANY THINGS BEHIND.

"People often forget what they have ordered in the restaurant before the dish is served, and will protest that they asked for something quite different. I have known a merchant start downtown to business on Sunday morning, and not realize the situation till he found the shutters up on his own store, and I once had a man board here all one winter who used to ask me to lend him a book very frequently. I always lent him the same copy of "Scribner's Magazine," all I had by me, and he would read it for an hour or so, and then return it with thanks. Once I asked him what he thought of it. He said that it was a good number of the magazine, no doubt, but he had heard the stories somewhere before, he thought. We have a store-room full of umbrellas, canes, brushes, etc., that guests have left behind inadvertently, not to mention trunks, whose owners 'skipped' without paying their bills. We have more night-gowns in stock than would set up an underwear department of a little dry-goods store. Guests leave them on the bed, the chambermaid folds them neatly up under the pillow and there they are overlooked in the packing up.

"But there is nothing amusing about that phase of absent-mindedness," said the clerk. "That is only a nuisance. One of our steady patrons, however, made me laugh heartily the other day. He suspected a new chambermaid of stealing little things from his room and I was going to dismiss her at once. He thought he would like to be sure that she was guilty first, however, and I suggested that he leave a marked coin lying on his bureau. Next morning when he came down, he said: 'I improved somewhat on your trick, old man. I thought that leaving one coin in a conspicuous place would look so palpably like the old trick that the cunning little fox might not bite at it at all. I'm a keen judge of human nature, you know. So I just placed a whole handful of small coins on the bed-clothes, as if I had been emptying my pockets and had forgotten them, and if the girl's dishonest she'll think she can take one or two pieces without their being missed.'

"'It may be an expensive bait, however,' I said; 'perhaps she will scoop it all. How much did you leave.'

"'By Jove,' he said, 'I forgot to count it.'"

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Furniture Makers and Upholsterers,

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Parlor Sets and odd Fancy Pieces in rare coverings, stylish Bedroom Sets, antique patterns in Dining Furniture, etc., at astonishing low prices. We desire especially to call attention to the fine line of goods suitable for furnishing summer residences. Persons buying furniture should not make selections before examining our stock.

We beg to call the attention of paper-hangers and others to the fact that we are selling out our stock of imported wall papers at 50 per cent. reduction.

GOSSIP AT THE CAPITAL.

WHAT MEN TALK ABOUT.

ONE OF LINCOLN'S STORIES—GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE CABINET—GENERAL SPARKS'S QUESTIONS.

Speaking of General Harrison's ability to say an absolute and unmistakable "no" to certain persistent applicants for office, a well-known Western Senator recently remarked that President Lincoln, albeit an exceedingly patient Chief Magistrate, possessed the same emphatic quality. His negations were frequently expressed in a manner which was peculiarly his own.

"A large and influential delegation," continued the Senator, "had persistently importuned Mr. Lincoln to save the rank of Chaplain-General created in the Army, having, of course, a reverend peg ready to occupy the proposed ecclesiastical hole. Upon the last appearance of the delegation, President Lincoln, finding it impossible to convince them of the absurdity of creating the rank referred to, took another tack, and inquired with apparent anxiety as to the qualifications of their particular candidate. The deputation enlarged considerably upon his well-known piety and ardent devotion to the cause of religion, painting in the most glowing colors this 'Boanerges of the great and glowing West,' as they graphically described him. Now the fact of the matter was that President Lincoln had heard some rather alarming accounts concerning the reverend gentleman, whose amusements and accomplishments were somewhat secular in their character; indeed, he had been assured that this worthy representative of the church militant had not, on several occasions, disdained the frequent potation in the beer saloons of his native town. 'Well,' remarked the President, in reply to their eulogiums, 'I have heard statements made about the reverend candidate whom you are urging upon me which recall a little incident that happened the other day. I was walking along a street here in Washington which was not much frequented. It had been raining, and there was a good deal of mud near the curbstones, and three or four boys were carrying the unenticing mixture on pieces of board and in old tin pans to a bigger boy on the sidewalk, who was laying off the mud, by means of a rough wooden dauber which he had made, in a sort of regular plan or figure, comprising squares, parallelograms, angles and circles of various sizes. They were all working like beavers and didn't notice my arrival until I was standing right over them; but finally their work seemed to be complete and they all stood round admiring it. "Well, my little man," I finally inquired, "what have you been making here?" The dirty little urchin looked up at me for a moment, with an expression of withering scorn upon his grimy face, and then cried out: "Why, doncher see, or are you a blind man, anyway? See here," he continued, pointing to the different figures with his mud-dauber, "this is a church; why, here's the windows, here's the steeple, here's the orgin, here's the pews, here's the people, and here's the pulpit, too," he finally concluded. "But where in the world's the parson, my little man?" I ventured timidly to inquire. The boy looked at me for a second with inexpressible contempt, and then replied, with a bitter emphasis impossible to describe: "The Parson, Mister, the Parson! Why, he's the ornery, snivellin' cuss that's snoopin' 'round a-tryin' to marry my mother; there ain't mean enough mud in this whole blamed street to make him!"'

"That deputation," pursued the Senator, "filed out, one by one, from Mr. Lincoln's presence in a silence that could be felt."

The presence in Washington of "Billy" Mason, the popular Chicago Congressman, is known to all men about the Departments. He has a few matters which require the attention of various Cabinet officers, but like others he finds that a Cabinet officer's time just now is a good deal more precious than rubies.

"I stayed a couple of weeks after inauguration," said Mr. Mason, "but couldn't even get time for an introduction to the gentlemen who make up President Harrison's official family. It wasn't their fault and I didn't bear them any hard feelings. I did think though that after a month there ought to be some show, so I came back to Washington determined to give three whole days to making Cabinet calls, as the ladies would say. I found the same people sitting around the ante-rooms that were there when I left and I came near sticking a pin into some of them to see if they weren't wax figures.

"The first day I saw the stenographer of the Postmaster-General's private secretary, got a nod of recognition from Clarkson, and established friendly relations with the elevator man. The second day I was introduced to the private secretary of the Secretary of the Interior, and made the acquaintance of the Department messenger. I also had a chance to gaze at the pictures of the Interior Secretaries who have gone before and whose faces now look down from the walls. But the Secretary himself didn't get back from the Cabinet meeting and I had to go to my hotel and get some breakfast. So I missed him. The third day I divided in three parts—one part for the Secretary of the Navy, one for the Secretary of War and one for the Attorney-General. But I stopped at the White House to tell General Harrison a new story I had heard and before I knew it the only men left at any of the Departments for me to see were the night-watchmen. I'm thinking now of going home and asking my people to give me another term so that I may get acquainted with the Cabinet."

"I never knew until recently," said one of the Cabinet officers, who had pre-empted a cosey corner at the reception given in honor of Senator Morrill's seventy-ninth birthday, "how many cousins the Lord blessed me with, or how much affection they had for me. Why, they are thicker than cherries on a tree, and I have been compelled to detail one clerk to attend to their correspondence, for they each and every one insist on my showing my affection for them in some substantial way. My class in college, too, has grown to unrecognizable dimensions. I thought I knew every man in it, but the college would never have held at one time all the men who pretend to have graduated when I did, and each and every one of them loves me like a brother; but the most wonderful evidence I have yet received, is from a man in the town where I was raised. When we were boys I had occasion to thrash him; I thrashed him well," and the Secretary smiled a smile of content as he remembered his boyish feat, "but I was always afraid that he had never forgiven me, so you can imagine my joy when I received a letter from him last week thanking me for each separate lash I had given him. There are some roses as an offset to the thorns of a Cabinet office."

A pretty constant visitor to the office of First Assistant Postmaster-General Clarkson these days is Judge McDuffie, of Alabama. Judge McDuffie has several times been elected to represent the IVth Alabama District, but he has been regularly counted out, and when he appealed to Congress found that the Democratic jury was set up against him in advance. He will come before the LIst Congress with better prospects of a fair hearing, and will undoubtedly be seated. In the meantime Judge McDuffie is recognized at the Departments as entitled to speak for the District. His business with Mr. Clarkson gives him the keenest pleasure. The dialogue usually runs about as follows:

First Assistant Postmaster-General Clarkson—Good morning, Judge McDuffie. What can I do for you today?

Judge McDuffie—I have a few more fourth-class postmasters I want changed.

Mr. Clarkson—Do you know these people you recommend?

Judge McDuffie—Yes, they are all competent and good Republicans.

Mr. Clarkson—Why do you want the incumbent at —— removed?

Judge McDuffie—He was an election officer four years ago and helped to count me out. The postoffice was his reward.

Mr. Clarkson—What's the matter with the man at ——? He has only been in two years.

Judge McDuffie—He was an election officer two years ago and helped stuff the ballot-box on me. He asked the postoffice in return for that service, and got it.

Mr. Clarkson—The commissions for your men will be made out this afternoon.

This dialogue has become so familiar that nobody in the First Assistant's office smiles at it now, but between McDuffie and Clarkson, the ballot-box stuffers in the IVth Alabama District are likely to understand that in the long run that kind of business doesn't pay.

Said Representative Louis E. McComas, of Maryland, the other day to several of his Democratic compatriots, who were bewailing the out-going of some of their appointees from the snug places which a beneficent Democracy had provided for them under the Cleveland Administration,

"I can't for the life of me see what you fellows have to complain of. You ought to accept the situation gracefully; not merely because it is the inevitable, and the fortune of war, but for the reason that rotation in office is a universal law of nature observed even by the wild denizens of the forest."

Being called upon to explain, Mr. McComas narrated the following simple but instructive history.

"A friend of mine," he remarked, "went off for a week's shooting in the Shenandoah Valley, and upon his return gave me several amusing incidents of his expedition. 'One day,' said he, 'I felt quite tired during the afternoon, and lay down in a little nest among the bushes near a stream, with my gun beside me. I had slept for a little while, when I was awakened suddenly by a loud thump upon the ground, caused, apparently, by something falling from a considerable height. The sound recurred quite regularly at stated intervals of about half a minute each, and appeared to come from a thick wood at a little distance from the spot where I was lying. My curiosity was thoroughly aroused, so I crept cautiously through the bushes, dragging my gun after me. Presently I discovered the cause of the disturbance. There, right in front of me, stood a tall poplar tree, or rather the remains of one, for the top of it had been torn off about forty feet from the ground, while the diameter of the remainder was about five feet near the roots. From the top of the trunk a large coon looked warily out for a second and then jumped down, with a resounding thud, upon the ground, taking the forty-foot leap quite as a matter of course. Immediately upon reaching the ground the coon made a bee line for a hole in the roots of the tree, disappeared, and presently emerged again at the top, when he again proceeded to take the flying leap, repeating this curious performance until I grew tired of watching him. This was too much for me, so I skirmished round, got several farmers together, and we all proceeded in a posse comitatus to the spot, with dogs and guns and axes. Well, sir! we cut down that blamed tree and split it up the middle and what do you suppose we found? The trunk was hollow all the way up from the roots, and I'll be durned if it wa'nt packed chock full of live coons just as tight as you could stick 'em. Then we understood the whole thing at a glance. There was one additional coon for whom there wasn't enough room, and when he fought his way into the hole at the roots of the tree, he just forced the whole heavy column of live coons above him upward, and the top one had to leap "down and out"; it wa'nt the same coon that I saw jumping all the time, but a different one at every trip, they all took it in rotation.'"

Mr. Hugh S. Thompson, of South Carolina, formerly an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under the Cleveland Administration, has been calling to see his friend, Jesse D. Abrahams, who has been the Acting Controller of the Currency, nearly every day since the present Administration relieved Thompson from official cares. A number of Democrats—some decapitated ones, and others expecting to be—gathered the other morning in Mr. Abrahams's office.

"I find you here every time I come, Thompson," remarked one of the Democrats.

"Oh, yes," replied the South Carolinian, "Abrahams is a nice, pleasant man, and a good friend of mine; and I am somewhat like the old fellow who kept going to the circus every day for a week. His friends couldn't understand it, and he told them that he saw the man go into the lion's den during his first visit, and he had been attending the circus every day since expecting to see the lions bite the fellow's head off. I am just waiting around here to see the head of my friend Abrahams drop off."

The good-looking young Virginian is no longer Acting Controller, as Mr. Lacey, of Michigan, was appointed on Wednesday, and it probably will not be long before Abrahams is relieved of his duties as Deputy Controller.

I hear that "General" William Andrew Jackson Sparks, ex-Commissioner of the Land Office, is just now torn by conflicting emotions. He can't make up his mind whether he would prefer to come back to Congress or go to Europe. At one stage of his career when the doughty Land Commissioner was unsettling titles all over the country, President Cleveland was earnestly besought to give him some place where he could do no harm. The Consulate at Cairo was suggested and seemed to strike the President favorably. He casually intimated to a Congressman who knew Sparks well what his intention was. The Congressman promptly vetoed it.

"It wouldn't do at all," he said to Mr. Cleveland. "Do you know what would happen? Sparks won't be there three months till he will be questioning the title of the Khedive to the Pyramids and ordering the Egyptians to file a quit-claim deed to the Sphinx. He'll get us into a grand international row."

This reasoning was so forcible that Mr. Cleveland kept his Land Commissioner at home and subsequently kicked him down the back stairs without any sort of a cushion to fall on.

"General" Sparks deplored his enforced retirement to private life, but solaced himself with the promise of a trip to Europe and the pleasure of Continental travel. His plans were all arranged when a vacancy was made in his Congressional District by the death of Representative Townshend. His enthusiastic neighbors, who knew that "General" Sparks had a fat pocket-book and would put up liberally for campaign expenses, suggested his name. But the "General" majestically put away the tempting suggestion and declared that nothing could induce him to forego the pleasures of his European trip. He had served his country, had been abused for it, and he was going to linger among the old world despotisms and leave it to its fate. His neighbors, however, knew the weakness of Sparks. Again they made the proffer of a nomination. Again it was declined, but with less positiveness than on the former occasion. Recently a third tender was made and it was put away more gently, but still it was put away just as Cæsar refused the crown. Now the fourth offer is soon to be made, and everybody out in Southern Illinois knows that if Sparks doesn't snap it up, the able political workers who want a good campaign fund won't bother with him further. Hence the ex-Commissioner's painful indecision as between Congress and Europe.

Should "General" Sparks return to Congress, a wicked Representative threatens to have him investigated. One evening not long ago this member stood in the lobby of the Ebbitt House as the majestic form of the ex-Commissioner disappeared from view.

"Sparks is a reformer," he said sarcastically. "I don't doubt it, because he says so himself. But I'd like to know what the —— he's doing eighteen months after he goes out of office that entitles him to use Government stationery."

Saying this the member pulled out several letters of recent date from Sparks, all written on "Extra Superfine" paper which bore the impress of the General Land Office.

The Palmers have not yet left for their foreign post. The Senator has come on to get "coached" for his duties, and he and Mrs. Palmer are alone with their dogs in the big K-st. house. These wonderful dogs have been a source of great amusement and pleasure, not only to the Palmers, but to their friends and the public in general, and have supplied many spicy paragraphs for the newspapers. The account of the gorgeous funeral accorded the King Charles spaniel who was killed by a poor plebeian dog some three or four years ago was published all over the United States and copied in the English papers.

Bijou has long occupied the warmest place in the hearts of his master and mistress, and the Senator often takes the diminutive little beast for an airing in the pocket of his great coat. A friend of the Palmers went with them one night to the theatre, and after they were all comfortably seated, she felt a dig in her left side, which was nearest Mrs. Palmer. Surprised that that dignified lady should take such an undignified way of attracting her attention, she turned quickly, only to find Mrs. Palmer paying strict attention to the play, which was a tragedy, by the way. In a moment or two the dig was repeated, and then again and again, so that the guest of the Palmers decided she must be crowding her friend, and these digs were involuntary movements caused by a cramped position. Moving as far as the limit of her chair would allow, she was surprised to again receive a little dig in her side, which was this time accompanied by a smothered cry. Looking down Madame Bijou was discovered, with her cunning head thrust from the muff, which had been converted into a temporary dog-house, nosing away at her next-door neighbor.

The Senator is not very enthusiastic over Spain.

"I'll be back next year," he says, "for I can never stand it longer than that. The fact of the case is when I have been over there four months I become so homesick that I cannot wait to get home. Look out for me, for if the feeling takes me between the railings of the big vessels, I may come dancing over by myself in a skiff."

The Hon. W. W. Thomas, of Maine, who has been appointed and confirmed Minister to Norway and Sweden, spent some time in Washington this winter, that his young Swedish wife might have a taste of the gayety at a Republican Court, if one may be permitted that rather paradoxical expression. Mr. Thomas is no stranger to Sweden, where he was once Consul-General, and then Minister during the Garfield and Arthur Administrations, and will be warmly welcomed back by his many friends there. Two Swedish settlements, one in Aroostook County, in Maine, and one in Canada, owe their existence to Mr. Thomas's efforts, and these colonists look upon him as a "bigger man" than the President. When he called on President Cleveland to present his wife, Mr. Thomas said:

"You see, Mr. President, you would not let me remain in Sweden, but my admiration for that country tempted me to bring back what I could of it."

"And you have brought back the very best, I observe," said the President, who was not renowned for making gallant speeches. "Our people at home will, I am sure, be glad that you were compelled to return."

Mrs. Thomas is a typical Scandinavian, big and blond and beautiful, and not even her admiration for her husband's native land and her own adopted country will make her sorry to return "home," where she will exhibit the little American from Maine—her six-months-old son—to her admiring countrywomen.

Mr. Munemitsu Mutsu, the Japanese Minister, is a jolly little diplomat who is very interesting to all Americans who meet him, but he complains frequently that he is having an up-hill time learning the English language. Not long ago he declared that he had despaired of ever being able to carry on a smooth, easy conversation in our language.

"Why, Mr. Mutsu," exclaimed a bright young lady who was present, "I think you are learning English very rapidly."

"Oh, yes," said the Minister, "I am talking some of it quite well, but I cannot get your slang. I get all mixed up when I speak slang."

The Japanese Minister thinks the slang phrases of Americans are decidedly funny, and he has been exceedingly anxious to pick up the more common phrases. Most of the every-day expressions have been explained to him, and he laughs immoderately at them. "In the soup" tickles him very much, and he says he is going to have lots of fun one of these days springing American slang phrases on his countrymen when he goes home.

A prominent theatrical man who was in Washington last week in speaking of Edwin Booth