LIFE IN LONDON.

PARLIAMENT AND THE SEASON—RUMORED REVOLUTION AS TO THE DINNER HOUR.

Westminster, January 24.

Parliament, which met on Thursday, is engaged upon an experiment watched with keen interest by all concerned with the London season. Since a period dating back to the beginning of the century the sessions of the British Parliament have opened in February, usually in its first week. The date of the prorogation has, particularly of late years, been more difficult to fix. There was a time, not much more than twenty years back, when the House of Commons would as soon have thought of sitting on Sundays as remaining in session over the Twelfth of August. Usually the prorogation took place on the 5th or the 8th, in good time for Peers and Commons to be on the moors bright and early on the Twelfth. Mr. Gladstone broke through the spell in his fighting Parliament of 1868. He thought it was more important that the Irish Church bill, the Land bill, the Education bill, the Ballot bill and other items in his colossal programme should be added to the statute book than that Members should be grouse-shooting punctually on the Twelfth.

When, in 1874, Mr. Disraeli came into power, it was assumed as a matter of course that the old order of things would be returned to, and the sacredness of the Twelfth vindicated. So it was in the first session of the Disraelian Parliament. But in the following year the Home Rule movement was born, obstruction was created, Mr. Parnell and the immortal Joseph Gillis Biggar came to the front, and all Parliamentary traditions were upset. There were all-night sittings, sittings half a week long, sittings almost into Good Friday, certainly one sitting into the quiet Sabbath morning, and as for the Twelfth of August, Mr. Biggar, with one thumb in the armhole of his famous imitation sealskin waistcoat, while with the other hand he signalled the attention of the Speaker (as if he were hailing a bus, it used to be said), observed in his most raucous tones: "If honorable gentlemen opposite couldn't do without pheasants, they might go and buy them at the poulterers'." It was, of course, grouse the honorable gentlemen were after on the Twelfth of August; but Mr. Biggar, when his blood was up, was not particular to a point like that.

Since the session of 1875 the precise date of the prorogation has become increasingly indefinite. The nearest approach to certainty was that it was likely to take place nearer the 1st of September than to the 1st of August. If the Government of that day were strong and resolute, they kept in "the boys" at Westminster till they had completed their appointed task. If they were not strong, they blustered a good deal, threatened to sit up to Christmas, and after wasting a week or a fortnight, prorogued in the third or fourth week of August, after withdrawing their principal bills. This is a scandal protested against year after year. The fact has been recalled that the whole arrangement of the session is an innovation of comparatively modern date. In the time of the Georges Parliament was summoned in October or November, sat within hail of Christmas, adjourned for a brief recess, got to work again early in January, and had wound up everything in time to leave town in June, so enjoying the summer time in the country. Now Parliament, meeting in February, swelters in town through the summer, Members finding opportunity to make holiday at home only when summer has waned.

Last session something was done to remove this reproach. Sir George Trevelyan submitted a resolution recommending that a fuller period of the winter months should be assigned for Parliamentary work, leaving the summer free for happier pursuits. He was defeated on a division, but the majority was so small that a Conservative Government which has already happily distinguished itself by revolutionizing time-honored Parliamentary procedure suddenly resolved to take this further step. Arrangements were made whereby the new session opened on the 25th of November last, made considerable progress with the Ministerial programme, adjourned over Christmas, and met again on Thursday, intending to prorogue about the middle of July.

Society was not openly consulted in this matter, but as it happened, it will in no wise interfere with ordinary arrangements of the London season. Perhaps if it did, the result might have been otherwise. What is called the London season loftily ignores the Parliamentary session; actually it is greatly influenced by it. As soon as Parliament meets, whatever the month may be, there sets in a period of social festivity. During the Parliamentary session no well-appointed dinner table west of Charing Cross is completed without one or two Members of Parliament, the better known in the newspapers the better for host and hostess. In May and June, the very spring tide of the London season, when the cream of Society languidly permits itself to be stirred, there are a good many dinner parties, where Members of Parliament, qua Members, are regarded as not quite the thing. But these are exceptions, and scarcely ruffle the dominating influence of Parliament upon the best dinners and the most attractive at-homes given in the London season. If the new scheme had involved the sitting of Parliament exclusively through the darker months, say from mid-October to mid-April, that would have been a serious blow to London Society. As it is, Parliament, sitting from mid-January to mid-July, is in session concurrently with the whole of the London season, and will be able to enjoy it and contribute to its enjoyment as heretofore. With Goodwood week, which usually begins about the 15th of July, London Society takes unto itself wings and flees away. Formerly it has left unhappy legislators with their nose to the grindstone and the depressing knowledge that they will not be released for another month, or peradventure two. Now, if the promise of the new arrangement is kept to the hope, Parliament and Society will finish the season's labors at the same time.

Some time ago a paragraph went the round of the papers announcing a heroic intention on the part of the Prince of Wales to curb a growing disposition to dine late. The normal dinner hour here is 8 o'clock; but, more especially in the rush of the season, there is a tendency to drift on toward 9. The House of Commons is distinctly responsible for this. Members bidden to the feast and coming in half an hour late are always privileged to plead the urgency of public business. A division has been called after half-past 7; duty to their country and constituents, at whatever personal inconvenience (to others), compelled them to remain to take part in it, and so they are late. When this kind of thing happens night after night people get tired of arriving at the hour for which they are asked, and as everybody knows everybody else will be late, nobody comes in time. The evil has, in fact, become so ingrained and recognized that people are not expected to be in time. Eight o'clock means a quarter past, a quarter past half-past, while half-past 8 practically means 9 o'clock. In the effort to deal with this minor crime hosts who really mean to dine at 8 o'clock issue an invitation for a quarter to. This invariably leads to at least one person inconveniently turning up sharp on the quarter. But that is a lesser evil, faced with comparative cheerfulness.

If the story meant that the Prince of Wales intended to set back the London dinner hour to 7 or half-past he would seem to have undertaken a task that would overcome even his tireless energy and the weight of his personal influence. Eight o'clock, as daily experience shows, is rather early than late to suit the general convenience. This is more especially the case when Parliament is sitting, it being impossible to conclude a current debate so as to take a division before half-past 7, which leaves little enough time for Members to dress and repair to the hospitable board. But, as a matter of fact, the Prince never entertained, or even talked, of the mission with which he has been credited. His first acquaintance with it was made when he found it gravely discussed in the daily and weekly papers. H. R. H., who can with impunity take muffins with his 5 o'clock tea, does not dine much before 9 o'clock, the hour at which the Queen has dined for a period as far back as the memory of man goeth. When the Prince dines out, other guests are asked to meet him at half-past 8. He arrives at a quarter to 9, with a punctuality Lord Hartington might well imitate, and almost immediately dinner is announced. The difficulty about dining at 8, increased if the hour is half-past, is found in the impossibility of going to the theatre. But the Prince of Wales is a regular frequenter of the theatre, accomplishing his visit as other people do, by dining at an unusually early hour.

H. W. L.

THE BEAUTIFUL EMPRESS.

THE PRESENTATION OF DEBUTANTES.

Vienna, January 21.

Notwithstanding the death two days previously of the Archduchess Maria Antonia, the Empress held her Court Drawing-room on Saturday night, postponing the beginning of the official mourning for her young niece until the following day, so as to avoid any disappointment to the ladies who had made preparations to be present at the Court reception. These preparations were of an exceedingly elaborate nature, for the occasion was one of considerable importance, inasmuch as it was the first drawing-room which has been held by the Empress for several years, and there were no less than fifty-six young debutantes anxiously awaiting their presentation to their sovereign.

The aspect of the Hall of Ceremonies when the Imperial cortege made its entrance was absolutely fairy-like. Arrayed in superb uniforms and exquisite dresses were the very pink—the fine fleur—of the Austrian and Hungarian aristocracy, only those who could show the proper number of nobiliary quarterings, untarnished by any bourgeois or plebeian stain. And mesalliance on the part of an ancestor, even a couple of centuries back, is considered as sufficient here to render a woman, no matter how high her rank and her title, unworthy of being received at the etiquette-bound Court of Vienna. The existence of this strict rule with regard to ancestry leads the great houses of the Austro-Hungarian aristocracy to exercise great care in their matrimonial alliance and restricts their choice of partners for life to the members of their set. The consequence is that almost all those present on Saturday at the Hofburg were related to one another, calling each other by their Christian names. The diplomatic corps had not been invited, and consequently the company was limited to the Imperial family and to the great houses of ancient nobility. The magnificent hall was brilliantly lighted, and the walls and consols were decorated with groups of feathery palms, white camellias and banks of violets. The long mirrors between the windows were surrounded with thick wreaths of violets, heliotropes and pale yellow mimosa-blossoms, with here and there a fragrant bunch of tea-roses. Posted in the adjoining hall and salons were the Hungarian Body Guards, wearing their silver-embroidered uniforms, high boots and scarlet kalpaks, with a snowy heron's plume; the Reiter Garde Escadron, in dark green coats, gold epaulettes, white leather breeches, and long patent-leather boots, with silver helmets on their heads; and the Body Guard of Archers.

Four hundred invitations had been sent by Prince Hohenlohe, the Grand Master of the Court. Count Tassilo-Festetics, who achieved notoriety the other day by refusing to receive at his Castle of Veshely the Prince of Wales because he was accompanied by Baron Hirsch, wore the splendid violet velvet dress of a Hungarian magnate. It was trimmed with priceless sable and literally covered with jewels. The aigrette on his kalpak, the hilt of his sword and the broad golden belt round his waist were all sparkling with huge diamonds, sapphires and rubies. Count Badeni was resplendent in the purple velvet costume of a Polish noble; he also wore jewels of great value, and the front of his gold-laced coat was encrusted with pearls and emeralds. Many of the men wore the black velvet and white satine uniform of the "Tobahiter Order"; as also did Archduke Wilhelm, who is the grand master of the order.

The orchestra was conducted as usual by "Eddy" Strauss, who has returned from his American tour. The maestro, wearing the red court uniform with sword and decorations, looked jubilant at resuming his functions of "Hofkapelmeister." At 8 o'clock the doors at the upper end of the throne-room were thrown open by two grooms of the Privy Chamber, the band struck up the National hymn, and the grand master of the ceremonies, Count Kalinan Hunyadi, wearing the crimson and gold uniform of a general of cavalry, with the Hungarian "Atilla" of white cloth bordered with Russian sable hanging by gold cords from the left shoulder, walked in backward, preceding the Imperial procession. With his ivory wand the grand master struck the floor repeatedly to announce the sovereigns' approach. The procession came in the following order: First, Empress Elizabeth with the Duke of Cumberland, then the Duchess of Cumberland with the Emperor, the widowed Crown Princess Stephanie with Archduke Karl-Ludwig, and the Archduchess Marie Theresa with Archduke Ferdinand d'Este. Then came all the other archdukes, archduchesses, princes and princesses of the Imperial family, followed by the ladies and gentlemen in waiting. Every eye in the room was turned toward Empress Elizabeth, who looked more beautiful, if possible, than she has ever done before; nobody could have believed her to be over thirty-five. She wore a very plain black crepe dress slightly embroidered with jet and bordered with black marabout feathers. The corsage was almost high to the throat and around the neck was a boa of black marabout. The beautiful white arms were bare from the shoulder, where gauze draperies were fastened by jet epaulettes. A long court mantle of black crepe embroidered with jet, and lined throughout with black marabout trailed gracefully on the ground; and a diadem of jet from which a long black gauze veil fell down to the edge of the train glittered in her wonderful auburn hair. She wore no jewels and the sombre hue of her garments was relieved only by the diamond decoration of the Sternkreuz attached to her left shoulder, and by the mysterious gleam of an enormous black diamond—unique in the world—which sparkled at her throat. In her gloved hands the Empress carried a cluster of Russian violets tied with black velvet ribbons. Crown Princess Stephanie was also in black. Her velvet dress, cut very low, had a stomacher of diamonds, and in her blond curls were three flat bands of diamonds. The black velvet court mantle was embroidered with seed pearls and silver; and here and there it was looped up with bunches of diamond thistles. The Duchess of Cumberland looked well in a dress of cloth-of-silver with violet velvet train, silver lace half covering it. Ropes of pearls were braided in her hair, and she wore her famous collar, which is composed of twelve rows of pearls as large almost as robin's eggs, and which falls down to her waist. Archduchess Maria Theresa, who is very lovely, wore a petticoat and train of white velvet smothered in old Venetian point. A garland of real tea roses began at the left shoulder, was caught a little below the slender waist by a diamond fleur-de-lys, fell gracefully down to the edge of the skirt, and then becoming gradually wider surrounded the train with a broad band of fragrant buds and blossoms. A tiara of large diamond fleur-de-lys completed this beautiful toilette. Among the guests, some of the prettiest and richest dresses were wore by Princess Valerie Windischgraetz, whose peach-colored damask, brocaded with pansies in their natural colors, was greatly admired; Countess Rosenberg, who was in pale yellow silk-cloth, embroidered with wreaths of buttercups and shaded poppies; Markgrafin Pallaricini in pearl-gray satin heavily wrought with gold and silver threads, the court mantle edged with Russian sable and powdered with diamond and ruby dragon-flies, and Countess Larisch in sea-green velvet embroidered with crystal and steel beads, wearing the historical Larisch family jewels. The hereditary Princess Schwarzenberg carried the palm with her exquisitely pretty and girlish dress, which was like to the realization of a poet's dream. The petticoat was composed of crumpled rose petals of a very delicate shade of pink. The corsage of valenciennes lace was draped a la Greque and fastened on the shoulders by cluster of Bengal roses; and the train was formed by soft masses of pale pink crepe, edged with rose-petals and pink swansdown.

The Empress, as soon as she entered the room, advanced to where all the ladies present were standing and began to talk graciously to them in turns. The Emperor had walked up to the rows of bowing gentlemen ranged on the other side of the hall and conversed with them. He then joined the Empress and spoke quite long with Princess Hohenlohe, Countess Schonborn and many others. At 9 o'clock the Empress, followed by Countess Goess, her grand mistress of the robes, and by Count Nopcsa, her master of ceremonies, proceeded to the Rittersaal, where the debutantes were presented to her. The ceremony over, the Court, headed by the Emperor and Empress, repaired to the mirror-room, where tea was served. A superb buffet for the guests was prepared in the Pietradura-room. The Imperial tea-table was glittering with gold plate and Venetian glass, and was covered with Jacqueminot and noisette roses, trails of which fell over the pale blue silk and lace tablecloth down to the floor. At 11 o'clock their Majesties retired and half an hour later all the guests had left the Hofburg.

DID THE DOCTOR EARN HIS FEE?

From The Green Bag.

Defendant—Now, docthor, by vartue of your oath, didn't I say: "Kill or cure, doctor, I'll give you a guinea?" and didn't you say: "Kill or cure, I'll take it?"

Doctor—You did; and I agreed to the bargain, and I want the guinea accordingly."

Defendant—Now, docthor, by vartue of your oath, answer this: "Did you cure my wife?"

Doctor—No; she's dead. You know that.

Defendant—Then, docthor, by vartue of your oath, answer this: "Did you kill my wife?"

Doctor—No; she died of her illness.

Defendant (triumphantly to the bench)—Your worship, see this. You heard him tell our bargain: it was to kill or cure. By vartue of his oath he done neither, and he axes his fee!

COURTESY OF THE TURKS.

KINDLY AND DIGNIFIED WHEN NOT EMBARRASSED BY INTRIGUES.

Constantinople, January 16.

The generality of European visitors to Constantinople regard the Turk as hopelessly at odds with his environment, and expresses this opinion, without taking the trouble to lower the voice. Yet one rarely spares time for social relations with Turks without realizing that when this has been said, all has not been said. Both their courtesy and their conversation have a certain fascination which leaves a permanent impression on the mind. The Greeks of Turkey are smart and even brilliant in conversation, the Armenians are suave in their courtesies to the verge of obsequiousness; the full-blooded Mohammedan Turk is bland and affable, but dignified in manner and picturesque and humorous in colloquy. You leave him certain that the enjoyment of the interview has been mutual, and sure that he is too nearly of your own flesh and blood to be a mere butt for glib criticism. No foreigner ever has had the privilege of conversation with the Sulfan without bringing away something of this feeling as to his character, coupled with an assurance that he has a firm purpose of wise and kindly administration. It is the fine old Oriental hospitality which thus sweetens all the lesser relations of the Turkish Government with representatives of the foreign Powers, and leads to striking demonstrations of friendship whenever the opportunity of making them is not handicapped by politic complications. The friendly feeling of Turkey for the United States has been manifested frequently, and another instance of the Sultan's good-will was afforded by his attentions to Mr. Whitelaw Reid a few weeks ago. The Sultan sent staff officers to conduct Mr. Reid to the principal sights of the city, and opened to his inspection the ancient treasury of the hoarded jewels of the House of Osman, in the low-vaulted rooms of the Palace of Top Kapou. He caused him to be taken up the Bosphorus in a steam launch from the Admiralty, and gave a state dinner in his honor at the Palace of Yildiz. Court carriages in all their glory of pedigreed horses and golden harness and dazzling outriders whirled through the streets of Pera, between crowds gaping on the sidewalk, and carried Mr. Reid and Mr. Hirsch, with the staff of the Legation, to the feast in the "Abode of Felicity." At the table Mr. Reid was placed on the right hand of Abd ul Hamid, and next to him was placed the Grand Vizier, who is at home in English, to act as interpreter for the man whom the Sultan delighted to honor. As if this was not enough, the Sultan, after the dinner, further recalled the hearty generosities of the old Caliphs by conferring upon Mrs. Reid the decoration of the first class of the Ladies' Order, which is appropriately named the Order of Shefakat (Compassion).

The willingness of the great functionaries of Turkey to show friendliness to foreign nations has to be more circumspectly exhibited in dealing with Europeans. They are at odds with each other, and intrigue is their constant occupation at the Porte. A striking illustration of this fact is the recent Lutski case, where special favor was shown to Russia out of sheer good humor, by placing the police of the city under the orders of the servants of the Czar for the arrest of political refugees. So great is the indignation which this action has aroused that the story is worth telling.

Not long ago Russian spies in Europe reported that a certain Nihilist, whom we will call Boretski, was coming to Turkey in order to obtain from the ex-Georgian Prince Miltun certain papers containing valuable information for the Nihilist exiles and presumably for the Czar himself. About the same time it was discovered that Prince Miltun had gone to Sophia to visit Lutski, an ex-Russian officer in the employ of the Bulgarian Government, and it was suspected that the object of this visit was to have Lutski take the papers to Boretski. This would spare the Nihilist the risks of a journey to Constantinople. At once the Russian Ambassador set his wits to work to capture the trio—Boretski, the Nihilist; Prince Miltun, who had fled to Turkey about the time of the last Russian war and had become a Turkish subject, and Lutski, who had been sent to Bulgaria by the Czar, but had declined to leave that country when the Russian officers were recalled after the rupture with Prince Alexander of Battenberg in 1885. Lutski was in fact a deserter from the Russian army. He added to this the crime of giving the Bulgarians efficient aid in repelling the Servian attack, by which Russia first sought to abolish Prince Alexander.

When the Prince was kidnapped Lutski was also arrested, but escaped and fled to Constantinople, where he remained for some time, supporting himself by teaching. A few months ago he returned to Bulgaria and took service under the Government as a civil engineer. This alone was enough to make the Russian Government desire to lay its paternal hands upon him. Russians are not renowned examples of patient endurance of harm through devotion to moral principles. The means by which the Russian Ambassador furthered his plans may not be too sharply scrutinized. They involved the friendly submission to him of the Turkish telegraphs as well as of the telegrams, and the friendly assistance of the Turkish police. First the Turkish police was informed that Prince Miltun was chief conspirator in the Armenian revolutionary movement, and was told that, as he had thus been false to his adopted country, his papers might well be handed over to Russia, even if he himself was not dealt with for his former sins. Miltun was arrested and all his papers were seized, but he was imprisoned, and the papers held for examination, instead of being surrendered to the Russians. As soon as he was out of the way a telegram was sent from the Russian Embassy to Lutski in Sophia, to which the signature of Miltun was forged, calling him to Constantinople on "important business." Lutski did not understand the telegram, for Miltun had been with him but four days before, and he replied that he could not come. This answer was delivered to the Russian Ambassador, although addressed to Miltun. Another forged telegram, more urgent, was sent to Lutski as from Prince Miltun, and shortly the Russian agents in Sophia were able to telegraph that Lutski had left on a certain train for Constantinople. When the train arrived at Constantinople Lutski was arrested by the Turkish police, under the orders of a member of the Sultan's staff, and was at once handed over to a band of Russians in civilian dress, who were waiting on the platform. These men gagged and handcuffed their prisoner, and dragged him to the railway wharf, where a steam launch was waiting. In half an hour he was on board of a Russian steamer driving up the Bosphorus at full speed, and he is now safely caged at St. Petersburg. Meanwhile Boretski, the third man on whom the Russian Ambassador had set his heart, was hastening to Constantinople, in ignorance of the arrest of Prince Miltun. He took the precaution to go through Roumania, and he took passage from Galatz to Constantinople upon an English steamer. On his arrival in the Golden Horn, Boretski started to get into a boat to go ashore. As he was on the lowest step of the ladder, just stepping into the boat, he discovered two boats bringing Russian officials and Turkish policemen toward the ship. He concluded that he did not wish to go ashore just then, and nimbly clambered up the ladder. The police demanded the man, but the English captain referred them to the British Embassy. Russian profanity chorded with Turkish profanity as the baffled officers withdrew. The Russian Ambassador and the Turkish police alike beset Sir William White for the surrender of Boretski, but that sturdy Englishman did not propose to have a Barrundia affair on his hands. He not only refused, but he informed all parties that any attempt to board the steamer would be resisted by force. So the English steamer proceeded on its way homeward with Boretski on board safe.

The outery in the European press against the Turks for rendering this friendly aid to Russia evoked the answer that the Capitulations compel Turkey to surrender any foreigner who is demanded by the officials of his Government. But this is hardly tenable ground, since the Hungarians under Kossuth, who fled to Turkey after 1848, were demanded by Austria and Russia, with threats, and were successfully defended by Turkey, on the ground that political offenders could not be surrendered under the Capitulation. Such pressure of public opinion has been brought to bear in this case that the Turkish Government has disavowed the whole proceeding. It declares that the Ministry of Police knew nothing of the action of the police officers and has placed under arrest the high official who conducted the arrest of Lutski. Prince Miltun has been found free from complicity in the Armenian affair, and, with his papers, will be released in a day or two. The whole gain reaped by the Russian Ambassador through his great scheme is the arrest of poor Lutski, who is neither Nihilist nor conspirator, but who must probably suffer much as if he were one, in order to lighten the pangs of the failure.

THE OBSTRUCTIVE HAT.

A LONDON THEATRE EPISODE.

From Punch.

Scene—The Pit during Pantomime Time. The Overture is beginning.

An Overheated Matron (to her Husband)—Well, they don't give you much room in 'ere, I must say. Still, we done better than I expected, after all that crushing. I thought my ribs was gone once—but it was on'y the umbrella's. You pretty comfortable where you are, eh, Father?

Father—Oh, I'm right enough, I am.

Jimmy (their son, a small boy, with a piping voice)—If Father is, it's more nor what I am. I can't see, Mother, I can't!

His Mother—Lor' bless the boy! there ain't nothen to see yet; you'll see well enough when the curtain goes up. (Curtain rises on opening scene.) Look, Jimmy, ain't that nice, now? All them himps dancin' round, and real fire comin' out of the pot—which I 'ope it's quite safe—and there's a beautiful fairy just come on, dressed so grand, too!

Jimmy—I can't see no fairy—nor yet no himps—no nothen. (He whimpers.)

His Mother (annoyed)—Was there ever such a aggravating boy to take anywheres! Set quiet, do, and don't fidget, and look at the hactin'!

Jimmy—I tell yer I can't see no hactin', Mother. It ain't my fault—it's this lady in front o' me with the 'at.

Mother (perceiving the justice of his complaints)—Father, the pore boy says he can't see where he is, 'cause of a lady's hat in front.

Father—Well, I can't 'elp the 'at, can I? He must put up with it, that's all!

Mother—No—but I thought, if you wouldn't mind changing places with him—you're taller than him, and it wouldn't be in your way 'arf so much.

Father—It's always the way with you—never satisfied, you ain't! Well, pass the boy across—I'm for a quiet life, I am. (Changing seats.) Will this do for you?

(He settles down immediately behind a very large and furry and feathery hat, which he dodges for some time, with the result of obtaining an occasional glimpse of a pair of legs on the stage.)

Father (suddenly)—D—— the 'at!

Mother—You can't wonder at the boy not seeing! P'raps the lady wouldn't mind taking it off, if you asked her.

Father—Ah! (He touches The Owner of the Hat on the shoulder.) Excuse me, mum, but might I take the liberty of asking you to kindly remove your 'at? (The Owner of the Hat deigns no reply.)

Father (more insistently)—Would you 'ave any objection to oblige me by taking off your 'at, mum? (Same result.) I don't know if you 'eard me, mum, but I've asked you twice, civil enough, to take that 'at of yours off. I'm a-playing at 'ide and seek be'ind it 'ere! (No answer.)

The Mother—People didn't ought to be allowed in the pit with sech 'ats! Callin' 'erself a lady—and settin' there in a great 'at and feathers like a 'Ighlander's, and never answering no more nor a stuffed himage!

Father (to the Husband of The Owner of the Hat)—Will you tell your good lady to take her 'at off, sir, please?

The Owner of the Hat (to her husband)—Don't you do nothing of the sort, Sam, or you will 'ear of it!

The Mother—Some people are perlite, I must say. Parties might bevave as ladies when they come into the pit! It's a pity her 'usband can't teach her better manners!

The Father—'Im teach her! 'E knows better. 'E's got a Tartar there, 'e 'as!

The Owner of the Hat—Sam, are you going to set by and hear me insulted like this?

Her Husband (turning round tremulously)—I—I'll trouble you to drop making these personal allusions to my wife's 'at, sir. It's pufflckly impossible to listen to what's going on on the stage, with all these remarks be'ind!

The Father—Not more nor it is to see what's going on on the stage with that 'at in front! I paid 'arf a crown to see the pantermime, I did; not to 'ave a view of your wife's 'at! . . . 'Ere, Maria, blowed if I can stand this 'ere game any longer. Jimmy must change places again, and if he can't see, he must stand up on the seat, that's all!

(Jimmy is transferred to his original place, and mounts upon the seat.)

Pittite behind—Jimmy (touching up Jimmy's father with an umbrella)—Will you tell your little boy to set down, please, and not block the view like this?

Jimmy's Father—If you can induce that lady in front to take off her 'at, I will—but not before. Stay where you are, Jimmy, my boy.

The Pittite behind—Well, I must stand myself, then, that's all. I mean to see, somehow! (He rises.)

People behind him (sternly)—Set down there, will yer! (He resumes his seat, expostulating.)

Jimmy—Father, the gentleman behind is a pinching of my legs!

Jimmy's Father—Will you stop pinching my little boy's legs! He ain't doing you no 'arm—is he?

The Pinching Pittite—Let him sit down, then!

Jimmy's Father—Let the lady take her 'at off!

Murmurs behind—Order, there! Set down! Put that boy down! Take off that 'at! Silence in front, there! Turn 'em out! Shame! Etc., etc.

The Husband of the O. of the H. (in a whisper to his Wife)—Take off the blessed 'at, and have done with it, do!

The O. of the H.—What—now! I'd sooner die in the 'at! (An Attendant is called.)

The Attendant—Order, there, gentlemen, please—unless you want to get turned out! No standing allowed on the seats—you're disturbing the performance 'ere, you know!

(Jimmy is made to sit down, and weeps silently; the hubbub gradually subsides—and The Owner of the Hat triumphs—for the moment.)

Jimmy's Mother—Never mind, my boy, you shall have Mother's seat in a minute. I dessay, if all was known, the lady 'as reasons for keeping her 'at on, pore thing!

The Father—Ah, I never thought o' that. So she may. Very likely her 'at won't come off—not without her 'air!

The Mother—Ah, well, we mustn't be 'ard on her, if that's so.

The O. of the H. (removing the obstruction)—I 'ope you're satisfied now, I'm sure!

The Father (handsomely)—Better late nor never, mum, and we take it kind of you. Though, why you shouldn't ha' done it at first, I dunno; for you look a deal 'ansomer without the 'at than what you did in it—don't she, Maria?

The O. of the H. (mollified)—Sam, ask the gentleman behind if his boy would like a ginger-nut.

(This olive-branch is accepted; compliments pass; cordiality is restored, and the pantomime proceeds without further disturbance.)

AN EXCISE CASE.

From The St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The Rev. Samuel G. Smith, of St. Paul, is noted not only for pulpit oratory, but for practical works. He holds, it is said, that one atom of practical Christianity is worth a world of mere piety. He is ever ready to step out of the pulpit and take a hand in the enforcement of the laws. He is himself keen in the use of ridicule and as keenly sensitive to its shafts when it is turned upon him. He is therefore ever on the alert to avoid being victimized in any way. The following joke concerning him is going the rounds:

Some time before W. P. Murray ceased to be city attorney, Dr. Smith happened in upon him one afternoon, leading a boy of twelve years by the hand.

"Mr. Murray, I want you to have ——, who keeps a saloon down here on Fourth-st., arrested. He gave this boy a drink."

"Well! ahem!" was the first characteristic utterance of Mr. Murray, with a winking, a twitch or two of the head and a brush or so of the hand over the head and face. "What time were you in that saloon—lad?" quizzed the attorney.

"Jest kem out a minnit ago," replied the boy modestly.

"Hum; yes, yes! How did you come to go in?"

"Don' know. Jest happened to."

"Gave you a drink, did they?"

"Yaas."

And the boy wiped his nose with an upward stroke of the palm of his hand, while Dr. Smith looked on with an expression of satisfaction. Mr. Murray scratched his head a minute and proceeded.

"Ahem; well; what did they give you to drink?"

"Glass of water," replied the youth calmly.

"Why didn't you tell me that?" shouted the divine, turning very red in the face.

"You didn't ask me, sir," returned the youth, demurely.

THE SLAUGHTER AT WOUNDED KNEE.

From The Chicago News.

An officer accompanying General Miles's party, which arrived last evening, substantiates the serious report concerning the blunder made at the Wounded Knee engagement. "There is no disputing the fact that the slaughter of soldiers at Wounded Knee can be partially ascribed to the reckless firing of their comrades," said he.

"The troops were not anticipating any attack and consequently they were not prepared for it. Their position was such that many of the cavalry horses were killed by the fire of the soldiers and two companies of the troops fled for some hundreds of yards to escape the extreme danger they were in from the firing of their comrades. It is believed—in fact, it cannot be doubted—that some of the casualties among the troops resulted from the unfortunate arrangement of the forces."

Through the Weary Hours

Of many a night, made doubly long by its protracted agony, the rheumatic sufferer tosses too and fro on his sleepless couch, vainly praying for that rest which only comes by fits and starts. His malady is one which ordinary medicines too often fail to relieve, but there is ample evidence to prove that the efficient blood depurent, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, affords the rheumatic a reliable means of relief. Check the malady in its incipient stages, when the first premonitory twinges come on, with this agreeable medicine, and avoid years of torture. Whatever be the rationale of the active influence of the Bitters upon this malady, certain it is that no evidence relating to its effect is more direct and positive than that which relates to its action in cases of rheumatism. Like all sterling remedies, however, it deserves a protracted, systematic trial, and should not be abandoned because not at once remedial. It is equally efficacious in dyspepsia, indigestion and kindred diseases.

FOR THE HONOR OF JAPAN.

PLAIN WORDS FROM A BLACK-HAIRED PATRIOT.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I have read in the Tribune of the 11th last an article with the title "White Wives in the East." May I be pardoned to ask your favor to do us the justice of printing these lines in your paper as the answer to the former, as its contents are so thorny that it pricks our flesh right deeply, and that it calls out a watch-dog to bark at the strange conduct of the author.

The whole narrative is indeed exquisitely drawn and well calculated to arouse the curiosity and strike a dread into the heart of this people.

If the author took us for four-pawed animals he could not have done worse. To say that such a thing as chastity is entirely absent from our community, not even the synonymous word for it in our language, or we have no better regards for women than for brutes, or a wife has to crawl on her fours when she wants to approach her husband, or a wife is not allowed to eat with her husband! Why, it is simply monstrous and incredulous. It is an abomination. Who would easily believe these accusations unless he possesses barbarous notions like the fanatics of the Middle Ages, who gloried in tying their brethren to a stake and burn them with good cheer?

During my long stay here I have never yet met with accusations so terrible as these. If the author is a worthy man and sincerely hopes to prevent the daughters of this nation from entering into marriage with the people whose manners and habits so vastly differ, he might have found other means than infamously accusing us with unparalleled malignity. Although there is a good deal of truth underlying the whole narrative, yet its power and animation is not so much derived from the reality as from inventive genius and skill of pen.

There are always two sides of features, which belong to all things, viz., the good and the evil. If we depict and enumerate only the evil side of a man we can succeed to represent him as a black villain, no matter how truly great and good he be. So I say there are also two sides that invariably belong to each nation. If the author, whose patriotism no one would dare to question, had as good knowledge of the devastating evils of his own country as he does of Japan he would put himself at the top of the list of the great reformers here and left us alone.

He believes that Christianity keeps off from his country the innumerable evils he detects in Japan. If it is truly so is the question? To my eye Christianity appears like a monstrous shelter, where all sorts of evils and villanies take refuge, that even led Bishop F. D. Huntington to acknowledge its corruption and suggest the overwhelming necessity for its purification.

Now let me return from my ramble to my original question and consider in parts the exaggerated estimation of our corrupted morals; and please let it be remembered, that I do this not from the wounded pride, nor from the desire that our people should not be prevented thus from marrying your daughters, but from the wish to rectify the wrong, to correct the faults and set before you impartially the true condition of our people.

As to the chastity he spoke of, I like to consider in the first place what chaste life the people keep here. During my seven years' stay in this country I have heard of more runaway wives and husbands heartlessly leaving their children in the lurch, or wives of business men walking with mysterious men while their husbands are hard at work downtown, than I have ever heard of or come in contact with in all my life before; and, mind you, they all profess to be the best Christians under the horizon. And this same class of Christians, who are in Japan, the Americans as well as Europeans, instead of elevating the mind of the infant nation, have infamously created new depravity in our land. Now let me speak our side. The chastity of our people is more strictly kept than one can imagine. This is the reason in our country the honor stands even before love. The marriages are not contracted by the free self-will of young minds. They are transacted mainly by the parents, who investigate minutely the natures and the characters of the respective side, and if everything is satisfactory to the both parties, then by the general consent of the parents, the relatives and the friends, they are married before the large company and the friends of both sides. Thus the wanton marriage, which is the result of the free choice of husbands or wives by the undeveloped mind of young people, is necessarily avoided. The marriage ceremony is regarded to be one of the holiest and most serious moment in the lives of the two that are involved. And we hold it the highest disgrace, if a married daughter return home divorced. If it is through her misconduct, she can not hold up her face again in public without invectives shower down on her. Thus our morals are restricted by the very organization of the social system. But this rigid system, sad to say, swept away from the part of the people of our big cities that are infected by evils of the revolution, which had blown off our feudal system and substituted it with the constitutional government.

For the rest, let me answer as a whole: I confess in the first place that our women are not so highly regarded, almost to affection as in America. I have often heard from our people, who had been to Germany, that the condition of our women very much resembles the women of that country. But I have never yet heard any one say that the Germans treat their women like animals. Let me flatly deny that there is no necessity of any class of our women to crawl on all fours to approach their husbands, nor are they detached from the pleasure of sharing the same meals out of the same plates. Judge for yourself if we regarded them so low, why have we had so many Queens for our sovereigns? And our admiration for the ability of some of them is everlasting and universal.

The author goes on to say that the Japanese and the Chinese are one of the same stock, and that they possess in main characteristics very similar and identical. It is very possible that we may be originally of the same stock. But the difference of the features of the present generation vividly shows that the Chinese forfeited their claims to the original race by their complete amalgamation with Tartars. But we are free from it. As to the difference of the characters, I have not made any special study, but how can we fail to recognize their conflicting elements of the two nations? Principally the Chinese are extremely conservative, almost to timidity, while the Japanese are progressive almost to rashness. The Chinese are grave and reserved, while the Japanese are frolicsome and gay. The Chinese are remarkably parsimonious, and the Japanese are generous and extravagant, often going beyond their means. These are the dominant characteristics which decide the destiny of the two different nations.

His exposition of the corrupted morals of our people is in a great measure very true, but we cannot accept them in the light he has given them. For if the author represents them as national evils, that our people were always so, and that they are a part of our nature, then it appears indeed horrible. But if it is considered as the evils that belong only to this era, like a passing shower on the annals of our history, then it impresses the public differently and is less odious. It is very natural that the author, being a foreigner, overlooked these facts. Therefore, let me declare that the evils in question are the disease belonging to this particular epoch, quickened by the revolution. With the spread of the foreign element the riddle of sphinx is solved—the superstitious fears of our old religion is removed from the mass of our people, and unchained them to the fang of passion. The result was that what the author has pictured, and that we are left without religion to build up the minds of the young nation.

To confirm my statement, I will draw briefly the condition of our people before the revolution. In those days our domestic commerce were carried on by a perfect system of harmony. The money transactions were all done by word of mouth. We did not use written document to bind debtors with the gag of law. With the force of thought the author has unconsciously, by turning the best virtue we possess, the simplicity of habits, into a weapon for whipping us, and claim we do not have luxuries enough to make once life happy. On the contrary, you have too much encouraged these luxuries, which form the very blot of dark crime among women in this country. They are never satisfied, no matter how poor they are, until they have diamonds and fineries.

Lastly the author says: "Ancient hatred for the foreign devil, which has been latent for some time, is again bursting force afresh. At no period during the last twenty years has the animosity against the foreigners been so intense as it is at the present moment," is one thing very true; so pardon me to assert a reason why it is so. When we first opened our ports to the foreigners our self-esteem was too high and strong. We thought we were the only human beings on the face of the earth, and whoever appeared in our land, whose peculiar features and varied-colored hair struck us with the idea that they must belong to a lower species, for the common belief was that the human beings can not have any other colored hair than black. This superstition of horror soon changed into unlimited admiration, when we have found out their great intellect, consequently the peace was made. What is now forming to hate foreigners is entirely on a different ground. This time they are