

concierge, after counting all her money, found a deficiency corresponding exactly to the rent of a tenant. She concluded he had not paid, so called on him again for the rent. He listened with a stoical grin to the second demand, and produced his receipt for his rent duly paid. The janitress then fell back upon that woman's weapon, tears; but the tenant was an old bird. She then accused him of hypnotising her and during her deep sleep abstracting the receipt. She alleged to the commissary of police she was easily hypnotised and offered to be tested before the Academy of Medicine. It is not too much to say that in all France and Navarre you could not find a soul to believe that a Paris concierge could be mesmerized. Shop lifting is on the increase in Paris and the industry is largely confined to the well-dressed classes. But if the thieves be expert their catchers are more so. An *élégante* having made a tour of inspection of a leading shop and smiling thanks to the shop men who replied to all her questions duly left and walked to a dashing tilbury yoked to a fast trotting horse, that had for driver a gentleman got up regardless of expense. As he was giving her his hand to help her to her seat, the head detective of the shop, which has its own corps of secret police, raised his hat and politely begged the lady to return to the shop—or rather to its searching room. A scene ensued; the driver took in the situation and whipped the horse into a lightning pace. He was pursued till a policeman drew a sea serpent wine cart across the street, pulled up the bolter, and arrested him for "furious driving." He arrived at the police station, where the lady soon joined him, after being *accouché* of several bottles of perfume, lace, ribbons, silk, etc. The driver, in addition to some railway scrip and a few watches, had a roll of 1,000 frs. in gold. The commissary placed that sum on his desk to remit to a poor cashier, from whose double-chained portfolio it had been subjected to painless extraction. In the twinkling of an eye that sum had disappeared and had not since been heard of.

Burns lamented that we had not the gift to see ourselves as others see us. That old but harmless beau, the Prince de Sagan, who declares he has no enemy in the world but his separated princess wife, the richest lady in France, has seen himself as M. Hermant, the dramatist and satirist, has depicted the hero of the new play *La Meute*. M. Hermant accepted a challenge while declaring both before and after the duel the Prince never was utilized for the play. The Prince is short-sighted and had a pair of specially made spectacles to adjust his pistol. Two shots were exchanged by each side. Of course no harm was done, nor would be, had both parties the magnifying glass which will bring the moon in 1900 to within two yards of our planet. It is best in life for a man to have the pluck and turn the adder's ear to the rubs of life, and to be the first to laugh at the jokes cracked at his expense, or the personalities retailed. And it would be well if an author, when dealing with even type-creations, wrote as if he was speaking before them in life. After all the personalities of literature are short-lived, and when effluxion of time covers them with dust it is surprising how one laughs at what once blistered. The buffooneries of Aristophanes did not kill Socrates; the personalities of the writers under the First Republic where are they now? Even Rochefort, who is a monopolist in the vituperative and the personal, effects no more than temporarily annoying his victims. But as to his writings turning aside the course of events they never possessed that potentiality.

The Reading infanticides attract much attention in France; could the women lay their hands on the *Ogresse* Dyer her doom would be terrible. In France there are baby farmers known as "angel makers," but they are difficult to convict, as it is next to impossible to smuggle a birth or a decease from the lynx eyes of the registrars. It must not be concluded that baby massacres are unknown in France; only "cussed wickedness or crass ignorance" can urge a mother to destroy her infant. The private fondling hospital will take charge of it, even guaranteeing its restoration—identity secured by a medal with a number and fastened to leg and arm, and the nuns will receive the little strangers, guard the secret well. An unmarried mother can make her *accouchement* in any of the private lying-in hospitals, but at the same time owned by diplomed midwives who have to take out a government license. Here the

patient is not bound to make herself known, and what confessions she may make to the midwife the latter cannot reveal them, under penalty of a smart fine and imprisonment. Only the judges can release her from the bond of secrecy in case of criminal proceedings. The mother is not even bound to give a name to or register her child. The midwife in this case replaces her. But between 150 and 200 corpses of infants, mostly new born, are annually brought to the morgue, whose death and parentage are unknown.

Where infant murder—for really it is but that—exists, is in the institution of professional nurses in the country, to whom Parisian families, and with the very best intention, entrust their little ones to be reared till about three years of age. The nurses arrive in Paris, assemble at stated offices, where mothers come to seek their services and arrange for payment, which is effected through the local Mayor's hands. When in charge of the peasantry, the local government physician, sanitary inspectors, and the national school teachers are bound to exercise a surveillance over the babies known as *nourrissons*. No peasant can have in charge more than two of the latter. In addition to private families giving their babes thus out, the Municipal Council has to provide the same assistance for its city abandoned babies. It is the feeding bottle that has largely to be relied upon. A nurse has to have a *livret* or personal pass book, wherein the names of the children entrusted to her are entered, how long she has had charge of them, and the medical officer's periodical observations on the rearing of the child. If the nurse's book reveals too many deaths that will be a subject of judicial investigation. The only motive a nurse can have to practise foul play against a *nourrisson* is the temptation to receive presents from the parents, chiefly in cash, on being given the infant. Parents may visit their infants occasionally and "remember the nurse"; others do not visit at all. Public opinion, since some years, has been directed to the evils of placing "little Parisians" out to nurse in the departments; result: the mortality has been reduced from sixty to thirteen per cent.

The Bourse du Travail has been re-opened and is now subjected to severe police inspection and regulations; it is not likely that the Labour Exchange will for the future degenerate into something like an anarcho-Socialist hall, where wild speakers could bespatter and rail upon whom they pleased. The institution is eminently helpful and the working classes will drift into discovering its practical usefulness. The underground story is devoted to all unemployed who seriously desire to obtain work. They receive an identity ticket from the bureau that represents their calling, and in addition their offer is posted up in the bureau of their Guild as well as on a general tableau. No fees are charged. About 300 professions are provided with office accommodation; gas, firing, rent free, with presses for their records, and *salles* in which to hold their shop meetings. No politics tolerated. A government officer has now charge of the conduct of the building.

A fresh series of letters from Renan to his sister has appeared; they date from 1848, and bear the impressions of that revolutionary period. These letters will lower not raise the character of Renan, while fully bearing out the poverty of his character as a man, and the hollowness of his writings and the absence of everything practical in his "isms." He will be remembered simply as a "stylist," and nothing is more evanescent than style devoid of flesh and bone and of concrete facts. During the revolution he knew how to protect his skin; he had not the courage of a mouse. He confides to his sister his inmost thoughts and resolutions; he will not shoulder a rifle in the interest of any party, no matter how just and righteous may be their programme. He arrives at that safe conclusion on philosophical grounds; the first gutter child encountered can fire a musket, but the philosophers are the *rara avis*. In opinions he was resolved never to quit the realm of theories and to avoid their practical application as if a plague. And he acted on that unplucky system all his life—hence a failure; he has leagued only words, not ideas, to mankind. Now we want ideas, facts, actualities; these are the current coin and the aims of existence. He also recommends to conceal your own opinions, but to agree with those of other persons. In a word, be guided by St. Paul: "Be all things to all men." Now Paul was a sound divine. Z.

Paris, April 18th, 1896.