

Another Failure in Municipal Government.

The latest failure in municipal government occurred at the recent city election of Cincinnati. According to the *Gazette* the city is delivered over bound hand and foot to a ring of thieves and ruffians, headed by the Mayor, a man named Johnston, who has just secured his re-election by the worst conceivable means. The *Gazette* says "the most disgraceful election that has ever been held in this city has resulted in the success of the most corrupt ring that have ever held office." It further declares that the rights of the ballot box were shamefully violated; that the police were used to procure the election of the Mayor; that fraudulent votes were admitted and legal votes rejected; that peaceable citizens who offered to vote against the ring were seized, ill treated, and locked up in the station houses. Of the newly elected executive officer it says, "the lowest man in his personal habits, the most disreputable in his associations that has ever occupied the position of Chief Magistrate of the city, he is a fit representative of the hordes of ruffians and scoundrels who were yesterday patrolling our streets and held possession of the voting places." * * * He was opposed by all the papers in Cincinnati. There was no defense possible against the damning charges of which he was the object. Yet he was re-elected by a majority of four to five thousand. We are not surprised that the *Gazette*, in despair of decent municipal government, should exclaim, "It is high time that a city which cannot govern itself better than this one is doing, where hardly the semblance of a republican government is maintained, were put under State control. The virtue of the country may do for us what cannot be done here." But cities which depend upon salvation from independent constituencies are we fear in a forlorn situation. We can fancy the howl of indignation and disgust that would be raised at what would of course be called a proposition to "disfranchise" the citizens of Cincinnati—as if every honest and decent man was not now disfranchised in the most offensive and odious manner. We should hear about the right of self-government; about taxation without representation, and so forth, *ad libitum*; and the low browed scoundrels whose taste for bad whisky is cultivated at the sacrifice of respectable and tolerable Government would be paraded as an enlightened and patriotic community, threatened with deprivation of the most precious rights of citizenship by an insolent and usurping oligarchy of agriculturists. Meantime every decent man in Cincinnati, regardless of party, feels and admits that he is not living under a republican government, but that he is at the mercy of a vile and brutal mob of reckless thieves, who only refrain from sacking the city openly, because experience has taught them that slow bleeding is the most profitable manner of killing a community. And the people of Cincinnati will presently be called upon to manifest enthusiasm in a Presidential campaign, and to agitate themselves over the choice of a practical abstraction, while their own hearths and homes are exposed to almost as much danger as though they were travelers who had lost their way in the brigand-haunted wilds of Calabria. Some day it will be found necessary to remedy this state of things, even if the actual cautery has to be applied. Some day that peculiar kind of municipal administration which may be characterized as government of the people, by the thieves and for the thieves, will reach the end of its tether; and then, whether the panacea selected shall be curtailment of the suffrage, or regulation of the proletarian city vote by the honest country vote, it will get adopted by the public despite the outcries and curses of the "dangerous classes."—*Sacramento Union*.

The Brooklyn bridge is to be beaten before it is finished. Its rival, which is to be constructed over the Frith of Forth, Scotland, will be the largest in the world. The height will be one hundred and fifty feet, and the number of spans nearly one hundred. The great span in the center is to be fifteen hundred feet, or nearly one-third of a mile in width, and the smaller spans one hundred and fifty feet. It will cost about \$10,000,000.

Pious Adultery.

A famous example of this strange psychological phenomenon is narrated by Macaulay in his history of England. The principal actors in the memorable amour were King James the Second, Lord Rochester his treasurer (and prime minister), and Catherine Sedley, countess of Dorchester. The historian, after detailing the circumstances of the scandal, thus proceeds:

"The history of this extraordinary intrigue will be incomplete if it were not added that there is still extant a religious meditation, written by the treasurer with his own hand on the very same day on which the intelligence of his attempt to govern his master by means of a concubine was dispatched by Bourepaux to Versailles. No composition of Kerr or Leighton breathes a spirit of more fervent or exalted piety than this effusion. Hypocrisy cannot be suspected, for the paper was evidently meant only for the writer's own eye, and was not published until he had been a century in his grave. So much is history stranger than fiction, and so true is it that nature has caprices which art does imitate."

A dramatist would hardly venture to bring on the stage a grave prince in the decline of life, ready to sacrifice his crown in order to serve the interests of his religion, indefatigable in making proselytes, and yet deserting and insulting a wife who had youth and beauty for the sake of a profligate paramour who had neither. Still less, if possible, would a dramatist venture to introduce a statesman stooping to the wicked and shameful part of a procurer, and calling in his wife to aid him in that dishonorable office, yet in his leisure moments retiring to his closet, and there secretly pouring out his soul to his God in penitent tears and devout ejaculations.

But the straight feature of this amour consisted in the extraordinary zeal of the king for virtue and his denunciation for profligacy. "He formed and announced many very good resolutions, spoke publicly with great severity of the impious and licentious manners of the age, and in private assured his queen and her confessor that he would see Catherine Sedley no more." Of Catherine, Macaulay says—

"Personal charms she has none, with the exception of two brilliant eyes, which to men of delicate taste seemed fierce and inhuman. Her form was lean, her countenance haggard."

Who can irradiate this paradox in moral science with any illuminating light?—*Historicus*, in *N. Y. Sun*.

New German Marriage Laws.

The law for the regulation of marriages just passed by the German Parliament must be regarded as one of the most revolutionary of legislative enactments. By it Prince Bismarck has dealt a blow to the power of the church that will be severely felt, and from which it will be difficult to recover. In all Germany it does away with the services of the clergy in three great domestic events of life—that is, it allows people to be born, to marry and to die without the intervention of the church. Children can enter upon their earthly career without being baptized and without being assigned to any religious denomination whatever. It enables men and women to marry without the consent or aid of the clergy, and thus does away with the trouble entailed upon them in all Catholic countries. And it permits persons who die to be buried in consecrated ground, although they may have had a purely civil burial, and although their surviving relatives can not swear that they belong to any religious denomination while alive. All ecclesiastical fees are abolished. The poor, who begrudge the sum paid to the clergy for birth, baptismal, marriage and burial fees, will particularly welcome the change. Although the law is aimed particularly at the Church of Rome, the Protestant Church in Germany, which has no compulsory fees, will be the first to feel its effects, and the already poorly-paid pastors will find their revenues for baptismal, marriage, and burial fees, diminishing from day to day. There is no doubt that this law will provoke much criticism, and that it will be received with animosity by the clergy of all denominations;

but, however rigorous a piece of legislation, it cannot be regarded as an attempt to persecute any one church. Catholics and Protestants are treated alike, and all are taught to bow to the authority of the State. The law does not pretend to interfere with the religion of any German subject. Every man has a right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and is permitted to indulge in any religious rites that he sees fit. There is no attempt to interfere with his liberty. All that he has to do is to comply with the formalities prescribed by the State, and after that he may go through as many religious formalities as he desires. He can have his children baptized by clergymen or a cure, and pay him any fees, and he can have his marriage celebrated in a church, or in two churches, as often as it pleases him. So far as the state is concerned, he can be religiously married once a week to the end of his life, and he can select any church recognized by law for the performance of the ceremony. All that the measure proposes to do is to establish the supremacy of the state in all civil acts of this kind, and in matters that have hitherto been considered within the religious domain. The law contains a mass of details which need not be given here, and because they are mainly found in the marriage laws of all countries; but there are one or two points worth noting. Clergymen and priests are allowed to marry if they choose. The law of divorces is very clearly defined, and the matter is taken completely from the hands of the clergy and given to the civil magistrate—the verdict of a tribunal being required to separate married persons, or to allow them to remarry in certain cases.—*Ex.*

Don't Shoot the Small Birds.

The classic oaks of Berkeley are being devoured by caterpillars, and to the visitor who for the first time sees the place overrun by myriads of these indefatigable little crawlers it seems as if every green leaf and blade of grass must soon disappear. Apparently, however, they are fastidious in regard to their diet, and avoid the strongly-scented aromatic blue gums and cypresses, for within the plantations of those trees not a caterpillar is to be seen. In all the other part of the University grounds they swarm; colonies of them have spun gossamer nets in the boughs of the live oaks; they take possession of the paths, and one cannot step without crushing them; they crawl over the sides of the students' cottages and even invade the sanctity of the Professors' gardens and residences; they drop on the heads of the young people in the picnic grounds, and float wriggling and kicking on the waters of the brooks. The students indeed bear the visitation with the composure of philosophers. Possibly the plague keeps their friends away and diminishes the distractions to which they are subjected by the visits of "the profane vulgar." Seriously, however, it is a pity to see the oaks stripped by these voracious little creatures, and the students of the Agricultural Department might profitably exercise their ingenuity to rid the place of such pests. One of the lessons which the annoyance teaches is that the lads who shoot the small birds destroy the farmer's most efficient allies in his continual struggle with the insect hordes that ravage his fields and orchards. This truth has at last, after generations of ignorant prejudice and misapprehension, been recognized in England, and an Act has been passed prohibiting the shooting or taking of about eighty varieties of wild birds from the 16th of March to the 1st of August, although, for some reason or other, the blackbird, the skylark and the thrush have not been placed under the protection of the law. The next legislature would do well to stop the destruction of small birds during the breeding and rearing season, so that we may escape the possible danger of grasshopper and grub plagues in our hitherto favored State. The difficulty at Berkeley, perhaps, is due to the shyness of most of the wild birds, which rarely live near human habitations; but there is the sparrow, a sociable fellow, as little afraid of a student as a street *gamin* is of a policeman, and a dozen imported from New York would be as useful at Berkeley as they proved in the Central Park

when imported from London. In conclusion, we would appeal to the good sense of our boys and young men, and ask of them not to shoot the small birds.—*S. F. Chronicle*, April 17.

Standards of Language.

Whatever else the spelling-matches do it seems probable that they will result in educating the public up to a demand for a higher standard of the English language than is furnished in what the *Boston Advertiser* calls "the loose and debauched pages of Dr. Webster." The extraordinary jumble of good words, bad words, and no-words, heaped together in that ponderous tome, represent a frantic attempt to create a special American language, which should resemble nothing in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth. Webster imagined it possible to do this thing, and thought that for a new nation a new language was indispensable. But facts and conditions were against him. In the first place the American people possessed a past, which was all English. Their traditions, their literature, were derived from the same source, and consequently all that Webster achieved was the countenancing of some abominable corruptions, and the introduction of a demoralizing element to the literary education of the people. Worcester is a far more trustworthy authority than Webster, the latter being almost universally repudiated by cultivated persons, and by all who aim at acquiring a pure style of English composition. In fact, it is quite possible to spell according to Webster, and yet not to spell correct English, while there are thousands of words in his dictionary which have no right whatever to existence. Since the spelling matches have forced these facts upon the public attention, however, there is some hope an attempt will be made to provide the masses with a dictionary which shall have a better recommendation than mere bigness, and which shall be founded upon the usage of the best English writers. There is no purer English extant than that which is presented in the authorized translation of the Bible, and if that work were taken as the standard in these matches the results would be far more salutary. Even Worcester abounds with corruptions and vain inventions, the natural consequence of a lexicographical competition in which the aim of each party was to produce the greatest possible number of words. As an illustration of the unprofitable nature of matches in which Webster is the standard, we may refer to the fact that in a match held in this city the other day, a candidate was rejected for spelling "meagre" thus. It was held that he should have spelt it "meager;" but it is hardly necessary to state that "meagre" is in accordance with the best usage, and, therefore, right.—*Sacramento Record Union*.

Forrest as Actor and Critic.

His criticisms on Shakespeare were marked by impatience of any reading but that which pleased his own fancy. I remember his contending with another actor almost to the point of angry controversy as to whether Hamlet meant "a sea of troubles" or a "siege of troubles." Forrest always read the line—

"To take up arms against a siege of troubles;"

and, lest the critics might not understand him, was wont to place the strongest emphasis upon "siege." He had a reason for everything, and in his stage business was a most exact and methodical man. Nothing annoyed him more than to have the text of Shakespeare recited imperfectly. His industry was boundless. He was punctual in appointments, hard in money matters, and toward the close of his life extremely so. He never shirked a pecuniary engagement. His constant lesson to young men was "industry, industry." There are stories of his harshness in stage discipline, but he was never harsh except to those who deserved it. No young actor of merit was ever pushed back by him. I have heard many stories of his kindness and his courtesy from one who played with him during the last years of his life, and who now is in the front rank of our tragedians. "Forrest," he said,

"was always considerate. If the business of the stage required you to go to the front he always gave place. If you desired to make a point in any speech he always acted to you, and you felt always while on the stage that he was following you and supporting you. It was only to those who were incompetent or imperfect or seemed to lack enthusiasm in their art that his anger broke forth. He hated sham and cant and folly, and in rehearsing a piece would insist upon the actors going through the business over and over again until they became as perfect as it was possible to be. He had a perfect knowledge of stage effect and dramatic art. On the stage he never thought of the audience—never saw it. He played his part correctly, earnestly, always doing the best he could. He never skipped the business, or shirked the lines. Perhaps the strongest point in the character of Forrest, and that upon which his fame will largely rest, was that whenever he went upon the stage, whether there were ten people or 10,000 before him, he did his best." One of the most remarkable peculiarities of the great tragedian, and one which, probably, no one ever suspected, was that he never went upon the stage, no matter under what circumstances, without a certain degree of trepidation. He soon forgot it and his audience, but this "stage fright" was always there at first.—*N. Y. Herald*.

And Yet He Is Not Happy.

The vanity of human ambition, and the homilies of the preacher about the inability of fame or riches to confer happiness, were never more strikingly confirmed than in the person of the most eminent political personage now living. One would think that nature and fortune had conferred everything on Prince Bismarck calculated to afford him boundless content, proud retrospect and the serenity of happy satiety. He may plume himself upon the conceded fact that, of all men living in the possession of power, he is the chief; if there be a world-mover in this generation, it is he. A word from him would set a legion of a million and a half of the best soldiers on the globe in motion; in one hour he is impressing his will on foreign courts, in the next he is waging a successful fight against the still mighty spiritual forces of Rome. Czars and kaisers are even seeking to conciliate him. Wealth he has, and might have as much more as he wished, for German gratitude to him who has made Germany a nation has no bounds. He has more than won the highest rank to which subject or statesmen could aspire. He is blessed with a devoted family, whom he loves, and who idolize him. In Berlin he is greater than the Emperor; in Pomerania he is a feudal despot who needs no law to enforce his authority, whose yoke is accepted by the ardor of veneration. Yet Bismarck, according to a Berlin letter-writer, is one of the unhappiest and most discontented of men. He is harassed by the opposition of the spectated doctors of the Reichstag; the petty details of office worry and fret him; chronic illness too often paralyzes his vast powers of body and mind. Every day's mails bring him letters threatening his life; and these tease though they do not frighten him, as a sick lion is teased by the perpetual biting of very small insects. The police tell him to be careful; he lives ever in a sulphurous atmosphere of vague danger. Even power has grown nauseous to him, and adulation has ceased to give its sweet sting of pleasure. He longs to abandon the scenes of his triumphs and troubles—to get away from all this worry; will gladly let his name pass out of men's mouths if he can but get peace, and would fain exchange those things for which men so keenly envy him for the vines and fig-trees of remote Varzin.—*Appleton's Journal*.

A Preacher on a Slow Horse.

If you have any sympathy on hand for which you have no particular use you may as well bestow it upon a certain clergyman of New Haven, Conn. This clergyman has long wanted a horse, but being afflicted with a want not entirely unknown in his profession, the want of money, has been unable to purchase the desired quadruped. Recently, however, he came into