

by the stupid Concert of last night, to which I dragged her. Sir, I must go to the party, I suggested that my hair wanted cutting. "Oh you old Roue!" cried Anastasia, "Mamma he's going to flirt to night." This jest, for of course it was nothing more, pleased us much because it showed that Natty is returning to her old merry self. Late home and with great satisfaction to bed.

Friday, Oct. 14th.—Tom is shooting at Truro, but does not expect a prize, considering the few times in the year he attended the meeting of his corps, and as I know he never practises on his own account, it would be strange if he obtained one. It is in vain that I tell him over and over again that a prize gained at an annual meeting of Rifle shooters is really worth having, and will be looked upon with pride in after years. "No" he says "rifles in this country were made for moose and bears." What will I do with the boy or bear, or whatever he is. Met with another accident to-night in Hollis street. This time it was over some building material.

Extracts.

MODERN CONFIDANTES.

If Queen Charlotte, of snuff-taking memory, should revisit the glimpses of the moon, she would see and hear much to make her venerable hair stand on end. She would stare in mute horror at a pork-pie hat, and shudder at the slang which now-a-days slips so naturally from the lips of sweet seventeen. But what would astonish her most, what would appear to her to amount to little less than a social revolution, would be the total disappearance of that element of distance and reserve which marked the relations between young persons of opposite sex in her young days. The theory of a young lady's portion is so altered that her grandmother would not recognise it for the same which she herself once occupied in all the glory of a highly frizzled head and a preternaturally shortened waist. She was regarded and treated much as a tender lamb in the near vicinity of wolves. The approaches to the fold were strictly guarded. A duenna, clothed with despotic powers, warned off male marauders. This lamb-and-wolf theory is quite exploded. Young ladies are no longer lamb-like in anything, except it be in the sportive agility with which they frisk over the barriers of etiquette. Nor is the male sex credited now-a-days with the wolfish propensities with which a prudish generation invested it. A better understanding exists between the young people of the two sexes. They mix with each other much more, and know each other much more intimately. The wall of partition which used to divide them is thrown down. The pervading tone of their common every-day relations is no longer one of stiffness and formality, but of boyish frankness and easy familiarity. For good or for evil, young-ladydom has abandoned its old attitude towards the other sex, of armed observation. For good or for evil, it has been driven by the pressure of its matrimonial exigencies to emancipate itself from the thralldom of old-fashioned notions of propriety. It has quitted the old defences, and goes forth now-a-days to encounter man, as diplomats say, "on its own responsibility."

One of the most indisputable canons of the ancient salon was that of a young lady's friendships must be strictly limited to her own sex. Her overflowing sympathies gushed in one uniform channel. They expended themselves invariably on another being as interesting, as impulsive, as romantic as herself. Clarissa opened her whole soul to Evelina; Evelina shared every secret of her virgin heart with Clarissa. But both would have given vent to a little scream at the notion of sharing Florio's or Eugenio's confidence. Our modern Clarissas are not so squeamish. They show an unmistakeable eagerness to constitute themselves the recipients of those minor confidences which the young and handsome part of the male sex can easily be brought to impart. In every drawing-room they erect their confessional, and invite moustached penitents to unburden their bosoms. No one need fear any severe penance. Absolution is freely extended to the good-looking sinner. There is no harm in the growth of female influence so exercised; on the contrary much good. It is a great advantage to any young man to have his conscience directed by a pretty young lady. What a debt of gratitude he owes to the fair Mentor who will with promptness give him advice about everything, from the choice of a profession to the choice of a neck-tie! There is something inexpressibly soothing in nestling into a setttee by the side of an amiable directress, and pouring forth into her private ear a long catalogue of petty grievances. The stinginess of a heavy father becomes more endurable when his recital has evoked the commiseration of such a listener. The persecutions of duns are borne with more philosophy after they have awakened an interest in a gentle bosom made sympathetic by the recollection of a long-outstanding milliner's bill. It is a sad proof of the materialism of the age we live in, that so much of the intimate communications between young gentlemen of a confiding turn and young ladies of an amiably inquisitive turn should relate,

as they undoubtedly do, to pounds, shillings, and pence. But besides his debts and Derby losses there are other matters which an ingenious youth freely communicates to this lady-confessor. The circumstances of his home are a favourite topic. The good and bad qualities of his sisters are gently criticized. He wishes his fair listener knew one of them, is not so sure that she would get on with another, is certain a third would never suit her. Then it is a relief to be able to express his private opinion about the various persons of his acquaintance. There are the fellows he can't stand in his office or regiment, and the fellows he not only can stand, but pronounces capital—the young ladies whom he admires, and the young ladies whom he doesn't admire, and the young ladies in whom he can't see what other people admire. Sometimes his confessions take a more serious turn, and he depicts himself in ugly colours, making himself out much worse than he really is, for the pleasure of receiving a bewitching little lecture on the state of his soul. Having listened with an air of the liveliest concern to all he has to say, his companion assumes the function of a monitress, looks prettily grave or tenderly remonstrant as occasion may require, throws out a rosy sketch of Christian obligation, says that it is all so sad, that she knows that feeling so well, wonders naively if he has ever felt this, murmurs a line of Tennyson, and, after engaging him to assist at her stall in the approaching Bazaar for the Distressed Dancng-masters, goes off to dress for dinner.

There are two kinds of young-lady confidantes. One adopts this line with a definite object in view—as a means to an end, that end being matrimony. Like a skilful general, convinced that the enemy's position is impregnable in front, she seeks to vanquish him by an adroit flank movement. Overpowering beauty, overpowering cleverness, overpowering fortune are, in their way, like the *gros bataillons* by which Napoleon swept all before him. A woman who commands such mighty weapons for enslaving the heart of a man is irresistible. But one who has them not, or has them in a less degree, cannot expect the same easy triumph. To gain her point she must often have recourse to manoeuvre. And no manoeuvre is more congenial to the female strategist than that of gradually but surely possessing herself of all the avenues to a man's tastes and proclivities. That is what she is quietly doing while he waxes confidential. She is taking the measure of his intellect, noting his likes and dislikes, observing his habits, his hobbies, his weaknesses, reconnoitring his most accessible side. The result of this study of character is treasured up for future use. Supposing him to have revealed in an unguarded moment a passion for botany, she will surprise and delight him one fine day by giving a wild flower some alarmingly scientific name. If he is fond of field sports, she will secretly take in the *Field*, and astonish his weak mind by her knowledge of natural history. If politics are his chief interest, she listens again and again with unflagging interest to his *resumé* of the state of parties, and his view of the Schleswig-Holstein question; and when she has made out on which side his sympathies lie in the American struggle, loudly proclaims her own adhesion thereto. With the votary of art she adores art. With the pre-Raffaellite, she is pre-Raffaellite, and lays aside her crinoline, heroically sacrificing her love of the Fashionable to her sense of the Beautiful. With an enthusiast for Goethe she is all for Goethe, and, as a proof of the perfect conformity of her own tastes with his, she manages to give a Goethe bend to her last new bonnet. Music, if her friend avows a passion for music, she declares a necessity of her being. All this delicate flattery tells. It gratifies the self-esteem which characterizes the lords of creation. But it is not by operating on this sentiment that she hopes to succeed. She speculates on the chance of making herself indisputable. Some day, she thinks, the object of her ambition will suddenly awake to consciousness that he cannot do better than make a lady who understands him so well his wife. He will say, here is a person to whom I have told everything, from whom I have no secrets, who knows my tastes and shares them, whose sympathies exactly coincide with mine; where can I possibly find a woman better calculated to make me happy? He will perceive at last that years of unreserved confidence have completely mined his position as a bachelor, that it is no longer tenable, and that he must instantly decamp or capitulate. Whether the latter alternative is adopted depends mainly on the lady herself—on her firmness in forcing matters to a crisis, and her tact in making that crisis take a direction favourable to her wishes. If she fail in either of those qualities, success will never crown her efforts, however her pertinacity may deserve it. Her fate will be to be involved for an indefinite term in a long, dreary, aimless, damaging flirtation, which perishes at last of disgust and inanition.

COLONIAL DO-NOTHINGISM.

(John Bull.)

No questions are more important, and no questions more imperatively demand the thoughtful reflection and wise interference of statesmen, than the mutual relation of England and her great colonial empire. The civil war in America ought, one would think, to have opened the minds even of our Whig and Radical statesmen. Behold the results of colonial independ