

THE MILITARY FETE IN PARIS. MAY 10th, 1852.

TEMPERED by the announcement of the Grand Fete to be given by the French Army to the President—and we must confess somewhat stimulated by the chance of a *row*—we went over from London to witness the sight.

With no other luggage than a light carpet-bag containing a few changes of linen and the various toilet necessaries, and duly furnished with the Consular 'Passe,' we started by a special train on Friday night (the 7th,) reached Newhaven at 2 a. m. on Saturday morning, Dieppe at 11, and by being my own porter, customs-agent, guide, and general factotum, and giving the go-by to all the vast herd of *touters* who throng the quays of that quaint and cheating watering-place, in less than an hour we were spanking along through the tunnelled Rouen Railway on our way to Paris. The road offered no striking feature of interest until we got near Rouen, when we came upon that long string of manufacturing towns which lies at the bottom of the chain of vallies between Rouen and Dieppe. It is from these towns that those vast hordes of dangerous fighting men have so often marched to aid the insurrectionists in Paris on the occasion of any disturbance there.

We shall not attempt any description of the various places on our way, as full accounts of them have been often given, and are accessible to all who desire any information on the point. The scenery from the carriage window was sufficiently diversified to make the journey agreeable; and, what is not often the case in travelling in France, there was plenty of water to vary the prospect—especially between Rouen and Paris, where the Railway continually crosses and re-crosses the wide blue Seine, or occasionally glides along on its very brink for a mile or two together. The view, however, is never extensive; being shut in by the low but even range of hills which embrace that river throughout the whole of its later course. Foliage there was none—for here as in all the northern part of France, the ugly formal poplar is the only representative of the ancient forests of Gaul which is now left.

We arrived in Paris about 5 p. m., and after passing through the scrutiny for the *octroi* duties, (that antiquated and tyrannical exaction which every successive government have talked of abolishing, but which promise none have yet had the manliness to fulfil,) we set off in search of lodgings. Now be it known we had come off at only a few hours notice, and consequently, had not written beforehand to secure rooms; and as some quarter of a million of people from all parts of Europe had come, like ourselves, to see the great show, the hunt for lodgings was not a short or an easy one. Some previous acquaintance with Paris teaching us how to set about the search, we deposited our luggage in a neighbouring hotel, (which like all the rest was full from top to bottom; even to the sofas in the smoking-rooms which were turned into extempore beds,) and we commenced our hunt. But that the night was