

MONTE TESTACCIO.*

Why! surely this is Arcady? Not so.
Or Andalusian dance-enamored home?
Not so. Or festival beneath the glow
Of old Vesuvius? Pilgrim, this is Rome!
But surely these are Bacchus' antique vaults,
His chariot caverns and his leopard stalls,
About whose doors his thirsty retinue halts?
Stand by! The rout begins! His clarion calls!

Out of the gates a-drip, as it had dashed
Through sudden showers of old Falemian juice,
Rings the red car; the mellow air is flashed
With music: song and merriment let loose
Their fluttering reins, and follow round the hill
With flying hair like ancient charioteers
When Nero led the circuit! Hark! he still
Just at the turn where Caius Cestius rears
His marble peak, they halt their furious race,
And pass demurely, voiceless, with bent heads.
Sighing, they pass with melancholy pace
Where Keats and Shelley lie in flowery beds.
The lowest deity of classic Greece,
Here, like the highest, bows the willing knee:
The last of her anointed bards were these,
Though born in exile, where the northern sea
Climbs the white cliffs, and, blind with his own looks,
Chants to the land Homeric tales of war;
Or like pale Sappho, on the summer rocks
Breathes of Ionian isles that woo from far.

Under cathedral branches, tall and dark,
Or flowery shrubs and ivy clad retreats,
Here swells the requiem of Shelley's lark,
Here, hush-like, chants the nightingale of Keats.
Though far from England's shrine, they sleep apart,
Their "Master Abbey" is the world's great dome—
Their "Poet's Corner" is its mighty heart,
While tear-fed blossoms write their epitaphs in Rome!

T. B. READ.

* Monte Testaccio, or "hill of broken crockery," rising as it does to the height of one hundred and sixty-five feet, out of what was formerly a swamp, is one of the enigmas of Rome which have baffled the antiquary. Its height commands a fine view of the city and surrounding country. It is about forty-five hundred feet in circumference at the base. That it is composed of one mass of broken earthenware is well attested by the wine-vaults which perforate it on all sides, some to a great depth. It is supposed by some antiquaries—and with great reason—to have been built of the refuse of the ancient potteries established in this vicinity by Tarquinus Priscus. Others pronounce it to be the debris collected from the streets of Rome in later centuries. That this curious mountain has not been added to, and that it has been used as a wine-magazine for hundreds of years, is proved by the most ancient charts and maps of Rome. It is near the gate leading to St. Paul's Church and to Ostia. The Pyramid of Caius Cestius and the Protestant Cemetery lie between. In this latter are the tombs of Shelley and Keats. Monte Testaccio and its vicinity are especially gay with music, dancing, and merry-making generally during the vintage season. The costumes of the peasants, the brilliant trappings of the wine-carts and horses, make the scene attractive, not only to the artist, but to all lovers of the picturesque.

THE LATEST PARISIAN FASHIONS.

From Land and Water.

In spite of dismal soothsayers, always ready to read the future through funeral crape, and in spite of taunts and evil prognostics, Paris is really filling, and we are promised a brilliant winter. Already we have had a few *fêtes* and entertainments, which serve as preludes to those which we may expect later. Several ambassadors, also, have recommenced their weekly receptions; and some of our aristocratic *salons* are preparing for the ensuing season. We have not a Court, it is true, but the Orleans Princes and Princesses are coming forward to do the honours for France; and, lastly, though the reverse of lastly, the Princess Metternich has returned, and with her come life and fashion, as of course you know; so that we may expect soon to be in a vortex of gaieties, and our note-book, which has lately been but a series of blank pages, will now scarcely be large enough to contain all the little items which I hope to inscribe therein for your pleasure.

Already I have seen some exquisite toilettes, which I will describe by-and-by, though I must here warn you not to expect anything very strikingly new. The general appearance of dress, taking it as a whole, is much the same as it was before the war. (When shall we finish using that detestable word? It seems as if we were to date everything from that unlucky period, and as if a wall had suddenly sprung up dividing us from the past, and forming a new era in our annals.) Pardon, mesdames, for the digression caused by an "unhappy thought." I was saying, then, that there was little "noticeable" change in fashion; still there is a change, and a change in favour of "severity," if I may use the expression respecting anything so light and fanciful as a lady's toilette. Long dresses and tunics made perfectly plain, without loopings of any kind, have quite replaced the Watteau shepherdesses of a year ago, and there is a tendency to have everything large, the larger the better. It is said that it is the heavy materials, which are now so much worn, which have brought about the re-introduction of long, tight dresses, which in France are called "Princesse," and in England "Beatrix." With this style of dress flounces and tucks are quite *à trop* and out of place. A "Princesse" or "Beatrix" dress can only be embroidered or braided. They are trains, of course, but can be looped up for walking, as already often described in these columns. It is also certain that we shall have the long, straight paletot for out-of-doors, like that which was worn some years ago. It will not be looped up at all. Black and dark colours will be exclusively worn for out-of-doors, lighter shades being reserved for "at homes" and evening receptions. And here let me fulfil my promise of describing a charming dress, which created quite a sensation at a dinner a few days ago. It was a rose-colored satin, made with a long train, and perfectly plain. Over this was worn a black velvet "Princesse" tunic, with low, square body and square hanging Greek sleeves. The body and sleeves were bordered with a band of rose-coloured satin, and the skirt of the tunic was also bordered with rose-colored satin and a rich fringe; a rose-coloured bow in the air and rose-coloured "Metternich" shoes. No ornaments whatever. Now if this "Princesse" tunic were bordered with jet and edged with black ball-fringe, it would be quite as elegant, and would, moreover, be a very economical garment, as it could be worn over any coloured skirt, and thus serve to revive many a *passé* dress, otherwise unwearable perhaps. *Nota bene*, that the body and tunic are made in one piece, and consequently a *sash* is not admissible.

There is a new style of dress called the "Alsacien," in honour of the late province of Alsace. I do not think, however, that it will have much success; but I will describe it, that you may judge for yourselves. The model I saw was composed of blue and black. Black skirt, with five rows of blue cashmere tucks; blue cashmere tunic, crossed and fastened at the side and bound with black velvet; high blue body and

sleeves to elbow, with black frills; black velvet spencer, with basques but no sleeves; blue ribbon round the neck, and a huge blue bow and ends in the front of the forehead, in imitation of the picturesque coiffure worn by the peasant women in Alsace. The only part of the dress likely to become popular is the spencer, and this promises to be very greatly worn, both with or without sleeves, and with almost every kind of skirt from a dark merino to a light muslin.

Although at the risk of being monotonous, I must still repeat that braiding, embroidering, and *passementerie* have entirely superseded every other kind of trimming, and flounces must have a rest for a time, for they have done duty long enough. Coloured flowers of silk embroidery, cut out and each flower separately *appliqué* on a white or black silk dress, have a very stylish appearance. Ball dresses entirely embroidered with coloured flowers will be considered the *à plus ultra* of elegance. I have already in previous letters alluded to the present mania for jet and coloured beads, but especially for jet. It is jet on everything, and jet everywhere. Jet combs, jet stars for the hair, jet ear-rings, jet brooches, jet bracelets and jet necklets of rows and rows of beads. Apropos of ear-rings, I have to record a little change. For some years we have had every exaggerated form of ear-ring, from the long "fisher-woman" shape to the round "Indian." Now, however, a single button is the only correct thing for the ears.

But I must hasten to add a few words on out-door mantles, the latest shape of which is the "Mobile." But it can scarcely be said to be becoming, for being full and gathered in at the waist with a belt, it shortens and widens the figure too much. The "Garrick" is much prettier, as it is also long and full, but flowing, and its long hanging sleeves and double pelerine give it a graceful appearance, which the "mobile" has not. The "Macfarlane" is another very becoming shape, and its cape, which reaches to the waist, forms sleeves in front. It is not unlike a gentleman's "Raglan." In velvet, however, it looks remarkably stylish, and is much favoured by our *élégantes*. All mantles, however, have one or more pelerines, and long pelerines, in form of a *camail*, are worn over dresses, even without mantles to accompany them.

Hats are much more worn than bonnets this year, bonnets being exclusively reserved for church and visits of etiquette. In fact, fashion was never known to be less exacting. All it orders now is for woman to be as pretty as possible; and to be pretty requires a certain talent, for it is not necessary to be handsome to be pretty. Many plain women can make themselves pretty by dressing with taste, for the art of good dressing consists in hiding imperfections and bringing out the natural advantages with which nature has endowed you. Thus, a short woman should never wear dresses too short or tight, long flowing draperies which better adapted to her. Consequently the "Beatrix" dress and tunic, now so generally adopted, should have the addition of a Watteau plait or pelerine when worn by a stout person, as this hides a portion of the figure and gives height. Long train skirts are also particularly suitable to ladies of embonpoint; but tall, thin figures may patronise flounces and looped-up draperies so long as fashion allows them to be worn.

The hair is still worn very low down the back, and will be so worn for some time to come, no doubt. But I hope ere long to give you a long and full *résumé* of every style of coiffure now, and to be worn for the whole season. Till then, *au revoir*.

CHESS AS A STUDY AND RELAXATION.

From Land and Water.

Chess has from the most remote ages up to the present time been held in such esteem amongst all civilized nations, not only by the powerful but also by the humbler classes, that it may not unreasonably be a source of surprise that its value as an element in general education has not received sufficient attention. This may perhaps be accounted for by the circumstance that there are many who doubt whether amusement can ever go hand-in-hand with discipline. Their argument can be at once refuted by regarding those serious subjects with which an educational system, according to their view, only can have relations. It is notorious that a great mathematician finds the highest pleasure in his abstruse studies. It may be laid down as an infallible rule that what is discipline to one mind is simply amusement to another. As an illustration, there are volunteers who never feel fatigue in the exercise of their manoeuvres, whilst to others constant drill is the greatest possible annoyance. What is true of the physical powers is far more true of the mental. The merit of chess consists in the fact that it affords real gratification to both classes, whilst to those who wisely make use of its advantages, it will be the highest discipline. What has been overlooked is this, that it is not to be desired that every person who indulges in the pastime should aim at becoming a player of the first rank, but that he should practise chess so far as he finds it not inconsistent with his ordinary avocations. There are, indeed, instances where a man has been able to gain the highest honours in chess, at the same time that he has been eminent in Church and State. Take but one example: we may be sure that Ruy Lopez would never have been made Bishop of Segovia by so severe a judge of ecclesiastical propriety as Philip the Second of Spain, had his wish to become a first-rate chess player stood in the way of his legitimate duties. Others, like Napoleon, were content with being indifferent chess players, but were never so foolish as to deny the merit of the game. Perhaps, as Napoleon was one of the greatest generals the world has ever produced, it may be thought that he only regarded it as the best mental recreation for military purposes. Let us, then, come nearer home. No one can deny that Sir William Jones and Dr. Duncan Forbes, the historian of chess, were profound oriental scholars. But it is not with such great names that we wish to deal; we mean to apply the same reasoning in a more extended form to minds of far humbler capacity—in other words, to the generality of men whom we meet every day. We recommend chess as an element of education for the young mind, not for the purpose of obtaining excellence in one pursuit, but in almost every branch of knowledge. Apply this discipline of mind first to that profession, which is of the most intrinsic importance in the present age—that of engineering. An engineer, however considerable his natural ability, will find himself outstripped by inferior rivals, if he is without correctness of sight; and this valuable gift is materially assisted by the practice of chess, provided it be, though humbly, correctly studied. Just as the engineer wants correctness of sight, so the merchant, the banker, and, indeed,

every one engaged in mercantile affairs, are in need of accurate calculation, and without that quality no one can play even a moderate, far less a great, game of chess. Proceeding to what are thought the native regions of intellectual supremacy, the result will be found to be analogous. Not to be tedious, the forensic, the parliamentary, orator cannot be injured in their career by having conveyed to them in their early life, through the vehicle of mental diversion, the principles of order and proper arrangement of ideas, whether they are leading or are in opposition. Though not in the same manner, all men of mind derive benefit from this ancient game. The poet has not his imagination killed by playing chess, he is simply strengthened in accuracy, whilst his fire is by no means extinguished. The philosopher, whose tendency, through his confined and solitary life, is to believe in no other conclusions than his own, will perceive through the medium of taking part in an occasional game of chess that others possess reasoning powers equal to his own. But we are not arguing so much for grown-up men as for children. Happy indeed had it been for themselves had some of those, whose lives were melancholy instances of genius preying upon itself, learnt self-discipline, not through harsh control or entire neglect, but through having had their interest aroused by a sport which would have satisfied, without fatiguing, a mind already too much predisposed to intellectual isolation. We are not upholding chess as a universal mental remedy, but are pointing out its claims as an element in rudimentary education. A child, tired with writing verse or prose, or studying mathematics, may wish to have recourse to something of an entirely different character, provided that that be a symbol of mental power brought agreeably before his eyes. It may be argued that the student may transfer his attention from ancient authors, mathematics, or technical science, to modern languages; but this is not fair reasoning. We will venture to say that there will be a strong inclination merely to exchange the difficulties of one language for those of another, especially on the instant. Homer may be very good at one time, and Dante at another, but it must be remembered that both these authors form a part of school work, and are, therefore, not a change of a legitimate description. Reasoning of quite an opposite nature may be dismissed summarily. It is not every boy that would choose violent exercise as his sport, though it would be absurd to gainsay the advantages accruing from a healthy use of gymnastics, cricket, or any other good old English amusement. But one maxim, we think, ought to be adhered to by all masters of schools. If a boy does his work in school in a proper and satisfactory manner, he ought to be allowed to employ his spare time after his own inclination, with the limitations that the object of his choice be in itself innocent, and that it be not injurious to health. Experience teaches us full well that the boy is sure to take to his sport without being asked, and should any one be fatally disposed to neglect physical training, he will rapidly discover that without a sound body he will never be able to play good chess. Boys should not be forced in their play-hours to contest friendly games of chess any more than they should be to row on the river, but neither class ought to be debarred from their favourite pursuit. It must not be forgotten that no form of elementary education should ever terminate in itself; the end must never be mistaken for the means. Chess is recommended as a pleasant process towards obtaining a result which will have full development in after life. Mathematics cannot say more for itself. The majority of those who study mathematics in their youth do not become great lawyers; nevertheless it is well known that mathematicians, though they do not study law at an early age, have afterwards become the greatest ornaments of the judicial bench. Again there is many a classical scholar, whose elegance of taste is completely lost to the world, but then when it is not so, how well it is set as a gem in the coronet of a successful statesman. We have said nothing respecting the value of chess as a moral element in an educational system. Nothing, perhaps, more than this game requires a strict command of temper, while it also inculcates the duty of obedience. Without the first of these a player, however extraordinary his skill, must be vanquished, and the other is absolutely enforced upon him by the very names given to the pieces which act in the mimic warfare. Surely it is not a bad lesson to be reconveyed to the youthful mind that no one is fit to command who cannot obey, whatever may turn out to be his occupation in the more advanced stages of life.

WHAT EVERYBODY KNOWS.

From Punch.

Everybody knows the story of Androcles and the Lion.
Everybody knows the composition of sulphuretted hydrogen.
Everybody knows the plays of Shakspeare.
Everybody knows the meaning of the Balance of Power.
Everybody knows the old English ballads.
Everybody knows where Hogarth, Dryden, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Dr. Johnson lived in London.
Everybody knows how the electric telegraph is worked.
Everybody knows where black pepper comes from.
Everybody knows the topography of Asia Minor.
Everybody knows what the Silurian System is.
Everybody knows all about our glorious British Constitution.
Everybody knows the difference between an acid and an alkali.
Everybody knows the derivation of "biscuit," "sauterter," "currant," "Jerusalem artichoke," "desultory," and "cambric."
Everybody knows the History of England.
Everybody knows who was Prime Minister when the Queen came to the throne.
Everybody knows *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Fairy Queen*.
Everybody knows the changes a butterfly goes through.
Everybody knows the construction of a watch.
Everybody knows the course of the Danube.
Everybody knows the Rule of Three.
Everybody knows French.
Everybody knows that Napoleon entered Berlin in 1806.
Everybody knows what is going to happen when the Bank of England raises the rate of discount

("Ha! have we touched anybody nearly?")

Hepworth Dixon has sued the *Pall Mall Gazette* for libel. The *Gazette*, in a review of his "spiritual wives," accuses him of obscenity. Hence the action. Damages are laid at £10,000.