

going to leave Peterborough. "Those who blame me for horsewhipping Mr. Colbeck," says Mr. McWilliams, "should place themselves in my place and think what they would do if a delicate child of theirs came home with arms and legs all bruised and black, especially if he was such a kind and affectionate child that I never had to punish him."

We refer to this letter especially for the purpose of pointing out that this is not at all the question in which the public are primarily interested. Whether the punishment inflicted was excessive, whether the boy kicked Mr. Colbeck when he was receiving his castigation, whether the wrath of Mr. McWilliams was justifiable—he certainly could not be justified in taking the law into his own hands—all these are questions of some interest and might properly come before a jury. But this is not the serious matter with which we have now to deal. We want to have some explanation of the conduct of this Grand Jury. We want to believe that they had honest reasons, even if unintelligent ones, for their illogical and irrational decision; and we trust that the people of Peterboro', for their own sakes and the sake of public justice, will demand an investigation.

LONDON LETTER.

IT is only within the last year that the name of Mr. Rudyard Kipling has become familiar to us in England. Indian travellers had spoken of the pleasure they had found in his sketches and one heard from good critics how admirably the stories were told and with what wonderfully fresh material he worked. But it was not until Mr. Lang drew our attention in *Longman's Magazine* to some of the "Departmental Ditties," and later in a *Daily News* leader to "Plain Tales from the Hills" that we realized Mr. Kipling was, so to speak, at our doors, and that we need no longer depend on what other people said of him but could judge for ourselves. And now those among us who have leisure for current literature read and quote his rhymes and stories in a way that augurs well for his popularity in England. If occasionally he strikes a note in his verse that reminds one of Bret Harte, or an attitude in his prose that now suggests Rider Haggard and anon Mr. Besant, still he possesses a strong personality. He has, too, to a rare degree that journalistic instinct upon which the author of "When a Man's Single" discourses so wittily. There is nothing much better in its way than "Beyond the Pale," through which one hears the wail of the Love Song of Har Dyal and the clink of the girl's bracelet; or the sketch of the room in the House of Suddhow what time the magician crawls about the floor; or the description of the opium-eaters at the Gate of the Hundred Sorrows. I think of a score of small romances, very perfect; of the drawings of British soldiers in exile, full of truth and spirit; of the vivid manner in which with just a word or two you are made to see the scenery which is about Mr. Kipling as he writes. And yet there is something lacking with all this excellence, a want of scholarship, of refinement, of reticence, which perplexes the ordinary reader not a little. It is impossible to help regretting that Mr. Kipling should give up so much of his time to regarding the comings and goings of Mrs. Hanksbee and her kind, that he should listen to their ill-bred voices, out of tune through retailing garrison gossip, through singing the music of "La Grande Duchesse," and that he should think it worth his while to reproduce, and reproduce admirably, so many of the degrading little episodes which fill the lives of that idle, vain, ill-educated class to which Mrs. Hanksbee belongs. But much must be forgiven for his undoubted success in the art of telling a story. Try as you may you will not easily forget certain things he has said and sung to you. There will always remain in your memory the picture of the man who would be a king; of the lad in debt who shot himself; of the sad rhyme written on Christmas Day; of a dozen of others equally good. And Mr. Kipling's skill and power and originality will cause you to forgive faults glaring enough to anyone with the least feeling for literature, odious to most of us who prefer good manners to bad.

Sir Percy Shelley, whose death is just announced, was so little like the ideal son of a poet that one was tempted to believe Queen Mab had slipped a changeling into the Shelley cradle. The vigorous gentleman pounding along the Bournemouth roads on his bicycle or enthusiastically deep in theatrical matters, or yachting among the islands on the Scotch coast, had many sides to his character but none that reminds you in the least of the stock from which he sprang. Trelawny used to say that the poet at twenty-nine years of age would say, "I feel ninety." The poet's son inherited his father's lost youth and preserved it till the day of death. Full of tact and cordiality there were few things he and his charming wife liked better than the delightful gatherings at Boscombe Manor where all who had the smallest right to be considered interesting were at some time or other to be found. The old friends of the poet were never forgotten. Hogg, married to Jane Williams (that Sensitive Plant), would come to play chess. An admirable sketch of him by Mr. Easton is reproduced in the recent life of Mrs. Shelley; and there were many of less name who had to do with the years when Sir Percy was growing up, and his mother, the *Madre*, to whom he was so devoted, worked hard at those volumes which not

even the most curious reader can find of interest now. I think among all the celebrities, little and great, Trelawny was the only one missing of late years. But he who gave the best and truest sketch of the poet was ungallant, to say the least of it, to the poet's wife; and the unfounded accusation of the transfer of the ashes in the Roman cemetery was not likely to be forgiven by the family. Mr. Stevenson dedicated his "Master of Ballantrae" to Sir Percy Shelley, who, with the happiest of youthful natures remained in touch to the last with everything fresh.

By the way a curious story is told of Lady Shelley's first husband, a Mr. St. John (son of Lord Bolingbroke), who when a lad at Harrow met on one of his walks with an old gentleman riding among the lanes, for whom the boy did some small civility, such as opening a gate into a field. The two fell into conversation and the young gentleman amused the elder so much that he asked the lad where he was at school, and was told Harrow. "What's your name?" he said, and was answered by Master St. John in a spirit of schoolboy mischief, "John Smith." Then they parted and neither came across the other again. Well, long after that chance meeting there was an advertisement in the papers for a John Smith at Harrow in such and such a year. This notice catching Mr. St. John's eye, he, trying to think which young Smith it could be, suddenly remembered the talk with the horseman by the gate. So he wrote to the advertisers giving them a description of the old gentleman and an account of the interview. There was much discussion at the time about the case, for it seems the old gentleman had left all his money to civil John Smith, of Harrow school, with whom he had once spent a delightful half-hour; but the money was not given to Mr. St. John, who had no reasonable excuse to offer for the foolish joke of the wrong name and whose unsupported word could not be taken. Therefore the kindly old gentleman's bequest went to the charity which was to possess it if Master Smith were dead; and this story goes to prove that it is wiser never to tell lies even in jest.

Sir Percy Shelley is buried in one of the prettiest churchyards in England with his mother and his grandparents, the Godwins, whose coffins were brought from St. Pancras when the railway took the ground and laid waste the cemetery. In the gardens at Boscombe Manor is a square lawn, railed in, and called the Resting Place, where the Shelleys said they should lie at peace when their time came; but after all, Sir Percy, as I have said, is buried in the churchyard, so the Resting Place remains with no tenants except for sundry pet dogs who have been interred there. Few mourners care to be unconventional. Plans laid in health are seldom regarded when death comes; then the shadow of the church is chosen by all except by that brave handful who think they see a solution of many difficulties in the heathen ceremony of cremation.

It is impossible to imagine, as far as those outside may judge, a more delightful life than Browning's, just brought to a close in Venice. He had an immense number of friends, high and low, rich and poor, who all spoke of him with affectionate admiration. His years were full of sunshine. He had known everyone worth knowing in London since the time of Paracelsus till to-day. He was blessed with wonderful health and looked years younger than his age. Most days he could be met in town walking at a great rate, very upright, his umbrella or stick carried over against his right shoulder. One cannot speak too highly of his courteous, gentle, manner. Those who knew him well say his talk was always quite simple and lucid. When Tennyson told Wordsworth the Brownings were going to marry, Wordsworth said, "Let us hope they will become mutually intelligible." Can you not imagine the old Lake poet's amazement over, let us say, Sordello? There was once a Browning Society started by ladies who soon became very weary of the whole thing. The secretary voted, I think at the third meeting, that the subscriptions should be spent on chocolate creams; and this resolution was carried with enthusiasm, and the society was broken up. Browning, they say, wrote a sonnet on the subject. He should have presented a copy to each of the young ladies.

WALTER POWELL.

WHAT I say is, Don't have nothink to do with a place where they don't keep their servants. Now, there was Missis Brown's at the corner. Sarah Hann went there first, and at the end of the first week she thought she'd like a change; so she left at her month to go and nuss her mother as was took ill. Then Soosan tried the place, and she 'adn't been there three days when she 'eard of another where there was no end o' perks. So she left at her month to go and nuss her mother as was took ill. Then Loeezer went there, and nex' day she thought she'd like to better 'erself, and go as a barmaid. So she left at her month to go and nuss her mother as was took ill. Then Hemley took that place—ah! a nice bright gal she was! And the second day she was there she 'eard of a place as professed cook at £50 a year. She'd never tried cookin' ennything, but she give up the rest of 'er month's wages an' went and took the cook's place, to go and nuss her mother as was took ill. Then I met 'Lizabeth, and says she, "I'm a-going to try Mrs. Brown's place." And I says, "My dear, if you go there, you'll repent it; they never keeps a servant more than her month there!" And sure enough my words come true, for 'Lizabeth 'adn't been there three weeks when she accepted George, the grocer's young man. So she left at her month to go and nuss her mother as was took ill. "What did I tell yer?" says I. —*Fun.*

ROBERT BROWNING DEAD?

Not dead?—Oh, no! not dead;—'tis but the sleep
She sang of—she—his own,
Whose tender music in our hearts we keep
Blent with his deep, strong tone!

"For so He giveth His beloved," here,
Rest after weary toil,—
Re-union after many a lonely year;
One grave in Tuscan soil;—

And what, beyond?—Nay, but we may not dare
To follow, on their way,
Twin souls that blossom into radiance rare
In light of perfect day!

But he,—the seer,—whose vision never lost
The light, through darkest cloud;
Who, in a faithless age, with conflict toss'd,
Could sing his faith, aloud;

Who held so fast the thread of nobler life
That but *beginneth* here;
Who heard the heavenly chorus through the strife
And caught its cadence clear;

Who gave it back to us, as best he could,
And sang so nobly *this*—
That service still must be our highest good,
And love our purest bliss—

He is not dead,—for such can never die;
We miss him here a space,
And yet—I think—in yonder Christmas sky,
His voice hath found its place!

December, 1889.

FIDELIS.

PARIS LETTER.

THE government intend to "rush" the Secret Service money estimate through the chamber; it is not surprising that there should be no balance under this head after a general election; such is always the case, no matter what party be in power. The amount now demanded is a trifle over one and a half million francs. If some writers are to be credited, no value is to be obtained for this annual expenditure, because it is nearly all allocated to the endowment of journals for "flapping" the cabinet of the day—journals asserted to have no influence on the country. Every nation has a Secret Service fund: it is an instrument of rule—like smokeless powder. Then it affords every year the occasion for members to shake off the dust of their feet against the grant, and next to vote it all the same. The French Secret Service money possesses this advantage, that it is laid out in the country, and not like such funds of other nations, appropriated to bribe and worm secrets out of foreigners. For the latter purpose, I nearly forgot to mention, the Minister for Foreign Affairs is, like his colleague of the Home office, accorded a round sum also.

M. de Bonnefon claims to be more Catholic than the Pope. He has not the less created a terrible row by his book, the *Pape de Demain*—the "Next Pope"—which is a violent attack against Leo XIII., and three-fourths of the members composing the Vatican court. The vignette on the cover represents the Pontifical and House of Savoy arms, supporting a Prussian helmet. The author accuses His Holiness of letting down the Papacy to please Signor Crispi, the Emperor of Germany, the Czar, etc.; that he has only two passions, hatred of his predecessors and of his recognized successor, presumed to be the Cardinal Lavigerie. This leads to the apparent aim of the book, the emancipation of the church from the Sacred College, which is "merely an Italian vestry," recruited from the Italian clergy, instead of proportionately from among the 200 million Catholics at large. Daudet in his romance, *Immortel*, said that the forty immortals of the Academy were either *canailles* or *imbeciles*. M. Bonnefon is not a whit less respectful to the cardinals and the great functionaries of the Pontifical court, whom he classifies, "white and black souls." He ranks among the good cardinals, Mgrs. Manning, Newman and Gibbons; but Lavigerie is his unique *persona grata*. The Cardinal Archbishop of Lyons, Foulon, is simply a Prussian, while Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, next to killed his predecessor by intrigues. A specimen of the diatribes: "Cardinal Foulon is a venomous mushroom of 1860, which sprouted at the foot of the imperial laurel." The author recognizes deputy Comte de Mun, the ex-cavalry officer and an accomplished orator, as the veritable *chef* of the Catholic church in France. The lively volume demonstrates two things: that politics profoundly divide the church, and that unless M. de Bonnefon takes a few doses of hyssop, he need not count upon the Papal benediction when on his death-bed.

General Cluseret is a deputy, and it is on his shoulders the mantle of Eudes, the deceased generalissimo of the Communists of Paris, fell. He has brought in a Bill, backed by Mgr. Freppel, Bishop of Angers, a model business deputy, to put down duelling. Extremes meet. The general proposes Draconian fines and imprisonments for all parties to a duel. What is new in his Bill, and that would next to abolish the humorous institution, tempered with danger, would be, to fine the journals that agree to publish an account of the duel. When antagonists perceive they will be deprived of the occasion to pose through the publicity of the newspaper, it will not be worth while calling a fellow out. For once the Communists score a chalk.

The role of doves in revolutions is a novelty, yet Dom Pedro was quite right to let fly one from his outward bound steamer in mid-ocean, to return to Brazil with his best wishes. It would take the bird eight hours to reach its cote, which, by a singular coincidence, was the time