

self henceforth a real knight of Our Lady, Mater divine gratie," she said, humoring him. He pressed the medal gravely to his lips and stood up; while Miriam, amused in spite of herself whispered to Barbara:

"Isn't she charming?" "Yes," with a little troubled smile—"but so very foreign; we must put a stop to these tableaux and get ready for church."

Mr. Alby was right. The baptismal font and the new chancel-rail and the cross over the communion table were improvements; and the fresh scarlet with its scarlet berries did make the dark little church look brighter. He had even ventured on lighted candles in the chancel, and some clusters of hot-house flowers from the Terrace. But poor Pet had so little appreciation of all these High Church splendors that she sat in a corner of the family pew feeling lonelier than she had ever felt before, and dropping so many tears on her elegant new Prayer Book, that the medieval gilding was blurred and the aristocratic paper blistered. She would keep thinking of the midnight Mass at the old convent; of the altar ablaze with innumerable tapers and flowers; the Bishop and the priests in their magnificent vestments; the dark figures of the nuns bowed reverentially in their oaken stalls; and the incense making the whole, misty, ethereal, like a vision of another and a purer world.

She wiped her eyes; and the school-children began to sing. It was a simple little Christmas hymn, but it sounded very soothing; and Pet felt better when Mr. Alby began to preach. He wore his new surplice (a miracle of Barbara's needle work) and looked paler and thinner than usual. As well he might be after keeping Advent with an imprudent austerity which had he known it—which he didn't—would have astonished his soft-living Bishop. But although he stood with bowed head and down-cast eyes and showed that singular diffidence in his delivery—his sermon was a remarkable one. Pet brightened under it like a flower.

There was so much tenderness for the Babe of Bethlehem; so much respectful reverence for His Virgin Mother; such a vivid touching picture of the poverty, and the patience, and helplessness, and the burning love of that grand Christmas mystery, that even Miriam's calm eyes were moist, and some of the little children in the choir sobbed and cried outright.

After it was all over, and Mr. Alby came down the aisle dressed in something which was a cross between a gown and a cassock. Pet astonished them all, by going up to him and propounding this remarkable question: "Why don't you become a Catholic, Mr. Alby?"

"I am one already, dear child," he answered softly. "Then why don't you have a lovely tabernacle with a lamp burning before it; and a shrine with Our Lady's statue?"

"Because I am not a Roman Catholic," returned the young minister a little flushed.

Pet looked puzzled. "I am an Anglican Catholic," he went on explaining in his nervous worried way. "One of the great body of earnest believers who are gradually but surely growing into harmony and sympathy with many doctrines of the Roman Church: but not yet openly affiliated in her communion."

Pet was plainly staggered at all these new hard words; but her clear eyes searched keenly the minister's face.

"Catholic and not Roman Catholic?" she said slowly and musingly. "True and yet not true? Heavens! Monsieur Cyril," (with a little despairing gesture), "tell me, I beseech you, am I Petronilla Trenton, or am I the sister of the Grand Turk?"

Cyril laughed outright; but Mr. Alby looked very uneasy and walked away with the despondent stoop which was becoming habitual with him. Barbara lectured Pet in a gentle fashion all the way home; while Cyril and Miriam talked of old time, and compared the striking points in the snowy landscape.

"Angelique," said Pet solemnly that evening, when the tall maid came to dress her for the ball; "it is not near as nice here as it is in France: and if I hadn't gone to vespers this afternoon, I should have died of ennui."

"Vraiment," said the maid briefly. "My sister Barbara does not like it," pursued her little mistress with a remorseful twist of her bracelet, "but what can I do?"

"Mam'selle has more sense than all these people," said Angelique in her own tongue, "Miss Barbara, very good and kind, but never been abroad. If she had lived one year, only one short year, in France—*misericorde!*" and the maid lifted her hands and eyes with an expressive gesture of delight at the benefit Barbara might reap from the experiment.

"Ah! no, Angelique, I am not near so wise as Barbara; but" (with a firm set of the lips and a decided spark of the gray eyes)—"I have sense enough after all, to know what is beautiful and true; and I don't believe in calling one's self a Protestant to the world and playing at Catholic, all the while *sub rosa*, like a grown-up baby."

"Or what is worse—a hypocrite," muttered the maid.

"Oh! Angelique, this will never suit me, I must have a *berthe*."

She was standing before the long mirror—a vision from fairyland. A white silk *jupe* with a trailing illusion over-dress, and sprays of delicate glistening flowers in her long hair.

But her cheek grew crimson as she gazed. Out of the low airy corsage her white shoulders rose uncovered save by the masses of waving hair.

"Bring me the *berthe*," she repeated quickly. "Ah! Mam'selle," pleaded Angelique, "it is a la mode. You are so fair; do not hide your charming neck."

Pet's face burned. "Angelique, you ought to be ashamed of yourself; and you a Catholic. What would Madame Justine—what would any of the dear

nuns say to such a fashion? Bring me the *berthe* without another word."

And clasping the brooch in the airy lace about the throat, and taking her gloves and fan, Pet went down to the drawing-room like an indignant vestal.

IV.

How gay was the long saloon! Barbara was there in silver-gray; and golden-haired Miriam like a mermaid, in pale green; and scores of fairies in pink, and blue, and violet, and amber, with a plentiful sprinkling of white, as the young scions of the neighboring gentry gathered joyously at Trenton Terrace.

Holly and mistletoe were on the walls, on the doorways, and the hanging lamps; and an orchestra tuning in an impromptu gallery half-hidden in green.

Cyril came buoyantly to claim Pet for the first dance.

"Willingly" cried Pet, her color rising with the music. "What is it to be?"

"A waltz."

"Ah! then," with a shade of disappointment on the bright face, "You must dance a little. The next is a quadrille: we will wait that."

And this ravishing waltz of Strauss' playing? I shall do no such thing."

"Then you must seek another partner, Monsieur. I cannot dance round dances."

"Cannot or will not?" and Cyril looked cross.

"To be plain with you *mon ami*," with a little blush, but with her fearless eyes on his face; "I do not think them proper; *au contraire*, quite indelicate."

"A Daniel come to judgment!" said her companion with an amused but admiring smile.

"O wise young judge! how I do honor thee! Your sister does not share your scruples," he added as Miriam sailed past them, leaning on a gentleman's arm and waltzing with stately grace. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes sparkling, her loveliness more striking than usual. But Pet bit her lip, and looked annoyed.

"Your sister is very beautiful," said Cyril following her with his eyes.

"As an angel," exclaimed his companion in French—a sure sign of excitement.

"So are you," and Cyril looked down at the bewitching face beside him.

Pet frowned, and tapped her foot impatiently on the floor:

"Bah!" she said quickly, as if the words stung her; "that is bad taste, and you know it, Monsieur. I am a foolish child, but I do not like foolish compliments. Madame told me (at the convent) that when men flatter girls to their faces they do not respect them."

Then her face changed like an April sky from clouds to smiles; and she added with a charming little gesture of penitence: "Pardon, Monsieur, I was rude, but I cannot be dishonest."

He took the hand she proffered: and led her silently to the head of the room where the dance was forming. The band was playing the *Lancers*; but they took several turns in the intricate figure, before they spoke again; she dancing with a graceful vivacity, thoroughly French and very pretty to see;—he, stroking his beard in pauses and looking very thoughtful. At last he said:

"Where were you going this afternoon when I met you with your apron full of flowers?"

She smiled joyously:

"To vespers at the Catholic Chapel. Ah!"—and she drew a deep breath and fanned herself contentedly—"I had such a good time."

(To be Continued.)

JOTTINGS FROM THE SEAT OF WAR.

THE SIEGE OF ORLEANS.

We (Tables) make the following interesting extracts from a private letter from Orleans:—

Convent of the Visitation, Orleans, Oct. 11. For several days the noise of cannon had resounded sadly in our ears, but on the 10th Oct. it seemed as if there were still several leagues between ourselves and the enemy. However on the 11th about midday the sound became each quarter of an hour nearer and nearer, till at last it was one continual roar. The balls seemed to whiz past and burst, making the house shake. This went on till 6 o'clock. You can imagine, dear Mother, the state of our poor children all praying in the chapel, when a signal was given for all to go to the infirmary where our Sister Thais greeted us with an angelic smile; our voices were drowned while we recited the prayers for the dying. Towards 3 o'clock M. l'Abbe Taget came in to give the last blessing to our dying Sister, and our good Mother took the opportunity of assembling us in another room, and with the wonderful faith she has shown all through our troubles, and which has sustained us, encouraged and prepared us for the worst. This act of preparation was needed, for by 5 o'clock there was fighting at our very doors, which were open for the reception of the wounded; our troops rushed precipitately into the court, continuing to fire on the enemy. Balls and shells fell and burst, and soon the convent was on fire; this lasted for 20 minutes, the walls shook and appeared to be crumbling, the loudest thunder would hardly give an idea of the noise. The Community left the choir to attend to the wounded, then returned to say the *Miserere* with their arms extended. Women and children trembling came rushing in for safety, others knocking loudly cried, "Open to us, Sisters, for God's sake save us!" The balls fell so thickly on those in the court, that they gave themselves up for lost. At last the roar ceased, all was over, the town was no longer our own. Then came shouts of joy, sounds of music, mingled with cries of rage. The street was so crowded, it was hardly possible to move, and our court-yard so filled with wounded we knew not where to put them. The parous and cells were also full and night coming on. M. l'Abbe Taget said to our Mother that all out of the court must be taken in, so then we brought down mattresses, making beds how we could, and soldiers blackened with smoke carried in the wounded into our enclosure. M. Simon, the doctor, with the ambulance badge, accompanied them, and M. Taget never left. Everyone became a Sister of Charity. Oh, what a scene it was! the floor covered with blood, and shrieks of agony! most being mortally wounded. The tumult in the street increased so much that it was thought prudent to remove the Blessed Sacrament, and place it in the chapter-room, on account of the wounded. We all accompanied our Dear Lord, come to be the companion of our sorrows; and, whilst M. Taget was speaking to the wounded on the happiness of having Our Lord in the midst

of them, it was announced that the Prussians demanded admittance. They rang and knocked with redoubled fury on all sides, when, marvelously to relate, they stopped at the door of the Visitation. Our Mother, in a loud voice, told all to go to the choir, saying that the Prussians were about to enter. Then, taking several Sisters, she went to the door of the enclosure, with M. Taget vested in his surplice and stole, M. Simon with his white apron, and August the gardener.

The door being opened, a troop of Prussians presented themselves, all armed with guns and bayonets; advancing one step, they fell back, exclaiming, "They are Religious!" M. Taget then explained that it was a convent. M. Simon also spoke to them in Latin, and they appeared to understand. After many assurances given that no soldier was in the house, the Prussians retired, having each kissed the hand of M. l'Abbe, who said to each *Amice*, and *Amice* they all replied. Oh! the wonderful providence of the Heart of Jesus, such calm moderation shown by the enemy who had spread terror and consternation all around. It was a second miracle within three hours, for at 6 o'clock we had seemed to be lost, the house ready to fall, and yet no soul belonging to it touched, not even a square of glass in the windows broken, no marks on our walls, and yet the surrounding houses utterly destroyed, that is, walls broken in, windows, &c. Our Mother, who was in the parlour during all this, showed the greatest courage, whilst even the wounded threw themselves on their knees believing their last hour was come. Our dear Mother, trusting in the Sacred Heart, looked after all, answered each one, all the time feeling the walls trembling as if they must fall in.

Nothing could exceed the resignation of the wounded soldiers. All that night the Community attended on them, and the next day several died in the most admirable dispositions. The town appeared more calm in the morning. Six Davarians were brought for us to take in, but with their arms and muskets loaded, and their gloomy looks did not reassure us, however by the following day we found that they were all fervent Catholics. All went to Confession, and Holy Communion, and after a few days were recovered enough to get up and walk about the garden. They all wished to come to Mass and to the Office, and edified us much by their recollections. One felt that they prayed, they hardly knew how to express their gratitude, and when the Prussian officers and their own chaplain came to visit them, they spoke of their great happiness at the Visitation.

The conduct of the Prussian chiefs was really wonderful, always respectful. A young Protestant who asked for instruction became a Catholic, and another of the wounded made his first Communion on All Saints.

PARIS UNDER BOMBARDMENT.

(From the correspondent of the London Daily News.)

PARIS, Dec. 28.

One of the German correspondents of the press, describing how Paris was to be reduced, gives great prominence to what he calls the psychological moment. It was discovered, he said, by the German leaders that a bombardment could produce but small physical effect, and therefore it was considered best to defer it until the Parisian mind being shaken by misery, famine, sickness, and despair, it would produce the strongest psychological effect. It would appear that now, in the opinion of the Germans the psychological moment has come—the moment when it is likely that the mind of the Parisians must be peculiarly open to impressions from a bombardment which could effect little by main force. At least this might be inferred from the terms in which the Government describes the first cannonade which the enemy has opened on the forts of Paris. If I were to describe this cannonade according to my own lights, I should say that it was undertaken with a single definite object—namely to clear the plateau of Avron. This plateau was occupied by the French on the 29th of November, and it was instantly mounted with guns of enormous range—the heaviest guns in Paris, which reach even to Chelles, and give the enemy a great deal of trouble. The Germans cannot occupy this plateau, but they think that they may render it untenable by the French; and to this end, as far as I can understand, the heavy firing of yesterday, in which 3,000 projectiles were dropped upon Avron, was directed. But, then, I am nothing but what is called here a *pekin*—that is, a civilian as distinct from a military man; and to read the military report of the Government, as well as the descriptions in all the newspapers, you would imagine that it is the long expected bombardment of Paris, which has commenced with a cannonade upon the forts of the east. Suppose the view announced by the Government and all the papers be correct, it follows that, as a bombardment on this side can do no harm whatever to Paris, it can only have a moral effect. But if the enemy have aimed at moral effect, they have been woefully at fault in their calculations. The bombardment, if so it may be called, has put the Parisians in great good spirits. "It is a sign of disquietude and impatience on the part of the Prussians," they say. "The siege lasts longer than they expected; they are tired of it; they want to finish it; it is necessary that they should finish soon; let us wait a little longer, and they will have to raise the siege." So it was when Gen. Moltke sent in word that the army of the Loire was defeated. He no doubt expected to drive Paris to despair, and to the point of surrender. On the contrary, he raised the courage of Paris and we now know that though the French armies in the provinces were defeated, they made a stout resistance, and succumbed under circumstances which gave a good hope of better luck for renewed efforts. On Christmas day the German leaders made another psychological attempt which, so far from dampening the spirits of the Parisians, has sent them chuckling with glee. One of the generals sent in a long letter ostensibly to arrange for the exchange of prisoners, and particularly to inquire as to the fate of a certain John Muller. But this elaborate epistle, so full of anxiety for the welfare of Mr. John Muller contained the announcement, introduced with a clumsy emphasis, of the defeat of a French army at Amiens. It is a great pity that a French army should be defeated at Amiens, but it is a consolation to the Parisian that the Germans should be so anxious to let us know of it that they must stumble into so much clumsiness. And now comes the bombardment, so called, which has upon the Parisian mind the best possible psychological effect. It would probably have this effect even if it were better directed than at present. But as yet it has done little damage.

Yesterday morning the enemy unmasked twelve batteries of heavy guns, three at Raincy, on the road to the Hermitage; three at Gaguy; three at Noisy-le-Grand; and three at the bridge at Gournay. These directed their fire on the forts of Noisy, Rosny, and Nogent, but chiefly on the plateau of Avron in advance of Rosny. The French are under the impression that they have inflicted severe losses on the enemy; but this is merely a supposition. What is known for certain is, that they have sustained very little loss. Their works have not suffered at all, and in men their losses amount simply to eight killed and fifty wounded. From a military point of view the effect is zero. From a picturesque or dramatic point of view there was one of the three thousand shells fired which produced a startling effect. In the midst of the firing nine people sat down to breakfast in a small house upon the plateau of Avron. There were, the commander of the sixth battalion of Mobiles of the Seine (M. Heintzler); his wife, the adjutant of the battalion, a captain, two lieutenants, an ensign, a chaplain, and a doctor—nearly all of the same battalion. A Prussian shell

came smashing upon the table and killed six of the party. The commandant and his wife were wounded. The only one who escaped unhurt was the doctor. Of the eight persons who were killed, yesterday six belonged to this little breakfast party. What an incident for the future novelist! Nine persons, including a lady, are jostling over their frugal breakfast, which they are determined to enjoy in spite of the cannon. "There wants but a shell to give us butter," says one of the party. Instantly comes a shell and blows six of them out of existence, while wounding two more, the commandant and his wife.

If the cannonade was a failure yesterday, still more is it so to-day when it has diminished in intensity; and the Parisian becomes more and more content as he thinks of the unavailing efforts of the enemy. It is a wonderful happy faculty—this of cheerfulness and sublime conceit. I neither praise it nor blame it, recognizing fully that it is a characteristic not of French alone, but also of human nature. It is a terrible weakness, and it is a tower of strength. The French used to laugh at us in the Napoleonic wars because our regiments never knew when they were beaten and went on fighting. But they also did just as our tenacity. "C'est magnifique," they said, "mais ce n'est pas la guerre." And we may say to all their cheerfulness and tenacity in the midst of disaster much the same. It is not reasonable—it is mere conceit; but still it is very fine. Let me give you an extreme example, to illustrate the ingenuity of the French mind in conceiving disaster as victory. When the Army of the Loire was defeated the other day, and cut in two, what do you think was the comment of a French journalist? He said, "We have now two armies instead of one." According to which rule you may go on cutting a hostile army to pieces, and every fraction becomes a new power. This is, of course, very absurd, and there are many people who have no patience whatever with such a temper, which sees every event tinged with a beautiful rose colour that answers to their own conceit. Still, in this temper there lurks the spirit which refuses to be conquered; if it cannot lead to victory, with such follies the enemy cannot be beaten back; but even with such follies a nation may rise elastic from defeat, and compel the enemy to acknowledge that they are not to be downtrodden.

Those who despise the French will call it mere conceit, and sneer at it; those who admire them and know what a part they have played in the history of the world, will call it patriotism, and see in it the elevation of the national character—that in many respects they seem to act as if there were no war; as if all would go on as before, as if they were not suffering a defeat which even threatens to extinguish them.

(From the Times Correspondent.)

I started with a friend for the Plateau d'Avron this morning under the innocent impression that it was still in the possession of the French. The mistake, however, proved not an unlucky one, for it took us to two of the three forts, Nogent and Rosny, upon which the Prussians were, I have since been told, exclusively firing, and we, therefore saw more of the bombardment—now the all-engrossing subject of interest in Paris—than we should perhaps have seen anywhere else. We started about 9.30 a.m., and, fortune favoring us got out of Paris by the Vincennes gate without difficulty. We thence intended to make for Rosny as probably the nearest point from which to watch the attack on Avron, without ourselves getting unpleasantly near the great Krupp guns; but, as we passed Nogent, we found it was then heavily bombarded, so we stopped our carriage and got out to see what we could. A deserted house, within about 150 yards of the fort, offered a good point of observation, so we went up into the top room, and thence got a view of a great part of the interior of the fort. It was not then answering the batteries at work upon it, and so all the garrison were hidden away under shelter. Not a sign of human life could we discover. Half a dozen horses saddled together in the inner moat to protect themselves from the cruel cold were the only living things we could see. The first shell I saw drop into the fort happened to fall near them, and there was a momentary panic and general scamper, but not one was touched. The shells were coming at about the rate, I calculate of two per minute, and with a precision which struck me—this being my first experience of bombardment—as very marvellous, until a little later on, at Rosny, I saw firing far superior. Nearly all struck some portion of the fort, and yet I could not see that any damage was done. A few did not burst; others struck harmlessly mounds of earth, sometimes burying themselves in it, sometimes scattering showers of it high into the air. Many fell into the paved court-yard, and exploded with a noise and vibration which seemed to shake the house we were in from roof to base. As far as I could judge, they were of enormous size and weight, and I was considerably surprised—having very vague notions of what a bombardment ought to do to see that they did apparently so little mischief. They might have killed and wounded to any extent if there had been anybody to kill and wound, but as the fort guns were not being worked, the men were, I presume, stowed away in safe corners; at any rate they were out of sight, and the deserted aspect and death-like stillness of the fort, broken only when every now and then a shell burst like a thunder clap in the middle of it, had a most singular effect. I looked in vain for the breached walls, crumbling ramparts or dismantled guns which I had always imagined to be among the effects of bombarding so vigorous as I was then watching. "You may go on in that way for two years," said one of a few Mobiles who shared our observatory. It seemed to me they might "go on in that way" for 20 years unless the continuous dropping of shells upon a fort produces anything like the effect that the constant falling of drops of water on the head is said to work on the brain. Yet the firing was first-rate, so good that we had felt in no sort of danger until at last one shell came out of the usual line right in the direction of our house, but luckily falling short. The Mobile suggested that the Prussians had perhaps noticed that the house was occupied, and did us the honour of thinking us worth an occasional shell. He threw out the suggestion in an off-hand sort of way, as if it was rather a pleasant one than otherwise, but two or three of the party did not see it in this light. We were in the top room of the house and a shell however harmless comparatively in a fort, would have crashed through the roof as if it had been tissue paper, catching us all like rats in a trap. My apprehensions were quickened by an account I had just been reading in a newspaper of how a shell had burst through into a room—near Rosny, I think—where eight people were seated at dinner, and had killed six of them then and there, wounding the other two. I made as decorous a retreat as I could, and leaving the house, joined a group of men and boys who were watching the bombardment from a comparatively safe position on the ground. Another shell shortly burst not far from the house, and away scampered the boys to scramble for the pieces. One of them returned in triumph with a fine specimen, and was delighted to exchange it for two sous. Just at that moment shells were probably a more common commodity at Nogent than sous. I found afterwards at Rosny that the latest excitement—the popular amusement of the moment—was to watch where the shells burst, and then run and pick up the pieces. I can't say, however, that I felt any inclination to indulge in it. Maryatt quotes a theory that, in a naval engagement, if a cannon ball makes a hole in the side of a vessel there you have precisely the safest of all places in which to put your head, the chances being enormously against a second ball coming in the same place as

the first; but the theory scarcely applies to shells, which, if they light upon a hard substance, burst into fragments, which fills the air in all directions, sometimes travelling an astonishing distance. And such fragments! Masses of iron, as big, perhaps, as a man's hand, knotted and twisted by the force of the explosion into all sorts of fantastic shapes—sometimes with protruding ragged spikes curved in like the angry claws of a wild beast. It makes one shudder involuntarily to picture such a missile tearing its way through living flesh and bones, and to think that a million or thereabouts of human beings, boasting that they belong to the most civilized nations on earth were then employed in hurling these missiles at each other.

As I stated in a former letter the fortifications were admirably constructed, and all the work there shows that General Trochu had regarded Avron as a most important position, and one to be held to the last. Deep pits were dug close to the batteries to serve as caves into which the artillerymen might retire for protection. To-day a melancholy sight was visible at one of the trenches. The head of a French grenadier, a man of the Marine Artillery, had been struck off by a projectile from one of the German batteries as clean as if severed by a well directed sabre cut. The head lay on the edge of the trench, the face illuminated by a placid smile. The body was stretched in the trench. A dead horse lay on the spot where a shell had struck him down in one place, and storks had been cut from his haunches. Biscuits were on the ground here and there, but no other provisions. The whole place had a desolate appearance, most of the wood which used to adorn it having been cut down to give room for the batteries and make way for the fire of the guns—There were splinters of shells everywhere. You could scarcely walk a yard without coming on one or more of them. I have seen several Paris papers found on the spot. One is the *Kapitel* of the 25th ult., the day the bombardment commenced. It contains a brief description of those fortifications from one who had visited them, and the conclusion arrived at by the writer is that "Avron is impregnable." It succumbed nevertheless after one day's firing. It was not impregnable; but in the hands of men who would stand to their guns it was capable of a long resistance, even against the combined fire of the 13 siege batteries of the Germans. In another part of the same paper I read a "General Order" condemning the conduct of soldiers who turned tail and fled from the Saxons in the affair of Ville Evrart on the night of the 21st ult. The Order says that discipline must be enforced, and troops guilty of such conduct must not hope to escape punishment. Then there is a list of Paris prices in another part of the journal. The standard for a goose is set down at 50 francs. Herrings must be scarce if, as the *Kapitel* alleges, they are 10 francs a couple; but as neither geese nor herrings are necessities of life—I know I could enjoy life without either—Paris may hold out longer if there is nothing worse than that. I confess I attach very little value to those price-lists. More than two months ago I read some much more alarming than that contained in this newspaper of Tuesday last.

INSIDE OF PARIS.

(From the Times Correspondent.)

Epicures who hear that we have rats for dinner may be pardoned for assuming that we have nothing else left except, perhaps, mice, and that when these have all been caught—supposing that they don't meanwhile die of starvation—we must take to dining upon our boots or upon each other, unless Paris at once surrenders. But the truth is, there are rats and mice. The majority are villainous eating, but a peculiar kind, not easily found, are delicious, if I may judge from one experiment. I have not yet been offered any opportunity of repeating it, and am scarcely enthusiastic enough about rats to go out of my way in search of them; but I am promised on Christmas Day by a friend, who is inviting a party of Englishmen to dinner, not only "rosbif" and "plum-boudin," but also "civet de rat" and donkey and other real delicacies. At the *Bocherie Anglaise*, beyond the Boulevard Haussmann, or now rather Boulevard Ulrich, you can order wolf, cassowary, and all sorts of wild dishes for dinner.—They come, I suppose, from the Jardin d'Acclimatation, or des Plantes, although when I went the other day to the latter place to find out of any joints of lion or tiger were still left, I saw no diminution among the animals, and was solemnly assured that they had not been sacrificed to the exigencies of the siege. Perhaps the wolves and cassowaries were needlessly numerous. But if wolf is eaten, it is only by way of experiment, and not from necessity, for a fine cat can still be bought for 12 francs, and dog, declared by connoisseurs to be as good as Welsh mutton, is abundant. If these be not enough, there is horse, and mule, and donkey, and beef, though these four dishes are so mixed up and played off against each other that you can rarely be quite sure which you are eating. The sufferings of those unlucky people who cannot make up their minds and stomachs to go altogether without meat or to take their choice of eating strange food may be easily imagined. They are now no longer safe at the best restaurants. I shall not forget the horrified face of an unlucky *gourmet*, when at the *Volain*, in which he still had faith, the proprietor in person offered him *rosbif* or *l'âne braisé*. He vehemently insisted upon being allowed to dine on vegetables, unless the proprietor could swear by all he held sacred to give meat that was above all suspicion safe. The *rosbif* was immediately produced, but, though apparently genuine, it was not half so good as the *l'âne braisé*, which was excellent. Mule, I am told, is still better. The four Prussian officers about whom so much unnecessary fuss was made must have carried away very erroneous notions of the condition of Paris, for by a too transparent manoeuvre, pretty sure to more than defeat its object, they were given a dinner worth say 150*l.* at about a third or fourth of the money.

The city of Versailles is surely the most favored of all the cities of the occupied territory. It is the Headquarters of the Emperor-King, the Headquarters of the Crown Prince. The former remitted a large fine demanded of the city, the latter is admitted even by the fiercest Frenchman to be a Prince of the greatest largeness of heart. No acts of violence, no excesses are allowed. There are shoals of officers in every street; gendarmes and police are on duty over the town, and there is no proof of the sufferings of some of the people visible to the eye. Those sufferings are, however, acute; so say those who know. There is a little English colony here composed of persons of high character and position who know the facts, and many of them are aware of cruel privations bravely borne by that class of all to be most pitied—"those who have seen better days." Still, in outward appearance, the city has not suffered at all. The shops are open, and the markets are well supplied. Certain branches of trade flourish. One smart little *Figaro* is delighted with his customers. A General gives him a taker, and does not mind the change; a Colonel drops him 50 groshen, and the officers pay a shilling where the charge for "hair-cutting, curling, and shaving" was "only 20 centimes." When the Prussians came he had 25,000*l.* worth of stock; he has sold 30,000*l.* worth and his shelves are still provided with many articles for the toilette, so that he will probably make 100 per cent. on his little business. And to hear his talk of "*Cet imbécile Bazaine*," and of "*Cette Armée d'Afrique qui a ruiné la France*," you would know he was a patriot! Above all, when he snaps his shoes savagely, and swears "France will never yield an inch of her territory nor give up one of her fortresses. No! not till she comes to her last man!" "And if you were he?" "Ah! yes! I would in that case be like a Frenchman, but yield—never!" He does not