

advice is, let the procession alone. It is now nothing to compare to its former splendor and numbers, and is yearly decreasing.

There is, however, one objection I would make to the procession, and that is, the bands are generally not fit for a strolling circus, at least singing might be substituted with good effect.

Excuse my trespass upon your columns.

FAIR PLAY.

STEAMSHIP EXPLOSIONS AND IMPERFECT VENTILATION.

SIR,—One of your correspondents, a Mr. Johnson Briggs, recently called attention in your columns to a subject of no small public importance. From his letter and a reference therein to a pamphlet, which he mentions having left with you, it is to be inferred that he has, or imagines he has, in his possession a something—whether the actual apparatus itself or the mere embryo in his own mind of an invention I am unable to determine—for thoroughly ventilating public and private buildings, steamships, mines and closed-up places of every description, and without the opening of windows, doors, &c., and the inconvenient and dangerous consequences of sudden drafts, expelling all foul odours and noxious gases, thus keeping up a continual supply of good, fresh air.

If Mr. Briggs be really in earnest, the sooner his idea is developed and put into practical use the better; but it strikes me that instead of just puffing his inestimable treasure by reference to the prospective benefits of its adoption, he might have added, for the information of your readers, a clear and lucid explanation of it, giving, in fact, a detailed description of its construction and workings, if it has matured into a tangible shape.

What I particularly note is that Mr. Briggs refers to the value of his process as a preventative of such accidents as the "Sardinian" explosion. Now, it seems to me, if he can clearly show that it can be applied as such a preventative, no steamship company brought to a knowledge of such an advantage would be slow to secure it, not only for the purpose of reducing their vessels' risks, but as a means of improving their passenger and other accommodation, and of thus increasing their business; for it must surely be obvious—especially in view of the more recent accident on the "Sarmatian," in which two lives have been lost, according to the verdict of the coroner's jury, through want of proper ventilation—that steamship companies who can offer the double inducement of pure ventilation and immunity from the dangers which are shown by the explosions referred to, to be now in existence, must take precedence by securing the patronage which a travelling public in quest of ease, comfort and safety are sure to bestow upon them. All of us, I am sure, with any experience of ocean travel have more or less disagreeable recollections of bad odours and impure air. Practically, in view of the generally short duration of the voyage, these give us but little concern, or are at most looked upon as a necessary inconvenience of the journey. The "explosion" phantom, however, has something more startling, more alarming about it, something which naturally prompts us to make anxious enquiry as to whether or not there are any ready means of "laying" it.

May I venture to ask Mr. Briggs to give us, through the medium of your valuable paper, if the subject be in your opinion of sufficient importance, a brief outline of his scheme, and to tell us whether or not he has brought it under the notice of the Allan or any other S. S. Co., and with what result?

Yours, &c.,

COMMODORE ET SALUS.

Montreal, June 13th, 1878.

PEACE AND FAIRNESS.

SIR,—Your remarks in last week's issue concerning the preservation and peace of our city were wise and well-timed. Let us have peace by all means; the trade and reputation of the city have suffered enough already through the laxity, and obstinate one-sidedness of those in authority. The Mayor seems to have learned a much-needed lesson from the Quebec riot, having seen it with his own eyes. But for the timely presence of the citizen soldiers of Montreal he would probably have seen the good old city in flames. It is hoped that the he would probably have seen the good old city in flames. It is hoped that the authorities will see that full and timely preparation is made to prevent disturbances about the coming 12th July, for there is great uneasiness among our citizens. At any cost we must have peace.

There is one thing in connection with Governmental and Municipal matters in the Province of Quebec that seems to me very unfair and unjust. While certain nationalities, of one creed, absorb almost all offices and situations, they do little to protect and keep the peace of either city or country. All the risks and inconveniences of protecting the Province are borne by others; that is manifestly unfair, especially when they have also to pay more than half the taxes. The Americans, too, while they are considerable in numbers and wealth, do little or nothing to protect the city. I suppose you could hardly find a single man of that nationality among the volunteers. Let us have fair play.

MARCUS.

LA PETITE MADELAINE.

By MRS. SOUTHEY.

(From "Blackwood," August, 1831.)

I was surprised the other day by a visit from a strange old lady, brought hither to be introduced to me, at her own request, by some friends of mine with whom she was staying in this neighbourhood. Having been, I was informed, intimately acquainted, in her early years, with a branch of my mother's family, to which she was distantly related, she had conceived a desire to see one of its latest descendants, and I was in consequence honoured with her visit. But if the honour done me was unquestionable, the motive to which I was indebted for it was not to be easily divined; for, truth to speak, little indication of good-will towards me, or of kindly feeling, was discernible in the salutation of my visitor, in her stiff and stately curtsy, her cold ceremonious expressions, and in the sharp and severe scrutiny of the keen grey eyes, with which she leisurely took note of me from head to foot.

Mrs. Ormond's appearance was that of a person far advanced in years; older than my mother would have been if still living; but her form, of uncommon height, gaunt, bony, and masculine, was firm and erect as in the vigour of life, and in perfect keeping with the hard-featured, deep-lined countenance, surmounted by a coiffure that, perched on the summit of a roll of grizzled hair, strained tight from the high and narrow forehead, was, with the rest of her attire, a fac-simile of that of my great-aunt Barbara (peace be to her memory!) as depicted in a certain invaluable portrait of that virtuous gentlewoman, now deposited, for more inviolable security, in the warmest corner of the lumber-room.

Though no believer in the influence of "the evil eye," there was something in the expression of the large, prominent, light grey orbs, so strangely fixed upon me, that had the effect of troubling me so far, as to impose a degree of embarrassment and restraint on my endeavours to play the courteous hostess, and very much to impede all my attempts at conversation.

As the likeliest means of breaking down the barrier of formality, I introduced the subject most calculated, it might be supposed, to awaken feelings of mutual interest. I spoke of my maternal ancestry—of the Norman blood and Norman land from which the race had sprung, and of my inherited love for the birthplace of those nearest and dearest to me in the last departed generation; though the daughter of an English father, his country was my native, as well as my "Father-land."

Mrs. Ormond, though the widow of an English husband, spoke with a foreign accent so familiar to my ear, that, in spite of the sharp thin tones of the voice that uttered them, I could have fancied musical, had there been a gleam of kindness in her steady gaze. But I courted it in vain. The eyes of Freya were never fixed in more stony hardness on a rejected votary, than were those of my stern inspectress on my almost deprecating face; and her ungracious reserve baffled all my attempts at conversation.

All she allowed to escape her, in reference to the Norman branches of our respective families, was a brief allusion to the intimacy which had subsisted between her mother and my maternal grandmother; and when I endeavoured from that slight clue to lead her farther into the family relations, my harmless pertinacity was rebuked by a shake of the head as portentous as Lord Burleigh's, accompanied by so grim a smile, and a look of such undefinable meaning, as put the finishing stroke to my previous bewilderment, and prevented me from recalling to mind, as I should otherwise have done, certain circumstances associated with a proper name—that of her mother's family, which she spoke with peculiar emphasis—and having done so, and in so doing (as she seemed persuaded) "spoken daggers" to my conscience, she signified by a stately sign to the ladies who had accompanied her that she was ready to depart, and the carriage being announced, forthwith arose, and honouring me with a farewell curtsy, as formal as that which had marked her introduction, sailed out of the apartment, if not with swan-like grace, with much of that sublimer majesty of motion with which a heron on a mud-bank stalks deliberately on, with head erect and close depending pinions. And as if subjugated by the strange influence of the sharp grey eyes, bent on me to the last with sinister expression, unconsciously I returned my grim visitor's parting salutation with so profound a curtsy, that my knees (all unaccustomed to such Richardsonian ceremony) had scarcely recovered from it, when the closing door shut out her stately figure, and it was not till the sound of carriage-wheels certified her final departure, that, recovering my own identity, I started from the statue-like posture in which I had remained standing after that unwonted genuflection, and sank back on the sofa to meditate at leisure on my strange morning adventure.

My ungracious visitor had left me little cause, in truth, for pleasing meditation, so far as her gaunt self was immediately concerned, but the harsh strain, or an ungraceful object, will sometimes (as well as the sweetest and most beautiful) revive a long train of interesting associations, and the plea alleged for her introduction to me had been of itself sufficient to awaken a chord of memory, whose vibration ceased not at her departure. On the contrary, I fell forthwith into a dreamy mood, that led me back to recollections of old stories, of old times—such as I had loved to listen to in long-past days, from those who had since followed in their turn the elders of our race (whose faithful historians they were) to the dark and narrow house appointed for all living.

Who that has ever been addicted to the idle, and I fear me profitless, speculation of waking dreams, but may call to mind how, when the spell was on him, as outward and tangible things (apparently the objects of intent gaze) faded on the eye of sense, the inward vision proportionately cleared and strengthened—and circumstances long unremembered—names long unspoken—histories and descriptions once attended to with deep interest, but long passed from recollection, are drawn forth, as it were, from the dark recesses of the mind, at first like wandering atoms confused and undefined, but gradually assuming distinctness and consistency, till the things *that be* are to us the *unreal* word, and we live and move again (all intervening space a blank) among the things that have been?

Far back into that shadowy region did I wander, when left as described by "the grim white woman," to ponder over the few words she had vouchsafed to utter, and my own "thick-coming fancies." The one proper name she had pronounced—that of her mother's family—had struck on my ear like a familiar sound; yet—how could I have heard it? If ever, from one person only—from my dear mother's lips—"De St. Hilaire!"—again and again I slowly repeated to myself—and then—I scarce know how—the Christian name of Adrienne rose spontaneously to my lips; and no sooner were the two united than the spell of memory was complete, and fresh on my mind, as if I had heard it but yesterday, returned the whole history of Adrienne de St. Hilaire.

Adrienne de St. Hilaire and Madelaine du Résnel were far-removed cousins; both "demoiselles de bonne familles," residing at contiguous chateaux, near a small hamlet not far from Caen, in Normandy; both well born and well connected, but very unequally endowed with the gifts of fortune. Mademoiselle de St. Hilaire was the only child and heiress of wealthy parents, both of whom were still living. Madelaine du Résnel, the youngest of seven, left in tender infancy to the guardianship of a widowed mother, whose scanty dower (the small family estate devolving on her only son) would have been insufficient for the support of herself and her younger children (all daughters),