

WINTER GLOOMS.

The winter morn wakes sad and slow
Beneath a sullen firmament;
The cock crew out five hours ago
But doubtfully, as if he dream't.
The noon creeps up—no light—no sun;
The sombre fogs hang chill and drear.
By four o'clock the day is done,
And life grows short and shorter, Dear.

The ragged skies are patchy with cloud;
Out roars the echoing waterfall;
The winds come howling fierce and loud;
The door creaks hoarsely in the hall.
The birds are silent in the wood,
Save here and there some moaning dove,
Or redbreast heavy with its mood,
And life grows faint and fainter, Love.

The meadows spread all wan and drencht;
Black snowdrifts lean against the hedge;
The knotted fallows deeply trencht,
Are frozen fast; upon the edge
Of whitening pools the cattle stare—
While hoar with icy rime above
Gaunt bushes meet the tingling air,
And life grows cold and colder, Love.

Give me your hand. 'Tis true and firm.
What matter how we thus grow old?
Or life speeds out? or fret that burn
Decay so fast? Ah, still enfold
My life with yours; warm heart, warm hand,
They thaw the frost of Time, and clear
All shadows till in happier Land
Our life grows bright and brighter, Dear.

ALFRED NORRIS.

For Everybody.

Unavoidable Delay.

If ever there was a good excuse for not getting a paper out in time, it is that offered by the Spanish paper, the *Star and Herald*. The editor says that the Government troops were keeping up a continuous fire on the door of his sitting-room, and half a dozen shots did not vary three feet in striking. "To this annoyance," he says, "we must attribute our delay in getting out the edition, for it is difficult to persuade men to work under a steady and dangerous fire."

Hired Goods in Paris.

Everything, it is said, may be hired in Paris, from swaddling-clothes to winding-sheets. Flowers, fruit, china, lace, and jewelry are duly loaned, by very respectable people, who wish to astonish their neighbours and not a little themselves. Aquariums well-stocked are among the recent novelties loaned for the day or the week, with facilities for payment if retained, like pianos and wearing apparel. The very latest wants supplied are cockatoos, love-birds, and various members of the finch family.

A Doctor's Income.

The earnings of Sir Astley Cooper afford a striking example of the slow promotion of even the most skilful and deserving of doctors. In the first year he netted five guineas; in the second £26; in the third £84; in the fourth £96; in the fifth £100; in the sixth, £200; in the seventh, £400; in the eighth, £810; in the ninth, the year in which he secured his hospital appointment, £1,100. The highest amount he ever received in any one year was £24,000; but for many years his average income was £15,000. The most that the famous Abernethy ever realised in one year was £5,000, showing that his vagaries and eccentricities were by no means a source of profit to him.

Marriage Statistics in Paris.

Paris, in addition to making Academicians and Cardinals, has not the less been occupied in making marriages. There was celebrated during the past year in Paris and its neighbourhood nearly fourteen thousand marriages, all made of course in heaven—save the forty-two separations that took place after four months' experience of matrimony. The deaths numbered nearly 40,000; the poorer people rushed with a headlong impetuosity into marriage, but their richer brethren, being in doubt, largely abstained. The provinces also displayed their opinion, by an immense majority as compared with former years, that the world must be peopled.

A Pleasant Picture.

A painting in the Wiertz Museum, near Brussels, represents Napoleon I. in the other world; not to put too fine a point upon it—in Hades. He is surrounded by those whose lives he caused to be sacrificed in his attempts to conquer the world. Bloody hands are thrust out towards him, and horribly mutilated bodies and dismembered limbs, still dripping with gore, strew the ground. Clinging to him, with faces expressive of anguish or fury, are the wives and sisters of those whom he has slain; yet he is represented standing in the well-known attitude, with folded arms, calmly gazing into futurity, and heeding naught of the scenes about him. His face betokens deep thought. The whole picture is terrible in its significance.

An Improvement in Telegraphy.

At the Paris Academy of Sciences, M. Dupuy de Lome has recently exhibited an invention for sending a plan or topographical sketch by telegraph. Over the plan or map is placed a semicircular plate of glass graduated. On the centre is the radial arm, also graduated, which carries on a slide a piece of mica with a blade point. A fixed eye-piece is adjusted; and, looking through this, the mica-point is carried successively over all the points of the plan to be reproduced, and the polar co-ordinates of each noted. The numbers thus obtained are transmitted by telegraph, and they are laid down by the receiver who uses a similar arrangement to that described.

Silver Bricks for School Prizes.

Patrick Keys of Virginia, Nevada, has just had moulded thirteen beautiful little silver bricks which he intends presenting to the public schools of that city and Gold Hill as prizes to be awarded to the best scholars. Each brick, according to the *Evening Chronicle*, has a ring attached to one end, and through this is passed a blue ribbon to be tied around the neck of the little child to whom it may be awarded. The sight of these beautiful and valuable prizes will most certainly excite the ambition of the little ones and stimulate them to renewed efforts to excel, and thus will the interest of education be promoted and the laudable end aimed at by Mr. Keys accomplished.

Political Playthings.

Among the new Parisian toys which point the hatred and contempt of Prussia is "Naive Gretchen," a German lass, with big blue eyes and long flaxen braids of hair. The cunning artisan who created her has managed so as to give her that expression of confiding friendliness characteristic of the Fraulein. But on touching a spring the india-rubber head turns inside out, and Bismarck appears with his pointed helmet, iron jaw, and swollen eyelids. Then there are "Liberation Maps" for the young, with the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine marked out in chocolate, as a temptation to the juvenile mind to recover them.

A New Venus.

The Venus of Falerone, the new acquisition of the Louvre,

has been on view in Paris for some days. It resembles the "Venus de Milo" very closely, with this important exception, that the whole figure is draped, the folds of the drapery being of admirable workmanship. The statue, after all, is little more than a mere torso, but the authorities of the Louvre have eked out its meaning in the best manner by surrounding it with casts of no fewer than ten other statues, or portions of statues, which it resembles in design, or which help the spectator to form an opinion as to its appearance when complete. On the whole, it seems that this figure, like this Venus of Milo, originally formed part of a group similar to that of Venus and Mars in the Uffizi at Florence.

Theatres in Paris.

Paris theatres are said to be at present, without exception, the most uncomfortable places of amusement that any one can visit. The boxes are so small that the chairs have to be taken out to allow the ladies to enter, and the balconies are so narrow that it is scarcely possible for a gentleman to pass to and fro; and in most theatres ladies are not admitted to the stalls. So that with the private boxes being all in the shade, and the best dressed ladies thus being placed behind the balconies, and the stall being filled with black coats (unrelieved even by a white tie), a Paris theatre is pleasant neither to the eye nor the feelings. And when you see that densely-packed mass, and you know how difficult the egress is, you cannot prevent yourself imagining what would happen if a cry of "Fire!" went to startle the audience.

Dueling Statistics in France.

During the year 1873 nineteen duels were fought in France; two of them ended fatally, and a few of the remaining seventeen resulted in grievous wounds, the majority of the sword duels being terminated at the "first blood," and some pistol duels after a few (in one case as many as five) ineffective rounds. Twelve of the duels were fought with the sword (amongst which was one military duel with the sabre-sword, or *épée de combat*); in the other seven the pistol being used, (especially in the late Souto duel at Fontainebleau) the majority of the encounters arose from editorial disputes (Ranc, Cassagnac, &c.), or were prompted by political, military, dynastic, theatrical, and literary differences of opinion. In a few cases the motives are attributed to jealousy and gambling quarrels. The duels continued for eight minutes on an average. The assault between MM. Cassagnac and Ranc, however, occupied fourteen minutes.

Victor Emmanuel's Left-handed Marriage.

The reading public in Italy have been greatly startled by seeing in the *Almanach de Gotha* for 1874 that King Victor Emmanuel, a widower since 1855, was by "a morganatic marriage" united to Rosina, Countess of Mirafiori, in 1872. This marriage was often spoken of, and may have been solemnized either in 1872 or several years before, probably in 1865, when the King was ill at San Rossore. Nothing, however, is officially known about it, but it was not likely that the King, even if he married, had his name and that of Rosina entered upon the register of any municipal corporation. What is certain is that morganatic marriage is not among the institutions either of Italy or any other Catholic community. If the King really married the Countess of Mirafiori he must have bestowed upon her his right hand.

A Novelty in Hogs.

The Virginia (Montana) *Enterprise* has the following: "McGinnis, of McGinnis's Station, at the mouth of Six-mile Canyon, has a hog which is a curiosity in more ways than one. The hog, though quite young, stands about three and a half feet high, and is as slender as a race-horse. It not only has astonishingly long and slender legs, but rejoices in the possession of a snout about half as long as its body. It is peculiarly marked, being black as a coal from its fore-legs to the end of its nose, while the remainder of its body is snow-white. It is a great pet, and is never so happy as when in the house playing with the children. By running with the children and dogs it has learned to do many things a hog is seldom seen to do, as to jump fences and the like. The owner says there is not a fence on his ranch that the hog cannot jump. The hog takes great interest in strangers, and likes to get acquainted with them and have them play with and notice him."

Mr. Bright on Public Speaking.

Mr. Bright has written a letter to a young theological student on public speaking. He is for extemporaneous speaking when a man knows his subject, and has a good hold of it; but for a preacher, who has to deliver a sermon a week to the same people, a written sermon, he says, is almost indispensable. Of his own speeches, Mr. Bright writes out the most important and highly worked passages, and gets them by heart. The rest he fills in as he goes along. He has a small slip of letter-paper with notes on it, and often is noticed in the House of Commons conning over his notes, and rehearsing passages with his eyes on the ceiling. Mr. Gladstone uses notes only for facts and the order of his points, and trusts exclusively to the moment for his words. Lord Palmerston always spoke extemporaneously, and scarcely ever referred to a paper. Mr. Disraeli only uses notes for dates and figures. He prepares his speeches with great care, grouping his points artistically and polishing up his epigrams. Lord Granville and Earl Russell both speak off-hand.

A Materialistic Spirit.

A California paper says: "The truth of the following queer story is vouched for by some of San Francisco's most prominent citizens: A certain lady who has breathed the diplomatic air of foreign courts visited a medium lately. During the *séances* the spirit of the lady's father was announced, and that an important communication would be made. It was revealed that the lady's father had, in a moment of generosity, given away a half interest in a valuable tract of land—1,250 acres—but that the other half was to be held for the donor, and to this 625 acres the daughter, as sole remaining relative, was entitled. The lady was admonished to apply to the well-to-do holder of the land, and ask restitution of the property held in trust. It is further reported that the lady, impressed by the circumstantiality of the revelation, visited the party indicated, and received a deed for 625 acres of land, valued at \$30,000. Visits from the shades of speculative fathers who dabbled in real estate in their lifetime will now be looked for with great pleasure."

Littiputians.

One evening the week before last the wife of Mr. J. B. McCrum, living at No. 58 Parsons street, Kalamazoo, Mich., gave birth to twins—a boy and a girl. The surprise of the parents can be imagined when, on surveying the party, the nurse held up the tiny pair in the palm of one of her hands. They were soon after weighed, and the aggregate avoirdupois of the twins was three pounds and four ounces, one of the pair weighing one pound and eight ounces, and the other weighing one pound and twelve ounces. They were less than eight inches long, and perfectly formed. A bed was made for them, which consisted of a minute basket filled with cotton-batting, and clothing had to be improvised for the strangers, that which in expectancy had been made up proving a world too wide for their little limbs. Some doubt was expressed by the physician who attended the mother as to whether they would live, but from latest accounts they are not only alive, but are lively, bright, and wide awake, and claim a place in this big sphere as well as their own immediate brothers and sisters, of which there are several in the family grown up.

A Philadelphia Puff.

The New York correspondent of the *St. Louis Republican* has

been doing Philadelphia something as follows: "It makes no difference with the Philadelphia phemale about the weather. She breaks the ice in her pail and goes cheerfully to work glazing those immaculate steps, while the winds howl round her and the mercury goes down to unheard-of depths. Bless her! she slides off the stoop, she skates on her ear into the gutter, and is rescued by one of the occupants who are not scrubbing. Nobody can hold their perpendicular one instant upon the scene of her exploits, and she looks with pleasure on the downfall of the Yorker. The native is all the while inventing things to circumvent the scrubbers. The latest kink is an article called 'creepers,' a little horseshoe-shaped thing, with sharp, short spikes that screws on to boot-heels. The Philadelphia man wears the 'creepers,' and the Philadelphia woman is in a ceaseless stew lest he forget to take 'em off on the steps and goes prodding round on her carpets. Therefore the instant the windows are properly glazed and the stoop iced, she sits in the hall to watch for the 'creepers'—a perfectly harmless life, but one destitute of attraction to an ease-loving, scrub-hating woman like me."

Immorality of French Literature.

"A Frenchman" has recently written to the *Pall Mall Gazette* denying that French dramatic and romantic literature is really any more immoral than English plays and novels. He asserts that he has witnessed indecencies at London music halls which would not be tolerated in Paris, and that Shakespeare and Fielding wrote with an indecency of language to which modern French literature furnishes no parallel. There is a large share of truth in these assertions. French literature certainly lacks the grossness that is found in that of England, and much of the immorality which is imputed to it consists in the fact that French authors handled crimes which English propriety prefers to ignore. It does not follow that England is really any more moral than France, just as it does not follow that because our literature is less gross in expression than it was in the time of Shakespeare we have, therefore, advanced in morality. There are more illegitimate births in Scotland in proportion to the population than there are in France, excluding Paris, and yet no people are more severe in their code of propriety of speech than are the Scotch.

An Artist in Dining.

A Washington correspondent writes: "Sam Ward, of Boston, now here, is said to be the greatest epicure in the United States. He is a connoisseur of art and literature, brilliant in conversation, and further distinguished by being the brother of Julia Ward Howe. His dinners are epochs in the lives of the guests. The courses are not so numerous as rare. The wines are the best of the best, and he knows how to graduate each. 'Take a thimbleful of this with the fish; a glass of that with the soup; so much of the other with the coffee;' 'never drink this till the last,' &c., he tells his friends who suggest the deplorable consequences of 'mild drinks,' and his advice never fails them. Once upon a time a friend gave him a *carte blanche* to get up a dinner for twenty people. It was worthy of the immortal gods, but when a bill for \$2,500 was handed, the host winced, and wished it hadn't been quite so good. 'See here, Ward,' said he, 'don't you call this pretty stiff?' 'My friend,' cried Mr. W., 'do you think that high? Why the "truffles" were cheap at that price!'"

A Pious Conflict.

A Paris correspondent says: "In the clerical department we have a fierce battle raging between Mgr. Dupanloup, the Bishop of Orleans, and M. Veuillot, the Ultramontane editor of the *Univers*. That those two holy defenders of the Papal infallibility should fall foul of each other is a curious and edifying spectacle. The cause of the quarrel is simple. M. Veuillot rushed into a pious passion because during a recent meeting at Orleans in commemoration of the soldiers who fell there during the war the banner of the Sacred Heart, which was the fighting flag of the Pontifical Zouaves, was not hoisted in the cathedral, therefore he accuses the Bishop of cowardice, and goes so far as to call him 'free-thinker,' and 'Freemason.' M. Veuillot's letter, in which he says it is M. Veuillot who is guilty of infamy, 'scandal and profanation.' After giving the rash editor a long lecture on his general conduct the fusionist Bishop winds up with the following clincher well worthy of mention: 'Nobody, sir—and this is my great charge against you—nobody has contributed as much as you have by your polemics, your insults, and your deplorable confusion of ideas, to the ruin of the work of the monarchical restoration, which only could have saved France from a final wreck!'"

Mourning Reduced to an Art.

The court mourning of Germany is thus described by a correspondent: "The court and every official wearing uniform go into mourning for six weeks. The ladies wear the first four weeks black woollen, high-necked dresses, gloves of black undressed kid, black fans and head-dresses, and bonnets of black crape. The first two weeks the bonnets are to be made with a deep flange, with a broad hem, and narrow lace; the cap is to have two veils—one to be thrown back, reaching to the ground, the other short, to be worn over the face. The third week the flange is to be smaller, with broader lace and narrower hems and only the long veil. The fourth week the bonnet is reduced to a small flange with deep lace, and the ladies appear in black silk dresses, black gauze head-dresses, glove kid gloves, and black jewelry. The last eight days the head-dresses, gloves, and fans are to be white, and jewelry must be of pearls. The gentlemen belonging to the army wear crape on the left arm, and the first few weeks have the epaulets, agraffes, cords, and sword-belt covered with crape. The chamberlains have their keys draped in crape. The gentlemen belonging to the court alone, and not to the military, wear black clothes, a three-cornered hat with black feather. Those not wearing uniforms at all wear crape on the left arm; the first five weeks black gloves, the last week white."

Ex-Monarch.

He who passes through the upper streets of Prague, the beautiful capital of Bohemia, about noon on fine days, will be certain to meet an old, slender man, dressed in a very ordinary suit of black, walking in a painful, shuffling manner, and leaning on his cane every now and then to take breath. Many of those whom he meets stand still and look after the old man with a curious air. The beggars run towards him as soon as they catch sight of him, to whom he gives a few pieces of silver. This aged *habitué* of the promenade, near the Hradshchin of Prague, is no other than the ex-Emperor Ferdinand of Austria, who occupied the throne of the Hapsburgs during that eventful period 1834-1848 when their power was at the highest and at the lowest ebb. He threw down his crown, and retired to Prague, where he has since lived in obscurity. He never goes to public entertainments, and rarely leaves the Hradshchin, except to take a brief walk. His only companions are two old servants, who have been with him from his youth. All the pleasure he has consists in making little ingenious toys in his cabinet-making shop. He has an undoubted talent in that direction. He never reads newspapers, and hardly ever opens a book. Few visitors call upon him, except some priests, who converse with him on religious matters. He dislikes to have his reign alluded to, and whenever it is mentioned, immediately changes the subject. His table is simpler than that of his servants. He never drinks wine, and has never used tobacco in his life. His bedroom looks like a chapel. There are four large crucifixes in it. Such is the life of the modern Dismal.