

NEWS ITEMS.

New and beautiful constructions for the Paris Exhibition seem to rise up daily in the Champ de Mars. Between other monuments of art the workmen have now commenced building foundations of a beautiful kiosk on account of the Turkish Government, and also a splendid mosque and a Turkish bath, of course on a small scale. In the interior of the building the workmen are engaged in finishing a rich and splendid gallery of architecture and decoration after the best model of the Turkish Empire. The new Ambassador from the Porte, Mehemet Djemil Pasha, immediately on his arrival in Paris, gave orders for the execution of these works, and, in spite of the short time to elapse before the first of April, there is no doubt they will be completed by that period.

THE New Orleans *Crescent* says that several of the Vicksburg merchants made up a purse of \$100 for the men of the 24th United States Infantry, as a testimonial of gratitude for the great service rendered by that command at the late disastrous fire. The gallant 24th immediately turned the amount over to the Mayor for the relief of the sufferers.

A CURIOUS application was made to the Government the other day on behalf of the Chinese at Emerald Hill, one of the Melbourne suburbs. At this place the Celestials have lately erected a joss-house, and as the new building is, or purports to be, a place of worship, they claim exemption from all municipal rites in common with other places of worship; and as our local law allows this exemption to all sects indifferently, the Attorney General may find that "State aid to religion" will comprehend paganism itself.—[Times correspondent.]

The vast desert of Sahara, in Africa, is whitened by the bones of hundreds, of unfortunate travelers who have perished on its arid sands from thirst and hunger. Before another century has passed away, however, it seems likely that the desert will be changed into a rich and beautiful country. The only cause of its barrenness is the absence of water. This want is to be supplied by means of an enormous quantity of artesian wells. A great many have already been sunk, and a number of new oases created in consequence.

TRADES UNIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCES.—Alarm is expressed in the London Standard as to the effects of the continued operations of the trades unions:—"It is said that England is suffering from a cause which is likely to occasion a permanent paralysis of her industrial energies, and that until this evil influence be removed, we are not likely to experience again the buoyant times which have been known in the past. Facts are daily making themselves manifest which tend to show the gravity of the crisis, and which may well serve to excite the apprehensions of those who, in the character of Englishmen, watch the markets of the world and the fluctuations of trade. The evil is said to be of our own making, and therefore the more fatal. Labor has leagued itself against capital until capital and labor have appeared as combatants, instead of friends, and, like the two noble animals in the fable, having wasted their splendid energies, in a deadly struggle, have the mortification of seeing the prize for which they fought carried off before their eyes by some sagacious and hitherto despised interloper. British industry has been wounded by the hands of Englishmen, and the foreigner is reaping the harvest which ought to be our own. At present the greatest damage falls on the workman; but others besides the workmen must ultimately suffer, unless a radical change comes over the entire system. What we are now saying is no bare speculation; it springs neither from the prejudice of a party nor the interested feeling of a class. We can scarcely take up a single publication professing to be a mirror of passing events without meeting with announcements of the extraordinary rate at which the foreigner is competing with English manufacturers. The lesson is too stern to be gainsayed; and if the working classes of this country are not yet alive to the facts—and we fear they are not—the best friends of the million are those who utter the words of warning most distinctly in their ear."

Miscellaneous.

A FIRE-SIDE STORY.

AS TOLD BY THE POKER.

The hearth rug ought to tell this story, because she had more to do with it than I had. But, spread out there before the fire from morning till night, she thinks only of making herself comfortable, and I dare say considers it a hardship to be shaken out of her drowsy self-sufficiency even once in twenty-four hours. So if the story is never told till the hearth rug takes to story-telling, nobody, I fancy, is ever likely to be the better for listening to it. The fender, I am bound to add, is very little more inclined to exert himself unnecessarily. As for the tongs and shovel, they are not quite so indolent, and I wish them joy of the compliment. The hare has not much to be proud of in being able to run faster than the snail. I don't think to much of my own activity, therefore, when I say, but for an occasional waking up on my part, we should be fairly considered a slow lot. What I mean by all this is, that it is not out of conceit of my own ability that I now put myself forward to tell this story. I do not so simply because I am the only one of our fireside companionship with energy enough in his composition to take so much trouble for the benefit and warning of domineering wives in particular, and in the interest of husbands in general; and I adhere to my original opinion, that the hearth rug ought to have told it.

Should the observation I am going to make at starting happen to be repeated within hearing of any individual following the same calling as myself, he will, I am sure, understand in a moment my feelings when I say that my mistress's face, in fact her person altogether, is such a one as a drawing poker reflects with warm and invariable satisfaction. As to her other good qualities, I shall not express my own opinion, which might be open to the suspicion of partiality, but shall rather report that of Mr. John Thomas, the footman, in his own words, uttered one morning while he was in the act of putting coals on the fire, a moment after she had left the room: "By George! master's a lucky man to have such a wife! If I was sure Amelia Catharine" (upper housemaid, equally good-looking and well conducted) "would make me such another, blow me if I wouldn't marry her without even asking to see her savings'-bank book!" Mr. John Thomas had lived in many other families, and was therefore qualified to speak knowingly on such a subject. My own impression is, that his admiration of his mistress, in her capacity of wife of his master, is abundantly justified. Of Mr. Silver, my master, I have only to say that, though he is a member of the stock exchange and anything but a saint, he certainly is not a bad sort of gentleman. He uses me a little roughly at times, but if it were not that in doing so he makes his wife start in her chair, I should not object to be so treated,—should rather like it, in fact. That they are a thoroughly happy pair is what any one would soon discover who had my opportunities for observing them together,—a privilege I have used judiciously, and without a suspicion of impertinence, I hope I may safely say, for very little short of ten years; to be precise, from about the seventh day after their return from their honeymoon trip, when my mistress took formal possession of her home, and sent my rusty predecessor travelling on the way of all old irons.

Premising that from my recumbent position on the fender I saw and heard everything I am about to relate—this is my story:

Fires had not yet begun in the drawing-room, but, from the force of habit I suppose, Mrs. Silver, when there was no company, would set reading or at work by the side of the fireplace while her husband went for a ride after dinner, which he did very often in the summer twilight. One evening while thus seated alone, I noticed that she paused reflectively, and presently I heard her say:

"No, no; I'll not remind him. To say to him, 'My love, for the first time in ten years you have forgotten the return of our wedding day,' might sound like a reproach. No; neither tears or reproaches belong to a day from which date ten years of tranquil happiness. I am sure his forgetfulness arises from no

want of love for me. Active and occupied as he is, I know how many other things he has to think of. If he had remembered—well, it would have been very delightful. However, since he has chanced to forget, let me reflect that his memory might be as retentive as that of the almanac, and yet he might not love me. No; if I avenge his forgetfulness, it shall be in my own way—by making the fireside, of which he is so fond, more than usually pleasant to him this evening."

Mrs. Silver smiled and resumed her work, which, that evening, was a handsome smoking cap she was embroidering for master; but I certainly saw the beginning of a tear in one of her eyes—the one nearest to me.

"The other day," she continued, meditatively, "he was regretting that the old custom of having hot suppers had passed away. I've a good mind to surprise him with one to-night! Yes, I will do it! But what shall it be?—What is he especially fond of?"

I beg here to allow to say that though I have never had any other mistress than the lady whose behavior I am now describing, a poker who for ten years had been in the very best middle class society, and who has assisted at the reading aloud of all the fashionable novels and a few of the most interesting divorce cases, is able to understand the exact difference between the best and the worst of wives.

"Ah! I know what I will order!" cried my mistress after a long pause; "a lobster rissole, a roasted chicken, and a lemon pudding. That shall be my great revenge."

She was just about to ring, when the drawing room door was suddenly opened, and a lady friend of hers, too much agitated to stand on ordinary ceremony, flounced into the room, exclaiming in tones which reminded me of the grating of a file—with which inharmonious noise I had been painfully familiar at an earlier part of my career.

"My dear, I knew you were at home, so I came up—only for a moment. Don't disturb yourself. I've no time to sit down. I'm boiling over with indignation!"

"Dear me!" replied my mistress.

"Quite as much on your account as my own, my love!" cried Mrs. Toovey, throwing herself on to the ottoman, in the centre of the room, and untying her bonnet strings almost fiercely.

"It's very good of you, I'm sure," said my mistress.

"You may smile, my love, but it's no smiling matter for all that, I can assure you," cried Mrs. Toovey.

"Not tragic, I hope?"

"I don't know that!" replied Mrs. Toovey, whisking her shawl out of the way, and plunging her hand into the pocket of her dress. "Do you know this handwriting?"

"Mrs. Toovey held out a letter to my mistress as if it had been a cup of poison.

"I've no doubt it's my husband's said my mistress, without taking it out of Mrs. Toovey's hand.

"Read it, my dear, read it!" cried that indignant lady.

"Pray excuse me, I see it is addressed to Mr. Toovey," said my mistress gently.

"Oh," cried Mrs. Toovey, "take my word for it, you'll some day repent of indulging in such silly scruples. A husband and wife are one, and the wife cannot too often or too emphatically remind her husband of the fact. At least you'll not refuse to listen to the contents of this atrocious document?"

I don't think any refusal would have induced Mrs. Toovey to defer the reading of the letter for a single moment. She read:

"My dear Job—The supper party of to-night, married and single, may count on me, even to the extent of an adjournment to Cremorne. I shall not say anything about the affair to my wife, who would be fancying all sorts of dreadful consequences inevitable."

"There, my dear! what do you say to that?" demanded Mrs. Toovey, refolding the letter with a spiteful jerkiness of action, and putting it back into her pocket, as if for further use.

I say that I am much obliged to Mr. Silver for the thoughtful care he had taken to keep me in ignorance of what he fancied it might be unpleasant for me to know."

Mrs. Toovey gave herself so sharp a twist on the ottoman, that I wondered she did not lose her balance and tumble off.

"Really, my dear," she cried, "you—

I must say make my blood curdle in my veins! You appear so wilfully blind that, positively, if I didn't know you had been married to the man for ten years, I should fancy you were still in love with your husband."

"Your imagination would not lead you in the least astray," answered my mistress, quietly musing; "I dare say I ought to be very much ashamed to make such a confession. But don't for a moment suppose that my love for my husband is of the high romantic kind; it never was that. He did not run away in a midnight storm of thunder and lightning, and marry me in spite of all the world, his parents and mine included. Time, if it has made me acquainted with his faults, has also taught me to bear with them without disgust, impatience or weariness. There is nothing to be surprised at in the continuance of such a love as mine—entirely unromantic, jog-trot, you see. Such as it, the sort of love I now feel for my husband, I hope to feel for him when my hair is gray, without blushing to confess it."

"My dear," she cried, "I can hardly trust myself to say what I think; but this I will say: If any wife ever went the way to spoil her husband, you are going exactly that way now. Patience with his faults indeed! Mr. Toovey, I daresay, would be delighted to find me patient with his—and heaven knows he has enough of them! But that is not my nature. I know my duty as a woman of intellect a little better than that! Why, my love, I have just come from having a scene with him about that shocking letter of your husband's. I made him confess everything; that, after supper, the whole party are to go to Cremorne. Are they? Mr. Toovey, I said, you dare to go, and I'll follow you." What is the result? Mr. Toovey has learned that, when I say a thing, I mean it. He has promised me he will not think of going, after my prohibition. Do, my love, let me give you some advice on the way of managing husbands.

"Oh, certainly, if it will afford you any satisfaction to do so," replied my mistress, with a good natured little laugh.

"You won't laugh, my dear," said Mrs. Toovey, "when you find out, some day, that another woman has carried off your husband's affections; and not only his affections but his fortune—for that's what commonly happens now. However, I see plainly enough you are prepared to despise my advice, and to laugh at my solemn warning. So be it. But, take my word for it, you'll find what cause you have for repentance."

"I hope not. Really, my dear, you seem to imagine my husband a second Lovelace. You forget that he is not a young man of twenty."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—"Sonny, does your father take a paper?" "Yes, sir, two of 'em, one of 'em belongs to Mr. Smith, and the other to Mr. Thompson; I hook 'em both off the steps as regular as can be."

THERE was once a clergyman in New Hampshire noted for his long sermons and indolent habits. "How is it," said a man to his neighbor, "that Parson—, the laziest man living, writes those interminable sermons?" "Why," said the other, "he probably gets to writing, and he is too lazy to stop."

THE salmon fishing season which has just closed in England, was the best experienced for many years. The rivers are now swarming with breeding fish, and with careful watching a still greater improvement in the fishing is expected for next year.

PRINCE Arthur having now reached his sixteenth year, Queen Victoria has determined that he shall enter the Royal Military Academy of Woolwich as a gentleman cadet. The Prince of Wales is a General in the army, and Colonel of the Tenth Hussars; Prince Alfred is a Captain in the navy; and it is intended that Prince Arthur shall be prepared for a commission in either the engineers or artillery.

ROWLAND Hill rode a great deal, and by exercise preserved vigorous health. On one occasion when asked by a medical friend what physician and apothecary he employed to be always well, replied, "My physician has been a horse, and my apothecary an ass."