

THE FLANEUR.

In the recent debate before the British House of Commons, on marriage with a deceased wife's sister, one member ventured on the famous text of Leviticus (XVIII. 18), and, of course, made a mess of it. He said:

"Neither shalt thou marry the sister of thy wife till she is dead!"

Another laughable blunder in our House of Commons:

In the debate on the New Brunswick School question, a member—I will hush his name—being rather arbitrary in the use of the genders, persisted in making the Constitution a female. He always referred to it as "she." This was odd but innocent, but when he went further, and exclaimed:

"If you do so and so, she (the Constitution) will be violated."

He was still odd, but not innocent, and the irreverent legislators laughed.

Why should a prudent woman seek to marry a tanner?

Because Shakespeare says "The tanner will last you nine year?"

On the 30th of January, the French Republic had a majority of one vote at Versailles. All Parisians said, that evening, "There is but one voice for the Republic!"

At the last soirée of the Elysée, Marshal Canrobert, said to Arsène Houssaye: "There is a great deal of talk about stagnation; look at these ladies, and tell me if they do not show that there is progress in painting."

Emmanuel Arago has found a good way to snub people who ask his age. "Alas! I am nearer 60 than 50." In fact he is 64.

An old bald-headed, wrinkled Senator was sitting in the Gallery of the House of Commons, while the member for Bothwell was advocating his famous resolutions.

"What a grind the fellow is," said the Senator referring to the speaker's manner, as well as to the persistency with which he has advocated this scheme, year after year.

A waggish journalist sitting near, replied:

"The Mills of the House grinds slowly, but he grinds exceeding fine."

The result of the vote proved how true the observation was.

The editor of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS has been "run" by his friends for advocating the nomination of Sir John A. Macdonald to the Chief Justiceship of the Supreme Court of the Dominion.

"Do you think he would accept?"

"It is not probable."

"There is one thing more improbable than his acceptance."

"Namely?"

"His being offered the position!"

Another story on the same subject.

"Sir John would have offered Mr. Dorion the place?"

"Yes, Sir John had such weaknesses. But Mr. Mackenzie is a strong-minded man."

A member of the Quebec Civil Service has immortalized himself by the following practical joke.

On market days, the *habitans* are in the habit of eating their dinners *en famille*. When the Angelus of noon rings, they leave their carts or their stalls, and producing their baskets, make a ring in the centre of the market and fall to. Men, women and children huddle together, eat, tell stories, and make merry.

This wag of ours had an inspiration. He made a bet with a friend that, without saying a word, he would break up this dinner party in disgust. Five dollars were staked.

He went to a china shop and bought a certain domestic vase, of the orthodox yellow hue. He went next to a tap-room and had a pint of beer poured therein. He went lastly to the old woman of the corner, and bought some gingerbread and baignes, which he forthwith threw into the beer. He then went forward bravely, took a seat among the *habitans*, and began to eat his gingerbread.

Consternation!

When he got through the cake, he raised up the vase to his lips and drank off the beer.

Cries, yells, exclamations!

He looked around and found the market deserted.

He won his money.

A Milwaukee paper thinks "it simply absurd to talk about a woman being qualified to fill every position in life that a man fills. For instance, what woman could lounge around the stove in a country grocery and lie about the number of fish she caught last summer?"

The process of cooking a beef-steak is to place it on a gridiron over a hot fire until the outside is properly browned, but not scorched; you are then to remove it, and put it on a plate in a hot oven, where you are to leave it for from three to five minutes. At the end of that time it will be found cooked through, and of a delicate roseate pink hue, neither dried nor burned in any part thereof. If you dare to salt or pepper it before serving, you will receive no diploma from this institute.

ALMAVIVA.

THE GLEANER.

How they understand things in England! Mr. Disraeli, was lately engaged to dine with the Speaker at his official dinner. Shortly after his engagement he received a Royal command to dine at Marlborough House the same evening. He, consequently, decided to make his excuses to the Speaker, pleading a Royal command; but it is said the Speaker intimated that he could not release the Premier on that plea, as he could only recognise it on the part of the Sovereign. Mr. Disraeli at once bowed to this decision, and intimated to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales that his allegiance to the first commoner of England prevented him from obeying the command in question. A similar incident, it is said, occurred to the late Lord Palmerston, who upon being invited in the same way to both places, replied in the following terms:—"Lord Palmerston presents his gracious duty to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and humbly regrets that a command to attend the Speaker of the House of Commons prevents him obeying his Royal Highness's previous command," or words to that effect.

Concerning Samson the instructor of Rachel. Admirable as was the result of their relation as master and pupil, it was a stormy one; their quarrels and reconciliations were many, and of these, one good story at least deserves reproduction. Being in a scolding mood, Samson one day took advantage of a situation in the piece of *Lady Tartuffe* to seat himself on the sofa by Rachel's side, and overwhelm her, *sotto voce*, with the bitterest reproaches, the circumstances of the drama all the time requiring her to accept them with the most gracious smiles and a by-play expressive of delighted acquiescence. Better still was the exquisite mistake, made on purpose, by which Rachel on one occasion became reconciled with her irascible mentor. She got him to act the Prince de Bouillon to her Adrienne Lecouvreur, and when, at one of the first rehearsals, she came to the scene where Adrienne goes up to her faithful adviser, Michonnet, and addresses him in loving words, Rachel turned from his representative to that of the Prince, and clasping M. Samson's hand, exclaimed, "This is he to whom I owe everything!" How thoroughly they must all have enjoyed this bit of sentiment!

The eminent chess writer, M. Cecil de Vere died at Torquay in his 30th year. He died of the English scourge—phthisis. He began learning chess when he was twelve, and was soon talked of as one of the most promising young players of his time. When he was 17 he beat Anderssen and all the best English players, receiving only the knight odds. In 1865, when only 20, he obtained his great triumph by beating Herr Steinitz, who gave him the pawn and the move. In 1866 he won the English Challenge Cup, but was only fifth in the Paris tourney in 1867. He came out second in two tournaments for the Challenge Cup of the British Chess Association of 1868, and again in that of 1872, when Mr. Wisker carried off the Cup, and on both occasions he lost the first prize only by being defeated in the tie game. After that he played uncertainly, though five months ago he displayed all his old brilliancy.

A correspondent, who signs himself "Mors," proposes "desiccation" as an alternative to "cremation." The manner of disposing of dead bodies by the new plan would be to place them in wicker baskets or shells in a properly constructed building, and dry them till all the dangerous gases and liquids were removed; then take them to the cemetery. "Mors" candidly admits that there are some "difficulties" in the carrying out of "desiccation."

A very fine fresco has been brought to light by the excavations which are being carried on at present in Pompeii. This fresco is in a richly-decorated house just uncovered, and represents Orpheus playing on his lute and charming the wild beasts and birds by his melodies. It is divided into three compartments by a painted framework, the centre one being the principal. This compartment contains a figure of Orpheus, seated before a high rock, the summit of which is crowned with verdure, and having a cleft, through which is seen on the distant horizon a charming landscape. The head and breast of the musician are finely treated, but the remainder of the body is so inferior that it leads to the belief that a restoration must have been attempted at some time by an unskilful hand. Amongst the animals surrounding the figure are a wild boar and a stag; also vastly inferior to the remainder of the work. In the other compartments, right and left of the central one, are birds of all sorts flying about in the air. These two frames are surrounded by garlands from which hangs a medallion containing a human figure. The whole is festooned with ivy, the sombre tone of which throws out the colours of the fresco in bold relief.

At the last Elysée ball Marshal MacMahon, Marshal Canrobert and Arsène Houssaye were chatting over the "volcano of the dance." It was toward midnight, the hour when the Duke of Magenta leaves the little "Salon of Salutations" to walk about among his guests. They were dancing and waltzing with great gaiety. The women were making peacocks' tails with their trains, and doing wonders with their faces. Marshal MacMahon said: "See how sensible Paris is; it ignores what is going on at Versailles. I have no Ministry; the Assembly is in tumult for a word; but all that does not keep Paris from dancing. They dance over a volcano; but it is a volcano of roses."

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

Arsène Houssaye, one of the witty of Parisian writers, an old *beau*, editor of *L'Artiste*, and correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, has some charming things on balls and women which under a satirical form, convey a useful lesson:

What romances there are in balls! A portionless young girl—say a hundred thousand francs—comes in with a Greuze face, under a forest of blonde hair. A bored young man, with three hundred thousand francs income, asks her to dance. The thunderbolt of love had struck his heart.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "do you like to dance?" "Very much indeed, Sir." "And to waltz?" "Passionately, Sir." "Will you make a sacrifice for me?"

The young lady looked at the young man. "Why not?"

"Very well, Mademoiselle, do not dance nor waltz this evening."

"And for this sacrifice?" "I offer you my name and my fortune."

"That is a great deal," said the young girl, more tempted by her feet than her heart. "Do you hear the violins?"

"Mademoiselle, I am called the Count de * * * and I have three hundred thousand livres of income."

The young girl doubtless reflected that with three hundred thousand francs income one could pay for a great many fiddles.

"Monsieur," she said, "let us compromise. I will not waltz or dance with any one but you."

"No, Mademoiselle, I want a complete sacrifice. You are the most beautiful person at the ball; every one is gazing at you; we will walk into one of the little drawing-rooms and chat together like married people."

"Already!" said the young lady, making a saucy face. But she had left her place in the quadrille. She leaned upon the arm of the young man and allowed herself to be taken to the staircase. "This is despotism, Sir." "Yes, Mademoiselle, I wish to be master before if not after."

The young girl mounted the staircase, saying to herself, "Three hundred thousand livres of income, a hotel, a chateau, a racing stable, a hunting equipage, travel like a princess, have caprices like a queen."

They went slowly up the steps, for the Elysée staircase is invaded, after the manner of Venetian fêtes, by a sea of guests. The quadrille was ended. All at once the young girl hears the prelude of Olivier Métra's *Serenade*, a Spanish and French waltz, full of rapture and melancholy, full of passion and sentiment. She could resist no longer. She withdraws her hand from the arm which holds it, she glides like a serpent through the human waves; she arrives breathless in the grand salon of the orchestra. She no longer knows what she is doing, the *Serenade* has so bewitched her. A waltzer who does not know her seizes her on the wing, and bears her into the whirlwind.

Meanwhile what is the three-hundred-thousand-a-year man doing? He is desperate; he has had happiness in his very hands, and now he sees it vanishing from him like a dream, all because Waldteufel had the unlucky idea to play that diabolical waltz. The unhappy lover tries in vain to reason with himself, to curse his folly, to swear that he will never look at the woman again. He has not the courage to go up the stairs. He descends four steps at a time; nothing stops him; he follows the young girl and arrives almost as soon as she does before the orchestra. Alas! She is already off for the waltz. She is a thousand leagues away from him. The first comer holds her in his arms, breathes the fragrance of her adorable blonde hair, revels in the warm glances of her soft eyes, the color of heaven.

Is not this the moment to give you my opinion of the Waltz? I will translate it in these maxims which La Rochefoucauld would hesitate to sign.

The waltz is a double life.

The most reckless women are less dangerous than the most platonic waltzes.

The waltz can give love to those who have none, as love gives wit to those who lack it.

Love is often nothing more than the exchange of two quadrilles and the contact of two waltzes.

A woman has learning enough when she can tell the difference between a two-time and a three-time waltz.

After waltzing, some women go through a quadrille as a purgatory to the waltz.

Women pardon to the waltz what they would never permit to the dance.

Marshal Canrobert was talking gallantly to the Duchess of * * *. "Keep on," she said, "Marshal, I am a fortified place. I am not afraid of you." "Take care, Madame. You are a strong place, but the sentinels of the heart are always drowsy."

It is said that black-eyed ladies are most apt to be passionate and jealous. Blue-eyed, soulful, truthful, affectionate, and confiding. Grey-eyed, philosophical, literary, resolute, cold-hearted. Hazel-eyed, quick-tempered and fickle. Green-eyed, jealous, squinting-eyed, cross, short-sighted, injudicious.

HOUSEHOLD THOUGHTS.

DRESS.—Comparatively few possess an innate perception of the beautiful, but all may dress in taste by the observance of certain laws of nature. Thus, sky-blue is becoming to fair persons, because it contrasts agreeably with the orange in their complexion. Light green is also, particularly to fair complexions, utterly devoid of colour, because it adds the rose tint altogether wanting. Red and yellow are becoming to dark, fresh coloured complexions, the yellow by contrast, the red by harmony. Violet, dark green, and pink are more limited in their adaptability, and require to be brought into juxtaposition with the complexion before a decision can be arrived at, as there may be a tone in the complexion that will neither harmonise nor contrast favourably. Then, again, there are gradations in these—some that are not becoming, if placed in direct contrast with the skin, would, with a line of white or black intervening, have a most becoming effect.

HEROINES OR FOOLS.—Young women have a dim notion that it is grand and noble to take a lover on trust, to despise good counsel and filial obedience, and they hug themselves with the sweet delusion that they are heroines, when they are only fools. The girl triumphs, of course, over father and mother. For a few short weeks, life is a dream of soft sentiment and new gowns. Then the truth begins to dawn. She has sold herself for a passing fancy. She shudders at the footsteps for which she once listened with rapture. She hides herself in terror from the face upon which she thought she could gaze for ever. Sometimes, with the courage which seems to be given to certain women, she holds a proud and smiling face to the world, and no one knows except her husband, when she rests at last from her sorrows, that the brave heart was broken in the first month after marriage.

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD.—It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would almost seem as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we dearly loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may those patient angels hover about us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered and so soon forgotten.

WINTER WINDS.—There is something wild and weird in the sound of the loud winds that whistle round our dwellings in the night time at the present season. They are mournful, and they bear on their swift wings the memories of other days. They remind us of faces that have vanished for ever from our view, and of firesides where the ashes are cold now. They appeal to us for charity, for we know that they come past the window without fuel, and poor and orphan children with scanty clothing, and scanty fare. Let us listen to the mournful winter winds, and while they make us sad, be taught by them to do what lies in our power to make other hearts more cheerful.

GOLDEN SILENCE.—"A pain forgotten is a pain cured," is a proverb we have never heard, but we think it would be a good one. We know more than one person who cherishes ailments, and of them makes a never-failing topic of conversation, which is never agreeable, and ceases to be interesting to others after a time. If the purpose of such conversation is to obtain sympathy, it certainly fails of its object. When one is really suffering, a regard for the feelings of friends would cause one to be very careful not to talk about it unnecessarily, for what is more distressing than to witness pain which one has no power to alleviate, and to be continually reminded of sorrows which cannot be assuaged?

HOUSEKEEPING.—No lady can afford, for her own sake, to be otherwise than gentle, thoughtful, and courteous in the administration of household matters. If she reserves her best manners for the drawing-room, where so small a portion of the average housekeeper's time is spent, it is likely that they will not always be easily put on. The habitual deportment leaves marks upon the countenance and the manner which no sudden effort can produce. And in housekeeping there are at best so many unexpected occurrences, not always agreeable, that nothing but a habit of self-control and serenity can tide us over them creditably. According to John Newton, it sometimes requires more grace to bear the breaking of a china plate than the death of an only son; and there is a good deal of truth under the seeming absurdity.

THE GOSSIP.—Beware of the gossip, no matter how plausible his or her manner. The artistic, accomplished gossip is great in asserting his own innocence of intention. He repudiates altogether the classification which would include him in the category of the slanderers—those conversational assassins against whom we make special supplication; and, when he is brought to book on the charge of spreading abroad false reports and bearing his part in shying stones at his neighbours' houses, answers demurely—"I did not mean to do any harm; I only told so and so to Mrs. This and That, and she had no business to repeat it." This only telling so and so is just the whole burden of the mischief. The thing we cannot keep for ourselves we have no right to expect others will keep for us, and we only play monkey tricks with our conscience when we pretend to believe that everyone else is more trustworthy than ourselves.