

Upon several occasions, when I addressed Frenchmen in my best "French," I was answered in very good English. The French are the politest people in the world. If a gentleman on the street is asked for any direction he will go to the

very pretty. The most interesting place is Versailles, which is located about fifteen miles from the city. A very delightful way to make the journey is to join one of Cooke's or Gaze's parties, and ride out in a comfortable four-horse coach,

filled with splendid works of art. The Hall of Battles contains a number of very large paintings illustrating the victories of Napoleon, and a statue represents the great Emperor dying in his chair with a map of the world outspread before him and his finger pointing to his beloved France. The pleasure grounds at Versailles are exceedingly beautiful. There are a number of large and elegant fountains, which play only occasionally on account of the great cost of running them.

In our next issue we hope to give some description of the World's Fair, which is now in full swing in the French capital.

#### IS THE PRACTICE OF NOVEL READING INJURIOUS TO SPIRITUAL LIFE?

BY MR. J. ROSS.

IF we consult the dictionary, we will find that a novel is a fictitious tale or narrative in prose. Accepting this as a correct definition, we must therefore conclude that every work of the narrative description, excluding those that are authentic and unembellished history of actual events, whether we find it in a daily paper, a church organ, or a magazine for Sabbath reading, remains a novel, because of the element of fiction in its construction.

How can the reading of a fictitious narrative be made helpful to us? "The noblest study of mankind is man," is a time-worn truism, which has never been controverted. And how to prosecute that study successfully is a problem which few can find the solution of, because their field of observation is so very small, thus our ignorance is often fatal to our usefulness. Here we endeavor to find where the highest work of the novelist has its useful and helpful place.

It is important, in following this out,



CHAMPS DE ELYSEES, PARIS.

greatest pains to give information, and if he is not able to answer himself will frequently go out of his way to make enquiries for the stranger.

Paris is a gay and pleasure-loving city. Its gardens, cafés and theatres are nearly always thronged. The people like especially to be out-doors as much as possible. The usual place for taking refreshments is the open air, and frequently the sidewalk in front of a café is so completely taken up with tables and chairs, that passers by find it necessary to step into the street. Our picture of the *Café de la Regence* will give some idea of this queer custom.

The methods of transportation in Paris are slow and cumbersome. There are no electric cars, at least in the centre of the city, and the tourist must resort to the omnibuses or cabs. The omnibus is a huge vehicle drawn by three horses, and having seats both inside and out. When the bus is full no more passengers are accepted, and a placard is hung out with the word "Complet" upon it, which means that the carrying capacity of the vehicle is complete. The story is told of an American who declared he had visited every place of interest in and about Paris except one. He had not yet been to "Complet," but as he saw this name upon so many of the busses, thought it must be a place of some importance. It is perfectly useless to hail an omnibus on the street, for it will not stop. The proper thing to do is to go to one of the small stations, which are located on street corners here and there. Each person receives a "*numero*," and seats are assigned, on the principle of "first come, first served."

There are many pleasant side trips to be made from Paris, as the suburbs are

through the Bois de Boulogne and by way of St. Cloud. Of course the glory of Versailles has to a great extent departed, and yet one can obtain a fair idea of what it was before the revolution. For many years it was the dwelling place of the Kings and Queens of France, and in the reign of Louis XVI it reached the zenith of its magnificence. The extra-



PLACE DE LA CONCORDE, PARIS.

vagance and arrogance of the Queen, Marie Antoinette, had much to do with arousing the passions of the populace and leading to the overthrow of royalty. At present the Palace of Versailles is a great historical museum, and picture gallery,

to remember that we read a novel primarily as a means of recreation, when the mind is perhaps in its most receptive state because it is at rest. We have temporarily laid aside the weightier cares of life for an hour of honest recreative en-