The Sunday Herald.

VOLUME XV. WASHINGTON, SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 18, 1880. NO. 18.

OLIVE LOGAN.

Night Brilliancy of Broadway—A Favorite Fable Fades Into Fiction—Can a Society Paper Succeed in America?—Who Are Aristocrats?—Overfeeding and Underfeeding—The New Social Abuse.

NEW YORK, July 9, 1880.

Stars of the summer night are shining; in the empyrean the planets flame; but suspended over the great thoroughfare, thronged with the harried humanity of this great city, there hangs by night the star the Peri died when she stood disconsolate at the gates of Paradise.

This lovely electric drop differs from any I have seen in Europe, in that it is inclosed in a globe of transparent, not of opaque, glass. It is, therefore, so dazzling that, were it hung upon the free of vision, the eyes of mortal could not bear it; it would blind like the lightning's flash. But its altitude is so great, swung as it is from the tops of the high houses across Broadway, that one may occasionally glance at it, especially when it flickers low, and the ruby red which tells of wavering power succeeds the blue brilliancy of the perfect stream of radiance. Down upon the street below it sheds concentric rings of light, and all within the magic circle is such a glare of brightness that men stop and read newspapers, as though twere in the moonlight, and this high noon. I fancy this thing of beauty is presaged into the sordidness of money-getting, in an indirect way, as the suspension is in front of Niblo's Garden, a pleasure haunt where now the twanging minstrel twirls the tinkling tambourine, and end man and interlocutor interchange, with the same "damnable iteration" which appalled *Macbeth*, the monotonous salutation: "How you was, Mister Jonsing," to be followed by the presumably humorous reply, "Hungry, oh course." It is as a beacon leading to these black men, ex-shoe-polishers, hotel-waiters, and what not, that the electric star gleams in the Broadway sky. A lifepose so vulgar it is not my province to record; but the study of the light is most interesting, and for the benefit of these wise observers among you who investigate with ardor the curiosities of nature let me note this fact: About the light swarm incessantly countless moths and light-winged butterflies of the summer night, the white-jacketed twitter, the dusky papillon, the million denizens of translucent space. But not to scorch their wings and die, mark you. No, no. The sage must send some other shade whereswith to warn impetuous youth, which basks in the pleasure of a killing joy. The miracle of science, called the electric light, has wrought a revolution in the moth-world. You should see them, sir, circling about this wonder-magnet, apparently, having attained a combination of destructibility which man has never reached, namely: the engagement of the most exquisite delight without the fear of penalty. For the electric light does not burn, it may be, for that reason, there is a certain something lacking in true moth-pleasure. If a moth were observing man-moth, and taking note of the curiosities of humanity for the benefit of the insect world, it might wonder that the lord of creation should lose his head and heart to a mere bit of female prettiness, a thing liable to disease, decay, and death, when a permanent, imperishable, and from the moth standpoint, no doubt, an every way satisfactory substitute might be found in masterpieces of sculpture which delineate all that is charming in woman, and are open to none of the objections of the mortal model.

I went into Brentano's yesterday. I found the quaint news-vender sitting there at his desk, in no way unchanged, or so it seems to me, since—well, Heaven knows how long it is since I first bought papers of him. The powdered old Italian—he is an Italian, I think—must have a wonderful memory for faces. He greeted me as though twere yesterday he received my last copy, when, in point of fact, it is quite five years since I tendered it. I asked him what the new society papers were. He shrugged his shoulders.

"It is hard to say," he answered. "They come up—go down."

I mentioned one of which I had heard, called *The Hour*.

"Yes," he returned, "it still continues; but it cannot succeed. Fifteen cents a number; it is too much. Fifteen cents for a society paper! Impossible. The *Nation* is doing very well. Then there is the *Sunnyside Press*, published at Tarrytown by Mr. Wheeler, formerly of the *World*. It is bright and spicy."

"A local sheet, of course?"

"No; he aims to make it interesting for New Yorkers, too. We get a good many copies."

After few words more I left this interesting Broadway character, whose physiognomy will be as much missed when it vanishes as was that of the eccentric Fanny Fern, who used to promenade this way incessantly, carrying her daughter's baby, the progeny of "Doesticks," the humorist. The historian who pens the tales of this generation will surely speak of Brentano, the quaint foreigner, whose fortunes arose from a table formed of a plank placed on two barrels, with a few newspapers for all this days where large and elegant premises which rent rail is $4,000, where every diverse expression of light literature in every language is to be bought, hot and hot every day. Retiring to his news counters I bought the latest issues of all the great periodic literature of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, a bulky bundle which it took me some hours to master. I see plainly the drift of hope which lies in the direction of very many, backed by capitalists of their acquaintance, to start journals which aim to repeat the successes achieved in London by the three headed weekly papers of the *Graphic*—the *World* and *Truth*, and the *Whitehall Review*. But a dispassionate and experienced observer, completely familiar as I am with the audience newspapers of this kind can command to both comfort and profit,