FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

LETTER FROM PARIS.

[Correspondence of the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.]

PARIS, Feb. 11, 1870.—All Paris is making merry over Gustave Flourens's article in the *Reforme*. You will ask, perhaps, who Gustave Flourens is, and what the article in question consists of? Well, I will endeavor to tell you, and, in so doing, convey to your readers some true idea of the events which have been passing around us for the last three days,—a more correct idea, perhaps, than that which you may have gathered from the sensational telegrams which have no doubt been flashing across the Atlantic. Gustave Flourens, then, is the son of a highly respectable, but somewhat eccentric father, a man of science and member of the Institute, whose writings attracted a good deal of attention a few years ago. And no wonder, seeing that they professed to teach people the method of not exactly of living forever, at least of attaining the respectable longevity of a hundred or a hundred and fifty years. M. Flourens, Sr., professed to assure us that there was no reason, save our own fault, that we should not all arrive at that comfortable period of senility. The son goes upon a different track, and seems desirous, if possible, of making his career a busy and short one. He has long led what French people call a *vie orageuse*, a "stormy life." It was he, you may remember, who, at the funeral of poor Victor Noir at Auteuil, quarrelled with Rochefort because the latter opposed Flourens's proposition to carry the corpse to Père la Chaise through the streets of Paris. "No, no," said Rochefort, "there are those nasty soldiers on the road, and I am not going to expose my person to those vile Chassepots." The two demagogues exchanged some very sharp language in the newspapers, but they seem to have come together again, for (and here we arrive at the immediate incidents of the moment) we find these both about to attend the same meeting at Belleville, on his approach to which Rochefort was arrested. That sagacious gentleman gave himself up, as you are long since aware, with the best grace in the world; suffering no one to fight for him, and, above all, taking care not to fight for himself. I believe the simple truth to be that Rochefort is not sorry to be out of the hands of such thorough-going confederates as Flourens, and likes far better to play the martyr, with a whole skin, in Sainte Pelage, than to be barricading the street of Paris with such a fire-eater as the man above mentioned.

At all events he goes quietly off into his six months' limbo. Not so Flourens, who, left free to follow his own impulses, comes out at once in the heroic, or rather, perhaps, I should say the tragi-comic line. Brandishing a sword-cane over his head, he hitches two or three shots from his revolver in the air, and forthwith declares himself "in a state of insurrection." A state of siege would, perhaps, have been nearer the mark; but, however, he declares war in his own person against the Government and proceeds immediately to open the campaign. Like Roland, he winds his own commentaries; and we had, yesterday, in the *Reforme*, the article above alluded to, containing a detailed account of his operations from their commencement to their conclusion. I wish I could send you the entire narrative verbatim. It certainly the very finest serio-comic epic I ever read. It is so "immensely ridiculous" that it is hardly possible to conceive any man writing and publishing what so dubs himself an ass. Flourens tells us that, having declared war, he first set out to escape a prisoner. So he seizes the luckless Commissary of Police, who was to have been present at the opening of the meeting, and marches off in triumph with this poor man of peace, who begs hard of his doughty conqueror that he lowed once more to see his wife and children before he dies. "I had only ground me," Flourens says, "a hand of a hundred but all of them heroes" and then he adds, a line further on, "and these soon dwindled to one." Yet, he adds, in the same breath, "I had a whole Fanbourg of Paris for three hours." Muchausen himself never performed such a feat! To be sure, Flourens does not tell us against what or against whom he and his sixty heroes held their ground; the simple fact being that, for the moment, there was nobody there to interfere with them. By and by the illusions hand marches on again, and these "sixty men" are "two sixty men." "We disarmed them," says Flourens, "as gently as if they had been brothers." After this tremendous achievement of taking their side-arms from two "real" soldiers, the party once more advances, and falls in with a sergeant and three armed men." Flourens is particular in telling us that they were "armed." This was a more serious affair; three armed men and a sergeant were not to be trifled with, so Flourens at first tries a parley: "I addressed them," he says, in picturesque language, "friendly words" And how do you think these "miserable slaves of discipline," as he calls them, had the hardihood to reply? By "lowering their bayonets and threatening to fire upon us?" After such a specimen of fraternity as this there was nothing for it but to be off, and declare, like Dogberry, that this sergeant and three armed soldiers were no true men. "We continued our march," says Flourens, with exquisite naiveté, "putting on the same as we went along." Encouraged, seemingly, by this successful attack on the gaslights, these doughty warriors actually had hands upon several "empty omnibuses" (they do not seem to have ventured upon any "full" ones), which were lying at the depot, and overturned them across the street. Their next achievement was to "carry by assault" an empty house, undergoing repairs, in the Rue de Paris, at Belleville, and appropriate the scaffolding to "make barricades" At this moment a brilliant idea suggested itself. "Some one reminded me," writes Flourens, "that there were guns at the Belleville station." Off goes the party, "poverty-room guns," murderous utensils, no doubt; such as might be expected to be found in a suburban theatre, and had flashed powder in many a bloodless fight. To the theatre, then, was the cry. But alas! by this time the sixty had diminished to ten, who alone still followed their undaunted leader on this last and most desperate expedition. Flourens asserts that when the manager heard he was about to be attacked he "drew up his troop" and "gave the word," but that "all the guns missed fire" We do not, however, answer for this fact, which is not mentioned by Flourens. All he tells us is that by the time he got into the theatre he had but "one brave and excellent young man" at his side. He proves that he and his friend were set upon by three or four people inside, who speedily drove them out of the house. After this, he hid himself in the house of a friend, and has not since been heard of, and is understood to have escaped to Belgium.

Now is not the above a most eloquent account of the Paris "insurrections" than any I could have furnished you with myself, and is it possible to doubt their real character after reading it? The late incidents have been a repetition on a yet smaller scale of the abortive proceedings of June last. But there must be an end put to this sort of thing, to which love of riot and plunder are the chief inducements. I think we have probably seen the last of such doings. The city is again perfectly tranquil, and both the Government and the inhabitants are quite resolved that it shall remain so.

NEW MAGAZINES.

We receive copies of *Harper's* for March from T. B. Peterson & Bros. and from Turner Bros. & Co. The first article is a graceful one on "Pussy," by Prof. Schele de Vere, with illustrations of uncommon originality and research, confectedly borrowed from Champfleury's superb French work. The pleasant erudition brought to bear on the essay may be guessed from the following extract:

PUSS IN LITERATURE.

Who does not know Puss's charming sonnet to his cat?—one of the brightest among his smaller gems; and Petrarch is said to have loved his cat only less than his Laura; so that what he could not do for the latter he did for his pet—he had her embalmed, and kept her as long as he lived. Cardinal Wolsey never cared for his whole regal throne, when he officiated as Chancellor, without having one or two of his favorite cats by his side; and Richelieu's grim humor required the constant presence of a number of kittens, these merry gambols alone could elicit a smile and soothe his temper. Chateaubriand was so passionately fond of cats that the Pope, to whom he went as ambassador, could not find a more suitable and acceptable present for the devotion of the Church than his predecessor's favorite cat; and when the great author was growing old he fancied he was also growing like his pets; from his close intimacy and great fondness. Nor have other authors disdained to sing the praise of Puss; Hoffman, and Richelieu's grim humor required the constant presence of a number of kittens, these merry gambols alone could elicit a smile and soothe his temper. Chateaubriand was so passionately fond of cats that the Pope, to whom he went as ambassador, could not find a more suitable and acceptable present for the devotion of the Church than his predecessor's favorite cat; and when the great author was growing old he fancied he was also growing like his pets; from his close intimacy and great fondness. Nor have other authors disdained to sing the praise of Puss; Hoffman