

L'AMI DU PEUPLE.

THE idea that German humour is an unknown quantity must assuredly be erroneous; for few things could be funnier than the account which the American correspondent of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* has written of his visit to the headquarters of the Anarchist Most in New York. The ground-floor of No. 167 William-street, where the *Freiheit* is concocted, is occupied by a saloon. Over the door leading to the apartments where the "universal patriot" works for freedom is a red flag, and on the door itself a French inscription says "Vive la Commune!" The entrance of strangers is the signal for the men engaged in the office to become very diligent in the cause of liberty. One takes from his pocket "what appears to be gun-cotton, another produces some dynamite, and all fall to discussing in picturesque and suggestive language the respective qualities of the aids to civilization. The editorial rooms are full of old muskets purchased by Most at a low price from the American Government. He sells them to his disciples at six dollars apiece, which is surely cheap enough. Then there are revolvers of all calibres, daggers, swords, and in one corner a complete collection of poisons. The walls are hung with portraits of such kindred spirits as Shakespeare and Karl Marx, Saint-Simon and Hans Sachs, Wagner and Louise Michel. For ten cents the kindly Herr Most sells an ambrosial little pamphlet called 'The Science of Revolutionary Warfare: a Manual of the employment of nitro-glycerine, dynamite, gun-cotton, bombs, poisons, etc.' The manual contains many useful recipes for the poisoning of daggers and revolver-bullets. Upon the correspondent purchasing a copy, Most asked if he proposed to join 'us,' or only to 'do a little assassination on his own account.'

THE COMING REPUBLIC.

IF the possibilities of legislation on the lines indicated by Mr. Chamberlain are not too serious to joke about, the elegant little squib, entitled "The Next 'Ninety-Three'" [by W. A. Watlock], ought to be widely read during the next ten days. It presupposes a Radical triumph at the end of this month, and many more Radical triumphs for eight years to come. Mr. Watlock's diary begins on the 10th of September, 1893, on which day "The Equable Distribution of Property Act" comes into force." Every one lives in a commune and has a piece of communal land allotted to him, which he is bound to cultivate. The narrator himself is fortunate in the possession of "an acre and a half of what chances to be a very fair corn-field . . . several hens, and a share of a cow" and part of a cottage, for which he owes the commune four hours labour daily by way of rent. His less-favoured friend, being "not popular with the mayor of this commune," has an allotment which is "partly a pond and partly a bit of what was formerly the branch line to Malmestone, now no longer in use." Nobody may do anything without an authorization from the mayor; and the mayor of this particular commune, who has allotted "the hall" to himself as an official residence, spends a good deal of his time shut up in the cellar, in order "to prove, from the purest motives, that it was possible for a person to muddle himself with '86 Perrier Jouet without attracting public indignation." The news of the day is that Citizens Chamberlain and Collings have been arrested on their way to America with bags of gold tied round their waists, and that King Michael—one of the thirty-eight absolute kings of the United Kingdom of Ireland—has been made a prisoner by his royal brother, King Timothy.—*St. James's Gazette*.

THE SLAVONIAN NATIONAL DANCE.

EGALI has promised that I shall see the Slavonian national dance sometime to-day, and a village is now visible in the distance. At the Danube-side village of Hamenitz an hour's halt is decided upon to give me the promised opportunity of witnessing the dance in its native land. It is a novel and interesting sight. A round hundred young gallants and maidens were rigged out in finery such as no other people save the Croatian and Slavonian peasants ever wear—the young men braided and embroidered, and the damsels having their hair entwined with a profusion of natural flowers in addition to their costumes of all possible hues. Forming themselves into a large ring, distributed so that the sexes alternate, the young men extend and join their hands in front of the maidens, and the latter join hands behind their partners; the steel-strung tamboricas strike up a lively twanging air to which the circle of dancers endeavour to shuffle time with their feet, whilst at the same time moving around in a circle. Live-lier and faster twang the tamboricas, and more and more animated becomes the scene as the dancing, shuffling ring endeavors to keep pace with it. As the fun progresses into the fast and furious stages the youths' hats have a knack of getting into a jaunty position on the side of their heads, and the wearers' faces assume a reckless, flushed appearance, like men half intoxicated, whilst the maidens' bright eyes and beaming faces betoken unutterable happiness; finally the music and the shuffling of feet terminate with a rapid flourish, everybody kisses everybody—save, of course, mere luckless onlookers like myself and Egali—and the Slavonian national dance is ended.—*Thomas Stevens, in Outing for December*.

A DANCE IN THE OREGON COMMUNITY OF RUSSIAN JEWS.

ALAS! the society has no instrumental music; not even the poorest squeak of a fiddle. In this strait the toughest throats amongst the brothers are devoted as a band. Kind-hearted fellows—A and B and C and D—are arranged against the wall to chant for hours the strains of la, la, la, with all the changes of time and air necessary to guide the steps in the waltz, the polka and the quadrille. The particular favourite of the people seemed to be the American country quadrille. This was danced again and again,

with, it seemed to me, every possible variety of blunder; the bridegroom acting as leader of the dance, calling the figures, tearing his hair like a Frenchman at the mistakes of his friends, and shouting out his despairing instructions with a rolling Russian R, for all the world like an Irishman with a little whiskey in him. Altogether the ball was a very rude affair, with hardly a graceful scene in it, except a few steps in a waltz by two young girls, sisters of the bride. It was relieved, however, by one round in the ring dance, in which the little children and the bride took part, all singing a joyful children's song in Russian. However, by rude I do not mean rough, or that there was any breach of good manners, for the social courtesy of these people under all circumstances is remarkable, but simply that there was an entire want of grace. Under similar circumstances of poverty and no music, I have seen the people of a French community hold a ball and display all the charms of measured movement. But on the other hand, the social bond with the French was evidently artificial, or rather no bond at all, but the pretense of a bond; whilst with the Russians all was genuine and sincere, and though there was no harmony in their dance, there was harmony in their minds.—*Overland for December*.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND THE FORESTS.

OBSERVE the inconsistency of our national legislation upon this vital question. By the present tariff we pay a bounty for the cutting down and manufacturing into lumber of almost every variety of tree. And by the Timber-culture Act we pay bounties in millions of acres of the public domain every year for the sham planting of counterfeit forests—forests which no more resemble in value, in beauty, and in sanitary influences the primeval pines and oaks which we tariff to their destruction than a five-cent nickel resembles a twenty-dollar gold piece. And if such repealing legislation be not enacted—if the present duties on lumber be continued—how long will it be before the treelessness of the whole country shall so environ all the people that every American shall be stimulated by surrounding conditions, by those climatic changes, those constantly recurring swelling floods of the great rivers—such as Cincinnati has so recently experienced in the Ohio—by long-continued droughts and by cyclones careening over the shorn earth, each year with more and more frequency, and more and more destructive force—how long, I say, before every citizen shall curse the giant system of legalized spoliation which the existing tariff has vitalized and energized against the woodlands of this fair and fertile country? While we on the prairies make miniature forests, you in the older States, by your daily consumption of forest products, make mighty and magnificent wastes and sustain tariff taxes in Congressional enactments which render impossible any amelioration by the importation of foreign lumber, and hasten inevitably and resistlessly the calamitous end of wood lands.—*J. Sterling Morton, in Outing for December*.

THE VANITY OF GENIUS.

I RECALL a story of a Scottish driver of pigs who was led on by a waggish Englishman to talk of himself. At last it was boldly stated by this wicked fellow that the driver was in fact a greater man than the Duke of Wellington. The stupid lout scratched his thick head, and, with a satisfied expression, replied: "Aweel; Wellington was a great maun, and verra smart in his own way, but I doot if he could ha' driven seven hundred pigs fra' Edinboro' to London, and not lose one, as I ha' done."

Whittier once sent a volume of Plato to a neighbouring farmer, and when the book was returned said, "Well, friend, how did you like Plato?" "First-rate," said the farmer; "I—I see he's got some of my ideas."

"Wordsworth," said Charles Lamb, "one day told me that he considered Shakespeare greatly overrated. 'There is,' said he, 'an immensity of trick in all Shakespeare wrote, and people are taken by it. Now, if I had a mind, I could write exactly like Shakespeare.' So you see," proceeded Charles Lamb, quietly, "it was only the mind that was wanting."

Northcote being once asked by Sir William Knighton what he thought of the Prince Regent, he replied, "I am not acquainted with him." "Why, His Royal Highness says that he knows you." "Knows me? Pooh! That's all brag."

It was, I think, Sir Godfrey Kneller who, on being asked by an inquiring friend if he could not have greatly improved upon the works of the Creator had his advice been asked in time, promptly replied, "Mein Gott! I think so."

Erskine was a decided egotist, so much so that Cobbett said of one of his speeches he should publish it as soon as he could get a new fount of type with a sufficient number of capital E's, and it was proposed that he should take the title of Baron Ego of Eye in the County of Suffolk. Lord Clackmannan was another title offered him [by Cobbett] after an animated speech which lasted (so they affirmed) thirteen hours, eighteen minutes, and a second.—*From "The Vanity and Insanity of Genius," by Kate Sanborn. New York: George J. Coombes.*

PUBLIC SPEAKING.

THE *Daily News* thinks that in these days of distracted search for a calling for the rising generation, a father might do worse than apprentice a promising son to the trade of public speech-making. Why is it that so many who rise to speak, at a dinner party, say, become pitiable objects before they resume their seats? Your neighbour at a public banquet, who