

A FEARFUL PICTURE.

It is melancholy and discouraging to read such a picture of Parisian morals as the foreign journals exhibit. M. Dumas, the younger, has written a play that is so indecent as to shock Parisian journals, which seemed to be armed with nerves of adamant. Some critics have indignantly denounced the outrage on public decorum. One protests against the practice of turning the theatre into a dissecting room. "There are operations," he says, "that should not be permitted in a theatre, unless the managers write over the door, 'Women not admitted.'" M. Dumas *filis*, then, is at his old work again; and so is Paris. The dramatist has outlived his convulsive fit of virtue; so has the capital, which wears sackcloth and ashes while the Germans engirdled her with a wall of steel, and the light of her theatres was extinguished. Fashionable Paris is rushing to see "Une Visite de Noces." Yes: the ladies of the fairest capital in Europe are crowded to enjoy the display of witty indecency—the degradation of high powers to the work of the pander. The boxes and the stalls are gay with bright robes and beautiful faces. And French censors perceive the significance of the exhibition. "We say it with regret, with sadness," exclaims the *France*, "that in no other country—no other civilized city—no other theatre in Europe, would the new piece of M. Dumas *filis* be possible; and we doubt whether there could be found elsewhere than in Paris, a public who would applaud it even by mistake." The conclusion of the criticism is strikingly solemn. "If our taste, if our sentiments, if our conscience, be so perjured and perverted that we accept such pictures without repugnance, and encourage them with our cheers, we are truly in decadence."

An able London journal truly says that "there is, indeed, no surer token of national degeneracy than such a proof that the moral fibre of a people has relaxed, that men have lost even the semblance of respect for virtue, and that women have cast to the winds the priceless delicacy of their sex. It is hard to couple such sayings with the name of France. Even in her worst hours, she has been treated with a yearning fondness by educated men. We cannot forget the brilliancy of her gifts, her wit, her urbanity, her classical propriety of taste, her power of smoothing down the rough places of life, the beautiful lucidity of her intellect. Her literature is a precious possession of all the earth. She has taught the world how to write and how to speak. French prose is the most perfect that any nation has produced since the days of Athens. Dramatic writing is a lost art in every country save France. There is not a nation in which thought is more fertile, or criticism more keen. France is the hotbed of those speculations which are the main-springs of science and philosophy. Her people are perhaps the most gifted race that the world has seen since the day of Republican Greece. Hence the leniency with which her faults are treated by those who hold the pen of the censor, the reluctance to admit her thousand faults, the eagerness with which her splendid endowments are blazoned forth in the warmest hues of rhetoric. But the truth must be told, and the triumph of 'Une Visite de Noces' proclaims that the truth is bitter. France was struck to the very dust in the late war because she contended against a people more virtuous, more self-denying, more filled with the idea of duty, than herself. She was thrown from her place because licence and the decay of family virtue had paralyzed her faculty of reverence for what is noblest and most enduring in thought and action. She fell because the decay of her moral sense enfeebled her capacity both for true obedience and for true command. Her proud armies were destroyed with an utter destruction, despite the heroism of individual citizens and the stolid patience of peasantry, because the power of endurance and self-sacrifice had been enfeebled by generations spent in self-indulgence, care hunting, money-seeking, and indifference to any interests higher than those of the Boulevards. France is the only country in which such exquisite literary skills as Theophile Gautier's could be employed to elevate vice to the dignity of a fine art. In France alone could such wit, such dramatic skill, and epigrammatic brilliancy as those of Dumas *filis* be enlisted in the service of artistic vice. Nowhere save in France could a mother say, 'I send these flowers to my son to decorate his room, because to-morrow is the birthday of his mistress.' That is what we see now in France, and that is why

she is in a state of decadence. From such men as M. Dumas *filis*, and such dramas as 'Une Visite de Noces,' she has more to dread than from a legion of Bismarcks and Moltkes. The theatres of Paris are preparing a new Sedan."

What we would especially call attention to in this sad yet truthful picture, is the irresistible evidence which it affords that the cultivation of the intellect does not involve the improvement of the moral nature. The most intellectual of modern nations is the most beastly in its vices, and the most shameless in its beastliness. In this picture of France we are enabled to realize how it was that "the world by wisdom knew not God," that Greece and Rome, in their highest state of civilization, could not form a conception of such a system of morality as the Bible, and we recognize more strongly than ever that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."—*Baltimore Episcopal Methodist*.

BIBLE-BURNING IN ENGLAND.

The *Edinburg Review* has an article on the books that have been suppressed and censured in England, which only touches the subject, but which it hopes will be enough to induce some one to prepare a full work on the subject. From it we learn that "the book against which the most unceasing crusades were made was the English translation of the Bible. Ten years after Wiclif had finished his translation in 1380, an attempt was made in the House of Lords to pass a bill for suppressing it. On that occasion, however, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, stoutly declared that he would 'maintain our having this law in our own tongue, whoever they should be that brought in the bill,' and the attempt failed for the time. Afterwards, however, the reading or possession of that version was made a capital crime, and there are many instances on record where the extreme punishment was inflicted."

The three first editions of Tyndal's Bible were printed in 1525 and 1526. "Of the first, a fragment of thirty-one leaves, in the Greenville Library, is the only one known; of the second, a perfect copy, except the title, is in the Baptist Museum, Bristol; of the third, no copy is known to exist. The earliest had a narrow escape from destruction before leaving the printers." One Cochlaeus "received information that two Englishmen were bringing out a work that would convert all England to Lutherism. By inviting the printers to his lodgings and plying them with wine, he extracted from them the intelligence that the book was the New Testament. He gave immediate information to one of the Cologne magistrates, and had the office searched. But Tyndal and his companions had taken the alarm, and carried off the sheets. Hearing of these proceedings, the English bishops took immediate action, and subscribed among themselves to purchase as many copies as possible, especially of the Antwerp edition. A large number of copies were secured, and on Shrove Sunday, 1527, there was a grand demonstration at St. Paul's and the offending volumes were solemnly committed to the flames—Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, preaching the sermon on the occasion."

In curious connection with the subject of the burning of Bibles, though not of it, is the fate which met De Foe's *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*; or, *Proposals for the Establishment of the Church*, published in 1702. "Though in reality a satire of exquisite irony from beginning to end, its true nature was so cunningly concealed as at first to deceive both High and Low Churchmen alike. When, however, its real object was discovered, the indignation against the author was intense. De Foe was prosecuted for libel, and condemned to pay a fine of 200 marks to the Queen (his expenses altogether amounted to more than £3,500, and brought him ruin), to stand three times in the pillory, to be imprisoned during the Queen's pleasure, and to find securities for his good behavior for seven years. Besides this, the book was, by an ordinance of Parliament of February 26, 1703, ordered to be burnt by the hand of the hangman, in New Palace Yard, as 'full of false and scandalous reflections on the Parliament, and tending to promote sedition.'"

The latest instance, we are told, of the execution of heretics occurred in 1612, when Bartholomew Legate was burned at Smithfield, for holding opinions very similar to those of the Unitarians of our own day.

BLACK SPIRITS IN ST. LOUIS.

Henry Ward Beecher is right. There are spirits, and many of them in this world. But we need to try the spirits. Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good. This ought to be the motto of St. Louis. For there are lots of bad spirits in St. Louis—perhaps as many here as anywhere, that do not bring gales from heaven but blasts from hell. Ardent spirits are doing a very dirty work in St. Louis. The spirits of impurity and lasciviousness are doing their share. Keno spirits have ceased to do theirs, for in St. Louis keno is not correct, and Judge Cullen means to go a hundred better in the scale of his fines. The thought has occurred to the *Journal* that a similar method with the ardent Black Spirits and the demi-monde Black Spirits in our midst might be as effectual to the pulling down of their strongholds. John Barleycorn is the monstrous murderer and deserves to die the death. Your Eliza Haycrafts and other monstrous fiends deserve the same. What mockery of charity is this that whines over the death of a wretched woman, who, in her day, had a hawk's eye and a serpent's tongue for every pretty and guileless girl until she had hurried her to her den? Muscular Christianity scorns the idea of attempting to palliate such villainy.

The *Journal* has noticed that hoary sinners in proportion to the enormity of their guilt and its profits become maudering saints in their old age. They retire on half a million, and as a compromise with the decencies their lives have outraged, express a few sentimental regrets, make no restitution, but subscribe to a church and give a dollar here and there to distress. Prostitution flaunts its paint, rouge and rugged vice on our thoroughfares unabashed and unrebuked. That is a poor way to make it odious. It is a sore temptation to hungry female poverty to know that the gorgeous show can become its own on that one condition. If prostitution was not so externally nice and comfortable, more girls might keep their virtue.

Before the philanthropists and thinkers of our city the treatment of our black spirits comes up for solution. We all desire to abate black spirits of every shade in our midst. They are dangerous and incendiary. What is the latest and best word we have to speak on this subject? Cannot we spare a little space from the discussion of our material interests to look at St. Louis morals and manners and try to make them more decent?—*St. Louis Journal of Commerce*.

MANSARD ROOFS.—In an article on the fire department of New York, the *Journal of Commerce* mentions the fact that firemen utterly detest wooden Mansard roofs. It says: "They consider them about equal to a lumber yard on top of a house. The slate is no protection whatever against fire. It drops off soon after the heat strikes it, and the framework is considered a most excellent medium for kindling and communicating fire. Besides, when a fire originates in one of them it is almost impossible to get at it, especially when the house is high. When the Catholic Orphan Asylum, on Thirty-ninth street, took fire in the Mansard roof, it burned a long time before the firemen could do anything to check the fire. Finally they got a hose up inside. Being a public building, and almost vacant in the top story, it was saved; but had it been a store, filled with dry goods or other combustible material, it would probably have been gutted, despite the strenuous efforts of the firemen. It is the opinion of experts that if all large buildings on our narrow business streets had wooden Mansard roofs, no human agency could prevent a fire from leaping the street if it got the least headway on one side."

RUNNING OUTLINE OF THE TICHBORNE TUSSE.

One of the comic papers recently had a cartoon which fairly represents the hold that the Tichborne romance has taken of the English public. John Bull was shown carrying the "Old Man of the Sea" on his shoulders and finding it as difficult to get rid of him as ever did the victims whom Sinbad told to get free from their persecutor. Everything else the cartoon tells us must give place to Tichborne. We have already endured it for so great a length of time that I can hardly say how long it has been or will continue to be the topic of paramount attention. Judges, jurymen, and counsel have already made preparations to meet the possibility of their dying before its termination. It lasted forty days before

the long vacation, and the plaintiff's case was only just begun. How long more it will run neither jurymen nor counsel can say; but as it is certain that we will have to send you constantly fresh instalments of it, I have thought it well to send you on a resume of the case so far as it has been made public, so that your old readers may refresh their memories, and your new circle may be placed au courant with this celebrated cause.

After much difficulty in securing a jury the case of the claimant was stated by Sergeant Ballantyne, one of the most eminent members of the English bar, on May 11. As will be remembered by those who have read Mr. Samuel Warren's famous novel of "Ten Thousand a Year," the most important cases frequently have as defendant one who is not really so, but only by a legal fiction. As in that famous suit in which the client of Gammon & Snap, Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse, was the plaintiff, and a tenant the nominal defendant, in a suit for ejectment, so in the Tichborne trial the defendant is a Colonel Lushington, tenant of the Tichborne estate in Hampshire. The real defendants are the guardians of the infant known as Sir Alfred Joseph Doughty Tichborne. The plaintiff claiming to be the uncle of the child and the right to dispossess him of the estates and title which are now held by him and which are of large importance. In the generation preceding the plaintiff there were three brothers Tichborne: the eldest died childless; the second, who had assumed in consideration of an inheritance the name of Doughty, left one daughter, Kate, afterwards Ratcliffe, but no son; and the third brother had two sons, Sir Roger, whom the plaintiff claims to be, and James, who died young, leaving a posthumous child, Alfred, who at present holds the estates and title.

Sir James Tichborne married a French lady, daughter of an English gentleman and a French woman. They had a very unhappy life, making the life of their child, Roger, "a hell upon earth," as he felicitously describes it. His education was entrusted to a Frenchman named Chatillon, and was grossly neglected. When his family returned to England, he was sent in 1845 to Stonyhurst, the great Catholic college, to school; but owing to various causes, chief of which was his want of preparation and his gross ignorance of the English, he made little or no progress. Examined at Sandhurst for the army; he made a wretched examination, but the examiners were not particular, and he was passed. He joined the Carabineers in 1849, at Portobello Bridge. In 1850 he visited Tichborne, and there met his cousin Kate Doughty, with whom he fell in love, whom he wanted to marry, and with whom, as he swears, he was more familiar than was right. Refused her hand by her father, and unhappy in the army and society where his peculiarities had made him ridiculous, he determined to leave England. Before doing so, after consultation with Mr. Hopkins, an eminent solicitor, Mr. Slaughter and Mr. Gosford, the Steward of the estate, he made a will. He then sold out of the army, and after visiting his father and mother in Paris he took passage in the Pauline for Valparaiso. About this time he was slight, with light hair and eyes, and by no means bad looking. He was about 5 feet 8 inches high. During his sojourn in France he fell on his head, receiving a wound which left a large mark. While in the army he had a serious fainting fit, from which he recovered only when the surgeon bled him in the ankle—both of which marks the present claimant possesses, and medical evidence is forthcoming that he could not have inflicted them within any recent period. Before leaving he left in the hands of Mr. Gosford a sealed packet, the contents of which were known to no one. The *soi-disant* Tichborne declares that he can tell its contents if it is introduced by Gosford. When the Pauline sailed from Havre there was on board with Roger Tichborne, a body servant named Moore. The vessel reached Valparaiso in June 1853, and the pair then proceeded to Santiago, where Moore fell ill and Tichborne left him to go to Valparaiso; from there he went to Melipilla and remained three weeks knocking about. Then he returned to Valparaiso, from which he sent home some birds, feathers and skins. Having taken a coasting voyage in the Pauline, he returned to Valparaiso and to Santiago, and then crossed the continent to Rio Janeiro. He took passage in the Bella for New York. That ship was lost. The news having come to England the next of kin administered the will of his father and took possession of the estates, Sir Roger having been treated as defunct. Instead of all the crew of the Bella having been lost Sir Roger states that two boats left the ship; one of these was lost; from the other he was picked up by an American bark in a state bordering on insanity, and was brought to Melbourne in July, 1853—just in the gold fever. In company with a Mr. Foster, son of the Attorney-General of Australia, he went to Boisdale, Sippaland. Here he attracted Mr. Foster's attention by his riding, an accomplishment of which he was master before leaving England. He afterwards went to Daigo, where he accepted menial employment, calling himself Thomas Castro, in memory of a companion at Melipilla. When at Daigo he met Arthur Orton, whose name figures so often in this trial, "a butcher of the butcher type—the butcher type of Wapping." This is the man whom the defendants claim is now