

armed and trained, would become the allies of Japan, etc. Malte-Brun hoped his plan would prove acceptable to the "transcendent genius from whom the world awaited to know its destinies."

It is generally believed that in the eighteenth century girls in France were always educated in convents. This is partly true. But from 1752, girls commenced to be educated at home. There were still educational convents in Normandy and Flanders, where each damsel had her own apartment, where gentlemen visitors were received at the grated parlour, and the severity of dress became less rigid. But some years before the Revolution of 1789, it was the fashion to bring up a girl at home. She was educated by reading books, by conversation, and by observation in the social milieu she frequented. At Paris, M. Bardoux says, the girls of the middle classes only entered a convent to prepare for their confirmation. They passed their lives near their mothers; they only went out twice a week, in special toilette—on Sunday to church and for a walk, the other day being given to family visits.

The girls were also brought to picture shows; but never to a theatre till they were married. Masters came to the house to give them lessons. After leaving the convent a young lady generally educated herself; she read the same books as her brothers, observed and noted current facts and ideas; in a word, she drifted into both fact and sentiment. Nor was her domestic education neglected; she was initiated into housekeeping; her toilette was simple; she rolled up her sleeves to work; wore no other jewellery but a simple Jeannette cross; she was active, orderly, and sought only domestic pleasures. But when married, she displayed an imagination more vivid in society; in her home she enjoyed immediately perfect equality; no business transaction was concluded without her consent, and if she were weak in orthography, she had at least a rich fund of proper sense.

The provinces at this time wielded a greater power than Paris. No book could find readers in the capital if it had not been stamped with the approval of the provincials. In the rich and flourishing maritime cities, Bordeaux, Nantes, etc., family theatricals were general. Then, when the Revolution arrived, it was the logical rôle of these middle classes to substitute a social state simple, new, and uniform, based on equality of conditions, to replace institutions at once aristocratic and feudal. None more than middle-class women felt the poignancy of their social inferiority. And wives experienced this more keenly than husbands. The insult of the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre to Barnave's mother at the Granelle Theatre touched middle-class society to the quick.

It was at the church in the provinces, where precedence became a capital question, that social inferiority was most rampant. To escape the pride and snobbism of the upper classes, many families removed to Paris. And yet, as late as Louis XVI., when Chateaubriand was invited to join in the royal hunt, he had to establish his nobility back to the year 1400! To be a page to a mere equerry, even in the houses of Orleans or Condé, it was necessary to have an ancestry clear back two centuries. The farmers' wives only demanded that their poor dogs be delivered from the *piquet*, an immense spiked collar, that the seigneurs ordered to be suspended from the neck of the dogs to prevent them seizing a hare, in case it traversed the poultry yard; it was not a muzzle, but a pillory!

The women were the loudest opponents of the court abuses; they waged an incessant war of epigrams against the coteries of Marie Antoinette. And when the Revolution was accomplished, they accepted immediately the sacrifices it demanded; they suffered bravely; they were only happy when their husbands enrolled in the National Guard; they eschewed all toilettes that recalled the courtly and aristocratic past. And they adopted new costumes—those which signified a complete modification of ordinary life, and the possession of social independence and its rights.

THE "Memoirs of the Princesse de Sayn-Wittgenstein" continues to be the sensational book of the season. Its strange revelations about social rights and duties affect not only the highest families in Germany, but also some in Russia, Poland, Italy, and France. The Princess's origin is cloudy; she apparently belongs to the Berlin *bourgeoisie*. Her book is a journal of her fortunes and misfortunes, written in the natural school vein, but not licentious. It is full of pathos and *ithos*. All, however, is sincere. The family of Sayn-Wittgenstein is not "royal," but very noble, and, above all, proud. When she wed the chief of this house her real life was as fabulous as a Cinderella's. Her husband died in 1876, leaving her all his wealth. It is from this point the book becomes as interesting a study of manners as any ever Balzac sketched.

The relatives of the defunct impounded the revenues of the estates, and placed seals on the château. The widow was thus next to rendered penniless. When she arrived, in the depth of winter, with the remains of her husband for burial in the castle chapel, she was driven off; she obtained

lodging in the village inn, while the coffin was smuggled into its vault by a back-way reserved for the servants.

The deceased's brother, Prince Frederick, broke the will, on the ground that the widow was *ebenbürtig*, that is, not noble, a *parvenu*. He himself married an actress of the Cassel Theatre. This does not illustrate Montaigne's remark: "That the souls of emperors and cobblers are cast in the same mould." It is said that in Germany the nobility-world respects Leibnitz—not because he is exactly the great philosopher of human thought, but that he was a baron and yet *ebenbürtig*. Prince Frederick some years ago was sent to travel to cure his fast life: he dropped in on the heathen Chinese; passed as a "blood-royal prince"; was feasted and incensed; presided at reviews, etc., with an *aplomb* to be equalled only in an operette.

THE new Minister of Marine, Admiral Aube, is a man of keen observation, well read, and possesses the pen of a ready writer. He has seen a good deal of service in the East and the Pacific, and his descriptions of the countries he has visited are picturesque, racy, clear, but, above all, full of sound sense and ripe judgment, as his "Notes d'un Marin" testify. But, like the majority of his countrymen—and Hugo is the most notorious sinner in this respect—he does not think a subject out. There is snap where we expect connection and correlation. Pity Jules Ferry did not read his China!

ZERO.

EDUCATION NOTES.

At the recent Normal School examination in this city all the candidates were successful but one. If this remarkable result were in consequence of the well-directed efforts of the teachers in that institution, the country would have good reason to rejoice; if, on the other hand, it followed from the easy character of the examination papers set by the Central Committee, we might conclude that it was intended to let as many pass as possible. But, if we may believe those who wrote at the examination, the leopard has not changed his spots, for there is the usual crop of complaints about the difficult character of the papers, and matters that are a subject of common talk amongst those who passed prevent us from entertaining the first hypothesis. The truth is that grave irregularities marked the whole final examination. It is a well-understood rule of the Education Department that at no examination for certificates is the teacher to preside over his own students, nor is he allowed to read their papers. Hence high-school masters are strictly precluded from acting as sub-examiners in the July examinations. If this rule is necessary for the non-professional examinations held at the various high schools, how much more necessary is it at the Normal School, as a guarantee to the country that every precaution is taken to secure the most competent persons to become teachers in our public schools. The Education Department was evidently of this opinion when it made the rule for placing the professional examinations altogether in the hands of the Central Committee, not only to prepare the questions, but to preside during the examinations, and to read the answers. Yet will it be believed that at the recent examination the Normal School masters presided while their students were writing, and both they and the Model School teachers read the papers. It may be said that no harm could result from these masters presiding. Under ordinary circumstances this might be true; but when we learn that cribbing was carried on extensively during the session, and that the man whose marks entitled him to the gold medal lost that honour on account of this offence, we are convinced that the rule of the Department is a sound one, and should not have been departed from. This fault of cribbing is apparently a venial one in the eyes of the Central Committee, for while the individual in question was deprived of the gold medal, his name was among those recommended for certificates, and he is sent forth to the country as one who is morally as well as intellectually fitted to train up a child in the way he should go.

At last we have a declaration from the eight clergymen who fathered the Scripture Readings issued by the Education Department. In it they say "That the volume of selections was intended to be thoroughly representative of every portion of the Scriptures, whether of a moral or doctrinal character, and it is believed that a slight examination of the book will make this clear." Now, were not these gentlemen tampering with the non-sectarian character of our school system in recommending, and the Education Department going beyond its duty in accepting, anything of a doctrinal character at all? If the Bible is to be used in our schools it is as a guide to right conduct, not for the purpose of instilling doctrinal opinions, whether of the four denominations to which the signers of the memorandum belong or any other. But a "slight examination" of the book shows us that at best it is but a thing of "shreds and patches." Take, for instance, the lesson on page 22, that professes to give an account