COMPANY MINUS CAUSERIE.

Some Social Gotham Gatherings Without Dancing, Dining or "Dramatics."

ELEGANT EASE EVERYWHERE.

American Women Queens in Educational Realms—How They Rule Among the Intellectual—Operatic Notes.

NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—[Correspondence of the BEE.]—It is the fashion to say that New York has no society except a dancing and dining coterie; that nobody can attract people without offering some especial attraction; that there is no house where any, except the very youngest, can find companionship and conversation, unless with the most intimate or ancient of friends. But I have found out the contrary. I went to a house, not very long ago, where there was no entertainment offered, except the company of the guests. There was neither music nor dancing nor cards; there were no private theatricals, no readings or recitations, or bagpipes; no lectures on art or ancient gems; no Nineteenth Century or Thursday Evening club—not even a "Causerie." There was no assumption of intellectuality, but there was just what constitutes good company—ease and elegance—and a high quality of tone and talk.

The hostess, a woman who speaks half a dozen languages well and has lived in half a dozen countries, brings about her people of various nationalities; but the core and foundation of her circle is the highest and most exclusive fashion of New York. Between 10 and 12 o'clock there were perhaps forty people in her rooms; several women of rare beauty; some of them married belles, some of the latter additions to society, others who have been know in the most distinguished companies in Europe and America for years enough to have marriageable daughters of their own. All were well dressed; none in demi-toilettes, which are the fault and the drawbacks to most of the attempts to bring people together in this way.

WHEN THE WOMEN WILL NOT DRESS,

the tone of the society is at once lowered. Full dress gives an air of elegance that nothing else accomplishes and as soon as the women come in in high-bodied gowns, and without their ornaments, you may call it what you please, it is not what is meant by—society.

At the house I speak of they wore their diamonds and were dressed as for dinner, but they came for conversation. Some, indeed, had dined at the house on that evening, and these made a nucleus for the others. The effect was radiant. You can see the result of costume and charm at a small party so much better than at a large one. It was like a dinner after the men have joined the ladies; only everybody did not at once begin to think of taking leave. Instead, at this fortunate house, people began to arrive.

There were men of fashion and wealth, and men of distinction in other ways; foreigners of eminence; Frenchmen with illustrious associations; Englishmen of the aristocracy; American painters who are famous in Europe; New York politicians who are yet in fashionable society; members of congress, literary men, military men, diplomats—a gathering as various in character almost as a Washington or Parisian salon could collect. Indeed, I can think of only one house in Washington where the world of fashion can be attracted in the same way to meet clever people perhaps not altogether of that world, where

THE HAUTE VOLEE

receives that dash of intellectuality which it absolutely requires to prevent insipidity, but which, when it is possessed makes society one of the most exquisite of pleasures—all the more exquisite because so rare—in America especially, but not to be found every day in any place in the world.

The ease and simplicity seen on the night of which I speak, were especially charming. The hostess cared sufficiently for her guests, but not too much. She possessed not only that knowledge of the world which is indispensable, and which only long experience brings—but a peculiar conversational talent besides; a faculty for touching on lighter themes, gossip and badinage, but flitting from these to others that only a cultivated mind can grapple with; a woman born for society, and who has been able, out of the incongruous elements found in New York, to crystalize the last result of civilization—a salon. As she went about presenting foreigners, regarding all, talking with one or another who seemed at the moment to be out of rapport, she exerted an influence that was very perceptible: it emanated while she moved, like an odor.

She is a woman talked of in the good companies of two continents; and though I had met her at intervals during twenty or almost thirty years in New York and Washington, and London and Newport, and I know not where else at home and abroad,

THE SECRET OF HER SUCCESS

had hitherto escaped me. But I make my submission now. I venture to say I know why she has succeeded. She is a woman of genius; of a genius for society, and deserves to have her career recorded as well as Recamier

Perhaps I may venture to relate a story I heard of her in England. She was very much in the circle of the prince and princess of Wales, invited to the little intimate parties at Marlborough house and Sadringham, and those who heard the words have related to me that more than once the prince would say to her: "I want to present a foreigner to you, count this, an Italian; or Monseigneur that, a Frenchman, because there is no one else here who can talk to him in his own language." So the American often came to the rescue of the English court.

For the English as a rule, speak no language well but their own. Many of the American women are far better educated and more accomplished that the great English dames. They have a taleht for society to a far greater degree. There is an ease, a grace about them, an art of making themselves interesting by being interested, which is sovereign in society; and for this to go to waste, as it often does, seems a desecration of nature's gifts that should not be allowed. The success of one such house as I was fortunate enough to penetrate, shows that others may emulate this good example. There are all the constituents in New York of the finest company, but scattered separated, kept apart.

FOR THE WEALTH AND LUXURY

that throw such a charm about life, and make refinement possible, need not, as so many preach, inevitably degenerate into vulgar ostentation. Wealth is not a crime that all the critics and censors of morals should hold it up to public reprehension. It is not even necessarily undemocratic, so long as it is easily acquired. The fact that wealth opens so many door is a proof of that society in New York, after all, is as democratic as it should be. The American who has achieved a fortune has a better position often than he who has simply inherited what his father left, and does nothing to justify fate for her partiality. But every man in America thinks he may be president, and almost any woman may aspire to enter society. The 140 boxes at the opera, all in the same tier on a level, each exactly like every other, are a curious exemplification of the democratic idea. The latest comer shares the exclusive position and privileges of all the others. But I don't find that baldness and bareness in the wealth of New York that are sometimes ascribed to it by those who have never seen society here. There are wealthy vulgarians, certainly, but there are also vulgar people who are not rich, just as there are rich people who are not vulgar.

Even those poor stockholders at the Metropolitan opera, who built the house and lavished their money to procure for themselves and the public a pleasure of the most elaborate and expensive character, have something to be said for them. Because they use their boxes as such boxes are used everywhere else, they are made a target for the rest of the world who have no boxes. They do not apparently

APPRECIATE WAGNERIAN MUSIC,

to listen to which is a study, and to enjoy an effort. They go to the opera for amusement, as many other people do, the Parisians, for instance, who are yet good judges of art; they might even prefer Italian strains, which need not absorb the attention, and which form a pleasant accompaniment to social divertisement. It is true the people who pay $4 or $1 as the case may be, have their rights and are entitled to their money's worth, but the people who pay from $12,000 to $20,000 for a box and an assessment of $2,000 or $3,000 a season besides, have some rights too. They pay all this for their pleasure, but they give up the sort of music that most of them prefer, because there is a craze just now for the German style, and then if they don't listen to every note the world of auditors is up in arms. They don't often interrupt the music, at most not oftener than people do the plays at other theaters, but they are criticised and decried because they prefer themselves and their own company and conversation to Wagner. This may be bad taste, but it is not altogether unnatural or unusual.

For after all, the whole end and purpose of an opera house is not music; neither in London nor Paris nor St. Petersburg nor Vienna. If it had been in New York the Metropolitan opera house would never have been built. This house is owned and was constructed by a certain number of people, in the first place for social purposes, because they liked a form of amusement in which they could visit and receive their friends while a fine spectacle or performance was passing on the stage. They did not go to all the expense and trouble solely to afford

EARNEST LOVERS OF GERMAN MUSIC

an opportunity to study harmony and counter-part. If the student insists on absolute silence, that—especially while the interminable Wagnerian situations are evolving, and if the student will have nothing but these elaborate musical expositions—the result may be that the stockholders will give up their boxes, and close the house, and then where will the students be? The stockholders as well as the others pay for their amusement, and it is in consequence of what they pay that the musical students get the finest rendering of their favorite master that America has ever known.

I don't advocate ill breeding or noisy talking at great moments of the opera; but the students and the public should not be too hard on the poor rich stockholders and unmusical fashionables. These may not be absolutely perfect in taste, or some of them in manner. They may talk too much or too loud occasionally, but not often, if ever intending to annoy; and certainly no human being would be so preposterous as purposely to burst into a laugh in the midst of "Fidelio's" finest scene. The accident which doubtless the unfortunate who was its cause regretted more than the artist or the audience, has been tortured into an insult to the public, I am sure, unjustly. I have not heard who committed the offense, but it must have been inadvertently. It seems to me there is something to be said for the unlucky people who own the opera house, and without whom we could not possibly have the opera.

ADAM BADEAU.

EDUCATIONAL.

There are 365 colleges in the United States, and only 119 of this number publish papers.

Forty thousand dollars and a million acres of land have been recently given to the University of Texas.

Harvard is the lasgest college in the country, Oberlin is second, Columbia is third, Michigan fourth, and Yale fifth.

The new Harvard divinity school is expected to cost about thirty thousand dollars, and the erection is going on with great progress.

A school of technology is soon to be established in Atlanta, Ga. The state has appropriated $65,000 and the city of Atlanta $70,000 for the purpose.

J. A. Bostwick, of New York, has presented to the Wake Forest college in North Carolina $50,000 in addition to the $20,000 given some time ago.

Cornell university will confer no honorary degrees hereafter, and to become a doctor of laws, under the new rules of the university, one must be examined.

The modern language convention of America met at Johns Hopkins university, December 28. Nearly all of the principal colleges in the United States were represented.

Harvard college has been left $400,000 by the will of the late John O. A. Williams. This is to be known as the "Williams Fund," and is intended to aid needy and deserving scholars.

During the past year $13,284,986 was expended for educational purposes in the state of New York. Of this amount $9,102,268 was for teachers' wages. There are 31,325 school teachers and 1,735,073 school children in the state.

To Brown university the will of the late Hon. Daniel W. Lyman, of Providence, bequeaths $50,000 for the erection of a building for any use not sectarian, to be called the Lyman Memorial, with a reversion of half the entire estate.

The New York Evening Post discusses the movement now on foot for the introduction of industrial training for girls in our public schools, and it dwells on the influence of normal school training, showing that however valuable this may be in and of itself, it is not an unalloyed good in its application to the daughters of our laboring classes.

IMPIETIES.

It is to be expected that old creeds will be subverted where so many persons are turning over Andover.

We still cling to the simple faith that the acme of human wisdom is to know when to lay down a poker hand.

Philadelphia has started out another of these long-lived phenominal "boy-preachers." He is now said to be sixteen. If he follows the example of Harrison he will remain a boy until the gray hairs come.

In a little churchyard down the Susquehanna valley is a humble tombstone inscribed with the name of a worthy woman and this inscription in expressively inaccurate English: "She done what she could."

If you would live long don't be a day laborer but a clergyman. Day laborers live on an average about thirty-two years, while the average life of a clergyman is sixty-seven years. There are other advantages in being a clergyman, too.

A woman in Bridgeport, Conn., complains that her husband, who is a member of the Salvation Army, makes her life miserable around the house by too much praying and singing and assaults upon her and the children because they do not believe in his religious methods. It is enough to make a man lose his hold on all the religion he has to be compelled to break off abruptly in the middle of a prayer or a hymn to hammer his wife and children because they do not join in the worship.

A Boston lady prominently identified with Sunday school work, and who is much interested in bringing our Chinese residents within the pale of Christian influence, called the other day upon one of her celestial protegés. John welcomed her smilingly to his laundry with evident pleasure and when the greetings were over the Mandarin, in response to her inquiry, gave her to understand that he enjoyed very much attending Sunday school, information that was exceedingly gratifying. Anxious, however, to receive more practical demonstration of the influence of the school upon him, she asked him if she did not think it did him good. "Yi, yi!" came the convincing response, "washo fol le whole conglegation."

A TRUE HISTORY.

Translated From the Russian of Count Tolstoi By E. C. Waggener.

"God knows the truth, but he does not always immediately disclose it."

In the city of Vladimir there lived a merchant by the name of Aksenov. He was the owner of two shops and one dwelling house. Aksenov was blonde, handsome and fond of merriment and good company. In his youth he drank a good deal, and when under the influence of liquor made a terrible uproar. Since his marriage, however, he had indulged but seldom.

One beautiful summer morning Aksenov concluded that he would go to the fair at Nijni Novoyorod, but when he went to bid his family good-bye, his wife said to him: "Ivan Dimitrievitch, thou must not go to-day; I am afraid for you to go."

"Afraid!" cried Aksenov, beginning to laugh; "what are you afraid of—that I'll commit a folly at the fair?"

"No," said his wife; "and I do not know myself why I am afraid. Only I have had a bad dream about you. I saw you return from the city, and when you took off your hat your head suddenly become as white as snow."

At this Aksenov only laughed the more.

"That's a good sign," said he, "I shall have good luck and bring you a magnificent present." And kissing his wife affectionately he took his departure.

Half way to the fair he met a merchant of his acquaintance, and stopped to spend the night with him at an inn near by. They supped together, talked till bedtime, and retired to sleep in adjoining chambers. Ivan Dimitrievitch was not a great sleeper, and he awoke in the middle of the night restless and wide awake. To avoid the heat of the day and travel more comfortably, he decided to pursue his journey without waiting for morning. Rousing his postilions he ordered them to harness the horses, and after settling his account with the innkeeper he drove away.

Going about forty versts he decided to rest again, feed his horses and eat his own dinner at another little auberge by the side of the roadway. While waiting for the samovar to be lighted Dimitrievitch seated himself upon the doorstep and began to play on his guitar. Suddenly there was a furious ringing of bells, a troika dashed up to the auberge, and a tchinovik (officer of the state) descended, followed by two soldiers. Approaching Aksenov he asked him what he was doing there and where he was going. Aksenov answered him very politely, then invited him to join him in a cup of tea. The official declined and continued to press him with questions—"Where had he slept the night before?" "Was he alone?" "Had he been alone all the evening with his friend the merchant?" "And why had he left him so precipitately?"

Aksenov, surprised at these questions, related all that happened to him.

"But why do you wish to know?" said he; "I am neither a brigand nor a thief. I am traveling about my own affairs, and no one has the right to question me."

The officer beckoned to the soldiers to approach, then turning to Aksenov said sternly: If I question you it is as a commissioner of police, and because the merchant with whom you passed the night was found murdered in his bed. Where is your luggage? We must have it."

Dimitrievitch pointed out his trunk and bag, and they began to search them.

"What is this?" cried the officer suddenly, holding up something that he had taken from among the clothes in the bottom of the sachel. Aksenov looked and saw that it was a knife all spotted and brown with blood; he shuddered with terror. "And why this blood upon it?" continued the officer.

Aksenov wished to answer, to tell them that he knew nothing about it, that the knife was not even his, but he was unable to articulate a word.

"The merchant was found this morning dead in his bed; you were the last one with him; the inn was closed and you were the only guest. Confess then that you killed and robbed him," persisted the officer.

Aksenov swore by all that was holy that he had not even seen the merchant after they parted for the night; that he had no money save his own, about 8,000 roubles all told; and that the knife did not belong to him; but his voice was strangled, his face pale, and he trembled as with an ague fit.

"Bind and place him in the carriage," cried the officer peremptorily, "and take him to the prison."

An inquiry forwarded to Vladimir in regard to Aksenov's character resulted only in the information that he was well esteemed by all who knew him, although he had been a little wild and fond of drink. "Nevertheless," said the merchants and neighbors, "he is an honest man, and it is impossible that he could have murdered Riazan and robbed him of 20,000 roubles."

The wife of Askenov was in the greatest distress and knew not what to think. Her children were all young, one of them still at the breast, but she took them and traveled as fast as possible to the city where her husband was confined. They at first refused her permission to see him, but at last her prayers prevailed and she was allowed to enter the prison, where her husband, in convict's dress, was chained with a horde of robbers and murderers. She put the children in their father's arms, then seating herself beside him, begged him to tell her all that had befallen him.

"What can be done?" said his wife, when Aksenov had finished, "save to supplicate the czar; he will never let the innocent suffer for the guilty. I have already addressed a petition to him, though I have not yet been able to send it. Ah, Ivan Dimitrievitch, it was not in vain that I had that dream when I saw you with snow-white hair. Thou art gray already with trouble! Ivan, my dear, is it the truth that thou hast told me?"

Aksenov answered her with a reproachful glance, then buried his face in his hands.

A soldier appeared at the moment and announced that the time was up and she must go. The bitterest drop to Aksenov in this parting with his wife was the knowledge that she had doubted him and had even asked him if he had killed the merchant.

"God alone knows the truth," said he; "I must trust in Him and await His mercy."

From that time on he ceased to think of sending away petitions; he closed his heart to hope and prayed only to God.

On the evidence against him Aksenov was condemned, first to the knout, and afterwards to transportation and hard labor, and with wounds scarcely healed departed with a gang of other convicts to Siberia.

At the end of twenty-six years of exile, hardship and sorrow, Dimitrievitch Aksenov had become an old man; his hair was as white as snow and his long white beard fell almost to his waist. All of his gaiety had disappeared; he rarely spoke and never laughed, spending his time when not at work in prayers to heaven.

In prison Akesnov had learned to be a shoemaker, and with the money which he earned from an occasional sale bought himself a Book of Martyrs, which he read whenever there was light enough in the dungeon for him to see; and on holidays and fete days attended the prison chapel and sung in the choir. The keepers loved him for his docility, and his comrades held him in high esteem, calling him "grandfather," and a "man of God." No one wrote to him from his old home and he did not know whether his wife and children were living or dead. Thus the time passed on.

One morning there was a stir of excitement in the prison; a batch of new criminals had just been brought in, and with them intelligence from the outer world. The convicts gathered about the new arrivals, plying them with a thousand and one questions: "From what city or village had they come?" "For what crime had they been sentenced?" etc., etc. Aksenov also drew near and listened to what was said.

Among the prisoners was a man perhaps sixty years of age, tall, muscular and robust. "The reason why I am here," said he, "is simple enough. I was unharnassing a horse from a sleigh and they took me for a thief. I told them I only wanted to go faster, but all the same I am here. Truly, I am a great criminal and should have been here before, only, you see, the police didn't know it.

"And you are from where?"

"Vladimir, I am a shopkeeper of that city. My name is Makar, and that of my father Semionovitch."

Aksenov lifted his head. "Did you ever hear them speak of the merchants Aksenov?" said he. "Are any of them living?"

"Of course," said Makar; "they are rich merchants now, although their father was sent to Siberia."

Askenov did not like to speak of his misfortunes, so he only sighed and held his tongue. His comrades were not so reticent, however, and soon had given the new-comer the details of his sad history. He was very much interested and looked at Aksenov with astonishment—something like uneasiness. He refused to answer any more questions and tried to turn the subject.

But Aksenov would not let him; something in the manner of the man had aroused his suspicions, and he pressed him closely.

"Did you ever hear them speak of my affair, Semionovitch?" said he; "and do you remember anything about it?"

"No," he responded; "the earth is full of ears, and I heard of it, of course, but it's so long since it happened that I have forgotten what was said."

"But do they know who killed the merchant?" Aksenov continued.

"The one in whose bag the knife was found, of course. How could it be otherwise? Why, Dimitrievitch, the bag was under your head and you'd have heard him."

Makar did not seem to notice the slip he had made, and Aksenov said nothing either, but more and more convinced that he was in the presence of Riazan's murderer, got up and left the room.

But all that night he could not sleep; the face of his wife as she had looked when he had bade her good-bye to go to the fair, rose up before him; he saw her laugh, he heard her speak. He felt his little children nestling in his arms and thought himself as young, gay and happy, romping in the garden with his family about him, then seated on the steps of the inn where they had arrested him. Again he was under the lash of the horrible knout, loaded with manacles and herded with convicts. Anger as bitter as death filled his heart, and he would gladly have died to be revenged upon the wretch—the brigand—who had caused it all. He prayed all night, endeavoring to becalm himself, but it was in vain.

Thus fifteen days passed by. Aksenov neither touched nor spoke to Makar Semionovitch. He never closed his eyes at night, and spent the hours in such a tumult of conflicting emotions that he scarcely knew what he was doing.

One night, as he was pacing his cell, as usual, wondering what it was best to do, he suddenly noticed that a plank had been loosened behind his bed. He stooped to examine it, when all at once Makar Semionovitch stood before him, a frightful expression of rage and chagrin distorting his countenance. He would have turned away and left him, but Makar seized him by the hand and held him fast, telling him with what incredible labor he had tunneled beneath his cell, carrying away the dirt in his boots.

"Keep silence and you shall go with me," he said; "say a word and I will kill you!"

"Thou hast no need to kill me," said Aksenov, trembling with passion; "thou didst that years ago. As for myself, I have no wish to escape; but whether I denounce you or not God only will decide."

The next day, when the convicts were taken out to work, traces of fresh dirt were discovered on Makar's boots. An examination of the prison was made a once and the tunnel was found.

There was no evidence against any one in particular, and the convicts would not reveal the truth, for they knew the offender would be whipped to death.

"Man of God," cried the governor of the prison, addressing Aksenov, "you are just and truthful; give me the name of the man who did this thing." Semionovitch remained impassable, but Aksenov trembled like a leaf, his lips opened, he struggled to speak, but the words would not come. "If I am silent," he thought, "they will let him off; but why should I do this? I believe him to be the assassin of Riazan, and yet I cannot, if I would, prove it—"

"I will not tell you," he said at last to the governor, fixing his eyes upon Semionovitch; "God will not permit me. You are master here—do with me as you will—I will not tell!"

To every effort of the governor his answer was the same. On account of his unvarying good conduct, he was not punished; and they failed to find out who had made the tunnel.

The following night, as he was stretched upon his bed, he heard some one approach and lean above him. He opened his eyes and recognized Makar.

"How now," cried Aksenov angrily, "hast thou still more need of me? Go, or I will call the guard;" and he attempted to rise.

But Makar pushed him back upon his pillow.

"Do not do that, Ivan Dimitrievitch," said he, "for I am here to beg your pardon. It was I who murdered the merchant Riazan; I who placed the knife in your bag; I would have murdered you too, but a noise in the corridor startled me, and I made my escape by the window. In the name of God, Ivan Dimitrievitch, give me thy pardon! I will declare myself guilty at once—thou shalt be set at liberty and return to thy home!"

"This is all very easy to say," Aksenov replied sadly; "but I have suffered too much; my wife is dead; my children and friends have forgotten me. I have no place to go—but I forgive, all the same;" and lifting Makar from his knees, the two old men mingled their tears together.

"I will declare your innocence to-morrow," said Makar, finally; "I will suffer less under the lash of the knout then I did when you refused to denounce me—I, the cause of all your misfortunes."

"I forgive and pray for you," Aksenov replied, a great peace suddenly filling his soul. He no longer regretted his home, his wife or his children, he did not even care to leave his prison.

Makar Semionovitch was as good as his word—he declared himself the murderer of the merchant Riazan, and ready to suffer the punishment.

But when the order arrived to set Aksenov at liberty, Aksenov was dead."

Colored society has its heart-burnings. One of the negro churches at Elberton, Ga., had a Christmas tree. As but few of the members could read or write, they selected a colored damsel who had "been to school" to write the names on the presents, which she readily consent to do. When the presents were distributed and the names called out, the assembly was greatly surprised to find that all the handsomest and most valuable presents had on them the name of the girl who did the writing. An indignation meeting was hastily held, and a redistribution of the presents ordered immediately.

SHERMAN "SHOOTS A STUB."

Senator Logan's Famous Game of "Knuckle-Down" With His Grandson.

SOME STAY-AT-HOME SOLONS.

Selection of New House "Chairmen"—Stories of the War—The Cluverius Hanging—Circumstantial Evidence.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20.—[Correspondence of the BEE.]—Speaking of General Sherman's absentmindedness, an old soldier said to-day:

"An incident happened on Pine Mountain, Ga., the evening that General Sherman sent his famous dispatch, 'Hold the fort, for I am coming,' to Allatoona, October 5, 1864. The general received a fresh cigar from some one—cigars being scarce—and he began to shout for a light. Lieutenant J. Clarence Peck, of General Whittaker's staff was the unfortunate possessor of a fresh lighted cigar, and he politely handed it to General Sherman, who lit his own cigar and then deliberately threw the lieutenant's cigar away. A broad smile displayad itself all around. The general was thinking of those million rations at Allatoona; but it didn't appease the disgust of the lieutenant."

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"Senator Logan was very fond of playing with the children," said a lady who has for many years been a frequenter of the Logan household. "The senator used to get so absorbed when he was playing with the little ones that he cared nothing for what was going on around him. He was very fond of his grandson, Lieutenant Tucker's boy, about six years old. I remember that just one day before he was taken ill he was playing marbles in a room with the boy. The game was pretty evenly matched and the general was absorbed in it. While the game was at its height the servant brought in a card to him. It was that of a prominent senator. The general, who was down on his knees at the time, and about to shoot his marble, took the card, looked at it a moment, then said to the servant:

"'Tell the senator to take a seat, and I'll be there in five minutes. I want to finish this game for the boy is ahead of me now.'"

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A good deal of talk is being indulged in with reference to the organization of the Fiftieth congress. So many members were defeated for re-election that an almost complete reorganization of the committees will be necessary. Mr. Randall will likely go back to the head of the committe on appropriations; Mr. Belmont to the head of foreign affairs; Mr. Herbert to naval affairs; Mr. Blount to postoffices and post roads; Mr. Matson to invalid pensions and Mr. Hatch to agriculture. The great majority of chairmen were elected to stay at home. Probably the most conspicuous of these is Mr. Morrison, of ways and means. His absence will be most conspicuously felt. Then Mr. Willis, of Kentucky, head of rivers and harbors. General Bragg, chairman of military affairs, who is left at home, will be missed in the Fiftieth congress. He is a hard worker and a highly intelligent member. His sarcastic reports on bills and his sarcastic speeches will be missed. He is described as "a buzz saw," and his teeth are sharp. Mr. Tucker, of Virginia, chairman of the judiciary, and one of the best lawyers the house has ever had, retires upon his own volition. He is tired of congressional work, and it will be years before the visitors to the house will cease to inquire for "that rosy-faced man of eloquence, with the southern sound of voice." Mr. Mitchell, of Connecticut, another who retires because he does not want more of official life, will make a change in the head of patents. Nicholas Muller, of New York, "the jolly Dutchman," will go away from the head of militia, and Hill, of Ohio, will say good-bye to territories while his colleague, Mr. Geddes, will look no more upon war claims. Mr. Barbour, of Virginia, will depart from the head of the District of Columbia; Mr. Eldridge, of Michigan, from pensions; Mr. Cobb, of Indiana, from public lands; Mr. Miller, of Texas, from banking and currency. The changes, in short, will be so numerous as to make the working machinery of the Fiftieth congress as different from the present as can well be, considering that the same party will retain control.

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Very many interesting war reminiscences are rehearsed at the panorama of the Battle of Bull Run in this city. A couple of veterans were discussing war matters there this morning, when one said:

"I was present when General Grant bid President Lincoln good-bye at Fairfax Court House, Virginia, when he started on to Richmond with the army of the Potomac. Mr. Lincoln said: 'General, I don't want to hear of your retreating toward Washington.' There was a twinkle showing sadness in the warrior's eyes, and for a second he seemed to be swallowing something. Finally he replied:

"'If I do one small boat will carry my army across the Potomac.'

"It would have done any man good to have seen the expression of gratitude and confidence, mixed with pride, shining out of 'Old Abe's' face when General Grant said this. Mr. Lincoln had the utmost confidence in General Grant's courage and tact, and when he left him he knew that Richmond would succumb."

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It is estimated by the clerks who handle them that more than 2,000 measures have been introduced in the house since it became evident to any wide-awake member that there was not the least hope of action by both houses, and that the measures would die, and that one-half of these the authors well knew would never be acted upon by either house. Even at this late day a call of the house will result in the introduction of from one to 300 bills, when committee meetings, with a very few exceptions, have been suspended, and it is impossible, not to say improbable, that any of them will receive attention. Asked why this is so, an old member said: "It is to satisfy the constituency. Why, I have often received requests from constituents during the last month in a congress to introduce a bill, and when I told them that there was not the least possible chance of consideration they urged that I introduce it anyway. I have had constituents insist that I introduce a bill on the very last day of the session, and if I did not do it they would work against me. They have but one opinion about a refusal to introduce a bill on the day they want it introduced, and that is that the member does not care for them. Of course, these bills are introduced simply to please these nervous people. But do you know that nine-tenths of the labor devoted to bills and reports on them is thrown away? It is true. And there has been what would amount to five years' work of a single man wasted during the past two weeks."

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"Senators, although they are in the midst of excitement, and have many trying times, are the most excitable people I ever saw," said an employe of the senate, this morning. "I have seen senators, in private conversations, in billiard-rooms, at the card-table, and at horse races—in fact, at all places where there is excitement, and they lose their heads quicker than any class of men I know of, considering the chances they have of becoming cool, calculating men. I saw one who was detained on the outside of the senate chamber the other day till the morning hour was over, and he had some bills to introduce. He completely lost his head and was wild."

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An old employe of one of the leading departments here said to-day that the alleged minds of the so-called reformers in all the departments were all concentrated on the little, diminutive, unimportant points in the service. Any little clerical error, that would formerly have been corrected without any fuss or hubbub, now creates as much confusion and jaw-wagging as would an attempt to subvert the very foundations of the government itself. If a figure, or a name, or a word is accidentally omitted from an order or a letter or paper of any kind, at once the division or room in which it was prepared is a scene of an eager quest for the unfortunate clerk, and when he is found he is passed from head to head till he finally reaches one of the high daddies, where he is overhauled in a style and tone that makes him wish in the inmost recesses of his soul that he had "died a bornin'." In this sort of infinitesimal reform, hours and even days of valuable time are spent, the public business delayed, and persons having business with the departments are compelled to waste their time and money in waiting till the culprit is run down and duly punished. Of course, errors should not occur if they can be prevented, but they have always occurred and always will as long as men are frail and imperfect. In nearly every case every error that would cause a loss to the government or detriment to the public service is discovered and rectified before any harm can result, thanks to the system in vogue when the present administration came in, and if any real reforms are effected they must be effected in some other way than by keeping everybody on the qui vive all the time for clerical slips or omissions.

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Although from five to fifteen executions occur annually at the jail in this District, and hangings excite but little interest generally in Washington, there has been a great deal said about the execution of Cluverius at Richmond, Va., on the 14th inst. This is more because of the extreme doubt existing in the minds of many people as to his guilt than on account of the close proximity to the national capital of the state in which the execution occurred. Washington is largely composed of hot-heads and impulsive characters, little given to sympathy and largely believing in capital punishment, but a great deal of sympathy is expressed for the man whose soul was flashed into eternity full of blood and guilt, or spotless as to the crime charged against the culprit who possessed it.

It will be remembered that one of the strongest links in the testimony that convicted Cluverius was a watch key found near the reservoir from which the corpse of Lillian Madison was taken a few days after her murder or suicide. This watch key was an unusual one, and was identified by a jeweler as the property of the culprit—at least the jeweler knew of no other key like it and knew that Cluverius had one just like it. In any light the case can be put Cluverius was convicted solely upon circumstantial evidence, and had he been tried in Pennsylvania or one of three or four other states, where conviction upon circumstantial evidence will not under the constitution or statutes permit a sentence of death, he would have been alive to-day. An Ohio statesman, discussing the conviction and execution of Cluverius, said:

"In my state a few years ago, a man was convicted of murder in the first degree and hanged upon testimony four-fold stronger than that which condemned Cluverius, and years afterward it was developed that he was as innocent as a person could be. A whole family living in the country was discovered to have been murdered. There was a hand on the place named Wilson who had a club foot and the thumb off his right hand who disappeared at the time the murder was committed, and, of course, he was instantly charged with the crime. In looking about the house footprints of a man having a deformed foot were discovered; also the print of a blood-stained hand on the door facing, which disclosed the loss of a thumb. The farm hand was found and tried on the strength of this evidence of the crime against him was found guilty and executed. Years passed and a criminal lay on his death-bed at Columbus. Just before he breathed his last he confessed that he had committed the murders for which the other man had suffered. Examination showed that he had the deformed foot and the loss of the thumb on the right hand."

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Near Muncie, Ind., about ten years ago, a barn was burned one night and a great deal of property destroyed. A harmless old shoemaker was charged with the arson, thrown in jail, and a few weeks afterward brought to trial. A detective who had been employed to ferret out the guilty person, and who made the affidavit that the shoemaker burned the barn, took the jury out to the scene of the fire and showed that the boots the shoemaker had on fitted tracks made about the place on the night of the fire and traced the tracks to the old man's home in the city. He also produced a piece of cloth from the seat of the shoemaker's pantaloons, which he found under a splinter on a rail on the top of the fence near where the barn stood and where the tracks showed that the prisoner had left the premises. The case was made complete on this testimony. When the prisoner was about to be found guilty it was discovered that the detective, a short time after the shoemaker was thrown in jail, had feigned drunkenness, been arrested, and thrown into jail and in the same cell with the prisoner, where he remained over night. The detective was released the next day, and a day or two afterwards he repeated the act. It was discovered, further, that he had torn the pieces of cloth from the pantaloons of the prisoner while the latter was asleep, and traded boots with him, and when put in jail the second time had re-exchanged boots. During the interim between the first and second time the detective was in jail he had gone to the farm where the fire had occurred, wearing the boots of the prisoner, made the tracks with them and placed the piece of cloth under the splinter on the rail. The old man was acquitted without form when these discoveries were made known, but it was a hair breadth escape.

It is believed by many people here and in Virginia that Cluverius may have been innocent of the murder of his cousin and convicted upon evidence as flimsy as that cited in either of the above cases; but the fact that he betrayed his cousin, ruined her virtue and left her heartlessly upon the world, and, according to his own hypothesis, drove her to suicide, makes the sympathy much less than it would otherwise have been.

P. S. HEATH

A PRIMITIVE FOLK.

Some Curiosities of Life Among the Mountains of West Virginia.

After a silence of a few minutes, in which the old fellow had stared at me to his content, says a Winfield (W. Va.) correspondent of the Philadelphia Times, and sized me up from head to foot, he suddenly burst out: "Stranger, is you married?" Being answered in the negative, his roomy and capacious mouth broadened into a grin and said: "Wall, while you is out in the country you ought to hunt up a gal and git married." And then, turning to a great buxom lass who would tip the scales at 175, and only sixteen years old—his hired girl—he continued, "Now, that is Ann. She wants to git married the wuss kind, and if y'all can make it up I guess I can scrape 'round git some flour, kill a chicken, churn, and give you a weddin'," and your correspondent thought that if he was looking for physical strength and development he couldn't do better.

When bedtime came I was advised to "shell off," which, to my surprise, I had to do before the family, consisting of the old man and wife, ten children, (a small crop for this part of the country), and the fair Ann; so, with my face a lovely crimson, I shelled off. Pretty soon all the family followed my example. From the log rafters of the one-room house, in which the family ate, slept, cooked, and did everything else, there hung large festoons of dried pumpkins, apples (dried and strung), the clothes of the whole family, pieces of pork, and endless other things for comfort and winter consumption.

On the table, three times a day, we got invariably fried pork, sweet potatoes, coffee (minus sugar), and forever and eternally "Johnny constant," or corn bread, and I may add, buttermilk. House after house we stopped at, and it was always the same—nothing of the comforts of life.

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