EVENING BULLETIN.

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IMPORTANT IF TRUE.

The only important statements contained in the cable despatches this morning are those supplied by a special correspondent in Paris. He asserts that Bazaine has escaped from the toils in which the Prussians had enveloped him, and is now in a fair way to outgeneral the Prussians. The story is that the bulk of the army which was driven back into Metz has been withdrawn successfully by way of the river road to Thionville. From thence, it is said to have marched in a northwesterly direction to Montmédy, a town upon a tributary of the Meuse river, twenty-five miles north of Verdun. Bazaine himself was reported at Montmédy. This much of the correspondents' story is confirmed by a statement in the Paris newspapers to the effect that Bazaine has procured provisions and reinforcements by this very route, trains having been waiting for him at Sedan, a town on the railway west of Montmédy. If Bazaine really has accomplished this feat he has outflanked the Prussian army in his front, and he will probably form a junction with MacMahon. He will also in direct communication with Paris and Chalons, and his army can be strengthened to an unlimited extent, while he will carry with good position, having his back to Paris, and his front to the advancing foe. Assuming his escape from Metz to be a fact, his future movements may easily be guessed. It is inevitable that he should march down the valley of the Aine river by way of Le Chene, Vouziers and St. Menehould, and form his line with MacMahon's, in front of Chalons, leaving the Prussians far upon the other side of Verdun. But to reach this position Bazaine would have to move upon two sides of an irregular triangle; upon the hypothenuse and the perpendicular, from Thionville to Montmédy or Mezieres, and then down to St. Menehould, while the Prussians, to reach the same point, would have to move only upon the short base of the triangle through Verdun from Metz. Whether they have made this important strategic move, or whether Bazaine has accomplished the larger part of his journey before the Prussians comprehended his intentions, we are not informed. Indeed, we may say that while the whole story of Bazaine's strategy is probable, it cannot yet be accepted as worthy of entire credence. We shall very likely have to wait for an engagement to reveal the exact positions of the two armies. It is difficult to believe that the Prussians would continue to surround Metz in stupid ignorance of the escape of Bazaine, while the road through Verdun to Chalons lay behind them undefended.

If the army of the Crown Prince we have heard nothing but that it was in the vicinity of Vitry-le-François, southeast of Chalons. Yesterday the indications were that this force intended to get in the rear of Chalons; it may be, however, that Bazaine's movement will induce the Crown Prince to come up in front of Chalons, and give MacMahon battle while he is waiting for Bazaine's descent into the valley. Certainly, it would be strictly in accordance with the strategic policy of the Prussians to advance their army from Metz and the force of the Crown Prince from Vitry and crush MacMahon before Bazaine arrived. The absence of any report of such movement serves to throw another shadow of doubt over the story of Bazaine's escape. If the report is confirmed, however, Bazaine's change of position may secure victory for the French. He is near his base of supplies, and he has behind him France, enthusiastic, ardent and eager to crush the invader. Everything will depend in such a case upon the prompt movement of the Prussians towards Chalons, and the arrival of their reserves.

MORE VALUABLE NEWS.

The Associated Press papers, this morning, furnish a fresh supply of the same admirable news for which we complimented them yesterday. One of the most startling items is entirely fresh and original. Even at this distance we tremble as we read that "Every railroad leading to the capital (Paris) has been undermined, and the mines charged with pyrate of potassium." This is terrible. Rotten bridges, misplaced switches, wrong signals, and all the other elements of railway accidents are bad enough. But to be traveling in and out of Paris over mines of pyrate of potassium! It would be bad enough in common times of peace, when railroading is going on in a quiet and orderly manner; when there is neither hurry nor confusion; when other studies and time-tables are as methodical as clock-work. But in times like these, who can tell what train will go off first? And what would be the effect on Paris of an unexpected explosion of pyratical mines? Gold went up, fifty per cent, in Paris, the other day, but that was nothing compared to the ☞ Stock would immediately follow such a grand piece of subterranean pyrotechnics.

But, as usual, the Associated Press papers come to our aid, just at the critical moment. In the very next sentence to that which reveals the mystery of this Parisian Guy Fawkes, we read, "It is questionable whether a popular uprising will take place, though many intelligent people expect one." If no uprising is to follow all this pyrate of potassium, of course the city is safe, and we are comforted with the thought.

ARCHBISHOP PURCELL ON INFALLIBILITY.

By the enterprise of the American Press Association we were able to give our readers, yesterday, a full report of Archbishop Purcell's speech, delivered in Cincinnati on Sunday evening, on the subject of the Œcumenical Council and the dogma of Infallibility. The Associated Press had not enterprise enough to lay this important and interesting address before the public.

Considerable anxiety has been expressed and felt to hear argument from this distinguished prelate of the Roman Catholic Church the views which he entertains upon the question of the new dogma which he so ably and vigorously combated in the Council at Rome.

Passing by the introductory portion of the Archbishop's address, in which he referred to the patriotic manner in which the American bishops had maintained the superiority of American education and American liberalism of the State from the Church—a service for which these eminent prelates deserve public commendation—we come to his defence of his position upon the difficult and delicate question of Papal Infallibility. Declaring himself to be "one of the most faithful Catholics that ever swore allegiance to the Pope," it is interesting to trace the conflict between this instinctive allegiance and the educated common-sense of Archbishop Purcell. He confesses that the Council of Lyons, which "examined the question of the Pope's infallibility" six hundred years ago, failed to discover "sufficient evidence in Scripture or tradition" for this dogma, and had "laid it aside." He declared before the Cardinals that "it has never been decided at what time, or how, or in what manner" the Pope became infallible. He asks, as thousands of others are asking, "Is infallibility in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the teachings of tradition?" He points out that "forty Popes have taught what is now regarded as erroneous doctrine by some." Some of these Popes, such as Nicholas I., he names, and also the erroneous doctrines which they taught, and having massed together the strong arguments, which his native vigorous intellect and his free education in a free country presented to his mind, in an impregnable bulwark of logic and common-sense, the Archbishop amazes his intelligent readers by deliberately walking over to the side of his own entrenchments and surrendering his judgment to his allegiance, under the demands of supremacy and implicit obedience as to make it impossible to believe that a man like Archbishop Purcell was really convinced by them.

These arguments are two-fold. In answer to the fact that "forty Popes have taught what is now regarded as erroneous," the Archbishop says that he had an unanswerable load removed from his mind by being told that all these erroneous doctrines were not *ex cathedra*. They were not "addressed to the Universal Church." They were "spoken to individuals," and therefore were not binding at this time. In other words the Archbishop was relieved of his dilemma by being told that the Pope is only infallible in public, on official occasions, when he proclaims some doctrine to the Universal Church. At other times, in his more private capacity, in his individual teachings and opinions about religious truth, he is fallible as anybody else. And this took a great load from Archbishop Purcell's mind.

But the other argument against infallibility was one urged by one of the cardinals—"How if the Pope becomes a heretic? Is he still infallible?" The point is well put, and how is it disposed of? By the very remarkable argument that if the Pope becomes a heretic, he is no longer a Pope; and if he is no longer a Pope, of course he is not infallible. As Archbishop Purcell strongly puts it: "If he denies any dogma of the Church held by every true believer, he is no more Pope than either you or I." And this argument, says the Archbishop, "serves to show the fullness with which the subject has been considered, and the ample thought given to every possibility."

But the American Catholic, "the best instructed portion of the Catholic world," will ask how the Pope, if he is infallible, can become a heretic. If his solemn dictum upon spiritual truths or dogmas is infallible, it must follow as a logical sequence that whatever he teaches must be orthodox. He, and not the Church, must determine what is heresy and what is the truth. And just as the Church is now called upon to accept a doctrine at his hands which is never accepted before, and which previous Councils have condemned, so it will be bound to accept whatever interpretation of truth he may choose to impose, even if "every true believer" has hitherto held it as heresy.

The address of Archbishop Purcell is valuable, as showing the general line of argument by which this important dogma of infallibility has been engrafted upon the Catholic Church. The distinguished prelate has unconsciously stated it at its best, for he is defending his own acceptance of a dogma in which he has boldly and ably declared his unbelief. He seems to have been borne down by the tremendous pressure of overpowering numbers, and by his instinctive reverence and affection toward the Pope. Outside of these two "argument," there is nothing in the eloquent address of the Archbishop to aid the investigations of those who desire to accept the new teaching of the Catholic Church; and nothing to convince those who are disposed to rest their religious faith, in ecclesiastical matters, upon the teachings of the Scriptures, of traditions, of history or of common sense.

AMERICAN NEUTRALITY.

We publish to-day, in full, the President's Neutrality Proclamation, of which we gave an abstract, yesterday. It is a timely document, setting forth the law on the subject, and also declaring the exact understanding existing between our Government and those of France and Prussia.

While the President thus warns the American people against all participation in the European war, he reminds them that they are free to exercise "the free and full expression of sympathies," and also that they may manufacture and sell within the United States all munitions of war.

The President will undoubtedly carry out the duty of neutrality in good faith, and all good citizens will be glad to assist the Government in its endeavors to keep itself from entangling complications with either of the contending parties. American sympathy is with the Prussian cause, but that will not prevent the Government from observing the obligations of neutrality in their strict letter and spirit.

AN EDITORIAL VICTIM.

We quoted the other day a poem which was first published in the *Liberal Christian*, with the following remark: "A year's subscription to the *Liberal Christian* will be given to any one who will inform the editor who wrote the fragment of verse, and how he may obtain the remainder of the poem. It was found on a mere scrap of newspaper which was picked up in the woods of Indiana more than twenty years ago." The inducement held out to the author to reveal himself is not of such a tempting character as to induce him to rush precipitately forward with his reply in time for next week's edition, or to entitle the editor to assume for himself credit as an unusually liberal Christian. And yet even so poor a bait as this will, we are well assured, be snapped at by so many individuals that, if the editor fulfils his promise in every case, he will have an enormous addition to his gratuitous circulation. There is in this country a class of persons who have a mania for acquiring notoriety by claiming authorship of poems with the composition of which they could not possibly have had anything to do. These people do not hesitate to claim as their own verses written by authors still living,—authors who can defend their rights successfully. We are quite sure, then, that the entire gang will assault the editor of the *Liberal Christian*, and that each member of the felonious horde will make a desperate attempt to grasp the prize. We hope all of them will get it, and that every succeeding number of the paper will contain an essay upon lying, and a short sermon upon the text of Ananias and Sapphira.

Among the first claimants probably will be Ball; Ball of New Jersey; Ball who argued through forty-six numbers of the New York *Tribune* that he wrote "Hook Me to Sleep," and to prove his assertion, composed two hundred-and-seventy more diluted and rickety verses upon the same theme, every one of which supplied positive evidence of the absurdity of Ball's claim to possession of any lyrical skill. If Ball could accomplish this feat, he would be entitled to credit for a new cradle-rocking, what would Ball not do to make his title clear to a poem of acknowledged sweetness and tenderness? He will write so much rhyme that "Paradise Lost" will be but as a paragraph to it; he will reel off a whole circulating library, and empty it on the head of the editor of the *Liberal Christian* until that gentleman will weep, and tear his hair, and curse the hour in which he stirred up Ball and set him at his doggerel crank. There will be manuscript from Ball in the waste baskets and the stove, on the floor, the tables and the window-sills, and the postman will have to engage a dray "for the emergency" to bring around Ball's verses until Ball exhausts himself.

Miss Peck will be on hand at once. She declared that she was the author of "Nothing to Wear," and she went into hysterics because it was proved, despite her prolonged and ingenious reasoning, that it was written by Butler. Miss Peck will immediately rally upon the *Liberal Christian*, and that book will be graphical resources of the establishment in an attempt to show that this female Peck is a poetic book. We will unearth up aunts, grandmothers, rural uncles, infatuated aunts and preposterous first cousins, to prove that she wrote this poem in the bloom of her youth —when Peck was a mere Pint, let us say—and read it to a select circle, and was only restrained by excessive modesty from affixing her name to it when it was published. Mr. Sam'l Blatchford also will burst upon the editor to torment him. Mr. Blatchford tried very hard to demonstrate to the New York *Post*, a week or two ago, that his sister wrote that sweet poem, "The Call," but he was summarily squelched by an overwhelming mass of evidence to the effect that his fraternal pride had carried him far beyond the boundaries of truth. But here will be a chance for Blatchford to cover his relative with glory without possibility of disgrace or discovery, and to gain some high moral instruction from fifty-two numbers of the *Liberal Christian*. Bob Lincoln will be on the ground in a few days, and, if he can prove twenty years ago, and Blatchford will be forced to admit an aggregation of years in the case of his relative, which will probably provoke a pleasant discussion between the two families, his family is remarkable for amiability and forbearance.

The *Liberal Christian* will assuredly hear also from Major Sigourney, the rhythmical warrior, who, a short time ago, published an affecting account of his own death, with the statement that the original draft of "Beneath Snow" was found in the left pantaloons' pocket of his corpse. There are seven hundred and twenty-three other adults and one precocious boy, who also claim to have written "Beautiful Snow," and there is a prospect of an animated and prolonged controversy upon the subject in the columns of the *Liberal Christian*. If the editor does not wish to lose his intelligent subscribers, we advise him not to print the poem, and to decline every specimen of poetical skill included among the arguments of the contestants.

Finally we shall have some interesting revelations from Mr. Shaver of Burlington, who declared recently that he found in a barn a letter from Edgar A. Poe, acknowledging that "The Raven" was written by a man named Fenwick. This absurd Shaver will grope around among all the barns in Burlington county, and presently emerge with another letter pending to show that Fenwick—who is nothing more than a myth; a mere poetical Mrs. Harris wrote this poem, while in a condition of unusual excitement induced by too copious use of paregoric, a drug to which he was a helpless slave. He will learn that the unfortunate individual committed the poem—filthy his signature during a paroxysm, and then lost it in the woods of Indiana while he was gathering huckleberries, or meditating upon an "Ode to Autumn" or communing with Nature, as poets always have to do. Nothing is too astounding for Shaver's envenomed lies; he will make that editor wish that *The Liberal Christian* was a sensation paper, so that Shaver could be engaged regularly as a perpetual writer of fiction.

All this, and perhaps more, is in store for the man who offered the reward for the discovery of the author of the poem. He has sacrificed his peace to the gratification of his curiosity; if he reads all the communications upon this subject he will sacrifice his intellect. We recommend him to resign. No man can peruse successive letters and arguments from Ball, and Blatchford, and Sigourney, and Peck, and hood over the mystery of the inexplicable Fenwick, without dethroning his reason. There is no alternative but withdrawal or pitiable imbecility.

In dealing with the Volunteer Fire Department the people of Philadelphia must be generous, while they are just. The fact that the Department, as such, ought to be utterly abolished, must not hide the other fact that, so long as it exists, firemen who are killed and wounded in the proper discharge of their duty have a claim upon the generous sympathies of the public.

At the great sugar-house fire three young men, members of the Philadelphia Hose Company, were killed by the falling of one of the walls, while carrying out the orders of the Chief Engineer. These young men—John L. Smith, Francis Fritz and Matthias W. Force—are represented as industrious and respectable men, earning their livings honestly, and supporting their families by the fruits of their daily labor. They leave widows, children and aged parents without means of support, and the destitute circumstances of those who have thus suddenly been bereft of their natural means of livelihood constitute an appeal to the generosity of the good people of Philadelphia which will not be disregarded.

The EVENING BULLETIN has been, for many years past, the steady, and, for a long time, the only advocate of a reform of the Fire Department of this city, and it will continue to labor in the same direction until the desired end is reached. But this, in no way, militates against the most cordial desire to recognize the claims of such cases as are now presented, and we shall be glad to be made the channel for contributions for the relief of these destitute families. The Treasurer of this relief fund is Mr. John Campbell, No. 740 Sansom street, and any contributions left at this office will be promptly acknowledged and forwarded to him.

The comic artists need not sigh for want of themes for their pencils while the news agents in Europe are busy with the war. For instance, take the statement "that every German soldier is supplied with a book containing a French dictionary and French conversational phrases, with their German equivalents, to enable him to talk with the natives." Imagine now, a Prussian soldier out on picket duty, with his book in his pocket. A French peasant, an a spy, perhaps, approaches. The soldier immediately leans his gun against a fence, takes out his spectacles, adjusts them carefully on his nose, wets his thumb and turns over the leaves, one by one, until he finds out what is the French word for "halt." The peasant stops. After some more delay, during which the leaves, one by one, until he finds out what is the French word for "halt." The peasant stops. After some more delay, during which the German soldier is turning over