

GOSSIP OF THE DAY.

BY IVAN

Mrs. Smith, the grocer's wife,  
Ran into Betsy Hard's.  
Whose husband keeps the butcher shop,  
And deals in fowls and birds.

Now Mrs. Smith she loved to talk,  
And hear the gossip, too;  
Then other women happened in—  
As women always do.

And so, from one thing to the other  
Their tongues so quickly flew,  
While each declared she couldn't stay,  
And guessed there was nothing new.

"Why yes, of course," spoke Matilda Jane,  
And didn't you see her come?  
She looks full thirty—I'll bet she's more;  
And feet not number ones."

"Well, now, Matilda, can't you tell?  
I let it out—don't whisper;  
You don't mean to say she's already here,  
'Squire Brown's dead wife's sister?"

"Well, there, I never! I told you so;  
I knew just how 't would be;  
Poor man—I do so pity him;  
Hesecena so bright and free.

"I guess she's old, and ugly, too;  
I wonder what she'll wear?  
Her sister's clothes, I'll be bound;  
The shameless busy, there.

"I wonder how did 'Squire Brown  
Ever come to bring her here?  
I expect she'll pay, and talk and lie,  
About every one, far and near.

"I don't believe that I shall call,  
I fear she'll be awfully cut;  
But I prefer to pick and choose,  
We can't hold the bold thing up.

"I suppose she thinks that some fine day,  
She'll lord it over all;  
And wheedle the 'Squire into marrying her—  
His wife only dead a last fall.

"Well, men are fools, I often tell Smith  
That when I'm dead and gone,  
He needn't find a sister of mine  
To keep house and mourn.

"O, Mrs. Jones, just come and see!  
Why, bless my soul, it's her,  
She only wears a black silk dress,  
And a coat of seal-skin fur.

"Her hat's all black—not a ribbon that's blue,  
Well, yes; her gloves are light;  
But bless my heart, don't you think  
We had better all call to-night?"

This is only the gossip of every day life,  
And some one must stand for the treat;  
For women'll talk and complain of another,  
Not willing to be met, or to meet.

CHARLEMAGNE'S DAUGHTER.

Have you ever been in Germany? If not I would recommend you to lose no time in visiting a very peculiar and to me, a very interesting country. Accompany me up the Main to the village of Selingenstadt (the Abode of Bliss), about a dozen miles from Frankfurt.

The village is delightfully situated, close by the bank of the river. It has a large forest in its rear, and a large out-skirt of the Spessart—a fine champagne before it on the opposite bank. High above the pretty houses which compose this little place stands the "Red Tower," an edifice well-known to the lovers of romance.

The best house in the village is the Anberge, over which, some years ago, a host presided, whose capacious size and rotund figure involuntarily reminded one of the Great Tun of Heildesburg. The Herr Von Cothen was a genuine German—his meerschaum seldom left his lips, except when the wine-cup, an hereditary goblet of massy silver, won at a drinking bout by one of his ancestors, was raised to them. The man seemed to live but for smoking—not that he ever was known to be what is called "disguised in liquor"—he protested that such a quantity of clay as himself required moisture, and he took good care to moisten it.

It was my fortune to know him for the space of three months, and I can safely say that, with one exception, I never knew him venture on any deviation from his trinity of practices, the aforementioned drinking, smoking and sleeping.

We had spent a pleasant day in what was the Spessart forest, and were returning home when the Red Tower met our view. We were weary and threw ourselves on the mossy bank beneath the shade of a mighty tree, where, in a few moments, both of us fell asleep. I was awakened by the voice of my companion. I kept silence while the redoubted Herr Von Cothen dilated loudly and long on the delights of the feudal days, when the lord had power of life and death within his territorial limits over his vassals. He spoke well for a German host, and the novelty of his speaking was yet more. True, there was not a very lucid order in his conversation, but this could easily be pardoned in one to whom language had almost fallen into disuse. Von Cothen lay on the ground at listless length, while telling a tale somewhat to the following effect:

Some centuries ago there was an Emperor Nero (no relative of him of Rome) who came, after the manner of the times, to celebrate his Christmas holidays at Frankfurt. He was devotedly fond of the chase, and held nearly an equal affection for his daughter, a maiden over whom some seventeen summers had lightly flown. She was, indeed, if there be truth in legendary report, a very delightful, beautiful and innocent creature. But her physical charms were even less than the rare purity of her mind, the soft and gentle character of her feelings. Born in a cottage, she would have cheered the peasant's lot; brought up amid the magnificence of an imperial court, she won the envy of one sex and the earnest admiration of the other. Such beauty of person and goodness of heart could not remain unknown; and, being an only child, many of the princes of the empire put in their claim for her hand. But the lady's heart was pre-engaged, and she paid little attention to the compliments of her many royal wooers.

Clorinda, thus she was called, had set her affections on one far beneath her in rank. Like

The king's daughter of Hongarie,  
Who loved a squire of low degree.

The daughter of the Emperor Nero had given her heart's first love to a

young man, one of her father's huntsmen.

It is impossible to say how the secret was discovered, but certain it was that the princess was placed in close confinement, and her lover would have been summarily and severely dealt with, but he had taken flight, and pursuit was useless, no one knowing in what direction he had fled. To do the young man justice, he had anticipated the discovery of a secret dear to him as his life, and taken steps accordingly. Deep in the hidden haunts of the Spessart he had found a cave—probably the former residence of some religious ascetic—and he had made the best provision in his power for that decisive step which, love whispered, the princess would not refuse to take, for his sake and her own. While she, in tears, sat in the solitude of her chamber, her Ludolf was busy in making preparations for her rescue.

Whenever princesses fall in love with their father's huntsmen it is customary for royalty to be utterly appalled. Accordingly, the Emperor was in a most magnificent passion, and gave strict orders that the princess should be confined to her own chamber. The next morning, however, he made the discovery—just a few hours too late—that the bird had flown—like Love.

He opened the window and flew away.

The poor old Emperor pined after her so bitterly that not an unmarried lady of the court but would have been willing to console him, had he offered her his hand. But, much to the disappointment of their philanthropic intentions, His Majesty did not see how he could atone for the loss of a daughter by taking a wife.

The princess and her Ludolf (who had assisted her out of her confinement) lived as happily "beneath the greenwood tree," as if there had never been such things as courts and kings, emperors and principalities. They loved one another earnestly and well, and (but this was long ago) had no wish to return to the crowds of society. Even if they had, there would have been no safety in attempting it, for how could either hope for forgiveness? Meanwhile, the loss of his daughter had fallen heavily on the Emperor. She was the sole living thing to which his hopes had long been linked, and all the father and the man were shaken by the uncertainty of her fate and her absence from those places over which her smiles threw a radiance, beautiful as the last tints of dying day upon the snow-crowned hills. The old man said little, but his grief was deep. Pride would not permit him to yield to open lamentations, but in secret he shed many a tear. His household gods were shivered by his heath, and, like Rachel mourning for her children, he would not be comforted.

He quitted Frankfurt, and many years elapsed before he again saw the place with which were linked so many and such sad recollections. He had laid aside his usual sports—the huntsman's spear had rarely been held by him since that day on which he lost a daughter; and it was with some surprise that the court heard him announce that he would hold a hunting match on the morrow.

Five years had lessened his endurance of fatigue, and it was with some pleasure that at the close of day, when the ardor of the chase had separated him from his suite, he found himself beside a rustic hut, at the door of which two lovely children were playing. To dismount from his weary steed, to enter the cottage, and to request refreshment, was but the work of a moment, and instant preparations were made for his repast.

The Emperor had fallen upon the residence of his long-lost and still loved daughter. Ludolf was a successful deer-stealer, and the fruits of the earth furnished them with other food. Besides, Ludolf had learned that the Emperor had quitted Frankfurt soon after the flight of the Princess, and felt little hesitation in visiting the market there, to exchange deer and other skins for necessities, and sometimes for a few of the luxuries to which Clorinda had been accustomed, and which she had left for him. Frugal in their habits and their desires, they had lived happily without a wish for change.

The graceful girl had budded into the glorious maturity of womanhood; and, further changed by her rustic attire, the Emperor did not know her child. She knew him at a single glance, and there came quick throbbing memories of the past, wild hopes of the future.

The sole repast which their situation permitted on the instant was some venison, poached by Ludolf in the Emperor's own forest. What limit is there to woman's wit, when aided by woman's affection? Clorinda prepared the repast with her own hands, serving up a dish which she remembered to have been a favorite with her father—of which, too, he had never eaten except when it was prepared by his daughter's hands. Scarcely had he tasted the food ere the tears began to fall, fast and bitterly, for her whose memory neither time nor anger could destroy, and he eagerly inquired from whom his young hostess had learned to prepare that dish.

The Princess and her husband fell at the old man's feet. The Emperor was still a father; his kind heart remembered only that his daughter was before him; all was forgotten and forgiven; he named the place Selingenstadt, or the Abode of Bliss (in double commemoration of his daughter and his dinner); he carried the happy family with him to his palace, ate his favorite meals as often as he wished to his dying day and built the Red Tower as a marriage gift for his daughter. The lovers built a church where their hut had stood, and when they died they were buried within its walls.

Such were the particulars which the Herr Von Cothen communicated to me. The next day I made some inquiries re-

specting the story, which seemed obscure in some parts; the old man stoutly and sternly denied having uttered a syllable on the subject, and appealed to his well-known taciturnity as evidence that he did not belong to the class of story-tellers—a set of persons for whom he had a most avowed and resolute contempt. He admitted, however, that I had picked up the popular legend in some way, but persisted in the denial that he had been the narrator. I was obliged to be content with his explanation, although it did not give me a very exalted opinion of the veracity of mine host.

Some months afterward, as I was looking at "Titian's Assumption of the Virgin" in the Dresden Gallery, I met with Augustus Saafield whom I had known at Göttingen. We spent the day together, and I told him, among other things, the mistake in which Van Cothen had fallen respecting the narration of the above tale. Saafield smiled, and dissipated my wonder by informing me that the worthy host of the Abode of Bliss was a sonnambulist, and the best story-teller within twenty leagues of Frankfurt—in his sleep.

I learned, at the same time, that this legend took its origin from the fact that Selingenstadt witnessed the loves and still preserves the remains of Eginhard and Emma, the Secretary and daughter of Charlemagne. Tradition has made a sad mistake in the names of all the parties by taking Nerc for Charlemagne, and the lovers for Ludolf and Clorinda. The Red Tower (now sadly dilapidated) was the residence of the lovers after Charlemagne saved the honor of his favorite daughter by giving her hand to his secretary. Eginhard built a church on the spot, and his bones and those of his beloved repose in a mossy antique sarcophagus on a monument beneath its roof.

An Oyster Yarn.

I never found anything but once here in excess of my expectations or even approaching them, and that was the New York oysters. I had just then come on from California, where oysters are very small and unimportant, not to say insignificant, and I had often eaten a hundred there at a time, and had always felt that I could eat more if I had them. So, when I arrived at the Metropolitan Hotel, I ordered my dinner to be brought to my room, and told the waiter to bring with my dinner a strong cup of coffee and a hundred raw oysters. He looked at me a moment and then said:

"Did I understand you to say a hundred oysters?"

"Yes," I answered; "raw, on the half-shell, with vinegar; no lemons, and as soon as you can, for I am very hungry."

"Ahem! Miss, did you want a hundred?"

"Yes, I do. What are you waiting for? Must I pay for them in advance? I want nice large ones."

"No, no, miss. All right, you shall have them," and he went out. I continued my writing and forgot all about my dinner until he knocked and came in with my dinner on a tray, but no oysters.

"How is this?" said I. "There are no oysters."

"Dey's comin', miss, dey's comin'." and the door opened and in filed three more sons of Africa's burning sands, each with a big tray of oysters on the half-shell. I was staggered, but only for a moment, for I saw the waiters were grinning, so I calmly directed them to place one tray on a chair, one on the washstand and one on the bed, and I said: "They are very small, aren't they?"

"Oh, no, miss, de berry largest we'se got."

"Very well," said I, you can go. If I want any more I'll ring.

When they got out into the hall one said to the other:

"Fore God, Joe, if she eats all them oysters she's a dead woman."

I did not feel hungry any longer. I drank my coffee and looked at the oysters, every one as big as my hand, and they all seemed looking at me with their horrible white faces, and out of their one diabolical eye, until I could not have eaten one any more than I could have carved up a live baby. They leered at me and seemed to dare me to attack them. Our California oysters are small, and with no more individual character about them than grains of rice, but these detestable creatures were instinct with evil intentions, and I dared not swallow one for fear of the disturbance he might raise in my interior, so I set about getting rid of them, for I was never going to give up beaten before those waiters. I hung a dress over the key-hole after I locked the door, and just outside my window found a tin waterspout that had a small hole in it. I carefully enlarged it, and they slid every one of those beastly creatures down one by one—one hundred and two of them—they all the time eyeing me with that cold, pasty look of malignity. When the last one was out of sight I stopped trembling and finished my dinner in peace, and then rang for the waiters. You should have seen their faces! One of the waiters asked me if I would have some more. May he never know the internal pang he inflicted on me, but I replied calmly:

"Not now. I think too many at once might be hurtful."—[Philadelphia Times.

Baltimore furnishes a first class snake story, to the effect that a water snake fifteen inches long, which was found imbedded in a cake of ice gathered eighteen months ago, was restored to life on Thursday when exposed to the sun. When cut out with a pick the serpent was as stiff as a bone, but, after lying in the sun a few minutes, it began to wriggle, and soon started off for the grass. It was captured and placed in a glass bottle.

Blinding Her Rival.

The Countess de Tilly was a sickly, discontented female who quarreled with everybody and especially with her husband. Marie Marechal was a very attractive young woman of two and twenty, of good character, until, in an evil hour for her, she met the count. The outraged wife discovered the intrigue and out of revenge blinded her rival with vitriol as she was going to her work. Such is the skeleton of this disgraceful business, and knowing only the skeleton, all sympathy must be given to the offended spouse. But when the facts of the case are developed, the sympathy becomes lessened. At first we could pardon the sudden explosion of anger on the part of the deserted wife, the aberration of a mother fearing to see compromised the future of her children by the extravagance of an adventuress. There was nothing of the kind; the fortune of the family had been so little dilapidated by the count's outlay on his mistress that the countess was able to make a present of 20,000 francs to the milliner, as the judge said, "by way of compensation for her injuries," and she took eighteen months for reflection before her jealousy prompted her to act. When she appealed in court, instead of the swollen eyelids of one who was suffering from some great sorrow, she showed a tearless face, the absence of all emotion and that pursed-up mouth which is the characteristic of virtuous but disagreeable Xantippes.

For nearly two years husband and wife had quarreled like cat and dog about Marie Marechal, but never had there been between the two any question of a rupture. They talked about her at every meal in the presence of the children; she taunted him with the liaison, told him that doubtless he only waited her death to "marry that thing." The count was one of those who, like Mrs. Skewton, are "all heart"; the countess was a sort of conjugal dog in the manger. I don't excuse the count, who certainly was a very wicked man, but it must be acknowledged that the countess was a termagant, whose constant allusions to her approaching death put me in mind of a horse-breeder whom I once knew near Caen. This worthy farmer made up his mind that he was to die in 1840, and ordered a coffin accordingly. I saw him last year and found that he had used the coffin as an oyster bin. The truth was that Mme. de Tilly was jealous of Mlle. Marechal, but not so much on account of her husband's love as because that young woman, called by the townsfolk "la petite Comtesse," took it into her head to copy the *grande Comtesse's* toilets; one gown particularly exasperated her. It is described to have been of the form of a violin box, and it can readily be understood that for a sewing girl to venture on wearing a violin-box shaped gown, when that arbitress of fashion, the Countess of Tilly, thought herself to stand alone in this costume in the midst of a population still addicted to crinolines, was an unpardonable outrage only to be washed out with strong waters. "I merely meant to dab her on the face with a sponge," said the great lady, "but my indignation got the better of me when I heard her laugh behind my back." It was a pretty vengeance, most horrible in its consequences, but of the same order as that of peasant girls who cut a piece out of some rival belle's dress because it is finer than theirs, and all through the trial was apparent that pettiness which is characteristic of French provincial tribunals. The court room was transformed into a sort of parlor, with chairs, for the family and intimate friends, in the rear of the lady who was up for judgment. The Judge, in the absence of M. de Tilly, did the honors with grace and ability, and listened with emotion to the recital of the "unhappy life of Mme. la Comtesse." The vitriolense was gratified with a title to which, it seems, she has no claim whatever. For the poor girl whom she has ruined for life, the courteous magistrate could find no terms too strong to express his horror and disgust.

It is all over now; Mme. de Tilly has gone back to her family, and will probably bring her brutal husband once more into the fold, as the next dose may be for him, and it does not make much difference what eventually becomes of the "fille Marechal" who will not utterly starve to death on the interest of her 20,000 francs, but the incident has had the effect to open the eyes of French jurors to the peril toward which they were drifting through maudlin sympathy.

Another faded idol.—One by one the roses fade. It seems that now we have lost Beatrice de Cenci, William Tell and a host of other old standbys, we are to be called upon to bewail the departure of that scantly attired equestrienne, Lady Godiva. A writer in Notes and Queries says she is a myth. It is impossible that she should have ridden through Coventry, for the reason that Coventry was not in existence at the time. There is, however, some foundation for the legend. Godiva was a lady possessing vast wealth, with which she determined to found and endow an abbey. This she did, "stripping herself of all that she had," and thence the legend. Coventry gradually arose round the abbey, and had no streets, and consequently no toils, until Godiva had been dead at least a century.

We have spoken of the ungainly shape of the grand piano. But there is equal need of reform in the shape of the upright piano. The rigid parallelogram with which we are all familiar is ugly and incastice. A German maker has taken a step in advance by making an upright piano with a curved top, following the natural form of the instrument, and the effect is pleasing.

Amusing Faith in Ghosts.

Judge Angell of the Eighth District Court, has just rendered his decision in a case which involves an amusing ghost story that for some months past has been a matter of common gossip and belief among the residents of a certain neighborhood in West Sixteenth street. The action was brought by Mrs. Eliza A. Stymus, to recover from Amzi Howell \$130 for two months' rent of the house at No. 551 West Sixteenth street. Mr. Howell is a flourishing milkman in Seventeenth street, with an honorable business reputation, and one of the best men in the world to evade the payment of a just debt, or to break a fair contract. Yet he admitted that having taken the house for a year from the 1st of May, he moved out somewhat hurriedly in the early part of June.

It was only by degrees that his true reason for thus throwing the premises back upon Mrs. Stymus was developed: The upper floor of the house, he said, was haunted by spirits, who amused themselves from sunset to sunrise by slamming the doors and making a variety of loud and blood-curdling noises. Naturally Mr. Howell was at some pains to add that the ghosts did not annoy him personally; but he intimated that his family had been reduced to a state of terror that it would have been simply inhuman to keep them longer in such unpleasant quarters. He therefore deemed himself justified in breaking the lease.

Vain, however, were all the endeavors of court and counsel to get any satisfactory descriptive testimony as to the true character of these supernatural manifestations.

There were two witnesses besides Mr. Howell, who evidently had full faith in the reality of the ghostly visitations—his brother-in-law, James H. Berthoff, and Edward Polk, a colored man. Mr. Berthoff had resided in the house with Mr. Howell. A few days after moving in he was accosted on the street by a neighbor named Gallagher, who asked if his name was not Berthoff. Being told that it was, Gallagher remarked that a friend of his had bought a farm of Berthoff in Orange county. This having excited for a friendly interest in Berthoff, Gallagher added:

"And I'm sorry you have been renting this house of Mrs. Stymus. You will be glad to move out in a little while; if you don't move out, the ghosts will drive you out." After that a gentleman named McEvoy confirmed the reputation the house had for ghosts, and in the course of a week or so Berthoff heard the same reports from at least twenty neighbors. On cross-examination, when asked if he left because of any ghosts he had ever seen there, he answered "no," in a very loud and firm tone of voice, and when counsel followed the question up with, "or because of any rumors about ghosts," he almost shouted, "No, sir, I did not." He was equally positive in denying that he had left the house without paying the rent.

Mr. Polk, the colored man, had also heard of the ghosts from a young man of the neighborhood who had slept in the house, and that he credited the report seemed a fair inference from the fact that he had declined an offer from Stymus to occupy the basement and take care of the house, rent free. He hastened to say, however, that his reason for declining the invitation was simply that he was subject to rheumatism, a malady which would be greatly aggravated by sleeping in a damp underground room. The general laugh which greeted this remark made him very indignant, and he became positively angry by the time he was handed over to the plaintiff's counsel for cross-examination:

"Are you superstitious?" asked the counsel.

"Supers-tit-titious?" said Polk, stammering with indignation.

"Are you afraid of ghosts?" suggested Judge Angell.

"No, sir; no, sir; oh, no; no, sir," he answered.

"Don't you believe that coming events cast their shadows before?" again asked counsel, with a smile.

"Oh, laugh; yes, you can sit there and laugh, and you can talk more than I can, but you don't know nothing at all about it," replied Polk.

Polk succeeded, however, before he left the stand, in convincing everyone that in his opinion, at least, the young man who had warned him that the house was "troubled," as he expressed it, had done him a very great service.

Mrs. Stymus, of course, scouted the notion of the house being haunted. Her explanation to the rumors is that during a period of some few months, when it remained empty in consequence of the death of her aunt, who had lived in it eight years, some boys in the neighborhood had obtained admission by breaking windows in the basement, and amused themselves by "playing ghost." She admitted, however, that the fact of the house being haunted was matter of common gossip in the neighborhood. The house itself is an old-fashioned red brick, English basement house, built on a model very common a quarter of a century ago. Its upper or attic story—where the ghosts are believed to dwell—has a peculiarly stunted appearance, owing to the windows being greater in breadth than in height. These rooms were originally intended for the servants of the family, who, in the estimation of old-time architects, were entitled to only half as much air and light as their betters. The house seems to be in fairly good repair, but though neat and clean is not cheerful. The ghosts are undoubtedly possessed of benignant natures, since the house is only one door away from a Baptist church. Judge Angell's decision is in favor of the plaintiff.—[N. Y. Times.

Ministers as a rule marry for money. J