[For the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.]

GOLDEN TRESSES.

Coldly beat the December rain,
All day long on the window pane;
All day long on the marble sill,
And the oaken casement, cold and still.
So glooming in mist the grand old house,
That one might have fancied the gaunt spouse
Whispering her family words of cheer,
While her own little heart was chilled with fear.

Marble and oakwood, and mist and rain,
Made of the window a fitting frame
For the face and the beautiful golden hair
Of the woman dreamily watching there.

May-be she, now, through the drizzled pane,
Through the pattering, bitter drops of rain,
In the mist can see a drift of years,
And measure them over, that make for tears.
May-be the clouds in their madness above
Might picture a loving heart ruined through "love."

Picture a shame and a curse and a prayer,
And an innocent child with golden hair.
For one who is waiting beneath the tide
Of the mournful sea should have called her bride!

Another is—where? O winds that have kissed,
Drops that have fallen on whomever you list,
Saw you anywhere in the world, long Ago
A little golden-haired girl at play?

But the drifting years—their tale is so old;
The face of a woman exchanged for gold—
A life that has become a mockery,
Teaching the heart it were better to die—
This is their telling: inscrutable Fate!
Ever your secrets are told at a late
What wonder if now the December rain
Seem a mocker, beating the window pane;
If the white stone steps and the gravelled walks,
(Where shadows at night were said to talk),
Do the river wall, with its oaken door,
All answered the years—So late! So late!

A moment only there pleaded a tear
In each penitent eye. She dashed them clear
With jewelled hands. Her mood is absolute,
Another time said defiance of fate.
"I will forget!" But her woman's heart
Even there rendered enough to start
And to stop its beating almost, before
The Herald of Fate in the opening door.
"Only a beggar"—the servant replied
To her eager glance—and bowed aside.
Only a beggar! the falling rain
Beat the stone steps and beat the window pane.
Only a beggar! hardly the sea
Will carry that echo silently.

Something prophetic, some wonderful word
Of that inner language, her being stirred;
And haughtily waving them gone, alone
She passed down the stately aisle of stone.
While strangely enough, in this hour of need,
Seemed her feet entangled with damp sea weed;
Sent by no fairer than the marble floor—
And colder her heart: she opened the door.

The whirling rain and the sad wind bore
Through the house a cry that forevermore
Should ring in the ears of that left-out face
With its echoes:—"Was was it to be:"
"One in the slime of the ocean beds?"
"Two at the golden cold steps—dead!"

All warm and bright on the window pane
Now shineth the sorrowful sum—in vain;
For the poor tired heart in the jewelled breast,
And the golden hair, have gone to rest.

H. P. L.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Zell's Popular Encyclopedia; and Universal Dictionary to the thirty-sixth number inclusive, is published, reaching the word BRIAR. The choice of words defined is as full in this publication as that of an ordinary dictionary, while the terminology of the sciences is full, and the geographical and historical features are added. The work, in fact, is a skilful combination of every sort of book of reference. The illustrations are frequent and plain.

Van Nostrand's Eclectic Engineering Magazine, for August, contains more than thirty articles selected from the best home and foreign mechanical serials, and a closed or clipped paragraphs. The news of engineering is certainly endowed with extraordinary zeal and skill for this journal by Mr. Alexander L. Holly, who conducts it.

"The Woman in Red," just published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., is a sensational story the scene of which opens in the Western part of the Western Alps. It is full of incident and romance, and will probably find favor with lovers of mysterious plots and astonishing combinations.

ART ITEMS.

—Théophile Gautier, the only prominent *feuilletonist* who touches to the Empire, prepares his *feuilleton* for the *Journal Officiel*. In a late number this prominent art-critic pays a high compliment to Bierstadt's "Storm in the Rocky Mountains, Mt. Rosalie."

"This picture, which introduces us to quite a new sort of nature, besides the merit of representing scenery unfamiliar to us, has that of being painted with great skill in a manner which recalls the style of Calame, a painter not enough appreciated in France, who, more than any one else, has known how to render Alpine landscapes. Mr. Bierstadt may pride himself on this resemblance."

The French Emperor has honored Bierstadt by presenting him with the cross of the Legion of Honor. Mr. Bierstadt will return home in August.

—Artists, and all who have anything to do with paints, know that the splendid bright color of vermilion has a tendency, especially if it has been mixed with white lead, to assume a blackish brown tinge when exposed on the palette. This tendency may be obviated by the variety, says a scientific contemporary, by mixing with the oil one-eighth of its weight of powders of sulphur.

—The very unequal force with which various colors are reproduced in photography has been so lamentable an objection to direct photographic versions of the old masters, that photographs from good copies made by hand in black and white have generally proved far preferable. In accordance with this well-known fact, Signor Morelli, perhaps the most accomplished copyist in Europe, has for a long period been engaged in preparing for multiplication by the camera a series of fac-similies of the masterpieces in the National Gallery. His last work of the series is after the new Michael Angelo, "The Entertainment."

—HOW BRONZE STATUETTES ARE CAST.—The *Home Journal* thus describes the process by which the small metallic statuary, so largely imported to this country from France and Germany, is fabricated:

"A lealing process of bronze casting is known as the *cire perdue*, or wax process. A structure of iron bars, resembling the skeleton of the statue, sustains the core. This rough angular outline stands on a kind of platform,

A PARADISE FOR MRS. TOODLES.

THE HOTEL BROUSSE AT PARIS.

There is in Paris an establishment where comparative history of art, psychology, archæology, and physiognomy, may be studied with advantage, and a knowledge of it is inconsiderable part of Parisian life acquired. This establishment is the *Hôtel Drouot*, where the public auctions are held, for which reason it is also called the *Hôtel des Ventes* (House of Sales). It is a massive, fire-proof structure, erected by the *commissaires priseurs* at an expense of almost two hundred thousand dollars. Of these *commissaires priseurs*, or auctioneers, there are eighty in Paris; and, like the exchange-brokers, they form a distinct body, independent of those who public auction is allowed to take place. They get ten per cent. of the gross receipts, five from the seller, and just as many from the purchaser. As the proceeds of these public auctions at Paris amount annually to upward of thirty millions of francs, and, owing to the augmenting population of the capital, the number of auctions is continually on the increase, it is evident that the position of *tenteur* is in great demand. But such a position is very difficult to obtain, because it is extremely dear—many of the *commissaires priseurs* would not dispose of their places for three hundred thousand francs. This sum would money alone suffice. Application must be made by the candidate to the minister of justice, and the appointment is signed by the head of the government. An unblemished reputation and attainments of a certain kind are required; the applicant must pass an examination before a commission, after which an oath is administered to him before the tribunal of the corporation. The number of the Paris *commissaires priseurs* being confined to eighty, these positions are very rare, and, as a general thing, vacancies are created only by death.

The corporation of the *commissaires priseurs* dates from 1816, anterior to which year auctions were held under the direction of the *huissiers* (bailiffs), and seldom passed without disorders. The dealers conspiring among and against each other, quarrels of various kinds arose, and the objects to be sold were not unfrequently injured. At the present day, the law is sure of seeing his interests protected.

The auction-house is two stories high, with a spacious yard and coach-houses. In the rooms on the ground floor some but heavy and common commodities are sold; in the upper stories, where one either side is a row of larger or smaller apartments, magnificent furniture, jewelry, and works of art, are knocked down to the highest bidder. On the ground-floor the auctions for the lower classes take place, while the products of art and luxuries put at auction up-stairs are accessible only to the purses of millionaires and those who are well off. Still the Hôtel Drouot is not frequented merely by those desirous of buying; a great part of the time is customed to lounge about there is composed of rich or poor idlers, or fellows who find no employment, or are not under the necessity of seeking any.

In every room is a *commissaire priseur*, having at his side a secretary, and holding in his hand an ivory hammer. In the apartments where valuables and works of art are offered for sale, a connoisseur is also present, whose business is to determine the standing thereof. As a matter of course, each room has its own public, varying according to the nature of the objects auctioned there. The place where household furniture is sold are visited by the middle and lower class of people, and Parisians wishing to get furniture at a moderate price commonly resort to the Hôtel des Ventes for their purchases. The fashionable doctors, lawyers, young officials, and many others whose possessions lie in the medium of the law, buy first one thing, another, wherewith to cover their naked dwellings. The locking-glasses, carpets, divans, armchairs, clocks, lamps, and chandeliers, heaped up in these halls, excite various and strange reflections. Could these utensils speak, what tales might we hear! For people and things in Paris suffer the most remarkable changes of fortune, and real life outvies the imagination of the poet. Many of the things now offered for sale have lived in palaces, and have already been the property of individuals entirely unlike in every respect; and who can tell how often they are destined to change owners yet? Perhaps the first possessor of this arm-chair died upon a pallet of straw in some retired corner of Paris; perhaps the lady who once admired her charms in this looking-glass is now sending withered vegetables or stale fish in some suburb of the city! Often enough it happens, too, that a visitor to the auction-house recognizes among the articles collected there old acquaintances—pieces of furniture with which he parted in an hour of necessity, or of which some inexorable executor deprived him.

But we will dismiss these reflections, and enter one of the halls where goods are about to be sold. Here the people, like the ware, are far more interesting, and all the real judges of art and *dilettanti* in Paris, as well as those who imagine themselves such, congregate here. Here, too, we find those who have been seized with a mania for collecting. The passion of one consists in possessing a rich collection of snuffers; others prefer snuff-boxes; others, to rive upon China teacups. I an acquainted with a man, in other respects quite rational, who, having a collection of *fetiches*, has been for the last thirty years paying daily visits to the Hôtel Drouot, and to all second-hand stores in Paris, for the purpose of discovering some hideous idol, divinity to add to his collection. His house is a perfect pandemonium. The innate love of possession exhibits itself in ludicrous ways, and not seldom becomes one of the strangest manias. Every collector, as a matter of course, regards his collection as the finest, loves it with genuine fanaticism, and has a spite against all who do not share that feeling. Several years ago I made the acquaintance of a Spaniard. We were fellow-boarders, and I met him almost daily on the stairs. A droller figure cannot be imagined. He was as thin as a spindle, had a long, pointed nose, extending nearly to his chin; and, from beneath briefly eyebrows, his small, piercing gray eyes flashed in a manner to make you feel rather uncomfortable. His dress was even more singular than his figure. He was always enveloped in a long cloak, and wore a turned-up pointed hat, which, I am sure, I always knew how many generations arise and perish. No one could tell when he took his meals. He came regularly at dusk for a cup of milk and a loaf of the morrow, and it was asserted that these constituted his whole food. By the people of the house he was dubbed *l'adorateur de Vénus*, and, on inquiring the reason of this nickname, I was informed that the Spaniard was a collector of antique works of art, among them a Venus, to whom he paid the homage of the highest admiration. It was told me at the same time that the strange fellow, who did not half fill his lodgings, was possessed of great riches, which, however, were all being invested in his collection.

Shortly afterward, while admiring the Venus of Milo in the Louvre, he came toward me, with a delighted smile, and exclaimed, "Behold me a lover of art, begged to be inspect his collection on the following morning. He did not await my visit, but came to me. I followed him to his apartment, which bore great resemblance to a lumber-room. Innumerable fragments of bronze and marble were heaped up or scattered about everywhere. Looking into the open alcove, I noticed on the floor a mattress—the bed of this singular personage. From the fact that he never opened a window, the air was so oppressive as almost to rob me of my breath. A small, rickety table, and a cane-chair from which rags were hanging, formed the whole *ameublement*. This chair stood in the centre of the room, before the goddess of beauty, who was half covering a crystal vase with full of roses. The Spaniard motioned me to seat myself on the chair, which I did, trembling for fear of all possible caution, he removed his silk covering from the statue. It was indeed a fine piece of sculpture, and was evidently a treasure in view, and I accorded to it due admiration. The Spaniard, however, did not find the commendatory of my admiration sufficiently high. Handing me a magnifying glass, therefore, he directed my attention to the minuteness of the work, and sought to prove to me that its equal was nowhere to be found. In an adjoining chamber, he showed me a collection of all the classical workshops of Greece, now scattered throughout museums. Coefficient in a more or less fragmentary state, cast a few more vitreal looks at Ali Venus, and again covered her with the recent silk petticoat.

I saw him a number of times after this. One morning, the lady of the house was startled by his not coming for the customary ration of bread and milk. On rapping at his door, no answer was returned, and, on being finally opened, the Spaniard was found lying lifeless upon the floor before the Venus, a fit of apoplexy upset chair. The physician declared that the unfortunate man had come to his end from want of nourishment and air.

Let us return to the auctions. There is no lack of people who come with the sole intention of driving up prices. These sham-purchasers are denominated *chauffeurs*, and are to the Hôtel Drouot what the *lionnes* are to the Parisian theatres. When, for instance, a fine painting is put up, the *chauffeur* (lioness) examines it as long as possible, and seems unable to express his admiration; he bids with great eagerness, interrupts the auctioneer at every bid, and, when the flame of contention is heightened, that is to say, when he sees that he has forced up the price to the highest pitch, withdraws with a doleful shake of the head, and leaves the field to his adversary, who seldom repents his victory. As may be supposed, such a theatre is a rendezvous for rogues and it is easy to be seen that he does not always attain his object. The visitors to the Hôtel des Ventes are, for the most part people who will not allow themselves to be hoodwinked or cheated. Artists, dealers, and those who now and then enter the trap, chiefly those who imagine themselves judges of art, who put on an air of importance, and who are followed by a single stroke of his pencil. Here, as in other markets, the inferior commodities are duped who think their knowledge fortifies them against every mistake.

The following story serve as an example to demonstrate the care it is necessary to exercise at the Hôtel Drouot. At the auction-sale of paintings a countryman of mine was one day sitting before the composition representing a Turkish Cavalier, with his hand, when a handsome lady, possessed of a very aristocratic exterior, standing beside him, addressed him in French, in an undertone, whether he understood English. On his answering affirmatively, the lady inquired him in English to bid for the painting that had been just put up. A perfect gentleman, my countryman immediately declared his inability to comply with her wish. He soon found himself confronting with a lady of fashion, listening to the suggestions of the unknown lady, had in a few minutes outbid them all. Not much pleased at the turn of affairs, he left the place, and, on his return to his hotel, he found the lady, who had bid against him, waiting for him. She was dressed in a manner that proclaimed her a lady of fashion, and, in spite of the rouge, her face was very rich.

"Sir," said the lady, "I am the original of the picture you have just purchased, and I am willing to pay you a handsome profit on your purchase."

"Madam," replied the gentleman, "I am a stranger in Paris, and I have purchased the picture for a friend who is well acquainted with the city. I cannot, therefore, accede to your request."

"Sir," said the lady, "I am willing to pay you double the price you have paid for it."

"Madam," said the gentleman, "I cannot, for the reasons I have mentioned