

"Poor fellow!" I exclaimed. "He must have been crazy."
 "Yes, he escaped from Dr. X's asylum about eight hours ago. A telegram was received here describing him, and officers were waiting to search the train. The brakeman saw him make the leap with you in his arms, and the train was stopped. You were picked up, and have been here about half an hour."

"How comes it that he was killed, while I got off so easy?"
 "He struck the ground first, and broke the violence of your fall. You rebounded against a haystack, and were only bruised a little."

"Oh, yes—I remember the haystack was there. Poor fellow! He must have been shattered from head to foot."

"Yes. There are not many whole bones in his body."
 It turned out that my crazy companion was a hopeless lunatic. I learned something of his history. Perpetual motion was his hobby, and for years he had been bent on carrying out the scheme unfolded to me. He possessed fine natural abilities, and in early life had given promise of a brilliant career. But the taint of insanity was in his blood, and took the direction that has been indicated. His madness was his own destruction. As for me, although it is not within the bounds of possibility that I will ever again meet with even a remotely similar adventure, I have ever since made it a point to scrutinize critically the faces of travellers who tend to sociability or communicativeness. Do you wonder at it?

SOME POINTS FOR WOULD-BE PRIME DONNE.

A correspondent of the *Hartford Courant*, writing from Milan, says: "American girls who come over to pursue their musical studies here after a little while find out a great many things they would like to have known before leaving home. In the face of all the disadvantages that present themselves, they will be apt to ask how it happens that Milan has become so popular with musical students, and how it is possible that two or three hundred Americans are content to make it their residence for a prolonged course of musical study. The first and great reason is that this city has become the acknowledged musical market of the world. Her position as an operatic emporium is as firmly settled as that of Paris as a leader of fashions, or London as the monetary centre of the globe. Impresarios from every land come here to engage their companies, and musical critics from all nations sit in the boxes at La Scala to pass judgment upon the new aspirants for operatic honors. A success at this magnificent establishment is sufficient for the whole operatic world, and an artist who passes the ordeal need have no doubts about the future. It is a brilliant prize to strive for, this winning of the honours at La Scala, but alas! few succeed to it. One or two of our countrywomen succeed in gaining an appearance here during the season. The others must be content with *débuts* at the lesser theatres. There are of course no end of bitter disappointments. Young girls who come over here on limited means find they have not enough to complete the lengthened course of study they here find to be necessary. Many who in America were told they had the voices of Nilsson and Patti find here that they have allowed themselves to be deceived by the enthusiastic judgment of partial friends. Those who held excellent positions in American church choirs, and gave unmixed pleasure as amateur singers, find here in the great majority of cases they are not equal to the requirement of the operatic stage. Indeed the most brilliant reputation as an amateur at home signifies nothing here. I have heard of ladies who, as church singers in America, have earned \$1,500 a year, besides a handsome sum extra in concerts, making lamentable failures here and returning home discouraged. Even the most experienced *impresarii* never trust their judgment of a voice they have only heard in a parlour. When they have heard it in the crowded theatre, and witnessed its effect upon the people, then and not till then will they venture to give an opinion. If a person does not intend studying for the opera it is entirely unnecessary to come to Milan. I am informed by Americans here who are entirely competent to judge, that general musical instruction may be had in our larger cities fully equal to that here, and that the only advantages of a residence in Milan are to learn to sing the text of an opera in regard to accent and expression just as an Italian sings it, and in case of a successful *début* to be brought into contact with the operatic agents here, through whom engagements are to be secured. I was somewhat surprised to hear that the Americans who learn their Italian from a good teacher in America have generally a better pronunciation than those who begin their study of the language here. The Milanese dialect is said to be scarcely intelligible to one who has learned the pure Italian, and the pronunciation of those who are not well grounded in the language before they come here is apt, from this cause, to be more or less injured. In general, however, the Americans are said to be diligent students and succeed admirably in mastering the difficulties of the language."

ODDITIES.

Lazy husbands are known out West as stove watchers.
 Kentucky has a paper "devoted to the interests of its proprietors."

A Chicago minister is affectionately advertised as being "out of a job."

A New York dentist gives a premium chromo for every tooth he draws.

A Georgia editor was bitten by a dog, "being evidently mistaken for a bone."

The editor of the New Berlin *Gazette* wants to trade his Midland Railway stock for an old setting hen.

A Maine man is out with a temperance lecture the taking title of which is, "How Goliath was Killed with a Sling."

In St. Louis everybody is considerate, and therefore a daily paper remarks: "Two gentlemen and a lady left for the Penitentiary last week."

Indianapolis boasts of a divinity student who preaches in English, prays in Armenian, sings in Turkish, and holds his tongue in eleven other languages.

A teacher asked an advanced school-girl why beer in French was feminine. She replied that it was probably owing to the fact that the boys liked it so well.

Inscription on a tombstone in Columbia, Tenn.: "Escaped the bullets of the enemy to be assassinated by a cowardly pup—a kind husband, an affectionate father."

An exchange asks: "Is there anything that man cannot do?"

To which Dr. Wood, of the Glasgow, Ky., *Times*, replies: "Yes, sir; we have never known one suckle a baby."

Sixteen years ago Tom Kenyon went to Kansas City with a cent, and the other day he signed a check for sixteen thousand dollars. He signed with another man's name, however.

A client remarked to his solicitor: "You are writing out my affidavit on very rough paper, sir." "Never mind," was the reply of the latter; "it has to be filed before it comes into court."

Sally, looking down from the window upon one of her master's customers, said: "We have all been converted, and when you want whiskey on Sundays, you must come in at the back door."

An exchange sagely remarks, "When they find a man in Washington who hasn't a plan of his own for the solution of the financial problem they drown him. No one has been drowned there yet."

A Detroit hotel-keeper writes his own bill of fare, thereby saving the cost of printing. It announces "Coffee, soupe, roste befe, fride ham, boyled and bakt potatys, fride coul puddin, and mins pie."

The Chicago *Tribune* prints a poem in which the writer wishes that she had "a heart full of sweet yearlings." How the persecuted author must have yearned to fumble among that compositor's hair.

At an Aberdeen examination of some girls for the right of confirmation, in answer to the question, "What is the outward and visible sign and form in baptism?" One of them replied, "The baby, sir."

As one result of the panic several of the "upper ten" have felt it a duty to give up their pews in fashionable churches, and if things go on at this rate they fear they may have to relinquish their boxes at the opera.

If you want to fire to frenzy the heart of the average Brooklynite, just whisper to him the base suggestion that he may yet make his boast that his home is in the Twenty-fifth Ward of the City of New York.

The difference between having a tooth properly drawn by a professional surgeon, and having it knocked out miscellaneously by a fall on the pavement, is only a slight distinction—one is dental and the other accidental.

An old lady, who had insisted on her minister's praying for rats, had her cabbages cut up by a hail-storm, and, on viewing the wreck, remarked that she "never knew him to undertake anything without overdoing the matter."

A Western exchange says: "The gift-chromo business has reached its sublimest altitude in Washington County. An enterprising clergyman offers 'an elegant chromo' to every person who shall not miss one of his sermons for a year."

One evening recently, at a Paris café, a group of idlers were discussing politics and people who change their opinions. "Well," said one, I've never cried 'Long live anybody!'" "Quite so," remarked another; "but then you're a doctor."

A correspondent at Portsmouth, describing the preparations in that town to welcome the troops from the Gild Coast, says that a huge flag with the inscription, "Welcome Home," had been hoisted over the police station. It was fortunately seen and removed in time.

A drunken Irishman was found by his friend the other night lying in the snow, with his heels upon the fence, warming his toes by the moonlight. He was muttering, "What a cowl'd fire you have got, Biddy darlin'! Have on some carrysane, or my futs will fraze."

Is it possible that the German schoolmen nod sometimes? At Berlin the director of a great ladies' college is said to have given to his pupils—young girls from fourteen to sixteen—as a theme for stylistic composition, "The advantages and inconveniences of the married state."

A wretched cynic writes: "A bright little five-year-old was looking through a picture-book the other night, when she suddenly paused, gazed eagerly into her mother's face, and, while there shone in her eyes the light of a wisdom beyond her years, said—[blamed if we haven't forgotten what she said]."

They have extraordinary children in Tennessee. One recently died in Memphis at the tender age of two months; yet a local paper tells its readers that "she rose as a star, and beamed lucently with meteoric resplendency along the horizon of her parents, lighting their pathway with the sheen of hope."

A man in Haverhill, N. B., who had recently buried his wife, on hearing of the sudden death of his nearest neighbour's better half, hastened over to his house to console him. After he beheld the lifeless remains of the lady, he remarked, "Wal, we have both lost our women, and all we hev got to do is to find two more."

A Scottish regiment, more famous for fighting than fluency, purchased a silver jug for the colonel, and summoned him to receive it. When all were assembled together, the spokesman of the subscribers grasped the "piece of plate," and said, "Colonel, there's the jug." "Eh!" said the colonel, "Is that the jug?" And the thing was done.

A university debating-club has decided the following question: "Was Lord Chatham a greater man than Pitt?" The speaker on the affirmative sat down after having delivered the following single but unanswerable argument: "Mr. President, I believe that Chatham was the greater man; because, if Chatham hadn't been, how could Pitt have been?"

"How much better it would have been to have shaken hands and allow it was all a mistake," said a Detroit judge. "Then the lion and the lamb would have lain down together, and white-robed peace would have fanned you with her wing; and elevated you with her smiles of approbation. But no; you went to clawing and biting and rolling in the mud, and here you are. It's five dollars apiece."

NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND.—The Rev. Newman Hall having explained the performance of some 'Madame Angot' music prior to a religious service in Surrey Chapel by stating that the organist was a gentleman who offered his services, and not the regular organist, and taking occasion at the same time to state that he knew nothing of such "demoralizing" entertainments, the editor of the London *Orchestra* observes: "The Rev. Newman Hall should blush to own himself ignorant of the 'Fille de Madame Angot' music; but it is not too late to repair the neglect. Buses run frequently to the Angel, and the Opera Comique is even nearer the Surrey side. Until he has indoctrinated himself in both performances let him not write nonsense about 'demoralizing entertainments.' There is no more demoralizing in 'Madame Angot' than in lectures on labor and other such blandishing themes."

TWO INSCRIPTIONS.—The Northern *Border* says that a graveyard near Bangor has a monument with the following inscriptions, the first verse of which was written by the wife before her death, and the second by the husband after he had married again:—

"Weep not for me, my dearest dear,
 I am not dead, but sleeping here;
 Repent, my love, before you die,
 For you must come and sleep with I."

"I will not weep, my dearest life,
 For I have got another wife;
 I cannot come and sleep with thee,
 For I must go and sleep with *she*."

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

We present to-day a group of the *Post Office Inquiry* now going on in this city. The Chairman of the Commission is Honoré Merle, Esq., advocate, of St. Hyacinthe, and Member of Parliament for Rouville during the last session. His two colleagues are J. Dewe, Esq., Chief P. O. Inspector, and W. G. Parmelee, of the Eastern Townships. Messrs. E. F. King, Emery, and J. T. Wright appeared as important witnesses. The fac-similes of handwriting displayed were produced in the effort to discover the author of the Pope-Macdonald letter robbery. We gave an opinion editorially last week on the worth of the evidence elicited from this source.

Our illustrations of the military scenes around BILBAO derive additional interest from the late successes of the Republican forces at that point. Marshal Serrano has entered Bilbao, after a long and arduous struggle, and the Carlists are precipitately retreating into the interior of the Province of Biscay. What the result of these important events may be it is difficult as yet to foretell.

The two river scenes on the eighth page are timely. Within a few days there was plentiful ICE CLEANING on the wharves of this city, and the advent of the FIRST SAILS on the opening of navigation.

The HALLOON ASCENSION of Messrs. Croce, Spinelli, and Sive is the most remarkable on record, because it rose to 7,400 metres the greatest altitude yet reached by aeronauts. The balloon went up from Paris, amid a concourse of scientific men, on the 22nd of March ult. Besides the usual instruments for scientific observation the aeronauts, relying on the theories of Mr. Bert, were provided with two small balloons, one containing 40 per cent. oxygen and 60 per cent. nitrogen, and the other 75 per cent. oxygen and 25 per cent. nitrogen. This vital fluid proved of indispensable use. As soon as it was imbibed the body recovered its vigour, the mind became clear, and the eyesight, from being dim, was sharp and distinct. One of the ascensionists at a great altitude managed to eat with appetite by alternately taking mouthfuls of chicken and inspirations of oxygen. The spectroscopic observations were very important. The question was to ascertain whether the sun contains aqueous vapour, as Padre Secchi surmises, or whether it was exempt from the same, as the French astronomer Janssen affirms. The latter theory was found the true one. The bands of watery vapour became invisible at 6,500 metres, and the line of hydrogen was intensely marked. The lines of the spectrum proved, moreover, that the aqueous vapour contained in the air was almost wholly in the lower strata. The balloon came down at Bar-sur-Seine, after a voyage of two hours 40 minutes duration, or 57 miles an hour. There were two layers of air passed through, the lower one relatively slow, and with a westerly direction, and a velocity of 30 to 35 miles an hour, and the upper, above 2,000 metres, with a velocity of 66 miles an hour, and a north-west direction.

PROFESSOR SCHLIEMANN's excavations in the Hill of Hissarlik and among the ruins of Ilium Novum are full of interest. We give several of his specimens in the present number. Under a stratum of earth, sixteen metres thick, where the remains of four superimposed cities are discernible, he discovered the ruins of an ancient city, surrounded by walls, destroyed by fire, and which he believes to be the Troy of Homer. The specimens are as follows:—

- 1, 9, 11, 13, 15—Glazed earthenware vases of different sizes, some bearing ornamental work scored on the fresh clay.
- 10, 12—Earthenware vases ornamented with rude similitudes of faces and women's breasts.
- 14—Glazed earthenware wine vessel (Enochos) with long spout.
- 16—Drinking vessel of the same make. All these utensils are hand made.
- 17, 23—Articles in baked clay, use unknown.
- 21—Flint saw.
- 25, 26—Rude figures in stone.
- 27—Glazed earthenware vessel with three necks.
- 28, 32—Brass axe and spear-heads.
- 33—Glazed earthenware vessel, rudely ornamented.
- 34—Earthenware vessel with cover.
- 35—Brass knife.
- 36, 40—Gold and electrum vessels.
- 41, 42, 46, 47—Silver articles, use unknown.
- 43, 44, 45, 48—Gold and electrum vessels.
- 49—Brass bucket.
- 50—Brass vessel.
- 51, 54, 55, 57, 58—Gold earrings.
- 52—Necklace of gold pearls.
- 53—Gold necklace and pendants.
- 56—Gold head ornament.

HOME AND ABROAD.

THE DOMINION.—The New Tariff of Mr. Cartwright has been remodelled.—Parliament is expected to adjourn about the 20th inst.

THE UNITED KINGDOM.—The *Observer* announces Sir Robert Peel will resign the position of Liberal whip on account of ill health.—Steering passengers are being carried from Liverpool to New York for fifteen dollars.—The House of Commons will take recess during the Whit Sunday holidays, adjourning on the 12th of May until the 1st of June.—The result of the election in Stroud, Gloucestershire, has been annulled on account of bribery, and a new election ordered.—A grand banquet was given at Portsmouth to the soldiers of the Asante expedition.—The *Daily News* says the lock-out of farm labourers will soon be submitted to arbitration for settlement.

SPAIN.—The Government troops have entered Bilbao. Gen. Concha, with 20,000 men to attack the Carlists in the rear, gained the heights on the left bank of the river Nervion above Sopuerta. The Carlist General, Andshana, was killed in one of the engagements before Bilbao previous to its recapture by Serrano. A church in San Pedro Abanto was nearly demolished by the fire of the Republicans.—A body of Carlists, 2,000 strong, is said to have been defeated in the Province of Tarragona, by the National troops.

UNITED STATES.—A Little Rock despatch says Brook's party in the State-house have thirty day's provisions, six tons of powder, and large quantities of shot and shell.—The Conference at Liverpool of ocean-steamship owners has been dissolved, and as tariffs will now be made on an independent basis a lively competition may be expected.

A terrible boiler explosion occurred at a mill in Bhavangunk, Pa., by which ten people lost their lives. The boiler, weighing five tons, was thrown 600 feet.—Very little further information has been received from the inundated district in Louisiana, except that the stock are huddled together throughout the district, and what are not starving are being killed by buffalo.—It is said insurance in New York this year will be three to four times that of last year.

FRANCE.—The Franco-American Postal Convention was signed on the 20th by the French Government. Duke de Cases will submit it to the Assembly and request its immediate consideration.

HOLLAND.—General Swieten, commander of the Dutch expedition to Aceh, and his staff have returned to Batavia.