

most tact, experience and varied knowledge of life and literature; Then it is her privilege to lead and guide the conversation; with swift tact to turn the course if rocks are ahead—to evade skilfully, encourage sweetly, repress gravely. And it is only a woman that can touch the curb with so light a hand that she checks without wounding. She allows no freezing ice to form and obstruct the full, free sail of thought; but by kindness and grace stimulates to exertion all the latent mental powers that may be around her.

Then every one looks happy; and good talk flows like wine from the golden chalice; the mutual pleasure of giving and receiving, the consciousness of heightened fascination, the triumph of success, all combine to give radiance to the countenance, intelligence to the eyes and eloquence to the lips. Thought flashes like light from the facets of a well-cut gem; while animation and the swift changes of ever-varying expression make all faces interesting, and some beautiful. There is heat or vehemence in discussion, for manner is a wall of defence against aggressive self-assertion; and the presence of a high-bred woman insures decorum and refinement.

By dignity, grace and tact she claims and receives her queenly right to the homage of courteous deference and purity of conversation; and the supreme social sovereignty of woman is never more evidenced than when she touches into harmony all the diverse and conflicting elements of social intercourse. At such times, when all the rich spiritual splendors of intellect are manifested, there is no need of any adventitious aid from other sources of enjoyment. There is talk far above singing, and the soft ripple of Ionic mirth struck from the converse of related souls is a music worthy of a symposium of the gods.

WHAT IS ARISTOCRACY!

(By FITZNOODLE IN AMERICA.)

YA-AS, I heartily wish that people wouldn't botham me about such things; but they will persist in coming wound to my residence at all sorts of hours to obtain my ide-ahs as to what weal aristowcacy is, and if such a thing weally exists in aw Amerwica. They do this, although I have wepeatedly told them that they are egwegious donkeys to worry themselves about such mattahs.

"It's verwy poor taste," I observed to a rich young snob, the othah day, who was dwessed in a tightly-fitting fwock coat and wore an extremely stiff collar all the way around the circumference of his thwoat; "in your Wepublican countwy, what the aw dence does it mattah whethah your ancestahs came he-ah two hundred ye-ahs ago or a me-ah generation back? In neithah instance could they have had a gweat deal of money or respectability, or they would nevah have left Eurwope."

"Aw," said this wudiculous fellow, as he wested his pointed-toe boots on an easy chai-ah at his vulgahly pwetentious club: "you're quite wong, Mr. Fitznoodle—quite wong. My gweat-gwandfather was a Knickerbocker and a judge."

"Ya-as," I weplied: "but in those days any fellow who could aw wead and wite, and did not make a pwactice of getting dwunk, could be a judge. It was not an honah, because there was no population, and no pwoperty to steal." "But, Mr. Fitznoodle, you don't mean to say that I am not vastly superwiv-ah to the cads who are now engaged in shop-keeping, cardwiving and othah disweputable occupations? Hang it, ye know, I'm a gentleman, because I've a wegulah income and am not obliged to earn my livin'."

"My good fellow," I weplied, "you are no bettah than the cads you weler to, who, by-the-way, are not cads at all; but you are making an awful ass of yourself in pwetending to be gweatah than your neighbah, and the soonah you get your aw bwain wid of such atwocious nonsense the maw desirwable it will be faw you. You are not bettah, and ought not to be in Amerwica, than you-ah gwoom or coachman or butchah boy, except perwhaps in education. There can't, de-ah boy, be any such thing as pwide of birth he-ah."

"But don't ye know, Mr. Fitznoodle, that, in Baltimore, arwistowcacy has been defined at last, and that it is to be banded togethah undah the name of the Arwyah Ordah of Amerwica, and diwected by a pwovost general? Descendants of generwals, colonial governahs, signahs of the Declarwation of Independence and westernd Eurwopean nobility."

"If you are going to talk any maw such wubish as this," I angwily weplied, "I must weally dwop you ah acquaintance. You are verwy fah wemoved from noble blood. Your ancestahs pwobably came ovah in the steerwage, and cultivated vegetable pwoductions in market gardens, and you can see any numbah of their pwototypes at the pwesent time. If not, they were inferwiv-ah twadesmen or laborwahs, and, I am sorry to say, you and your female wewatives show that you have this common blood in your veins by talking in such an idiotic mannah. There is nobody in aw New York society who can be considahed arwistowcatic. All are descended frow people equivalent to the emigwants daily arwiving frow Gweat Bwitamin, and you appe-ah, my young fwien, to come frow even a lowah gwade than what I have described."

The fellow, who befaw was always wegaling me with accounts of his illustwious lineage, got

verwy wed in the face, and now takes the twouble to avoid me. It's a gweat welif, and I wejoice at it; but what a horwid piece of impertinence and pwesumptuous vulgawism on his part! I weally was obliged to snub him aw.

GOUNOD ON MUSIC.

MUSIC NOW TOO COMPLEX—THE NEXT MASTER TO BE AS SIMPLE AS MOZART OR ROSSINI.

Gounod, in a late interview in London, said, among other things:

"To my mind the intellectual tendency of the art of music is greater than the sentimental to-day, but the great fault of music now is that it is complex and not simple. Masters are too apt to study the effects of a hautboy, of a violin, of a flute—questions of detail—and to disregard the great value of the *tout ensemble*—the expression, in its completeness, of an idea. It was not always so. Rossini and Mozart, for example, were both sublimely simple. All the greatest things are always simple. Rossini composed divinely from divine inspiration. It is as though God had ordered him to sing, and he sang—naturally, easily, and spontaneously. It was his nature, and there was no effect. The same was true of Mozart."

"What is your opinion of the art of music now?" inquired the interviewer.

"Like everything else, it is in a transitory stage. It is not wholly sentimental or wholly practical. When the two are wedded together it will be sublime and the fact of our being in this transitory state gives me confidence. There is strength in weakness, and where there is opposition to truth, truth would be the loser; we gain the strength and experience by combat and failure; and it is always after a transitory and hesitating stage like the present that the grandest epoch comes when ideality and reality go hand in hand, when faith and reason are one. The time will come, rely upon it, although perhaps neither you nor I will see it. It is the natural evolution of all things, and the history of human thought is as the physical history of this planet. As years and centuries roll on we shall see things clearer, until at length faith and reason will be as one, and things which we now consider supernatural will be natural. Music is only one phase of thought, and in considering its present condition and its future, I cannot separate it from other forms of thought. They all have the same history, and will eventually meet with the same full completeness and perfect power."

"But what will be the result of this present complex condition of the theory of music in Europe?"

"Why, naturally from this complexity will spring simplicity. The next great master will be as simple as Mozart or Rossini. He will come as a giant and break all, but with the fragments of what he has broken he will erect a splendid temple—Power; powerful, because it is truth, and simple, because it is true and powerful. As it is with the history of any art, so it is with the history of nations. Germany has been for years the head, the reason, the intelligence; and France, the heart, the sentiment. The day will come when they will understand each other, and be as one."

"How long did it take you to write 'Faust'?" was asked.

"About two years and a half; but then I was interrupted. I wrote 'Le Médecin Malgré Lui' in the middle of 'Faust.' People did not understand that kind of music—the simple. I expressed the *Faust* and *Marguerite* of Goethe as I understood them."

"Have you ever heard Spohr's 'Faust'?" inquired the correspondent.

"Years ago; but I do not recollect it. I am glad I did not know it, well at the time I composed mine, for it might have modified my conception of the subject."

After a pause M. Gounod broke out: "I envy men who have time to express their thoughts by oratory or by writing. These men are the real apostles. I am nothing but a poor musician, and the theatre absorbs all my time. I envy men who can directly appeal to the thoughts of their fellow-men by their pen or by their voice."

"But surely music is an expression of thought?"

"Yes, of course; but not so direct. I do not complain, for everything has its use, but I envy men who are free, and who have time to use their faculties as they please. Had I my life over again, I should not be a musician; I should devote my faculties to literature and philosophy."

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

LONDON, Dec. 28.

THERE is a rumor that a title will be bestowed on Mrs. Gladstone.

THE Princess Dolgorouki and suite are expected next week at Nice for the season.

IT is said that one of the vacant Garters will be offered to the Duke of Leinster.

IT is said that, for obvious reasons, there will be no drawing-room at Dublin Castle next year.

SIR THEODORE MARTIN is said to be engaged on a new and elaborate life of Lord Lyndhurst, the materials for which will be supplied by Lady Lyndhurst.

ARRANGEMENTS are being made to celebrate the Parliamentary jubilee of Sir Harry Verney, the Liberal member for Buckingham, who was first elected for that borough fifty years ago.

THERE has been a scheme preparing for some time past to erect new offices for the Admiralty and the War Office. It is possible that the buildings will be commenced early next year.

A "MERCHANT" imported into Australia some thousands of primroses in small pots, and sold them at very high prices, as home reminiscences. The English primrose and real English earth were a bit of the old country!

AT the half-yearly meeting of the Goat Society it transpired that the Duke of Wellington was a great breeder of goats, and that his two choice animals were called Billy Gladstone and Billy Doux. The contrast in tempers had given rise to their names.

THE virtues of plum-pudding being one of the scientific topics just now under discussion, it may not be out of place to mention that plum-pudding has, time out of mind, made its appearance at Christmas on the Royal dinner-table in the shape of a soup.

THE Old English Fair has penetrated to Aberdeen. The good people of that city are going to descend from their lofty intellectual altitude, and go in for larking on Thursday next. It is for the good of a church, be it understood.

IN a very high quarter it is felt that the new Archbishop should incline to view with favor the highly important and necessary measure which has received the support of the Royal Dukes for legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

THERE is a desire to light all the cathedrals and large churches by electricity; as that would lessen danger from fire it is most desirable. Canterbury was about to set the good example, but has failed in doing so from want of funds.

MR. GLADSTONE has taken to reading the lessons at Hawarden Church on Sundays. It is not on account of any want of clerical strength to conduct the duties, but because, as the gay premier says, time hangs heavily on his hands when he is not occupied.

THERE has been one Welsh fancy fair in London; its success has ensured the experiment of a second. The picturesque costumes of the ladies was the attraction. Why not have a divided dress fair?

IT was some time since stated that Barnum would open the Alexandra Palace next year. His secretary has been hovering about for some time, and it now appears that the arrangement has been concluded.

A MUNICIPAL Reform Club of London is to be formed. The principles of the new club will be opposition to needless overthrow of existing institutions, retaining that which is sound and good, and reforming that which requires improvement. If this is no healthy principle, what is?

THE new lord, Lord Wolsley, has not been supplied with arms from the usual depot whence soldiers receive material of war, but has manufactured his own arms. His supporters are a Goorkha and a Gordon Highlander, signifying that he owes them much. He might have added a pen.

As a proof of the increasing interest in the temperance cause, it may be mentioned that the blue ribbon is now worn by the Duchess of Sutherland, Duchess of Westminster, Lady Mount-Temple, Countess Brownlow, Countess of Ellesmere, and the Hon. Mrs. Howard. Mr. George Howard, M.P., has also donned the badge.

THE Art Union of London issues this year a most acceptable engraving; it is a copy of Burgess's "Stolen by Gypsies," the memory of which all will have treasured who have seen it, for it was most interesting in subject and beautifully printed. The engraving has been prepared by Messrs. Lumb Stocks, R.A., and C. Jeens.

DIAMOND pig brooches, supposed to bring the owner good luck, are among the newest things for Christmas and New Year's presents, and certainly nothing can be quieter or prettier. If a huge brooch is required a sty might be added with excellent effect.

A YOUNG American fashionable having received by mistake in his washing an article of attire which belonged to Mrs. Langtry took the liberty of wearing it as a ruffled shirt. He explained the circumstance to his club friends, and the dear boys have all gone in for the "Langtry ruffle."

TRAMWAYS are being resisted in the north of London, and petitions against the invasion of that suburb have been numerous and influentially signed. Tramways seem to agree with those of foreigners much more than with those of English people. We care more for our horses and carriages, and our driving is better. Tramways mar the efforts of the best coachman, and are ruinous to vehicles and horses.

LORD LYTON is hard at work on a biography of his father. It is a formidable undertaking, for the number of volumes is indefinite. Three of them will be published in the spring. A feature of great interest will be an autobiography of the novelist up to the age of twenty-two, and there will be a great quantity of correspondence, together with hitherto unpublished compositions of the late Earl. Bulwer Lyton is one of the greatest figures in the annals of fiction, and his undoubted gifts, his remarkable versatility, and his associations as a politician, as well as a writer, with the most distinguished personage of his time must make his biography very entertaining reading.

LONDONERS are about to make acquaintance with electricity as a motive power without the necessity of visiting the Crystal Palace. Great preparations are being made at the Agricultural Hall for a World's Fair, to be held from to-day well into the new year, one great attraction of which will be an electric railway. The fair will not, however, entirely depend upon scientific amusements for attraction. There are to be a Richardson's show, an imposing menagerie, a skating rink, a glass exhibition, optical illusions, a dog and monkey circus, a variety exhibition, and a marionette theatre, with accessories in the way of shooting saloons, swings, Christmas trees, and music thrown in. As there are to be no extra fees, it must be admitted that the sixpenny entrance payment will cover a multitude of amusements.

MISCELLANY.

Six cameras were recently used in photographing a wreck blown up by United States engineers, the views being about a second apart, and being taken instantaneously. A photograph taken one-tenth of a second after the explosion showed the vessel broken and a column of water seventy feet high; a second photograph, 1.5 seconds after, showed a column of water 160 feet high; a third photograph, taken 2.3 seconds after, showed the column at its full height of 180 feet, while fragments of wreckage were in the air, but none had fallen to disturb the surface of the water; a fourth picture, taken 3.3 seconds after, showed the column falling and the surface of the water disturbed; while a fifth photograph, 4.3 seconds after, showed that all was over.

THE South Kensington Museum has been enriched by a magnificent bequest, comprising pictures, sculptures, porcelain, furniture, trinkets, and miniatures, produced during the reigns of Louis XIV. The sale of similar objects in the Hamilton collection, and the prices realised for them may have given rise to an impression that an age conspicuous for uncurbed extravagance was dawning upon London. The sums, however, which were paid for French works of art at the Hamilton sale were frequently no higher than the original prices for the objects when new. There was little increase on account of the age of the objects or the decrease of the workmen who made them. In the face of such considerations, £300,000 may probably be fairly named as an approximate value of the Jones Bequest, which is arranged at the South Kensington Museum, and is now open to the public.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

MR. GLADSTONE is indisposed.

A Ministerial crisis has occurred in Spain. The Ministry has resigned.

DR. LYON PLAYFAIR has resigned his seat in the Imperial House of Commons.

A VIOLENT shock of earthquake was felt in Northern Ohio on Saturday morning.

POLK, the defaulting Tennessee State Treasurer, has been arrested at San Antonio, Texas.

GAMBETTA'S funeral took place at Paris on Saturday. Over 300,000 took part in the ceremonies.

THE steamship *City of Brussels* sank last Saturday off Liverpool. Ten persons, including two passengers, were drowned.

A SERIOUS affray occurred in Alexandria between European and Egyptian policemen, one Albanian being killed and several others wounded.

A *rolle prosequi* has been entered at New York in the case of Hanford, the conductor, held for manslaughter in the Spuyten Duyvel collision.

MR. SEXTON, M.P., speaking at Sligo, on Saturday, declared the policy of the Irish party was to carry on an agitation for the independence of Ireland.

ENGLAND and Portugal are reported to have signed an agreement, by which the former, in return for the cession of Wydah, on the West Coast of Africa, will support the claims of Portugal to the Congo River territory.