

A "HAUNTED" MANSION.

A Washington correspondent of the *Cincinnati Commercial*, writing of the Meade house, on F street, Washington, where the Howard Court of Inquiry was lately held, says: "This house was occupied during the war by the Government, who at the close of the trouble put it in thorough and complete repair, and it was offered for rent at a very moderate sum, but it had a bad name—it was haunted, and strange stories of queer sounds and curious sights were whispered, first by the *gamins* on the street, and then people old enough to have had more sense took up the wondrous tale until no one even applied to go through it. After dusk the negroes employed as servants in the neighbourhood, if sent on an errand, would go a square out of the way rather than see 'Massa Richard peeking through de window, a-swarin' as only fo' God he could swar!' Nervous old ladies going out to tea fights crossed over to the other side, and were flustered until the house was passed. Months and years went by until one morning there were painters and paper-hangers, scrubbers and whitewashers, all gathered on the terrace, and we knew some one without fear had rented the Ghost House, and that somebody was the Government. After it was all made as sweet and fresh as soap and water, whitewash, paint, and new paper could make it, we went over one bright, sunny evening in April to see 'the ghost at the window.' The man placed in charge by the Government received us with smiling politeness, and invited us into the parlor to see the pane of glass on which the face had appeared. We found grand old rooms, with lofty ceilings, and broad, open fire-places, while the main hall was at least twelve feet wide. We looked at the 'glass,' and as we remarked, saw nothing; it was clear, and without speck or flaw. Inviting us to follow him, he led the way to the garden; reaching the door we paused on its threshold to take in the scene before us. A generous, spacious portico runs at the back of the house, from which steps lead to the immense garden, where the rank, luxurious growth of vines, roses, and bushes, told of long years of neglect. Over all the shrubbery and the trees around us was that tender mist of green which assures us of the foliage to come. Before us was the Potomac, and on its tranquil waters were at least twenty craft 'sailing by, to their haven under the hill.' The canvas on the sailboats was all spread, and they drifted by us, as we stood, so swiftly and noiselessly that we felt truly that we were in the presence of 'ghosts;' then there were large helpless vessels being towed along by fussy little tugs, which in their noise and blowing reminded us of many people in the world. Off in the distance wrapped in a delicate haze of blue were the Virginia hills; way down we could just see the spires and chimneys of Alexandria; while to our right—here our guide, who had grown weary of our long stand, and whose patience was doubtless worn threadbare by our 'mooning,' asked if we wanted to see the ghost. We apologized and tripped down the steps and stood under the window. 'Now find the ghost,' he said. It required no great effort, for on one pane and nearly covering it was a black spot which, as we looked, assumed features until the face stood out like a silhouette. It was the three-quarter face of a man in the prime of life, with broad forehead, aquiline nose and full flowing beard. At the suggestion of Jones (we'll call him Jones, though his name is not Jones, but not knowing his baptized name we feel obliged to christen him Jones), it was the profile of Captain Meade, United States Navy, generally known as 'Swearing Dick.' 'How strange,' I murmured to my companion, who was in an agony of fear lest 'You know Catharine,' she said, turning to me, 'he might begin to swear, and then I should die.' 'Strange? Oh, no,' answered Jones, 'it is only a flaw in the glass. Ladies who are very imaginative come here with minds made up to see a ghost, and so, you see, they see one, and are satisfied.' He is an unbeliever; hears queer rattling sounds at night, groans and moans echo through the old halls, heavy footfalls go up and down the stairway, but this unbeliever explains them all. Notwithstanding his assertion, the house is still held in the same cherished dread, and people are just as wary in passing it after nightfall."

"TABARIN."

A correspondent of the *London Times* says: "Tabarin is a well-known name in France, but it may need a line of explanation to English readers. Tabarin was the Jack-pudding to a quack, and was at the head of his profession in the reign of Louis XIII. There is a rare medal in the Paris National Library executed by Marin, and showing the head and bust of the celebrated buffoon, with one shoulder higher than the other, and the strange-looking soft felt hat, which formed an important part of his stock in trade; for he used to put it into many shapes, about each of which he had some quaint jest or facetious anecdotes to tell. Learned archaeologists have taken much pains and written numerous pages to ascertain the history of this famous low comedian, by whose talent Dr. Mont-dor obtained a great sale for his marvellous elixirs, orvietans, and pomades. M. Paul Ferrier, a young dramatist already favourably known, has taken him for a hero of a two-act comedy, which has been performed on the stage of the first theatre in the world—the Comédie Française. So powerful is the prestige of the Théâtre Français and so keen is the appetite of the Parisian public for theatrical novelties that there was a great demand for places for the first performance of "Tabarin" as if it had been a five-act play by the most eminent living French dramatist, instead of a small comedy in two acts by a young playwright, whose second attempt only I believe this is. The theatre was as full as the theatre at Versailles when a row is expected, the audience being of the usual mixed character—*grand monde* and *demi monde*. The play was received with much favour. The first act passed over very quietly, and perhaps one or two of the speeches would bear some curtailing, but the second went off briskly and was listened to in breathless silence. Loud applause from the audience, and not alone from the *claque*, which prevents many people from applauding when they otherwise would, burst forth at the close of the piece. The curtain rose and Coquelin announced the author's name. It had again to be drawn up in consequence of the cry for the actors, and the two Coquelins and Mlle. Lloyd received a warm greeting. The actual time of performance, allowing for *entr'actes* was but an hour and a half—nearly as much as even an eager play-goer cares for in the month of June in a densely crowded house."

THE BALLET AT ST. PETERSBURG.

The second act is one of the prettiest spectacles imaginable—a ball given by the Polish commander-in-chief. The orchestra plays the proud, pacing music of the *polonaise* we have so often heard of late, and the Polish cavaliers, in bronze boots, red breeches, blue and red tunics, and tall plumed caps, led on ladies in smart short blue dresses and boots, and white—must we call them "tights?" The costumes of these dancers are exceedingly pretty, their dancing is admirable, and there is a peculiar and inimitable air and pride and grace in their carriage. The winding procession and resounding march of the *polonaise* over, eight couples dance the *cracoveck*, to the clinking of the cavaliers' spurs, and with a thousand graceful and coquettish turns and whirls. Then comes the mazurka, the real, true Polish mazurka. Who shall describe it? Who can describe a dance, and this least of all? Imagine everything that is most graceful and most pretty of step and attitude; imagine brief waltzes and short promenades, broken by the continually recurring mazurka step, and by a dainty stamp of the dancer's foot, and lifting now of one arm and now of another. But you never will imagine it; you must come to St. Petersburg and see it. It was especially beautiful to watch the skill and lightness of one male dancer named Ceschinski, and the perfect ease and elegance of an old man who waved a handkerchief in his hand as he made his steps, and called down loud applause. He always ended his figure by dropping on one knee and kissing the hem of his partner's blue dress. I was told, says the writer, and ought to have been glad to hear it, that the very prettiest and most perfect of the female dancers is the mother of seven children, but possibly my informant may merely have practised a gratuitous piece of cruelty. When at last the dancers passed off the stage there was thundering applause, and loud cries of "Bis! Bis!" They showed themselves and went again, but still the call continued louder than ever. "Will they come?" "No, they won't." "Yes! here they are!" and on they came again, and gave us a second pleasure. In no capital of Europe will you hear and see such trained choruses and *corps-de-ballet* as in St. Petersburg, where they are all carefully trained in the Imperial school which educate at one time three hundred ballet girls. Can one imagine an English government conducting the education of ballet dancers! Yet Russia is a country with tenfold more religious observance in it than England. Truly, extremes meet here, and not in this only.

ARTISTIC SATIRE.

M. Gérôme's new picture "Rex Tibicien," is thus described: "All must admire the intensity of the design, and the humour of the artist, who has shown King Frederick of Prussia in his cabinet, working away at a flute, for the love of which he has thrown aside fatigue as well as business. He stands, with bent knees, before an *escritoire*, on which he has propped the music-sheet, and clutching the magic tube with the finger-tips of both hands, he set his meager lips to the orifice, to produce, one would imagine, a harsh, unmelodious music, for he will blow, it seems, too hard, and his lean cheeks try to compel the sweetness they cannot utter; as it is up go his eyebrows, and the eyeballs are uncovered in his eagerness, while the *queue* of his wig quaintly rises on the stiff collar of his coat. So thirsty for melody is the soul of the king that he has not stayed to take off his dirty boots. Just returned from hunting he has stepped into the cabinet followed by the dogs, whose muddy feet have left marks on the polished floors and rich carpets; but before each weary animal could throw himself down to rest, one in the King's own chair the others on the ground, Frederick has torn open, read, and crumpled up the despatches that waited his coming, cast them on the floor and grasped the intractable instrument. What will Mr. Carlyle, whose soul enters not with zest into the enjoyment of such frivolity as flute music, say to M. Gérôme for thus mocking his model conqueror? Above the desk is perched a smirking bust of Voltaire. The ridicule of the picture is not the less pungent because it is keen enough to penetrate the thickest skin without giving an excuse for blustering. The irritable captor of Silesia himself could hardly have made this jest an excuse for war. The execution of the picture is, as usual, rather metallic, but the lighting of the interior is exquisitely true, and the modelling of every part is perfect; still the painting lacks concentration of its elements. As a design it is perfect: as a satire, one of the best modern examples."

WHO ARE "ROYAL."

A writer in the *London Spectator* says: "Nothing is more common than for a visit from a subject to be called a 'royal' visit, for the marriage of two subjects to be called a 'royal' marriage. This means of course that the persons spoken of are sons or daughters or other near kinsfolk of a king or queen. But that does not make their doings 'royal.' They are members of a royal family because they are members of a family which exclusively supplies kings, but they are not 'royal' themselves. No one would call a visit from a duke's son or daughter a 'ducal visit,' or the marriage of a duke's son or daughter a 'ducal marriage.' But he might quite rightly speak of a 'ducal family,' that is, a family which supplies dukes, a family one member of which at a time is always a duke. Why is there this difference of usage? To call a visit from a person who is not a king or queen a 'royal visit' is of course a vulgarism which ought to be left to the penny-aliners. But the fact that any people at all talk about a 'royal visit,' when they would not in the analogous case speak of a 'ducal visit,' has causes which are worth thinking of. The cause is just this, that, exalted as dukes may be, they and their children do not form a class which is absolutely cut off from the rest of the world. There are others whose rank comes so near to theirs that they do not stand by themselves as an absolutely distinct class, but at most as a class within a class. They freely intermarry with other people; they need not be spoken to with bated breath; they are not necessarily 'attended' by some one wherever they go; they are not said to 'honour' people by dining with them; their doings, public and private, are subject to free discussion. In short, they are still ordinary human beings, though they may hold the first

place among ordinary human beings. But the 'royal' personages are really, in popular belief, something more than ordinary human beings. They are 'royal;' that is, in fact, they are treated as if they were themselves kings and not subjects."

THE LITERARY WORLD.

Mark Twain is writing a book on his English experiences.

Dr. Livingstone is to be the theme of the prize poem of the Académie Française for 1875.

Dr. Birch is writing a small popular history of Egypt for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

The funeral of Mr. J. C. M. Bellow took place in the Roman Catholic portion of the Kensal Green Cemetery.

The lectures on the art of cookery, as delivered by Mr. Buckmaster at the International Exhibition, will be published shortly in a collected form.

Mr. George Smith gave an account of his travels in Assyria, and operations at the mounds of Kouyunjik, before the Society of Biblical Archaeology, on the 7th of July.

The Academy believes Mr. Beavington Atkinson has in preparation another volume of art criticism of a popular kind. It will probably be called "Among the Painters."

The first volume of the "Cabinet Edition" of Tennyson's works has been published by Messrs. H. S. King & Co. The edition will be completed in ten monthly volumes.

Mr. Murray has in preparation "The Ecclesiastical and Secular Architecture of Scotland: the Abbeys, Churches, Castles, and Mansions," by Thomas Arnold, M. R. I. B. A.

A correspondent of the *Daily News* writes that the Comte de Paris will appear in the next number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* as the author of the first of a series of articles to be signed with his name.

A curious relic of John Stow, the author of the "Survey of London," has been discovered. It is a manuscript copy of "John Lydgate's Chronicles," comprising 570 pages, transcribed by Stow himself.

A memoir of Mr. Wm. Smith, the author of "Thorndale," written by his widow, has been "printed for private circulation," accompanied by some essays, chiefly republished from the pages of the *Contemporary Review*.

Messrs. Blackwood and Sons are about to publish a volume entitled "Searchers for Summer," by Mr. C. Home Douglas, giving descriptions of the various places of health resort, including Algiers, Malaga, &c., which the writer has visited.

The Rev. S. J. Perry, the head of the expedition sent out by the Admiralty to observe the transit of Venus, together with Lieutenant Coke, R.N., Paymaster Brown, R.N., and the Rev. W. Sidgreaves, were among the passengers by the steamer "Windsor Castle," which left Dartmouth recently for the Cape of Good Hope.

By the death of the Baroness Emilie von Gleichen-Russwurm, Schiller's last surviving daughter, the interesting and hitherto unpublished correspondence of the poet and his sister Christophine and her husband Reinwald, has passed into the hands of Herr Wendolin von Maltzahn, under whose directions it will be published in the course of the present year.

A fresh cargo of antiquities from Ephesus has arrived at the British Museum, and they are now unpacked. Among them are—a lion's head, from the cornice of the last Temple; two lions' heads, more ancient, from former Temples; a boar's head; more fragments of the archaic frieze; a large fragment of one of the large acroteria from one of the pediments; one or two more fragments of sculptured drums and columns, &c.

Money appears still to be needed for the completion of the great Wagnerian theatre at Bayreuth. One of the most zealous patrons and supporters of the undertaking is said to be the Baroness Schleinitz, wife of the German Minister of the Imperial Household, who has arranged a sale of paintings in aid of the theatre, for which pictures of some value, including two small marine sketches by Acherbach, have been placed at her disposal.

Verdi's Requiem for Manzoni was given for the third time within a week at the Paris Opéra Comique. The building was crowded. The performance made a deep impression. After "Agnus Dei" by the two cantatrices, Mesdames Stoltz and Waldmann, an address in honour of Verdi was delivered. A lyre and crown were offered him by the audience, and another lyre by the orchestra and chorists. Mesdames Stoltz and Waldmann had a perfect shower of bouquets. This was to have been the final performance, but Signor Verdi yielded to the entreaties of the public to give one more performance.

An international congress of persons interested in geographical science is announced to be held in Paris early next year. All the French ambassadors and consuls have been directed to promote its objects, and endeavour to secure the attendance of as many foreign geographers as possible. The congress is to be divided into six sections, as follows:—1. Mathematical Geography, Hydrography, and Maritime Geography; 2. Physical Geography; 3. Historical Geography and History of Geography; 4. Economic and Physical Geography; 5. Instruction in, and Diffusion of, Geography; Exploration and Travels.

The unveiling of the monument erected in honour of Hans Sachs, the renowned German master-singer, who was also a zealous champion of the Reformation, and therefore greatly honoured by Luther and Melancthon, took place on the 24th inst., St. John the Baptist's Day, "Hans" being the Germanized form of Johannes. Considerable preparations had been made to render the commemoration a popular festivity. An appeal of the committee laid stress on the importance of Hans Sachs as a poet, as a citizen, as a representative of national aspirations, and as an ardent defender of Protestantism. His anti-Romanist lays exercised great influence at his time. He was, moreover, in a great measure the founder of the secular drama in Germany. One of his quaint comedies was performed on the 24th at Nuremberg, on a large square, in the open air. In the evening there was an illumination of the city.