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[FOR THE CRITIC.]

NEW YORK LETTER.

*My Dear Editor,*—In accordance with my promise to you, here is my budget of chit-chat from New York. Do not expect that I shall always write of persons and things that will particularly interest you,—ofttimes will I write of fashions and flounces, of bric-a-brac and bijouterie,—which things are ever detestable to the masculine mind. Here, in the heart of things, as it were, the difficulty is to know which of the hundreds of interesting incidents which occur daily, and which of the many charming visions that one has, to report and photograph for you.

I interviewed Succi, the fatter, a day or two ago, and was much interested in the little man. As I looked at him I could scarcely believe it possible (though he was somewhat thin and cadaverous-looking,) that he had been for a fortnight without food. He is most animated, and interested in all that goes on; he invited me to talk to him in French, as my knowledge of Italian and his power of conversation in English were alike limited. We had quite a pleasant talk; he showed me a little opium pipe, very slender and long, made of metal, which George Francis Train had given him; he says that Train comes to see him every day, and is very friendly. The authorities would not allow me to shake hands with Succi; they are ever on the alert for fear some food may be conveyed to him. The little Italian loves a crowd, he becomes depressed as soon as he is left alone; society has to be his food just now. It made me quite hungry to look at him, and imagine what his feelings must be. I made my way to a restaurant on leaving the presence of the science-baffling faster and ate a good supper. I wonder whether he can possibly finish the forty-five days that he has set himself. I must see him again towards the end of the time, if he has not died meanwhile.

I saw a rather funny cartoon the other day about the much talked-of and justly-abused McKinley Tariff Bill. The first picture represents McKinley as a ring-master, with whip held up, and a large ball marked Tariff Bill at his feet. The Democratic party, as a trained donkey, dances obediently in front of him with dropped jaw and submissive expression. In picture No. 2 there is a change of scene. The hitherto docile animal has become resentful, and while the ring master is adjusting a new cracker to his whip the donkey gives a sudden kick, and away go ball and master out of the arena. I am surprised that a government could even make trial of such a universally obnoxious law; the general opinion is that the Republican party have signed their own death-warrant, and that this selfish and one-sided bill will not long be law.

There is much to please theatre-goers just now; next week I will tell you something of the plays that are now on the boards. I do not know just when Bernhardt is to begin her New York season, but when she comes I shall be among the first to see her, though my purse should hold but the \$1.50 with which to pay my entrance fee. Bernhardt is one of the wonderful characters of the century. Through all her vagaries she is a very woman still, as is seen by her devotion to her worthless husband, whose death she mourned as wives rarely mourn better men. She never lost a chance for an advertisement. I think the story of her interview with M—— of the *Figaro* and its consequences deserves repetition. France was startled one day to hear that Bernhardt had become insane. "No," said the critics and journalists, "we have been deceived too often, we will not believe this story." M—— of the *Figaro* was especially firm in his decision. He was prevailed upon, however, to visit her; she kept him waiting in her boudoir for some time, then bounded in the room like some wild animal, and leaped against the mirror, hair unkempt, features distorted and unintelligent, fingers trembling, eyes wandering. She only mumbled to herself when he spoke to her, and lay on the floor at last, staring into the fire, babbling. Next day the *Figaro* came out with a great lamentation over Bernhardt. She had had her faults, but it would be long ere we looked upon her like again. This was Bernhardt's moment; within a few hours a card from her was in every newspaper in the city. She was not insane, she could not imagine how such a story had arisen, her head had never been clearer, as she hoped to prove to the public by her production of ———, which she would open the following week.

The fashion in fur capes this winter is most accommodating, any and every kind of fur is the fashion. Bring out your old mink muffs and wear them proudly, they are quite the thing. You must trim your hat with fur, Persian lamb or astrakhan are fashionable. A small astrakhan toque is becoming to almost anyone, blonde or brunette; black, feather-trimmed beaver hats are also very much worn. Gold slippers are all the rage for evening wear; if you want a nice cheap pair, take a pair of last year's black kid slippers, buy a package of gold dust, a bottle of prepared varnish, and a paint brush; mix well and apply; the effect is all that could be desired. Crowd your drawing-room with bric-a-brac, you cannot have too much in it. It is a fashionable thing to have a rug, Indian shawl, or crazy quilt thrown over the drawing-room sofa. Bureaus are old-fashioned, a cheffonier is the thing now, with a tripod glass or cheval mirror aside. I will give my lady friends more of the fashions next time. Meanwhile I am,

Yours, &c.,

PHYLIS.

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