THE CATACOMBS OF PARIS.

The Places of the Ancient Quarries—The Suburbs of the City Destitute of Foundations—A Large Town Underground—The Bones Deposited in the Space Two Million Skulls.

[From the Troy Times.]

The extraordinary subterraneous quarries known by the name of the Catacombs, lie wholly under a very great part of the city of Paris. For the benefit of those who have never been there, the stone was raised in the environs, and as the city was enlarged, the suburbs were built impercepibly over the ancient quarries, so that all that is seen beyond the ancient limits is essentially wanting in foundations. The Faubourg St. Jaques, the Rue de la Harpe, and the Rue Tournon, stand immediately over the ancient quarries, and pillars have been erected in very many places to support the weight of the houses. The principal entrance is near the Barriere St. Jaques, where there is a descent by steps to the depth of 150 feet perpendicular. At the entrance the path is narrow for a considerable way; but the visitor afterward enters large and spacious streets, all marked with names, as in the city above, and advertisements and bills are not unfrequently pasted on the walls, so that the place has in some measure the appearance of a large town swallowed up in the earth. The general height of the roof is about nine feet; but in some parts it is less than thirty, and even forty. Under the houses and many of the streets the roof seems to be tolerably secured by immense stones set in mortar; in other parts, where there are only fields or gardens above, it is totally unprotected. Considerable distances, the roof being level, or a plain piece of rock. After passing through and walled off from the rest, the visitor is led to the custom to shew him into a kind of saloon cut out of the rock, and called the Salle de Repos, or Chamber of St. Jaques, which was, occasionally illuminated, and contained representations in miniature of fortifications, with cannon ready to fire, &c. The journey through the Catacombs is a very tedious one, and the labor very great, as it often attended with unwholesome effects. The temperature, even at a little distance from the surface of the earth, except in hard frosts, when it is said to be otherwise. In some of the passages and caverns, where the roof is low, and in the descent, an oppression of breathing is felt. For many years there have not been more than two entrances in the quarries, viz.: at the Barriere St. Jaques and at Val de Grace, it having been deemed necessary to secure all the entrances, from its laying been formerly inhabited by a gang of robbers who infested Paris.

The Catacombs contain all the visible remains of those ancient Parisians, that had filled the burial-places within the walls of Paris for nearly 1,000 years. They were brought from the cemeteries, particularly that of "Les Innocens," in 1785, and the chief engineer, Lemesier, Lieutenant-General of the police, that the bones should be placed in regular rows, with the arrangement intended to serve as hints to the living. The skulls, of which there are about 2,000,000, are placed in conjunction with the bones of the legs and arms, in a manner which has a very striking appearance. Many (Chinese tells) are the victims of revolutions; the dead of the 10th of August, and those of the 2d and 3d of September, 1792, are deposited there in separate divisions. The different parts of the Catacombs are named, with strange incongruity, after the purport of the inscription which was placed there, or from the name of the place in the world's imagination. Virgil, Ovid, and Anacreon have each their crypts, as well as the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and Rabelais, the author of the "Meditations," takes his place with Horace, Malherbe, and Jean Jacques Rousseau. Among the ornaments is a fountain, in which four golden fish were, or are, kept alive. The Catacombs were much improved in 1810, under the care of M. de Thury, who stopped the access of the water which filtered through the roof—made galleries through the bones, which in some places were above ninety feet thick—provided a circulation of air, by means of the necks of bottles—carried off the water in channels—constructed steps from the lower to the upper excavation—built pillars to support the dangerous part of the roof—and, in short, was the great renovator of the place, which his successor had comparatively little attention bestowed upon it.

Among the many inscriptions, taken either from scripture or from poetry, there is remarkable one over the spring, which was originally discovered by the workmen, but for some use the basin was made, and whose waters are carried off by a subterranean aqueduct. M. de Thury named it "the first day of the Spring of Oblivion," and inscribed over it the lines of Virgil. But this inscription hardly been since changed for one of the most apposite texts that could have been found in the Bible:—

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

There is scarcely any exception to the fact, that there is no spring at all times, even the most savage, a strong and tender feeling for the relics of their dead; and it is remarkable that no so universal is the sentiment, that although for the inhabitants of maritime cities and of the sea-coast the most obvious and easiest mode of disposing of the dead would be by committing them to the deep, yet no such practice appears to have prevailed, because it would have the appearance of casting them away, rather than of depositing them in place. In visiting such repositories of the mortal remains of our species as the Catacombs, it is impossible not to be struck with the reverential feeling which has established, to a certain extent, a sanctuary for preserved it inviolate and hallowed amidst all political commotions, notwithstanding that objects of insult and contempt, for sacred things which will be the everlasting reproach of the French revolution, and of the recently years that followed it. The epitaphs and inscriptions to be seen in the cemeteries of France frequently show a disposition to treat death with levity; but there is no reason to charge the French with a want of respect or affection for the mortal remains of their great men, their friends or their kindred.

In passing along the walls and battlements of skulls in the Catacombs of Paris, there is yet another and a more important reflection, which can hardly fail to come home to the visitors of the city of the dead. It is the vanity of mortality cannot but suggest to us what a momentary space is the life of man, between the eternity of the past and that of the future. What is now the abode of the spirits that once animated thesskulls and skeletons, or what is to be our own destination after death, we may guess as long as we please, and guess in vain, for this knowledge is not for us. Many philosophers have been speculating for thousands of years, without the power of giving satisfactory solution, and the result is that philosophy can give us no certain information on the subject.

It is religion that holds out the strongest hopes that the grave's not our last home.

Irish Folk Lore.

We find a universal trust in the tradition of By-Breasal, or the Blessed Island, Thermopylæ, the land of everlasting youth and happy. It is conjectured by commentators that the mention of the enchanted climes in manuscripts and in oral tradition is due to certain maritime discoveries of the ancient Irish, some of whose navies, it is said, adventured the great American continent. St. Brendan, Bishop of Clonfert, set sail for the unknown land in the year 565 from Tralee Bay. We have an ancient record of his two voyages, in which it is speculated he anticipated the discoveries of Columbus.

Besides these graceful or amusing superstitions, there is the melancholy though poetic faith in the banshee, and the belief in the fetch or doppelganger which seems common to all countries.

There is a pretty legend current in the island about robin redbreast. During our Saviour's crucifixion the little bird fled to the cross and tried with his beak to tear out the nails that pierced the palms of Christ. While engaged in his fruitless task his bosom was crimsoned with blood. The Pagans considered the bird sacred to Ther because of the sanguinary stain. The myth that the ass was marked with transverse lines on the back since the crucifixion, one of these animals of our Divine Lord into Jerusalem has given rise to an Irish expression, "You'd steal the cross from an ass's back."

The morrow-maiden and the morrow-man correspond to the English superstition of the mermaid. On the south coast of Ireland the mermaid to the present hour is fully believed in, and the writer of this article has frequently while sea fishing listened to the mournful music of her appearance. The morrow is seldom visible without a misfortune impending or ensuing, and if she is heard to sing, a great disaster is considered to be a warning of speedy death by shipwreck. A popular superstition is connected with the coast is that of the water witch. The water witch is an old woman who dwells on a lonely peninsula, and at night goes upon the deep in a large cockle-shell, raising storms with her crutch. When she chooses to stay indoors she makes a hellbroth of the most abominable charms, ingredients, and into this she throws eggs labelled with the names of certain ships whose owners or crews have offended her. The fate of those the eggs in being smashed and broken in this diabolical potage is entailed at the same moment upon the unfortunate ships.

MORNING IN THE DESERT.

Zoëther's Xylothrene grown riding belted and booted in strict costume across the desert, was always inquiring with delicious quiver when they should come to some gentlemen's house. There was no poetry to that man in the desert. The great ocean of sand, when the Creator transformed to moving pillars of sand, are tormented by the simoom, was the grown only a sort of bad hunting country with a great want of fence. Still, he would like to try a greyhound there after a hare. The East has wonders. The Pyramids are stupendous as the work of Titans, tremendous as bastions of a demolished Babel. Baalbec is sublime in its majestic loneliness; but the desert has a grander only second to the ocean. Yonder, I there a room to live in the desert—yes, and room to die. Let the fire-wind come, or the simoom, and your bones will be added to the trail of those that mark the passage of death's cadaver, among the dreary sands and the scattered drift of shining pebbles. Room here for unassailable emigrants with small capital for other building societies, room for reviews the night before Armageddon; room, I guess, also, for the imagination of a poor man long crushed in between the black walls of a city. The delightful spirit, long pinioned the Afrit in the leaden casket, "takes to itself wings and rejoices as a strong man to run a race." The one great being that remains to her, and is there omnipresent, is the sun. As Mr. Kingdale says, in his fine way, "from pole to pole, and from the east to the west, he brandishes his fiery sceptre, as though he had usurped all heaven and earth. Lo! he bid his soft Persian in ancient times, so now, and forever, he bids you bow down and worship him; so now in his pride he seems to command you, and says, 'Thou shalt have none, other God but me.'"

All day the sun pours on you its liquid fire, and there is no rock nor tree to have you in its welcome shade. This monotony of heat and this monotony of sand seem to have taught the first Arab they met how approach you are inclined to think must needs be the Princess Badoura, seeking in disguise the truant Caramaltadin, or that merchant who, taking his meal under a palm tree, found a young man of the tribe that blinded the Genii's son. Every foot-print in the sand becomes to you now as important as the foot-print seen by Crusoe in the island.

You start with bags of dried bread, some wine, tea and sugar. Few goat skins full of water, and a sack of charcoal; for there is no food or fuel in the get in the desert, you may murder a rival traveler. The effects resemble a prolonged fast, and the heat, cannot be forced or fuel to be got in the desert, unless you murder a rival traveler. The effects resemble a prolonged fast, and the heat, cannot Arab stride ahead; you mount your camel, and by swings forward in his disjointed, disagreeable way. The domes of the mosques recede; you are in the Desert. No green valleys and and then there rise a genius—statesman or sovereign—armed cap-a-pie with a scheme which the world's happiness is the burden of his country. It is incalculable how many schemes have been started for the happiness of different countries. The people are enchanted; they are already happy by anticipation. The statesman, or sovereign, explains that it will be necessary to double the taxes in furtherance of the scheme, and the people open their purse-strings with alacrity, or at least with resignation. Those who grumble are treated as factious; in some countries a practice exists of sending them to prison. After the taxes have been paid, it is discovered that the money is not sufficient, and a loan is immediate war, and 100,000 men are shipped off, with much powder and shot and many good wishes. Those who remained are branded as unpatriotic, and held up to public execration; in some countries a practice exists of shooting them with stones. Napoleon the Great was a man who had a scheme, which was to become master of Europe. Thirty-fifteen years of power he expended upon this scheme. 2,400,000,000 and 2,000,000 men. The end results were that he lost his throne and his left France poorer by three provinces than when he was set up to rule over her. William Pitt was another man who had a scheme. A great country is reminded once a year, on the Budget night, how much this scheme has cost.

Pyrophotography.

[From the Scientific Archeologist.]

The art which by means of the rays of light produces changes on properly prepared surfaces, is attaining an unforeseen significance. Independently of its application in the photographic ateliers, these workshops have now become too small for it. It has already been transplanted into the workshops of art in industry, and has led to improvements by which enormous art objects, which formerly could only be multiplied with difficulty, have become the property of the masses. New and important progress has been achieved, namely, the application of the enamel photography to ceramic work, engraving, or the so-called pyrophotography. We are now able to produce an exact and enduring copy of any picture on a sheet of glass, or transparent photographic glass picture. The process is as follows: A sheet of glass, or other transparent substances, in certain proportions, is dissolved in water and poured in a dark room—upon this glass upon which the picture is to be produced. This layer becomes hard when dried at a temperate heat, but not uncomfortable for the scope. When, however, a bichromate is added to it, the property of this mixture is modified in such a manner that exactly in the ratio in which it is exposed to the light, it loses its property of becoming gummy, and instead of this assumes a horn-like appearance. But all the shaded parts are gummy, and consequently can be removed by a sponge, which the shadow prevents the light from acting. It is evident that in order to produce a copy on the glass, it is necessary to cover with a glass diapositive or engraving on paper made transparent with an albuminous enamel layer modified by a chromate, and to expose the sensitive plate for from five fifty minutes to the action of the sun. If such a plate has been subjected to the sun, not a trace of a picture can be perceived, but as soon as a black or brown flux, which must be of a flour-like fineness, is dusted over the surface, a true copy of the original will make its appearance, and will come out with great purity and vigor. It is then only necessary to wash out the finished picture in water, and to expose the plate to a high heat in a glass furnace in order to obtain an image that can only be destroyed with the first blow of a hammer. It is interesting to know that we are enabled to transfer in a direct manner to a glass surface, the most accurate copy of an original—a copy on which the illuminated parts are not black and the dark ones white, as is the case with the silver bath, but a copy that exhibits light and shade in the same manner. The original, and with the theories may itself be employed again as a so-called diapositive for the production of new copies. In conclusion, we add, that pyrophotography is at present practically carried out in some of the glass-painting establishments in Germany. We hope soon to give a more minute account of the process.

THE SPANISH REPUBLICANS

An Address to France.

The following translation of an address from the Republican committee of Santander to their brother politicians is of interest, as showing the view that the Republicans in Spain, and therefore a considerable portion of the nation, take of the present state of affairs in France:

To the Republicans of Santander: The French people has awakened. Inspired by sentiments of patriotism and by the lessons of history, it has sought its salvation where alone people can find it—in themselves. Napoleon, who has caused the destruction of what was once his army by forcing it to fight for one man, has fallen under the irresistible weight of an idea. The Republic has killed the Empire, and now it is the French people which is fighting against the hosts of the King of Prussia. The hour has therefore come when we should express our sympathies for the new situation created in France; and as for doing so we are about to use legal means, this Committee has determined upon holding a peaceful manifestation with the said object, in order to convince foreign governments that our faith does not decrease, that our enthusiasm does not cool. It would have been unnecessary to make this manifestation, for on the night of that Monday, on knowing the proclamation of the French Republic, the delight you evinced was a proof of the noble and elevated sentiments which animate you, and, interpreting your desires, the Committee hastened to congratulate by telegraph the Provisional Government of the great nation which has displayed in every part of Europe the triumphant flag of the Republic, and which now, notwithstanding that it finds itself without resources and without an army, oppressed and enslaved by the tyranny of the Bonapartes, will know how to defend itself, and drive beyond the Rhine the triumphant armies of the servile William. Republicans of Santander! let us have faith in our principles, for they will save our country as they must save France. Let us be prudent, for the triumph is ours. Each hour that passes renders the establishment of a monarchy more impossible; and the Federal Republic, the government of the people by the people, will be the solution which the moderatists have not been able to find for the Revolution of September, great in its origin, prostituted by its apostates and by those who imbibed it for their own ends. Long live the Republic! "Long live the French Republic!" "Long live Republican France!" "Long live the Federal Republic!"

SANTANDER, Sept. 11, 1870.

SOFA BED.

HOVER'S

Celebrated Patent Sofa Bedstead

is now being manufactured and sold in large numbers both in FRANCE and ENGLAND. Can be had only at the Warerooms of the undersigned. The piece of Furniture represents a Handsome Sofa, Easy Chair, or Lounge, as desired, and can be converted into a beautiful FRENCH BEDSTEAD, with springs, hair mattresses complete. It has every convenience for Sitting, Reclining and Sleeping, and is impossible for it to get out of order. Its Patent Spring Mattress is so adjustable it can be extended