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LATEST NEWS.

THE OLD WORLD.

On the 13th President MacMahon issued a proclamation advising the French nation in the coming Senatorial election to vote for those candidates favorable to the existing order of things. The resignation of M. Leon Say had been withdrawn.

According to Vienna dispatches of the 13th Russia was making gigantic preparations for war. A third railroad track had been laid between Moscow and Polish Lithuania.

A gale on the Algerian coast, a few days since, destroyed property valued at $100,000.

Egypt's contributions to the Centennial Exposition arrived on the 13th. Nearly all of them are the property of the Khedive, although some of the more valuable of the curiosities are taken from the Egyptian National Museum.

A Vienna telegram of the 14th says twelve merchants of Odessa had been transported to Siberia for supplying arms to Turkey.

According to a Paris dispatch of the 14th Sir John H. Glover, the newly-appointed Governor of Newfoundland, had arrived, prepared to offer the French Government a considerable sum of money for the relinquishment of its fishery privileges off Newfoundland.

According to a Constantinople dispatch of the 13th the powers had relinquished the intention of sending a collective communication to the Porte demanding reform in the disaffected provinces.

Labor troubles have broken out again in Wales. A portion of the colliers struck on the 15th for higher wages. On the same day 600 weavers, at Macclesfield, were locked out of the Lower Heyes mills in consequence of a disagreement between the proprietors and the Secretary of the Weavers' Union.

John Lothrop Motley, the eminent American historian, has been elected Foreign Associate of the French Academy of Moral and Political Science.

A Madrid dispatch of the 16th says the Spanish Government had sent out a diplomatic note in reply to the recent American circular on Cuban affairs. The reply is quite belligerent in tone and takes quite high ground on all questions raised by the United States.

Dilworth & Son's cotton-mill at Manchester and Lumley & Simpson's cotton-mill at Astley, England, were burned on the 17th, involving a loss of over $300,000.

The election of Senatorial delegates in France occurred on the 16th. *La Patrie* of the 18th says that of 36,000 communes 26,000 had returned Conservative delegates.

A Berlin dispatch of the 17th says the Imperial Government would close all Catholic convents and schools on the 1st of April next.

A Brussels paper of the 17th says that Louise Lateau, the peasant girl on whose person was exhibited the alleged miracle of the stigmata, was dying.

According to the London *Times* of the 19th the British Cabinet had resolved to give cordial support to Count Andrassy's note to the Sublime Porte, reserving the right to differ on anything Austria might propose after its presentation.

A London dispatch of the 18th announces the death of Henry Varley, the well-known evangelist.

Gen. Lewal, acting commander at Marseilles, France, on the 18th issued an order prohibiting a projected political banquet to Gambetta.

A Lyons (France) dispatch of the 18th announces the failure of a large silk firm there with over 5,000,000 francs liabilities.

A Berlin dispatch of the 18th says the police had discovered that Thomassen, the dynamite fiend, was charged in 1868 with scuttling a ship on board which he had goods insured in England for £34,000.

THE NEW WORLD.

The State debt of Pennsylvania, after deducting the assets of the sinking fund, aggregates $13,766,564.

The next Iowa State Fair is to be held at Cedar Rapids, beginning on the second Monday in September.

Gov. Kirkwood, of Iowa, was inaugurated on the 13th and delivered a brief inaugural address.

On the 13th, at Washington, the Republican National Committee decided upon Cincinnati as the place and June 14 next as the time for holding the Republican National Convention.

Joseph Lapage has been tried at Concord, N. H., for the murder at Pembroke of Josie Langmaid, and was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged on the 19th of January, 1877. The jury were unanimous in the verdict on the first ballot.

A Washington telegram of the 14th says the House Judiciary Committee had agreed to present an amendment to the Constitution fixing the Presidential term at four years and making the incumbent forever ineligible for re-election.

According to a New York dispatch of the 14th the attempt to call a Congressional council for the purpose of deciding the question as to the right of Plymouth Church to drop Mrs. Moulton from its list of members had finally failed. In attempting to get the names of Drs. Storrs and Dr. Buddington were included, and to these the committee of Plymouth Church objected on the ground that they were partial and hostile to the church. When some of the other churches learned that Drs. Storrs' and Buddington's churches were to be left out they declined to serve, and the calling of a council was abandoned. Mr. Moulton, on being apprised of this condition of affairs, through her counsel, sent a long letter to the Plymouth Church Committee, declining to treat with them further in relation to a mutual council. She sought the action of a mutual council, but considered by all just men as a deliberate attempt to avoid investigation as to the guilt of the Plymouth pastor. At a business meeting of Plymouth Church in the evening Mr. Beecher spoke in relation to the affair and said he was glad to be able to state that the other side had given up the mutual council altogether. They had backed down because Plymouth Church had objected to some of the churches. He had never believed that the churches had asked for the council with sincerity, and it was never declined by the church. This declaration on her part rendered it imperative to invoke the advisory council to investigate and determine whether the church had acted properly. They should issue at the earliest possible moment the letters missive calling it.

On the 14th the Louisiana State Senate adopted a resolution instructing Gov. Kellogg to send militia to the parishes of East and West Feliciana and East Baton Rouge to assist the courts in executing the laws against the so-called "regulators." In case the militia proved insufficient the Governor was instructed to report the fact to the Legislature, when the propriety of calling on the President to restore order in the disturbed districts would be considered. A committee from the House called upon the Governor and notified him of the action of Mr. Eustis as United States Senator and asked for the necessary credentials, which Mr. Kellogg declined to furnish, but expressed his willingness to certify to the House proceedings relative to Mr. Eustis' election.

The news received in New York on the 14th left little doubt that the American ship Harvest Queen had been sunk in the Irish Channel and her entire crew of thirty men drowned. The disaster is supposed to have been caused by a collision with the steamer Adriatic early on the morning of the 3rd ult.

A London dispatch of the 16th says the English National Rifle Association had accepted the challenge of the American Rifle Association to compete in a match for the championship of the world at Philadelphia during the Centennial.

Admiral Krabbe, Russian Minister of Marine, is dead, and Vice-Admiral Lessowski has been appointed his successor.

A Rome dispatch of the 16th says the Vatican had instructed the Archbishops of Cologne and Treves to endeavor to find means to avoid deposition from their seats.

A Sioux City (Iowa) special of the 15th says the Sioux in the Upper Missouri country represented by Sitting Bull were preparing for war and were threatening the destruction of the frontier settlements.

Mrs. Johnson, widow of the late ex-President Johnson, died at the residence of her daughter, near Greenville, Tenn., on the night of the 15th.

D. W. Munn, ex-Supervisor of Internal Revenue, has been held to bail in the sum of $15,000 to appear at Milwaukee to answer to the charge of conspiracy to defraud the United States, and also for accepting bribes. These charges Mr. Munn emphatically denies. Several of the Chicago distillers and rectifiers have acknowledged themselves guilty in open court of the charges preferred against them, and expressed their willingness to tell all they know concerning the ring frauds and the revenue officials and others engaged in them.

A Washington dispatch of the 16th says that representation had been made to the President that the laws of the United States were obstructed in several of the Louisiana parishes. United States Dist.-Atty. Beckwith would be instructed to bring all illegal combinations, as well as individual offenders, to trial under the Enforcement act. The President was determined to preserve order to the extent of his constitutional power.

It was stated in Washington on the 15th that Secretary Chandler had appointed a commission to examine into the suspended pension cases and had directed payment wherever no actual fraud barred the grant of pension.

Ex-Gauger McGriff has been tried at Indianapolis and found guilty on nine of twelve counts of an indictment against him for being concerned in revenue frauds. One of the counts on which he was convicted was for receiving a bribe of $500 from the Bingham brothers.

On the 17th George S. Bangs, late Superintendent of the Railway Mail Service, was nominated for United States Assistant Treasurer at Chicago.

On the 17th Secretary Fish was before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, and stated that he did not regard as unfriendly the tone of a recent Madrid dispatch giving the outline of Spain's reply to the American circular in relation to mediation and intervention in Cuban affairs.

The Democratic National Committee will meet at Washington on the 22d of February to fix the time and place for holding the next National Democratic Convention.

On the night of the 13th a body of disguised men took four negroes from the jail at Friar's Point, Miss., and shot them dead. The mob was composed of fifty men, about one-half of whom were colored. The victims were charged with being guilty of murder, arson and robbery.

Gov. Kirkwood was elected United States Senator by the Iowa Legislature on the 18th. The vote stood: Senate—Kirkwood, 40; Leffler, 9. House—Kirkwood, 68; Leffler, 28. His term in the Senate will begin March 4, 1877.

The United States Supreme Court, in a cause brought from Missouri, has lately decided that a State cannot compel a peddler to pay license for selling articles procured in other States, on the ground that it is a tax upon the goods themselves, a discrimination against the products of other States, and in conflict with that clause of the Federal Constitution which declares that Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States.

A Washington dispatch of the 17th says that the Texas Border Commission had appointed a sub-committee to examine the information in the War Department on the subject of Mexican raids, etc. The committee would not visit Texas, but would send for persons and papers.

A party of Indiana editors, numbering 200, on a visit to the Centennial grounds in Philadelphia on the 17th, adopted a series of resolutions commending the Exhibition to Congress and advising that the $1,500,000 asked for be granted, with the understanding that the Government should disclaim all liability for the expenses incident to the enterprise other than for the amount specified in the appropriation.

The final ballot in the Kentucky Legislature on the 18th for United States Senator resulted in the choice of J. B. Beck, who received 106 votes to 15 for Wadsworth, the Republican candidate. There were five scattering votes. He will take his seat on the 4th of March, 1877.

L. Q. C. Lamar received 110 votes for United States Senator in the Mississippi Legislature on the 18th—the Republicans voting blank. He takes his seat March 4, 1877. It is said that a private caucus of Republicans decided not to participate in the election on the ground that the late election was carried by fraud and violence.

Gov. Hartranft was inaugurated Governor of Pennsylvania, as his own successor, on the 18th.

The Illinois State Farmers' Convention met at Bloomington on the 18th.

At a greenback meeting held in Madison, Wis., on the 18th a State Central Committee was appointed, consisting of one member from the State-at-large and one from each Congressional district. A committee was appointed to draw up a declaration of principles.

On the 18th Miss Dona Herndon, residing near Springfield, Ill., spilled upon her person some burning-fluid from a lamp which she was arranging. Her dress caught fire and she was horribly and fatally burned.

At Delphos, Ohio, on the 18th George Sheeter threw a lot of kerosene-oil into a stove to hurry up a tardy fire. The usual result followed. Mr. Sheeter was seriously and perhaps fatally burned.

CONGRESSIONAL.

SENATE.—A bill was introduced on the 12th to place all colored troops who enlisted in the army on an equal footing with white soldiers as to bounties and pensions....A resolution was offered to appoint a committee to examine the books of the Treasury Department....The resolution declaring that the office of President *pro tem.* of the Senate is held at the Senate's pleasure was adopted—33 to 15....Adjourned.

HOUSE.—Bills were introduced—requiring National Banks to prepare for specie payments; to refund the cotton tax....Consideration of the Amnesty bill was resumed, and Mr. Garfield spoke in support of Mr. Blaine's substitute and in reply to Mr. Hill's speech of the preceding day....Adjourned.

SENATE.—On the 13th petitions were presented for the improvement of the upper Missouri....The Judiciary Committee was instructed to inquire and report whether the act of 1793, making provision for success ion to the Presidency in the event of a vacancy, be not defective, and, if so, in what particular....Mr. Davis spoke to his resolution calling for an investigation of the books of the Treasury Department, and was answered by Mr. Boutwell, who thought the discrepancies complained of by Mr. Davis were more apparent than real....Adjourned to the 17th.

HOUSE.—Several resolutions of inquiry and investigation were adopted....Mr. Blaine made his closing speech on his proposed amendment to the Amnesty bill, after which Mr. Banks offered an amendment providing that any person laboring under political disabilities might have them removed on subscribing an oath of loyalty to the Government, which amendment was ruled out of order. Mr. Randall then closed the debate, when the bill, with Mr. Banks' amendment, was sent to the Judiciary Committee....Adjourned.

SENATE.—The Senate was not in session on the 14th.

HOUSE.—The Amnesty bill as amended by Mr. Banks was reported back from the Judiciary Committee, the main question ordered and the bill put upon its passage, with the following result: Yeas 182, nays 97—lost, for want of a two-thirds affirmative vote. Mr. Blaine moved to reconsider, thus obtaining the floor, and offered unanimous consent to offer his Amnesty bill, which excepted Jefferson Davis from its operations. Objection being made, Mr. Blaine withdrew his motion to reconsider....The Pension appropriation bill ($29,583,560) was considered in Committee of the Whole, reported back to the House and passed....Adjourned to the 17th.

SENATE.—On the 17th a petition was presented from P. G. T. Beauregard for the removal of political disabilities....Bills were introduced—to amend the acts to aid in the construction of a railroad and telegraph line from the Missouri to the Pacific; to recover from the Central and Union Pacific Railroads the bonds and coupons issued in excess of the amount prescribed by law; to authorize the Secretary of War to grant to railroad companies; to amend the laws relating to silver coinage....A concurrent resolution was submitted, proposing a common unit of money and accounts for the United States and Great Britain....A petition of citizens of Massachusetts was presented, asking that a law be passed making each member of Congress directly responsible to the electors of his district, the majority of whom, if he do not meet their expectations or justify their confidence, may at any time recall him and elect a successor....Adjourned.

HOUSE.—Bills were introduced—to prevent traffic in spirituous or intoxicating liquors in the Centennial buildings, or grounds during the Exhibition; to repeal the act providing for a redistribution of National Bank currency; to reduce the salaries of all the executive and legislative officers of the Government, except the army and navy, over $1,500, 20 per cent., and to fix the salary of the President at $25,000; to repeal the act for the resumption of specie payments; for the removal of all political disabilities....An amendment to the Constitution was submitted by Mr. O'Brien—as an amendment to Mr. Blaine's proposed amendment—providing that no State shall make any law respecting the establishment or forbidding the free exercise of religion, disqualifying ministers of the Gospel from holding any office of trust or emolument, either State or National, and providing that no public moneys raised for school purposes shall ever be under the control of any religious sect....Mr. White moved to suspend the rules and bring the House to a vote on the Amnesty bill introduced by him, and from the benefits of which Jefferson Davis was excluded, and also to vote on an amendment striking out that exception, which motion was lost—yeas 103, nays 110—not the requisite two-thirds....A motion to suspend the rules and adopt a resolution declaring in favor of the repeal of the Resumption act was lost—112 to 158....A resolution was adopted calling on the President for copies of all correspondence with Spain in reference to the island of Cuba....A constitutional amendment was introduced and referred limiting the Presidential term to four years....The Committee on Rules reported back the proposition to amend the rules governing the offering of amendments to the general appropriation bills, so as to provide that the rules shall read as follows: "No appropriation shall be reported in such general appropriation bills, or be in order as an amendment thereto, for any expenditure not previously authorized by law, except in continuation of the appropriations for such public works and objects as are already in progress, nor shall any provision in any such bill or amendment thereto changing the existing law be in order except such as, being germane to the subject-matter of the bill, shall retrench the expenditures"....Adjourned.

SENATE.—On the 18th the credentials of James R. Eustis, claiming a seat as Senator from Louisiana, were presented and laid over....The memorial of the Louisiana State Democratic Convention relative to the election and the condition of affairs in that State was presented and referred....A bill was passed to secure the attendance and payment of witnesses before military courts....The resolution for the appointment of a special committee to investigate the books and accounts of the Treasury Department was taken up, and Mr. Boutwell explained at some length the method of keeping accounts in the different departments. Amendments were made and remarks by other Senators, after which the resolution went over....Adjourned.

HOUSE.—The Committee on Judiciary reported a proposed amendment to the Constitution making the President ineligible for re-election. The minority presented a substitute....An adverse report was made on the bill to abolish capital punishment....Bills were passed—to extend the time for stamping unstamped instruments to Jan. 1, 1877; to extend for three months the time for claimants before the Alabama Claims Commission to prove their claims....Several bills were introduced....The Centennial Appropriation bill was considered in Committee of the Whole....Mr. Williams, of Wisconsin, offered a proposed amendment to the Constitution, supplementary to the amendment proposed by Mr. Blaine, providing that no money raised by taxation in any State shall be appropriated for the maintenance of any sectarian school or sectarian institution....Adjourned.

MULTUM IN PARVO.

AMERICAN oysters are exported to England.

A GOOD hotel at night is like a railroad bed—full of sleepers.

THE center of gravity—the lowest button on a Quaker's vest.

THE New York *Sun* wants a Governor who will write a message only six inches long.

THE more a man or woman knows the less he gossips about neighbors. Culture kills gab.

HEAVY strata of anthracite coal have been discovered in the Apennines, near Genoa.

A VIRGINIAN goes to school to his wife, and she makes him stay after school when he's unruly.

PROFANITY and plug tobacco are the crutches on which many a boy walks to a loafer's grave.

THE *Alta California* wants every man who wears a diamond pin, on his shirt front arrested on suspicion.

"WHY, Mary Ann, what in the world are you doing with the scissors?" "Shure yez told me to scallop the oysters."

ACCORDING to recent statements ten steamers and 1,500 lives have been lost on the Pacific coast within the last twenty years.

WHY is it that butchers and grocers will insist on putting "Happy New Year" at the foot of an outrageously big bill?

COLUMBUS discovered America, but when a boy he had as much difficulty in seeing an empty wood-box or water-pail as any other boy.

A CONTEMPORARY gravely asserts that the entrance of the centennial year was more demonstratively celebrated than any of its "predecessors."

MEN of genius always get into debt, but every man who fails to pay his board-bill is not necessarily a genius. He is another kind of genius—a deceased vegetable.

"SO you wouldn't take me to be twenty?" said a rich heiress to an Irish gentleman, while dancing the polka. "What would you take me for, then?" "For better or worse," replied the son of the Emerald Isle.

A DANDY, getting measured for a pair of riding-boots, observed: "Make them cover the calf." "Heavens," exclaimed the shoemaker, astounded, surveying his customer: "I have not got leather enough."

THE shortest will on record reads: "San Francisco, Oct. 25, 1875. All the property that I have belongs to my wife, Anna Scherp. This is my will. Franz Scherp. Witnesses: Peter Kerna, Joh. Orths, T. B. Moorbrick."

PROF. TICE seems suddenly to have lost his influence on the weather, as all his predictions for the winter have failed. After all we shall have to fall back on the old-fashioned almanac weather-tables for anything approaching correct prophecies. —*Detroit Free Press.*

THERE is no better, no safer way, no easier way, no surer way of saving children from the debasing influences of the street, from corrupting association and from the acquisition of criminal habits and ruinous practices, than to make home attractive.—*W. W. Hall.*

LUMBERMEN in Ottawa, Canada, are said to be sending up lots of teams to the woods for the winter at seventy-five cents to one dollar a day. Chippers are now hiring to the offices for work and are taking whatever is offered. Wages are not within 50 per cent. of what they were last year.

DID it ever occur to you, kind mammas, asks the thoughtful Boston *Transcript*, while fondly and proudly contemplating such a vigorous way, that if some giant, about ten times your size, were to trot you in a similar style the breath would be very apt to be jounced out of your body?

A FEW weeks ago a pond of water in North Alabama suddenly disappeared with a loud, rumbling sound, to the great dismay of a couple of gentlemen who were standing on its borders preparing to shoot ducks. A large hole is all that remains to mark the spot where was the runaway pond.

NEAR Hillsboro' N. H., lives a swain, who supports an aged father with the aid of about two dollars a week from the town. A short time since one of the Selectmen called on him and expressed the idea that a dollar ought in future to satisfy him. "A dollar! you don't mean a dollar!" was the reply. "All the astonished son—"why, you ought to see the old devil eat!" The deduction was not insisted upon.

THE Bureau of Statistics of the Detroit *Free Press* estimates that "there have been but 128,360 newspaper sites at pull, back dresses up to date." These figures are large, and it is no wonder they inspired the poet to the utterance of these burning words:

Oh, let poor woman's clothes alone;
They're none to winnow and winn;
She never makes no fun of your'n,
Then why poke fun at her'n?

A LOUISVILLE drummer stopped not long since at one of our Green River hotels, and the next morning a chambermaid came in to arrange his room. He approached her, and, gently putting his arm around her waist, said: "You are my darling," and then stole a kiss from her red, pouting lips. What did she do? Why, she seized the foot-tub where he had just washed his feet, and bathed his head with the contents; then she shampooed his hair with the coal-grabs; perfumed him with the water in the slop-bucket; washed his hair and whiskers with the blacking-brush; rubbed him down with a brush that had been used the day before in painting the hearth, and knocked the dust out of his clothes with a poker. Then doubling up her fists and shaking them at him she said: "This (the right one) is certain death, but as I'm not the foot-killer I'll not use that on you; this (the left one) is six months in the hospital." Then she hit him a blow that sent him through the window. He alighted on the roof of a shed-room, and rolled off into a pig-sty in the back yard. This disturbed the big dog, and his dander "riz," and he fastened on to that drummer quick, which brought him to a halt, and the servants hastened to his relief. He was taken to jail as a supposed insane tramp or showman, and the local paper in its next issue gave a long account of the mysterious disappearance of a Louisville drummer from the House, who left without taking his baggage or paying his hotel bill.—*Hartford (Ky.) Herald.*

JOHN AND I.

NEIGHBOR JOHN has houses and lands;
But the earth and sky are mine:
He keeps his deeds in an iron box
I have a right divine.

The wind that scatters his orchard blooms
Or fills his sails on the sea
Comes over the orchard and over the wood
With a sweeter breath for me.

I can lie down on the ferny hills,
Watched by the silent stars;
John is afraid because of the gold
Under his bolts and bars.

Though the sun shines out, he sits him down
And reckons it day by day;
But green leaves beckon, wild winds blow,
And I am up and away.

I dip my cup in the crystal spring,
John drinks the red, red wine;
He sits at a feast from day to day,
And the frugal crust is mine.

But oh! the glory of earth and sky
To my free, exulting soul!
The world is wide and the world is fair,
And I hold in fee-simple the whole.

—*Harper's Weekly.*

FINE WEATHER AND FAIR WOMEN.

ONE fine August morning saw a large party assembled in the sunny breakfast-room at Leighton Court, in —shire; the finest place in the county, with the finest park and the best croquet lawn in the neighborhood.

A merry gathering. Mr. Leighton and his wife, surrounded by an unusually numerous family party, still increased on that occasion by several visitors. Mr. Leighton had been twice married, and two of his daughters by his first wife had been mothers long enough to add fair opening blossoms to the family wreath; while some of the present Mrs. Leighton's daughters were scarcely older than their half-nieces.

Mrs. Leighton, herself an ex-beauty but little over forty, still bloomed amid her "rosebud garland of girls." But alas! the group of fair feminine blossoms was almost entirely unshaded by the dark foliage of masculine attire. Two lads from Eton and Harrow, not yet escaped from the chrysalis stage of boyhood, and old Mr. Leighton, who had long passed the butterfly period of existence, were the only representatives of the sterner sex.

The rosebud garland was a full one. Airy, fairy Lilians and stately Clara Vere de Vires mingled with little ones scarcely out of the nursery. Fancy the choir of musical voices! The boys, sons of a friend in India, and old Mr. Leighton had not a chance.

I and my reader enter at a critical moment with the toast and the letter-bag. Every one seizes eagerly on his or her share of literature. Those who are not fortunate enough to have correspondents take to the newspapers and periodicals, and a momentary peace reigns. It is broken by Mr. Leighton, who, looking up from his letter, asks: "Isn't your croquet meeting to come off to-day?"

"Yes," and "Yes," with "So lucky such a lovely day," being responded on all sides, he adds: "Then I daresay you won't be sorry to hear that an eligible young man will be added to the number of your guests."

Considering the circumstances above stated, it will readily be believed that this announcement caused general excitement among the population of the sunny breakfast-room and the babel of feminine voices broke loose again. "Who is he?" "Where does he come from?" "Who's going with him?" "Can he play croquet?" With the added comments of "We want men so dreadfully; always the case down here; and worse than ever now the Brook Thompsons are away and Capt. Anderson's gone."

And truly there seemed reasonable cause both for the rejoicings and the lamentations. One of the schoolboys, a precocious little man, attempted some assertion of masculinity by expressing that a pretty girl would have been a still more acceptable addition to the party; but as this was taken as an insinuation that none such were already present the speaker got properly snubbed for his pains.

Late in the afternoon, the eldest of Mr. Leighton's daughters, and mother of the handsome twins of eighteen, Flora and Frederica, more generally known by the abbreviations Flo and Fred, silenced the lubbish by a sign; and then inquired, with well-assumed indifference, "who, after all, this eligible might be."

Mr. Leighton protested he had only waited for a lull in the storm to explain, which would be done by reading aloud some portion of a letter from Uncle John, meant to serve as an introduction to the new arrival.

"Uncle John writes to me," continued Mr. Leighton, "that his long-delayed choice of a successor is at last made. A nephew of his late wife, who has recently returned from a long foreign tour, is, it appears, regularly installed at Oxenham Hall as heir-apparent. He says—but here I must be as well pleased as he is—that the young man is all that I can desire; with good looks and good parts, accomplished and amiable, free alike from the vices of a former generation and the follies of the present. I am satisfied that he will do honor to our name, which I intend him to take, and that he will nobly administer the wealth of which I now feel that I, from indolence, have made but a selfish use. And now, young ladies, comes the part of the story which, I know, will please, as somebody says in a play. The letter goes on: 'I feel that to you, my only near relation, whose son or grandson, had you had either, would have been my natural heir, I owe an explanation of my conduct, and'—but I will have pity on your impatience and tell you, in fewer words than Uncle John uses, that he proposes, hopes and wishes that his heir may find a wife among what he calls my numerous female relatives and descendants. Having heard that we are all now assembled together, he sends him over to make a selection—only regretting that the infirmities of age prevent his performing the introduction in person."

"What a blessing!" screamed half a dozen voices; and "Do be quiet!" half a dozen more; while Mr. Leighton continued: "He will probably arrive by the two o'clock train to-day, in time for your party. So now I advise you all to combine archery with croquet, and see who can take the best aim at the hero's heart, handsome, accomplished and amiable; and, moreover, heir to Oxenham Hall and upward of twenty thousand a year. Think of that, girls; let's see—is there anything else in the letter? Oh, yes—his name is Smith; not very aristocratic, certainly, but that doesn't matter, as he's to take ours. So now, girls, get yourselves up in your best. Choose your colors, train for the race, and good luck to your coming! I must go and look at old Marmion's legs." So saying, the old gentleman walked off to the stables as fast as gout would allow him, in the highest possible spirits; the question of Uncle John's ultimate disposal of the wealth, which was so entirely his own to will away, being thus, as it seemed, so happily solved. The man must be difficult to please, indeed, as he thought, who could not fix on a wife among the bevy of maidens that even to less partial eyes must seem so fair.

The Squire departed, and left behind him a scene of pleasurable excitement. Besides the Marchmont twins, Mrs. Heathcote's two pretty nieces, and Mrs. Leighton's family, had one girl grown up, and three of the present Mrs. Leighton's daughter's were supposed to be out. All were good-looking, in different styles; good-tempered, when not too much interfered with; giddy, as was natural to their age; and fast and silly, as is, alas! the normal condition of so many of their kind. There were present, besides, two other young ladies; quiet-looking girls, children of a deceased brother of Mr. Leighton, who had been imprudent in his worldly affairs, and left but a very scanty fortune to his widow and orphans. They were occasionally invited to Leighton Court by their good-natured uncle, who had no idea how ill they sometimes fared among their more prosperous and showy relatives.

The important question, "What shall we wear?" of course derived additional interest from the recent announcement, "I suppose Fanny and Ann will appear again in those dreadful old washed-out piques," said one, alluding to the despised cousins.

"I suppose so, too," returned Fanny, unabashed; "*faute de mieux*, cousin."

"Then I am quite sure one of you will captivate the heir," was the taunting reply.

A few minutes afterward another opportunity for mortifying the victims occurred. Mrs. Heathcote announced that she had heard from her husband that he could not leave town so early as he expected, and he hoped if a person who was coming to see him on business from his lawyer should arrive before him they would "treat him civilly" till he could join them.

"Oh! delightful! a lawyer's clerk; he will be a beau for Fanny and Ann. What a godsend for them, for otherwise there certainly would not have been one to spare."

"Civility, indeed! what is papa thinking of?" cried another.

All this, if it did not show the good manners or good feelings of the more prosperous cousins, served at all events to exhibit the others in a favorable light, as their gentle faces expressed neither anger nor mortification. Perhaps because they were used to it.

And now the ladies rose; the elder to seek their dressing-rooms and confer with their maids, while the younger ones were hustled off to the school-room.

At about three o'clock that afternoon the whole party assembled on the beautiful lawn, level as a billiard-table, green as an emerald, to consult about the placing and arrangement of the different sets. And certainly a prettier scene was never shone upon by summer sun, even in merry England, where there are so many of the kind. The house, a modern antique, built by the present Squire's father, to replace one on a lower site, was a happy mixture of the picturesqueness of a former age and the convenience of the present. It stood out bold and striking, with its terraces and flower-gardens, from a background of fine trees, and commanded a magnificent view of the surrounding country, the glorious sweep of park stretching far and wide till it melted into the general landscape, dotted with hamlets and village spires, and enlivened by occasional glimpses of winding river.

Nor were the living forms unworthy of such accessories; the handsome girls and stately matrons, in light, summer dresses, walked hither and thither, or formed into gay groups round the croquet hoops; while the pretty children, in their dainty costumes of lace and muslin, flitted like butterflies among them. As the guests began to arrive they did not detract from the general effect. There were—which, it must be owned, is rare in our dear country—very few hideous toilets with combinations of color painful to the eye; for it must be admitted by the most determined Anglomaniac that English women seldom have an eye for either form or color, in constructing their own persons. As long as a dress is striking and showy, and, as they fondly hope, fashionable, no matter how incongruous it may be, or how unsuited to the appearance of the wearer, they are satisfied, and go about perfectly happy, after having made themselves look as ugly as nature, which made most of them so fair, will permit them to be.

And now the company dispersed, and the games began. Some played; some, more graceful or indifferent, sauntered about, engaged in sweet, or sometimes in rather bitter, converse; and all those groups of lovely ladies, but slightly shaded by the darker garments of the unlovely sex, flitted about and chatted and played, and drank tea out of the most delicate porcelain cups. The sun shone brightly and laughter pealed around. An uninitiated spectator might have supposed that there were spots in the universe like glimpses of brighter spheres, and have been tempted to forget for a moment that sordid misery, with all its concomitants, abounded in the world.

But I am not going to be philosophical, but to tell my story, which is true one. The enjoyment was at its height when a servant came out to announce to Mrs. Leighton that Mr. Smith had arrived, and was waiting in the drawing-room. Surely never did that undistinguished patronymic cause such a sensation. "Oh! let him come out here at once." "Mamma, go and fetch him." "Which set is he to play in?" "Oh! in ours; we haven't a single man." "No, in ours; Caroline is playing two balls." "But only suppose he can't play, or does not like croquet," suggested a juvenile, less interested in the matter than those older. The idea was scouted, and in the midst of the confusion of voices as she came out and passed among the different groups; and slightly saying that she found this gentleman was a croquet-player, and the set on the bank was less full, she led him at once to the party of the poor cousins, and there left him to make his way as best he could. What better tea fate could a lawyer's clerk expect? and, after all, it was not such a bad fate either. Those amiable girls, feeling for the slight he had suffered, immediately did all they could to make him forget it. One of the ladies of the party having complained of fatigue, they decided on beginning a new game, with the stranger to replace her, while she reposed; and neither Fred nor Flo thought she throughout degraded by being for an hour the partner of a lawyer's clerk, and a very dusty one into the bargain. He apologized for his deshabille, saying he was not aware there was a party; and the ladies were shortly restored to their condescension, if condescension it was, for not only it appeared that the new-comer was a first-rate player, soon turning the scale of victory on his side, but better still, on hearing his partner called by the name of Smith, rather vulgar, yet not common, name of Nancy, he exclaimed: "Nancy! Nancy Leighton! I suspect I have heard a great deal of you; do you know William Foster?" The smiles of one sister and the blushes of the other owned the soft impeachment. "Do you know, do they let you must know he is my best and dearest friend."

Had an angel suddenly spread his wings before them he could not have inspired more respect or given more pleasure. William Foster was the name of the betrothed of the younger sister, the despised usher or tutor, who, though in holy orders, had so little chance of a living as to support himself by imparting to others the learning he had already acquired; but who, notwithstanding his small means and humble occupation, was adored by this simple family.

They were like acquaintances of old standing, and, though the stranger had so much to say. He had heard so much of them, and apparently all in their favor, from his friend, who seemed to be endowed with all the garrulity of a lover expatiating on the charms of his mistress, and to have included the whole family in his conversation. Many an anecdote was repeated and laughed over. So they played, and chatted, and grew intimate and friendly; and of all the groups on that extensive lawn, perhaps the merriest was that despised one on the slope, composed of the pariahs of the party, but whose only trouble seemed to be that the balls would sometimes escape and glide swiftly toward the water.

A much more serious cause of anxiety occupied the others. The ball at all their feet, the great matrimonial prize, seemed likely to escape them, or, at all events, to become the prey of the least scientific player of their number.

For some time Mr. Smith was pleasant and complimentary to all, and, as it seemed, to all alike. They grew desperate; fair cheeks flushed, white hands, gloved and ungloved, they did everything with emotion; and only the convenances of good society restrained them from displaying openly the feelings of jealous rivalry of each other, and admiration of the handsome and charming, but too undemonstrative, swain which filled their hearts.

By and by, however, one fair one, the youngest Miss Leighton, a pretty debutante, only just out, and new to the world and its proprieties, seemed likely to overstep the bounds of prudery at least, and show openly by looks and even words her admiration of his beauty and pleasure in his society. What was worse, he seemed conscious of her undisguised preference, and inclined to return it by devoting himself to her; so at least it seemed to the jealous eyes that watched the scene, and the words "forward minx," and even "disgraceful conduct," might be heard borne in angry whispers on the afternoon breeze.

The mammas took an eager if comparatively passive part in all this. Mrs. Leighton was calmly triumphant, while Lady Marchmont and Mrs. Heathcote looked daggers at their half-sisters.

And so time wore on, the shadows lengthened, matrons and prudent chaperons began to talk of the rising dews of evening, to press shawls and wraps upon the juvenile players, and to call for their carriages.

The ladies of the family took hurried and careless farewells of their friends. They were too entirely engrossed in the game—not of croquet but rather of ecarte, for to score the king of hearts was the object of all, and none could yet proclaim the fact. Caroline seemed to be the favorite; but none as yet despaired or gave up the prize as lost.

At seven o'clock all the guests had departed, and the home party gathered together near the house. Even the isolated game on the slope broke up and joined the rest. Mrs. Heathcote began to look at her watch and speculate on the time of her husband's arrival, when old Mr. Leighton, who had carefully avoided the scene of gayety, appeared among them, followed by the missing spouse.

Mrs. Leighton hastened to introduce Mr. Smith, and Mr. Leighton was giving him the welcome due to a guest so heralded, when, to the astonishment of all, Mr. Heathcote stepped forward and claimed him as an old acquaintance. "What, Heathcote! do you know Mr. Smith? where did you meet?" "Where! in London, of course, at Old Cheatham's chambers. Know him? why, it's on my business he comes. I might have saved you the trouble, by the way, Smith, if I had known I should be detained in town till to-day, but I dare say you don't mind—a little country air is no bad thing after being shut up all summer in those confoundedly close chambers."

No transformation scene in Christmas pantomime was ever so complete. The handsome stranger, instead of being the expected heir, was the despised lawyer's clerk!—all saw at once their blunder. Smith! what more natural than that the lawyer's clerk, the obscure man of business, should be Smith! Why were they so precipitate? It was to his good looks and calm assurance that the mistake was to be ascribed, and they most unreasonably felt angry with him as the cause. But nothing was further said; blank looks and slight edgings away from his vicinity alone were perceptible. The change was so slight that the object of it, incased as he was in a goodly armor of conceit, seemed totally unaware of it. He had taken all the homage, all the attentions as the natural consequence of the remarkable personal qualifications of which he was so intensely conscious. The last thing he would have suspected was that it could have arisen from a mistake; and so he stood still, blandly smiling upon all around, and apparently not remarking that except from the youngest Miss Leighton his smiles found no reflection in the faces that looked on him.

A still more dreadful idea was dawning in their minds. If this was the lawyer's clerk, where was the real Smith?—the heir? Was it possible that the insignificant-looking, dusty individual, whom they had been so anxious to "shunt off into a siding"—whom they had thrown, as it were, into the very jaws of the enemy—who had spent the whole afternoon making the intimate acquaintance of the two poor cousins, could be the Prince in disguise—the husband whom all were so anxious to secure? It was too dreadful! They could have bitten off their own tongues in despite, and beaten him for stealing upon them thus, a dusty, undistinguished pedestrian.

What was to be done? To acknowledge their blunder would be to expose themselves to