THE LIGHTY EVENING TELLCHARM THE TREFFIEL MONDAY FEBRUARY INC.

THE BALL OF THE FRENCH MINISTER. |

Brilliant Assemblage of Fair Women and Brave Men-Statesmen and Warriors, Dames and Demoiselies-The Enton Between America and France Comented on the Light Pantastic Toe-Dancing to the Music of Perpetual Amity, Etc. Etc.

WASHINGTON, February 10.-The ball given to-night by the Marquis and Marchioness de Montholon was beyond all question the most magnificent entertainment ever given in this metropolis, and is a bright link in the chain of pleasant associations that binds together the

two nations. The Marquis bears a name historical in La Belle France, and is the son of the General of that name who was the companion of Napoleon the First at St. Heisena, and of Napoleon the Third when he was also a prisoner of state, while the Marchioness is the daughter of a gallant general in the old United States Army. The house now occupied by the French Legation was built and fitted up by W. W. Corcoran, the banker, and the last public entertainment given there was when his daughter was married to Mr. Eustis, then a member of the Federal Congress, but afterwards Confederate Secretary of Lega-tion at Paris. It is a spacious, elaborately orna-mented building, fronting Larayette square. To-night, as it to impress upon the guests that this was a French festival, the carriages rolled

in at a porte cochere, in true Parisian style. In front of the house there was no sign of the gay throng within. The guests, on alighting, were received by servants in full livery, and were escorted through the hall and up the grand staircase, with its banisters of massive curved oak. The front room on the second-story, used by the Marquis as his cabinet de iravait, was se-apart as the gentlemen's dressing-room, where gloves were put on, and the hair-brush was ap plied to give the last touch. The adjacent apart ment in the rest was the ladies' dressing room, into which the fair ones entered in their cocoon-like wrappings, from which they emerged in the full glory of evening attire. Descending the staircase again, the guests were shown into the front drawing-room, on the left of the main hall, where stood the host and hostess. The Marquis was attired in full evening dress,

wearing around his neck the bright scarlet rib bon and decuration of a Commander of the Legion of Honor, while several other orders graced his breast. He is a tall, well-made, graceful gentleman, and his Paristan politeness was conspicuous as he received his guests. The Marchioness, as has already been stated, is an American by birth and education. She wore a dress of white tarlatan, elaborately trimmed with a superb necklacs of diamonds, and the cross of some regal order on her shealder.

The drawing-rooms of the Legation are elaborately deco ated. Prominent in that which guests were received are three-quarter length portraits of the present Emperor and of the lovely Empress Eugenie, which were the objects of marked attention. Leading from the front drawing-room is the library, which is fitted up with carved oak, and not only contains a large collection of standard works, but many rand works of art, promment among which veiled bust, so wonderfully executed that it would seem that the bust is covered with a white

Connecting with the library and with the back drawing-room is the daning-hall. To-night this is the supper-room, and the carved oaken buffets are loaded with gastronomic wonders. Pastries ices, and the many palatable delicacies which have made French cooking renowned the world over are lavishly supplied, with an abundance of rich Burgundy, sparkling champagne, and other wines of the rarest vintages. All the eatables, we learned, are home productions, from the kitchen of the Legation, and were highly appreciated and enjoyed by the guests, many of whom are accustomed to the scanty fare of our Washington hotels.

The drawing-rooms, the library, and the dininghall are on one side of the main hall of the house. On the other side is a spaceous apartment dedicated to art. It is lighted from above, and the walls are covered with choice pictures by the first American and European artists of our generation. At the end opposite the door, in a spacious recess, surrounded by flowers, stands the original Greek Slave, by Powers, as fit presiding goddess for a temple graced by the loveliness of the land. Above her, gracefully entwined, were the Stars and Stripes and the tri-color—those glorious ensigns that have floated over victories on the two continents.

In addition to these spacious apartments there were others of less size. In one those fond of the card table were enloying their favorite game. In another a host of politicians were discussing whether or not the President would make further disclosures of his policy to-mor-row to the Virginia delegation. In another, which was evidently the boudoir of the Marchi cness, several couples of young people were always engaged in earnest conversation; neither should we forget a recess in which a table was graced by two huge punch-bowls, from which two attendants were ever replenishing glasses o a compound which appeared acceptable to all who imbibed it.

Such another display of beauty, glare of jewels, shimmer of silk and satin, and withal a grand crowd and crush of crinoline, has not been known in Washington for many a day. The generality with which the invitations had been distributed in official circles served to render it more than ordinarily marked and pleasant, and brought together a company made up of the members of the House of Representatives, United States Senators, Judges of the Supreme Court, the diplomatic corps, and all the generals and admirals now in Washington, together with a large number of distinguished officers of a lower grade from both branches of the service. Added to these were the scions of many of the oldest families of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore.

A marked feature was the presence of the officers of the French man-of-war, L'Amiral &Estang, now at Annapolis. They were the handsome naval uniform of the Empire, with the graceful epaulets and the brilliant decora-tions of the Legion of Honor. In the hall stood a veteran boatswain, with his broad turned-over collar, who appeared to take pride in the gay scene, and who was well pleased when any of the passing throng addressed a few words to him in the language of La Belle France.

The guests began to assemble about 10 o'clock,

though up to 11 comparatively few of the large number invited had arrived. So admirably had all the minutize of arrangements been perfected. that, although the current of gentlerolk flowed in more swiftly and voluminously as the hour grew later, no one, however much a novice in regard to the evening's programme, was at a moment's loss how to dispose of himself. For the first two hours there was nothing especially marked in the entertainment save a confused tide of beautiful women and their cavaliers as they wended their way in and up the grand staircase to the retiring-rooms, and later reappeared for presentation to the Marquis and Marchioness Montholon, who received, as has already been noticed, in the front drawing room, immediately opposite the base of the stairway.
Your respects paid to the host and hostess, an

enticing vista of luxury and enjoyment awaited, turn which way you would. The special mark and felicity of this delightful event was undoubtedly a result of the numbers and variety of classes through which the cards of invitation had been diffused. Here were the majority of members from both Houses of Congress, many of the Justices of the Supreme Court bench, our leading generals and naval officers, a dazzling array of diplomats and calebrities in every dis-

finguished walk and position in life.

Grave Senators found themselves talking courtly nonsense to bewitching young ladies in the sequestered recesses of an alcove; eminent warriors and stern old scadogs chatted in know together, and tought many a battle over again by land and sea; foreign and native diplomats took more than kindly to one another, and moved, gayly decorated, in and out or the maxes of the throng; younger men, with irresistibly lovely women, were treading buoyantly the measures of foreign and domestic dances to the melody of the softest strains, and over all hov-ered such a poesy of light, shade, color, mirth, congeniality, and delight, as would have tempted

an anchorite from his cell, and led a daughter of

the Church to torget her vow.

After the first formal tour of the rooms a ma orily of the company tended towards the danc-ng saloon, wherein a particular set were already blithely moving to the bewitching harmonies of les lanciers. This apartment above all the rest, was perhaps most noticeable and attractive. Here was a pot pourri of brondcloth, lace, sa'in, and brocade, animated and graceful, surging hither and thither giving voice and gesture to a syllabic refrain that bewildered and allured, You paused upon the threshold struck from the first with the chefs d'auvre that hung upon the walls; but lower, and upon your own level, was such a marvel of loveliness and refinement that the feve, once caught, could but surrender without discretion.

Swithin a circle, not magic, but gayly alive with beginded sprites and handsome men, hedged about with beauteous women and happy attendants, moved easily in and out the mazes of the dance. Music soft and inspiring issued from within the recesses of a grove of rare exotics, through whose branches the symmetrical shape of Powers' Greek Slave gleamed white and rigidly. Later the gay multisude transferred liself into adjoining salons, where promenades were in vogue and delicious morsels were spread to tempt the appetite.

At midnight the tide of arrivals had ceased to inundate the mansions, and rapidly departing equipages had already initiated the ebb. It would be invidious to criticize the toilets of the ladies, especially when so many of the ladies belonging to the corps diplomatic were dressed a la mode de Paris. Miss Blanche Briter, of Mussachusetts, in white tarletan trimmed, with a blue bodice trimmed with flowers, was a de-cided belle, and opened the ball with the first Secretary of Legation. Miss Blondem, of Missouri, in a white iarletan speckied with gold, and with her raven hair powdered wish gold

dust, was much admired.

Mis Doohitle, of Wisconsin, young and fair, contrasted favorably with some of the more aged and overdressed spinsters. Rhode Island was well represented by the accomplished Miss Jeneks, who was dressed in white, with pearl ornaments in her hair. One of Ohio's fairest laughters, Miss Denison, was deservedly admired and charmingly dressed; and from the far Pacific there was Miss Haverly, of California, whose dress was an ingenious combination of

white muslin and dowers Taken as a whole, the ladies were dressed with exquisite mate, and there was a brilliant display of lewels, rich and rare. The dresses were almost invariably fresh, and evidently make for the occasion, but some of them will never be wearable sgain, for stand men will tread on trailing skirts, tearing out gathers, and render-ing it necessary to retire to the dressing-room

and repair damages.

A noticeable feature of the entertainment was the cordial fraternization of the politicians from the Capital. Sanator Saulsbury chatted cor-dially with Senator Wilson, while Representative Boutwell held friendly converse with Senator McDougall. The Democratic Guelphs and the Republican Ghibellines hoonebbed at the punch bowls, while the Western economists supped champagne with the Eastern protectionists, Judge Kelley, of Fennsylvania, did not seem unhappy because the ball was "without distinction of color;" while Mr. Blaine, of Maine, improved his own constitution by partaking of the gastronomic delicacies.

As for the officers of the army and navy, they went through the mazes of the dance as it it was a battahon drill, and showed those at the supper tables how to "fire and fall back." An enthusiastic few, however, who were mostly given to the pleasures of the terpsichorean art, were plainly of a mind to continue the hilarity of the occation by using the vacated space of their more moderate fellows in keeping it up to the small hours when "daylight should appear."—N. Y.

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