The Spectator

WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1862.

Topical Articles

1. Garibaldi and his Troops
2. The Progress of the Opposition
3. Mr. Lincoln’s Address to the Free Men of Colour
4. The Prodigy of Lorraine by the Cotton Fibre
5. The Thalasso Cardiological
6. "Pine Polonce"
7. A Love-Story
8. Board and Sentiment
9. Marriages Conspicuously

Special Correspondents

Garibaldi and the French Public
A Long Vacation Romance

Notices

"The Spectator" is published every Saturday Morning, in time for dispatch by the Early Trains, and copies of that Journal may be had the same Afternoon through Book-sellers in any part of the Kingdom. News-agents are, therefore, enabled to deliver that Paper at the residences of Subscribers in London before eight o’clock A.M.

News of the Week

The Italian Dictator of 1860 is the prisoner and rebel of 1862. Garibaldi having failed in his attempt on Reggio, partly from the divided feeling of the people, partly from the presence of a portion of Cialdini’s troops, took to the mountains at Aspromonte, and was surrounded by Colonel Pallavicino’s force. On the 29th he was summoned to surrender, refused, and was charged by 1800 Bersaglieri under Colonel Pallavicino, when the greater part of his un-disciplined force of 2,000 men fled, and were caught at the outlets to the defiles. Garibaldi, with 300 determined followers, defended his mountain entrenchment for four hours against this enormously superior force, and was at length compelled to surrender, with a loss of 12 killed and 200 wounded, while all the ammunition was spent. He himself, and his son Menotti, were among the wounded. He was conveyed with his son and some of his comrades, in an Italian frigate to the Bay of Spezia, and remains there a prisoner. He is attended by two of the most eminent Italian physicians. The ball has been extracted from his foot, and his wounds are said to be immaterial, while his son’s are more severe. It may be stated that he demands a formal trial, which must and will be accorded—to the revolution on which the higher political authorities probably look forward with no great satisfaction. The chief conspirator, whatever be the verdict, must of course be pardoned, but his political accomplices and tempters will not even be tried. Before the judgment-seats of this world the lesser guilt is far more often arrogated than the greater. But whenever the responsibility of this needless Italian misery is investigated before a juster and less dim-sighted tribunal, other more august and more satiric punishments at the bar will stand beside this revolutionary chief, whose self-confidence, if it savours something of the vanity of a popular idol, savours still more of the lofty dreams which are more potent than policy, and more enticing than intrigue.

Speculation is active as to the effect of Garibaldi’s capture on the policy of the great Enigma at Birlzart. Of course, the semi-official papers in France all know; and, of course, they contradict each other. La France, the youngest born of the Imperial presses, is usually thought to be the favoured child who is the depositary of the augury designs, and it pronounces strongly for the status quo at Rome. For ourselves, we have little doubt that so long as the occupation secures France no influence than it risks, the army of occupation will remain.

But the Emperor is shrewd enough to know when the limit is reached, and when it will be better to bear the wrath of the priesthood, than the coldness of faithful allies, and the hatred of hot-blooded nations. He has, at least, been deprived of a great excuse for his sojourn at Rome by the defeat of Garibaldi and this demonstration of strength in the Italian Government; and no man knows better how to weigh the worth of an excuse. The gallant old John Brown, of Harper’s Ferry memory, said he was worth "inconceivably more to hang than for any other purpose," and Garibaldi may yet find that he was worth more to Italy to wound and capture than to conquer and dictate. If so he will be satisfied.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is said to be sinking rapidly, and more than one bishop is probably going through that painful conflict of mind so subtly described by Mr. Trollope in "Barchester Towers," where the Archdeacon, watching sadly by his bishop and father-in-law, can scarcely repress his eagerness to secure the reversion that will fall to his friend and Wells, who is an Eton, and the Bishop of Durham, who is a Baring, will have what are called family claims; while the Bishop of London has the advantage in ecclesiastical rank, and the claim of a mild and peaceable piety. Scribes talk of the ecclesiastical luck of the Premier, to whom it has already happened to fill up in England one See of London, one of Rochester, one of Chichester, one of Worcester, and twice those of Carlisle, Durham, and Gloucester and Bristol, as well as the Irish primacy. It is an irony in Lord Palmerston’s destiny which makes the jesting Premier a divider of spiritual gifts to the Church. Perhaps, however, when there are so many who, in the spirit of the Anglican prayer, "except the Lord, who can say that his grace and mercy who may be disappointed, Lord Palmerston may not enjoy his harvest of patronage so much as is commonly supposed.

Mr. Jefferson Davis has issued another of his able Messages—in English that contrasts strongly with the chocked grammar and laborious obscurity in which Mr. Lincoln shadows forth the travail of his soul, and far superior in composition to the ordinary Queen’s Speeches. He is, however, less self-contained than usual in inveigh against the barbarities of the Federal troops, and panegyrizes the innate humanity and tenderness of his own, in language that invites criticism to the practice known to have prevailed in the Confederate camp of turning the skulls and bones of slain Northerners into drinking-cups and playthings. He touches lightly, with incidental congratulation, on the state of Confederate finances, which, unless the rebel, was never in a position to deteriorate. He urges measures for enabling him to cashier incompetent officers without the awkward and painful machinery of a court-martial, and proposes to extend the Conscription Law to persons between 35 and 45. He denounces the appeal to the slaves with nervous emphasis; and a Bill was brought into the Southern Congress on the first day proposing to make necessary the separation of the races. He proposes that all persons of white and black shall be entitled to the privilege of war or to be taken prisoners; that the captured negroes should be "publicly sold," and the "commanders hanged or shot, as most convenient." We trust this measure will pass, and that Mr. Lincoln will publish it thoroughly in the North, inviting at the same time the aid of the coloured population. With this prospect before them in case of capture, they would make good soldiers.

But as yet Mr. Lincoln cannot brace up his spirit to the anti-slavery mark. In an interview with a deputation of free coloured men, held on the 14th August, he invites them to aid him in starting his notable plan of draining the Union of its already dwindling supply of labour, by settling the coloured people and the emancipated slaves in Central America. He fixes on this spot, he says, from the excellent sup-
whole foreign to the spirit of his philosophy. A gentle tolerance, a mild benignity, a magnanimous forgiveness, all these things he understood and strove to acquire; yet for they are rational and intellectual virtues. But that power of entering the life and sympathizing with the life of another, so as to perceive the other’s opinions, sympathize with the other’s passions, and feel the very thrill of his passions; this, which is of the essence of the Christian Gospel, would have seemed almost abhorrent to Marcus Antoninus. Of the more benign and external sympathies, the benevolence of one’s youth, his laborious discipline, and his high station placed him above all want or the fear of it, he lived as frugally and temperately as the poor. His only want was wealth, but little; it seems that he had the little that he wanted, and he was content with it, as he had with his servile station. But Antoninus after his accession to the empire said, much to the administration of an empire. He extended from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, from the cold mountains of Scotland to the hot sands of Africa; and we may imagine, though we are not told, that in all the trials, the laborious anxiety and the anxiety of the world’s business on his hands with the wish to do the best that he can, and the certain knowledge that he has done the best which he could (which on the whole, we might have expected)...

These thoughts of Marcus Antoninus have, we think, a peculiar fascination for the semi-sceptical culture of the present day. Their relation to the Christian faith resembling very closely the relation between the ruling part of the Greek theatre and the scenery, then was not in such a way that the following may, was perfectly consistent with them, and founded on the same essential conceptions of life:

"Generally, wickedness does no harm to the universe; and particularly, the wickedness of a single man does not hurt the world. It is only harmful to him who has it in his power to be released from it, as soon as he shall choose.

"If my own free will the free will of my neighbour is just as indifferent as his breath and his flesh. For we are made especially for the sake of one another, still the ruling power of each of us has its office, for otherwise my neighbour would be of no more to me than which God has willed in order that my unhappiness may not depend on another."

In short, the whole philosophy of Marcus Antoninus, as of many of the greatest living thinkers, had within it, no doubt, a real seed of regulation to the Christian faith, as we, at least, understand it, nay, as we may say the world has understood it. The belief that the love in both God and the human, and the rational tranquility, which never hazards itself for any cause however sacred, and from which all suffering and emotions are expelled and kept at a distance, is not merely a Stoic belief, it is a secret creed of what we may call the mediators of the Age, which always reserves for itself a sanctuary beyond the veil, not only of civil sympathy—for that must be so—but even of all spiritual claims and effort, the domain of the external world, what is called a magnetic sphere of regulation within the sphere of attraction, so there is, in mediative intellects especially, a sphere of individual regulation within the sphere of social cohesion. This was exceedingly strong in Marcus Antoninus, who had all the stateliness of the Roman Emperor, though in its most modest and noble form. But it is the claim of the Christian faith to present God as a world, as the inner world of reason, and communicating the very essence of his life to His Son, and to all men through Him. That the acceptance of such a faith requires an effort, a sacrifice, a struggle, a certain intellectual recoil and conversion, that every age must ever feel; but it must feel also, that it is of the very essence of that sacrifice, once made, to attest that it is a part—a very small part, but a part—of all that is. When Paul called the mystery of the Cross, which was to the Greeks foolishness, and to the Romans, we may add, something almost ignominious,—but which proves its own dignity in the very act of violating this sanctity of the intellectual and moral reason.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE: LES FLEURS DU MAL

It is now some time since France has turned out at least a very high note or importance: the graceful, slight, somewhat thin-spun classical work of M. Théodore de Banville hardly carries weight enough to tell across the Channel; indeed, the best of this writer’s verses is an example of what occurs to the moderns from time to time. But a French poet has seen to be unhappy; but those who do not observe the movements of their own mind, must of necessity be unhappy. And this is the conviction which Dr. Johnson himself, in less sympathy with the spirit of his time remained tranquil and at rest, undisturbed by, and even beyond the reach of, all social joy and sorrow, only permitting itself a kindly regard to the good of others in those lower regions of the social scale which are affected by the ebbs and flows of circumstance. "Inquire from thyself," he says, "as soon as thou wakest from sleep, whether it will make any difference to thee to-morrow, or to-morrow to thee. Will it make any difference?" And, true and noble as the Emperor’s doctrine of benevolence really is, far truer and nobler than we have any right to expect, yet it is a law of kindness rather than of sympathy which he teaches—of beneficence, not of self-sacrifice with the inmost spirit of another. The teaching that a Spirit of God makes intercession for us "with groanings which cannot be uttered," would have been scarcely intelligible to him—

[* Here follows a footnote in the text.*]
matter with a consistent eloquence, one may well expect to get the effect of poetry as he can get it.

Some English readers the name of M. Baudelaire may be known rather through his admirable translations, and the criticisms on American and English writers appended to these, and frequent allusions and citations of the volume of poems, which, however, has hardly yet had time to make its way among us. That it will in the long run fail of its aim of adding a new aspect of French art will depend on the first edition, which was, as we do not know, nor when. Indeed, the name of M. Baudelaire has been a sort of motto, that is, the name of a new and promising artist, a sort of motto, that is to say, that his name is a motto for his own work in art that has been foretold even then. He has more delicate power of verse than almost any man living, after Victor Hugo, Browning, and (in his lyrics) Tennyson. The sound of his metre suggests certain imaginative facets of French words, written in French, even in English. In these early writings there is already such estimable judgment, vigour of thought and style, and appreciative devotion to the study of the poet that the worth of his own future work in art may be of all time.

We believe that M. Baudelaire's first publications were an epoch of the contemporary art of French poets, now living very nearly since. In these early writings there is already such admirable judgment, vigour of thought and style, and appreciative devotion to the study of the poet that the worth of his own future work in art may be of all time.

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"Un objet court le monde : et ta forme immortelle
Autant que toi sans doute il sera fidèle,
Et constant jusqu'à la mort."  

All this and more might be worked out if the reader cared to try; but we cannot. It is quite beautiful and valuable enough as merely the "design of an unknown master." In the same way one might use half the poems in the book; for instance, those three beautiful studies of cotsilly placed in a book for police stylos of beauty—subtle, luxurious, with sheathed claws; or such carefully tender sketches as Le Beau Nécro ; or that Latin hymn "Francisca ments:"  

"Novis te cantabo cordibus,
O neveletium quod lapis
In solutua corde.
Esto semper implica,
O favo siti nobis.
Per quam solvantur pecos!"

Some few indes, as that ex-voto poem A use Madone, appeal once to the reader as to an interpreter; they are distinctly a moral, religious turn, and in that rich symbolic manner almost unsurpassable for beauty.

Avec mes Vera pellis, treillis d'un por métale
Vesuvio constellé de tennes de cristal,
L'Otan, prenant de dos l'ombrage de Colombe;
Et dans ma Jalousie, à mortelle Madone,
Je surai, te tailler un manteau, de fagots
Bâchique, ruis et boud ou double de scoups,
Qui comme une guérison enfermo tes charmes;
Non de Perles brodé, mais de tout es mes larmons !

Tant ehe, ce sera mon Désir, mon France;
Onduleux, mon Désir qui monte et qui descends,
Aux portes se suspend, aux valons se repose,
Et ton baiser ton cœur et ta nuit enlace et naît!"

Before passing on to the last poem we wish to indicate for especial remark, we may note a few others in which, for instance,  

Le Poète, Princesse de la Lune; Éternel Posthume, Le Flocon, Oeil Brouillé, Une Migrante Rousse (a simpler study than usual, of great beauty in all ways, noticeable for its verbal the old fashion of unmixed masculine rhyme), Le Balcon, Abîme, Crâne, Amour et la Chanson des somnambules marked xxvi, xxvii, xxviii, and xix. We cite these headings in no sort of order, merely as they catch one's eye in revising the list of contents and reviewing the poems classed in those. Each of them we regard as worth a separate study, but the Litaniens de Satan, is in a way the key-note to this whole complicated tune of provocations, inside for the last, much as (to judge by its place in the book) the author himself seems to have done. Here it seems as if all failure and sorrow on earth, and all the vestiges of things in the world—ruined bodies and souls diseased—made their fare into these very long poems;  

Tol qui de la Mort, ta vieille et forte amante,
Engueulade l'Espérance—oue folle charante;
O Satan, prends prêt de ma longue misère ;
Tol qui fais au porcet ce regard calme et haut;
Qui danme tout un peuple autour d'un échafaud,
O Satan, prends l'âme de ma longue misère ;

Tol qui, magnifiquement, assujitti les vieux œufs;
De l'ignorance atardée foule les cheveux;
Qui, pour consul un homme failli qui souffre,
Nous appris à montrer la simplicité et le sourire;

These lines are not given as more finished than the rest; every verse has the vibration in it of naturally sound and pure metal. It is a study of pathetic cadence throughout, of wonderful force and varietie. Keep it may be hot, without further attempts to praise or to explain. I have to leave off, with its stately and passionate music fresh in our ears. We know that in time it must make its way; and to know when or how concerns us as little as probably concerns the author, who can very well afford to wait without much impatience.

A SIBERIAN EXILE.*

Taxis little book, written with all the charm of simple narrative, forms part of that collection of interesting publications about Russia which, for the last few years, have been issuing from the press of M. Franck at Leipzig. The author, Prince Obolenski, is one of that illustrious Russian nobility who have been sent to Siberia for their complicity in the military revolt which happened last year at Petersburg on the accession to the throne of the Emperor Nicholas in 1825. There he remained thirty years—working first in the workshop of the Nizhniy, then afterwards employed in the Government factories at Petrofotts, until in the end he was put as a scatler at Jarangia, beyond Lake Baikal. Here he married a Siberian girl. In 1856 he was in-

* [Spectator d'Exil en Sibérie (Le Prince Obolenski)]

Travaux du Renseignement
Par le Prince Augustin Gallieni.  
L'Exil : France et Volga Mandchourie.