

opinion is rather on the turn respecting the utility of these mimic wars, where the unexpected and unforeseen cannot enter, nor shells and bullet showers make themselves felt on men and commanders. Brigades execute between sunrise and noon operations that would require in real war several days, and more battles are delivered in a week than in real campaigning could be fought in three years. It would not be bad were soldiers and officers to be made fully *au courant* of the trend of their marchings and counter-marches. Nothing has so bad an effect on the *morale* of men and officers as having to promenade here and there, not aware of the reason why, for a week, between the termination of one battle and the beginning of a second. That situation favours nostalgia, and since everyone must now be a soldier, there are no more civilians to be kept out in the cold respecting strategic movements. It is said that some of the soundest criticism on the manœuvres comes from the militia officers, or "Reservists," whom the "Reg'lars" do not professionally love. The various cavalry regiments do not stable their horses together; they are very jealous of one another, and the bickerings will continue till that arm of the service be abolished. They are considered as a mobile—happily—fortress, but must keep outside the range of artillery, and beyond the line of fire of infantry; the latter and the cavalry rely on the artillery; that is their *sursum corda* in battle, and that sentiment must be counted with. The smokeless powder enables artillery to remain concealed, but during the recent manœuvres, when the artillery commenced to play from ploughed land, which was very dry, each detonation blew up a tell-tale column of dust! Henceforth artillerymen must be provided with watering pots, or those knapsack sprayers in use against the potato disease. Complaints were made that too many reservist officers were employed in purchasing forage, provisions, and seeing that the soldiers did their cooking well. An officer's duty is to show an example of coolness and bravery before the fire of the enemy, not that of a soup pot. The bicyclists were rather viewed as a little too smart, requiring too often the services of the smith-veterinary for their steeds, and remaining in villages two days to be made right. Not a few bicyclists came to grief—the India rubber bands of the wheels slipped—when wheeling through a town, between six and seven in the evening; the rider handed the machine to be repaired, and retired to a hotel for the table d'hôte. Henceforth a bicyclist-smith will be attached to a brigade so "repairs can be made on the premises."

The "outs"—chiefly the extreme Radicals and the Socialists—keep harping on the Minister and President Casimir Perier. But it is all stage thunder, and the public, knowing that, seeks no lightning conductors. The practice of abolishing a deputy's right to question the government, is not yet quite ripe for the nation's approval—though the exercise of questioning be a terrible nuisance, consuming much time uselessly, and often attended by complications. To make the passing of a question subject to the approval of an initial committee—the latter certain to be elected by the government majority—would virtually be the extinction of the minority. So parliament must live on with the institution—accepting it like matrimony "for better, for worse."

In the central penitentiaries of France, there are 7,933 male and 1,198 female

détenus: the average daily earning of the former is 1 fr. 17c., and of the latter, 0 fr. 93c. The most lucrative trades are: printing, bookbinding and plumbers' work; the least, making slippers. The sewing machine and making shirt collars are the best paid work with women. Any balance left, after deducting the prisoner's cost for keep, is put aside till discharge day. The output of prison-labour must not now be sold below general trade prices.

The comic journals cease to occupy their pages with the Duc d'Orleans, and so do the ordinary newspapers—proof, that he has no political importance for the French. Let the Duc prevail upon one of his henchmen to set up as a candidate deputy, having for programme the restoration of the Duc d'Orleans as King. That, or a Strasbourg raid, are the only roads to the throne. The latter would be the most direct to the prison. Faith, to be sincere, must act.

Parisians at the present moment are wholly taken up with the theatrical lawsuit between the elder Coquelin, the leading actor in France, and the Theatre Francais. It is an old quarrel that has simply come to a head. To belong to the *troupe* of the house in question, the first in France, the member, of either sex, and called *sociétaire*, must sign an engagement, to give his or her services exclusively to that theatre for 20 years, never to play elsewhere in France without permission, even after the twenty years; when a pension shall have been accorded they must still abstain from acting in France. The Comedie-Francaise, as this theatre is also called, receives an annual endowment from the State of 800,000 fr. The star artistes are paid 18,000 fr. a year, with a share in the receipts, often amounting to 30,000 fr. Sarah Bernhardt, in 1880, and Coquelin, in 1886, kicked, and left the theatre. Both really wanted to set up on their own account. The grand Sarah was sued for breach of agreement to act, and was condemned to pay a fine of 100,000 fr. to the house, with costs; she forfeited, in addition her right to a pension. She paid the fine, made star tours round the world and now owns the *Renaissance* theatre. Coquelin was unfortunate in his travelling tours. He has just signed an engagement with Sarah to perform at her theatre. This is in violation of his agreement when he retired from the Comedie Francaise, and was accorded his pension of 12,000 fr. a year, not to act in France without permission, and hence the law-suit. Of course he will lose his pension, and will be mulcted in damages, as he and Sarah will draw away the public from the old house.

The sanitary inspectors have at last "dropped" upon a ring of fishmongers, that smeared the gills of the fish when stale, with poultry and rabbit blood to have the look of being fresh. The knowing ones judge of fresh fish by the eye always.

Naturalist Milne Edwards informed the Academy of Sciences of a species of lobster, dredged at a depth of 8,300 yards, that has—not millions, but only 30, eggs housed in its tail, as a kangaroo shelters its young.

Law governs man, and reason the law.

You pretend the public, but you mean yourself.

To a man there is no more uninteresting object in the world than a woman who is in love with some one else.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

To the Editor of The Week:

Sir,—In THE WEEK of October 5 your leader-writer, referring to a suggestion of the London *Spectator* that Cabinet Ministers sitting in the House of Commons should have the privilege of speaking in the House of Lords and vice versa, observes, "this arrangement would do nothing to remedy the enormous disproportion in voting in the Upper Chamber, and it is the inequality of votes rather than any inequality of oratorical power which is creating the outcry against the Lords at the present time."

His observations show a curious misapprehension of the facts. I have on previous occasions, voicing the opinion of many well-informed persons, pointed out the unwisdom of people brought up and residing all their lives on this side of the Atlantic and totally unacquainted with English political life, writing heedlessly and positively upon such subjects. In THE WEEK of March 16 an Ottawa gentleman, writing over the signature of "British Canadian," for himself "and others," sympathetically thanked me for my humble endeavour to "let in light on the matter in question." I take this opportunity of thanking him and his friends for their appreciative and cheering words. Only once before have I been similarly gratified; that was when the Duke of Argyll wrote in the same strain in the London *Economist* of Oct. 12, 1889, anent an article of mine.

I contend that Canadians should be supplied with carefully tested facts, and that those who wish to inform us should avoid the errors so prevalent in the States with regard to the Old Country; and dogmatizing like Canning's "Three Tailors of Tooley Street," when they claimed to represent the people of England.

Your leader-writer leads your readers to imagine (1) that there is an enormous disproportion between the Conservatives and the Liberals in the House of Lords; and (2) that there is an outcry against the Peers. Both statements are erroneous. We have no exact statistics of the present relative strength of Conservatives and Liberals in the House of Lords. If there had been no Mr. Gladstone, probably their numbers would have been even. Moderation and justice are the ruling forces in the Upper House. Mr. Gladstone's conduct during the last nine years has caused numbers of Liberal Peers to vote with the Conservatives in their laudable endeavour (1) to prevent the disruption of the British Empire; (2) to prevent civil war in Ireland; which would increase tenfold the horrors of 1793; (3) and also to repel attacks upon the work-a-day Commandments. The insurrection of 1798 was mainly quelled by the loyal Catholic militia, and only extended over a small part of Ireland; but the one that would be caused by the handing over the property of those who have—whether Protestant or Catholic—to the "have nots" would extend all over the country. The majority of those Catholics who have anything to lose would side with the Protestants. See "Ireland As It Is" (Birmingham Gazette Company) for the opinion of the educated Catholics.

If affairs were in a normal condition; if Mr. Gladstone had ceased from troubling nine years ago, it would be safe to say that at the outside the Conservatives would only have a very moderate majority in the House of Lords. But when the Sixth, Eighth and Ninth Commandments were attacked, then the Liberal Peers—with few exceptions—sided with the Conservatives and their combined forces rejected the Evicted Tenants Bill by 249 to 80. About one-half of the 30 were Government officials; and in all large bodies there are sure to be a few cranks. The Bill (initiated to retain Irish Nationalist votes) proposed at great cost to reward dishonesty, lawlessness and laziness; and to punish honesty, law-abidingness and industry. Therefore the real truth is, that the Conservatives and Liberals joined forces to repel an attack upon the Decalogue.

As to the fairness of the Peers see what