

# THE EXAMINER:

A Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, and News.

"This is true Liberty, when Freeborn Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free."—Euripides.

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## Literature.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

### LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM, NOW-A-DAYS.

Oh, tell me not that distant seas  
Will ever make me, dear, forget him;  
For he, I'm sure, is at his case—  
And I'm in clover.

And don't tell me that foreign parts  
Will ever make me, dear, forget him;  
Nor will he back to breaking hearts,  
Unless I let him.

He writes to me by every post,  
And every post brings me his answer;  
He writes of "muffins," steaks, and roasts—  
I of my dancer.

So don't tell me that I must mope,  
While he's in Canada recruiting;  
He's neither Bishop, Saint nor Pope,  
And fond of shouting.

I wish you'd write to him some day,  
How very badly I'm behaving;  
He'll send back word to me on say,  
He thought you raving.

He likes my going to a ball,  
And talking German with Lord Rowan;  
D'you think that, out at Montreal,  
He fits with no one?

Al! why don't you know him? I must own  
I've seen you dirt, my pretty cousin;  
But Willy soon would fret you down,  
And say you're dunc.

Don't talk such sentimental stuff;  
You preach as if I were a baby;  
As Willy says, "I'm not a muff,"  
Nor he "a gab."

I know he's very fond of me—  
I know I'm very fond of him;  
And as to doubts and jealousy,  
We're not so silly.

We both intend to have our fun  
And then to marry one another;  
And, as the music boister,  
Pray no more bother.

### ABOUT SPIRES.

(Concluded.)

The most famous spires of England and Normandy are St. Peter's at Caen, a very early specimen. St. Michael's at Coventry, Louth, that of the parochial church of Boston in Lincolnshire, that of Chichester Cathedral, the three that rise from the famous Lehigh Cathedral, and finally and especially the magnificent spire over the cross at Salisbury. In the judgment of most English connoisseurs, this is the finest of the world. It was probably erected during the reign of Edward III., a very florid period for architecture. It is the highest in England, its summit rising four hundred and four feet from the pavement of the church beneath. It is one of the earliest erected in stone, and is remarkable for its simple construction, the masonry in no part being more than seven inches thick. This spire is belted with three broad bands of pinnacled tracery, and there are eight pinnacles at its base, two on each corner of the tower. The ribs are fretted throughout the whole height with elegant crockets, thus imparting to the sky-line an appearance similar to the gusty spray on the borders of a rain-cloud. An admirer has said of it, "It seems as though it had drawn down the very angels to work over its grand and feeling simplicity the gems and embroidery of Paradise itself." England once boasted the loftiest spire in the world, that of St. Paul's, London, whose summit, five hundred and twenty feet from the ground, seemed to sail among the highest clouds; but the great fire of 1666 destroyed it, and St. Christopher's stately metropolitan dome now rises in its place.

One could believe in the "merry" days of Old England, were her abundant spires their only evidence. The ardent zeal that kindled so many thousand answering beacons throughout the length and breadth of the land is the best proof of that concord of souls which is true happiness. We know that the decision of the Council of Clermont about the Crusades was believed to have been in-tantly known through Christendom, and that the great cry, *God willeth it!* which shook the council-roof, was echoed from hill to hill, and at once struck awe and astonishment to the hearts of remotest lands. So in the birthplaces of our Pilgrim fathers, over these cherished spots,

"Where the kneeling hamlets drained  
The exhalation of the grapes of God,"  
arose the "a'z-poin'ing" spire, like a voice of adoration; and then another would be raised in union of some neighboring village, where they could see and communicate with each other in their silent language; and yet another close by among the hills; and presently, in full view from its summit, twenty more, perhaps, till the good tidings were known through the whole country, and from helmet to helmet, the *Deum of the land*. For it was said among the people, in that antique spirit of worship, as Milton exhorted the birds in his *Hymn of Thanksgiving*—

"Join voices; all ye living souls! ye spires,  
That sing up to heaven a glad accord,  
Bear ye y' wings and in your notes His praise!"

It is a beautiful proof of the spirit of sacrifice which actuated the Masonic builder of the Middle Ages, that his fairest and most precious works were not confined to the great metropolitan cathedrals, where they could be seen of men, but were frequently found in quiet and secluded villages, nestled among pastoral solitudes, far away from the gaze and admiration of the world. Though the spire of Salisbury was, perhaps, an epic in Masonic poetry, yet in humble hamlets of England, beyond her most distant hills and amid many an unnamed "sunny spot of greenery," were idols sung no less exquisite than this. Many a village spire, of conception no less beautiful, arose above the tree-tops among the most untrodden ways. All day long its shadow lingers in the quiet churchyard, and points among the humble graves, as if, over this dial of human life, it loved to preach silent homilies on "the passing away," even to the simplest poor. It must be inexpressible richness to meet with these beautiful forms in the lonely wilderness, where the eye alone, as it throws its loving arms around them, appears to recognize their grace and all their tender significance. It is like the pure discovery of a good deed done in the darkness, or like a chaste life spent in the sweet and serious retirement of a little hamlet, pointing the way to heaven for its scanty flock of cottagers.

It was the custom in those days, during the celebration of Mass, at the moment when the Host was raised, to ring a peculiar bell in the tower, in order that those gathered beneath the consecrated roof might be made aware far and wide of the awful ceremony, and be reminded to offer up their devotion in union. And we remember what Isaac Walton said of quaint George Herbert,—"how 'some of the manner sort of his parish did so love and reverence Mr. Herbert, that they would let their plough rest when his saint's-bell rung to prayer, that they might also offer their devotion to God with him, and would then return back contented to their plough." Now it seems to us that the spire is a perpetual elevation of the Host, a never-ending lifting-up of the Symbol of Redemption, a consecrating presence to

field and cottage, hillside and highway, ever ready to bless the accidental glance of wayfarer or laborer, and to make in the desert of his daily life a momentary oasis of sweet and hallowed thought. Its peaceful influence extends over the whole landscape, and pierces to its remotest corners.

"A gentler life spreads round the holy spire;  
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste retires,  
And airy harvests crown the fertile lea."

It may be thought that St. Peter's spire, which so often answers the sunbeams from the spindly spire, and kindles and glitters there like a star, is rather empty of emblematic significance and soul-language. But what saith old Bishop Durandus?—"The cock at the summit of the church is a type of the preacher. For the cock, ever watchful, even in the depth of night, giveth notice how the hours pass, wakeneth the sleepers, predicteth the approach of day,—but first exciteh himself to crow by striking his sides with his wings. There is a mystery conveyed in each of these particulars: the night is the world; the sleepers are the children of this world, who are asleep in their sins; the cock is the preacher who preacheth boldly, and exciteh the sleepers to cast away the works of darkness, exclaiming, Woe to them that sleep! Awake, thou that sleepest! and then foretell the approach of day, when they speak of the Day of Judgment and the glory that shall be revealed, and, like prudent messengers, before they teach others, arouse themselves from the sleep of sin by mortifying their bodies; and as the weathercock faces the winds, they turn themselves boldly to meet the rebellious by threats and arguments."

But it was on the Continent, especially in France, the Low Countries, and Germany, that the Gothic tower opened in fullest perfection; and it is here that we find the loftiest and most luxurious spire-forms. They were always the last part of the church completed, the finishing-touch, the last that was needed to perfection. The progress of the building of a cathedral thus embodied a beautiful symbolism. In most cases, the choir, or east end, the holiest part of the church, was the first erected, in order to sanctify and protect the high altar; and then, as the treasures of the church flowed in, after the expiration of years or centuries, the builders, tutored by the legendary science, and harmonized by a wonderful feeling of brotherhood, in the same spirit, perfected the design of their predecessors, by leading out westward a long nave and attendant aisles, a chapel northward and southward the transepts, adding a cloister here and a porch there, glorifying the western front with the touches of divine genius; and when at last every niche was occupied with its statue of angel, saint, or pious benefactor, and the holy choir, with its apsis, had been re-builder, with the accumulated art of centuries, and glowed with the iris-light from painted windows,—when the mural monuments of bishops, warriors, and kings had thickened beneath the consecrated roof, and the whole structure had been hallowed by the prayers and chantings of generations,—then, at last, over the ancient tower arose the lofty spire; as if an angel messenger had spread his wings at its base and mounted upward to heaven, showing up the glad tidings of the completion of the House of God, and, as he rose, the voice grew fainter and fainter, till at length it melted into the sky!

The finest spires of Europe were erected as late as the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, upon towers prepared for their reception, usually, in much earlier times. This confuence of the old builders in the final completion of their structures is remarkable. They drew without stint on the piety of after ages,—a resource which has not unfrequently proved too feeble to realize their generous expectations. There are few cities in Europe which do not bear witness to this misplaced confidence. And, indeed, when we find that not only one, but two, three, four, or even five spires were sometimes required to frame upward from the same building, as in Caen Cathedral, it would seem as if the kindling spark in heaven, as of old it did upon the first offering of Moses and Aaron, to inflame these centers, rich in frankincense and naphtha.

Now let us see what were the distinguishing attributes of the Continental spires. We know not why it was, but in the great old towns of Belgium and the Low Countries there existed such exuberance of imagination, such an unbounded luxuriance of conception, as created more images of Gothic quaintness and intricacy than elsewhere can be seen. It is any architecture ever expressed the average of human thought, that of these towns is especially eloquent in its indications that their inhabitants were very happy and contented. Look at a print of any old Belgian town or street, and you will at once see our meaning. What a joyous out-springing of pinnacles and pointed roofs and spires! of no more earthly use, indeed, than so much pleasant laughter. There is no tower without its spire, no turret or gable without its pinnacled, no oriel without its pointed roof, no dormer without some such playful leaping up into the air. Every salient point attacks the sky with its long iron spindles, wrought with strange device and bearing a hospitable cup where the bird makes his nest; and every spindly spire and shrieks with a shivering vase,—so that the wind never sweeps idly over a Belgian town. This innocent and happy people did not grow through the ages from grim battlements, and we possess with stern and massive walls. But they loved old childlike socialities and festive tales. They loved to build curious fountains in commemoration of pleasant legends. They loved to, the large, cheerful-toned bells of their minister-towers, and the sweet, celestial-toned bells of their convent-towers, and the breeze, of melodious, never-ceasing chiming. They carved their Lanes and Penates on their house-fronts very curiously, with sun-dials and h-tchments, sacred texts and legends of hospitality. The narrow streets of Ghent, Louvain, Liege, Mechlin, Antwerp, Ypres, Bruges are thus full of household memories and saintly traditions. So it is not strange that a people whose daily hours were counted out with the music of bellies were fond of fretting their towers with workmanship so precious and delicate that has been called "the potification of music."

But before we proceed to tell in how vivid a manner the Low Countries interpreted the simpler forms of spires, we shall describe generically in what manner not only they, but all the other European kingdoms, were indebted to the old Rhineland towns for some of these forms. When the bell-tower, in about the seventh or eighth century, began to be used in Germany, it at once received certain very important modifications of the earlier Italian campanile. The upper terminations of these latter were horizontal, on account of their flat roofs. Now in more northern climates, where the snow falls, these flat roofs would be unsafe and inconvenient. So we find that the first church-towers that arose in such Rhinish places as Oberweil, Gelshausen, Bicharach, Coblenz, Cologne, Bingen, "sweet Bingen on the Rhine," no longer ended in these horizontal lines, but arose in pointed shapes. Indeed, the Germans, who were great rivals of the Italians in those days, not only in matters pertaining to architecture, but to literature also, in all the same independent spirit which induced them alone, of all civilized peoples, to retain through all time the cramped, angular letters of monkish transcribers, in preference to the fair and square Roman forms, took particular pride in avoiding horizontal lines entirely at the tops of their towers, as they did at the tops of their letters. Wherever they so occur, they are insignificant,—rather ornamental than constructive. Not so with the English; they kept the square tops to their towers, and contented themselves with the pointed superstructure. Let us see how Teutonic stubbornness arranged the matter. Each separate face of their towers, whether these towers were square or octagonal, ended above in a gable; and from these gables, in various ways, arose the octagonal pointed roof of spire. This circumstance, more than any other, tended to give a peculiar character to German Gothic. The simplest type of the gabled spire was magnificently used in the spire of St. Peter's at Hamburg. This was the finest in North Germany; it was four hundred and sixteen feet high, and, if still standing, would be the third in height in the world.

But it was destroyed by the great fire of 1842. Many a traveller can bear witness to the sweet melody of the chiming that used to sound beneath every half-hour.

In later times, between the Germans and the French, was invented the lantern,—a feature so often and so superbly used, not only on the Continent, but more lately in England, that we must needs glance at it. This consisted in a tall, perpendicular, octagonal structure, placed upon the tower, quite light and open, and pierced with long windows. Here they used to lounge; and the spire was called the lantern or *lautre*; hence the octagonal spire arose easily and naturally. Now, notwithstanding this device, those troublesome triangular spires still remained unoccupied at the top of the square tower. The manner in which this difficulty was remedied was exceedingly ingenious and beautiful. It was by building on them very delicate pinnacles or turrets, peopled, perhaps, as at Freiburg with a silent and serene concourse of saints in rich robes, or inclosing, as at Lausanne, a spiral open-work stairs. These structures accompanied the tall lantern through its whole height; thus rendering the entire group a memory, as it were, of the square tower below, while, at the same time, it beautifully foreshadowed the octagonal character of the sky-seeking spire above.—a significant symbolism.

Now, when the Belgians and their neighbors received the spire thus from the fatherland, they at once began to express in it the joy of their worship by all the embroidery and tender imagery and grotesque conceits it was capable of receiving. They varied as many changes on it as they did on their bells. They concealed the first springing of their spires behind clustering pinnacles, flying-battresses, exopied niches with gigantic statues, galleries with battlements and parapets pierced and mantled in lacework of flamboyant tracery, pointed gables alive with crockets and finials, and long, quaint dormers—all with a bewitching and fanciful ornament. And they inherited from the Germans a love for the corner, which haunted the springing of the spire at the corners with visions of very hideous *diablerie*. It may well be believed that these fabled builders did not suffer the spire to arise serious and serene from the midst of this delicious tangle of architecture. They tricked it out with all the frostwork of Gothic genius. Not only did they use in its decorative spire-light, crockets, ribs and cinctures, bands of gables, and masses of reticulated relief, but, with wonderful skill, they pierced each face from base to apex in foliated patterns of great richness, so that the whole spire became a web of delicate open work, through which the light was sprinkled in beautiful shapes, varying with every movement of the beholder. Their plainer spires of wood they were fond of covering with glazed tiles of various tints arranged in quaint taste. And they would vary the outline by making it curve inward, giving a fine sweep thus from the base to an apex of great slenderness. Sometimes they would give it, with exaggerated refinement, the *cutis* of the Greek column. There are instances of this last treatment both in France and England.

But it was not only in exuberance of enrichment and quaintness of form that these enthusiastic workmen uttered their inspirations. They built their spires to a most amazing height. Indeed, the loftiest steeples in the world arose in level tracts of country, where they could be seen at immense distances, as not only in Belgium and thereabout, but on the flat margins of the upper and lower Rhine, as at Strasburg and Cologne. In these countries, and about the North of France, there was a generous rivalry as to which city should lift up highest the cross of God. But as soon as the sacred spire for spire-building was corrupted by this new element of human emulation, some strange things happened. The people of Beauvais, for instance, desiring to beat the people of Amiens, set to work, we are told, to build a tower on their cathedral as high as they possibly could. The same thing had been done once before on the plains of Shinar. One foresees the result, of course; "it fell, for it was founded upon the sand, and great was the fall thereof." And so with the good people of Lorraine. They built three spires to their cathedral, of which the central one reached the unparalleled height of five hundred and thirty-three feet, according to Hope, and the side-towers four hundred and thirty feet. This tremendous group, however, fell, or, threatening destruction, was taken down, in 1604. We remember what the Wanderer said so finely in the "Excursion"—

"We must needs confess  
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame  
Conceptions equal to the soul's desire;  
And the most difficult of tasks to keep  
Height which the soul is wont to gain."

But we find that adreastic edifices were not the only ones that were adorned with this high building; for town-halls were not infrequently distinguished by immensely lofty spires, as at Brussels. It is curious to see, however, how easily the less exalted impulses which crested them may be discovered. They do not soar, they climb up panting into the sky, like the famous passage Chaucer, in Milton, "with difficulty and labor hard." They have not the light, airy climbing upward of the religious spire, whose feeling George Herbert had in his mind, when he sang of prayer!—

"O! what an easy, quick ascent,  
My blessed Lord, art thou! how suddenly  
My soul requests thine own invade!"

Not so; but it is all human rivalry, a succession of diminishing towers, steps piled one above the other, when the mind every now and then may stop to breathe, and then fight its way onward again,—not an Assension, though that by Deity; rather the toil of a very human, though very laudable ambition.

Unfinished spires were in Europe very common legacies from generation to generation. Descendants were called upon to embody the great conceptions of their forefathers. But the ancestral spirit too often failed in the land, the wing of aspiration was broken, the crane rotted in its place, the great conceptions were forgotten, or lived only as vague and dreamy inheritances; and the half-completed spires stood like Sphinxes, and none knew their riddles! They are very melancholy memorials. Like the broken columns over the graves of the departed, fallen short of their natural uses, they seem only the funeral monuments of a race that is dead. The empty air is still over them in expectation, and the imagination makes vain pictures, and fills out their crescent of splendid purposes. They have been called "broken promises to God." Too often, perhaps, they were rather monuments of the feebleness of those who would scale heaven with anything but adoration upon their lips. There were Ulm, indeed, and Cologne, and Mechlin, as artistic intentions, immensely grand and beautiful; and in the early part of the sixteenth century Belgium was famous for designs of open-work spires, which, if erected, would have surpassed in height and richness all hitherto existing.

Of the finished spires, the loftiest in the world are, first, that of Strasburg, 460 feet; second, that of St. Stephen at Vienna, 410 feet; third, that of Notre Dame at Antwerp, 406 feet; Freiburg in the Breisgau, 384 feet; and then follow the distinguished heights of Lunshut, Utrecht, Rouen, Chartres, Brussels, Soissons, and others. The highest spire in our own country is that of Trinity Church, New York, 284 feet. We do not sweep the columns from the sky so effectually as when men build according to the scale of spiritual exaltation rather than that of practical feet and inches,—after the stature of the soul, rather than that of the man.

The architects of the revival of classic architecture, with the learned language of the five orders, with pediments and attics, consoles and urns, labored to express the childlike sentiment of the spire. But even the great Sir Christopher Wren, with his sixty steeple-towers, and all his followers to this day, have not succeeded in a translation so unnatural. Spiritually and artistically the spire is a struggle to the spires of the Renaissance, and so they struggle to painfully into the sky. And it is very rare to find those who have gone back even to Gothic building a spire

which touches our affections, or claims affinity with any of our nobler emotions; so sensitive is this unique structure to the approach of any element foreign to the early conditions of its existence. As for the great Strasburg example, that *Jungfrau* of all spires, German traditions have very properly babbled many strange stories about the erection of it. These constitute an episode so characteristic in the history of spire-building, that this essay would be incomplete, were they not briefly told here.

In the legendary days of yore, nothing was more common than to meet that personage known as the Devil walking up and down the earth, in innocent guise, but ripe for all sorts of mischief, when he found the people were building up mighty monuments to the glory of the good God. Very naturally, the sacred spire was a special object of his aversion; and, for some reason or other, that of Strasburg was honored with peculiar marks of his hatred. Two ancient churches, which stood on the site of the present minster, had been successfully destroyed by fire; and although, in the one case, this had been kindled by the torch of an invading army, and in the other by a thunderbolt, yet the infernal agency, in both cases, nobody ever thought of doubting. So it was the effort of Werner to combat these evil influences; and he accordingly inflamed the pride and indignation of the people to such a degree, that throughout the land all concerted to defeat the wicked designs of the Adversary. In two centuries and a half the whole cathedral was completed, save the tower, the corner-stone of which was forthwith laid with great pomp by Bishop Conrad of Lichtenberg, on the 25th of May, 1277. Doubtless the Arch-Fiend laid many cunning schemes to entrap the illustrious architect, Erwin of Steinbach; but, unlike his brother in the craft at Cologne, he came out unscathed; so we must believe that throughout the whole work he was actuated by the most unselfish spirit of devotion, infernal inclinations to the contrary notwithstanding. Now it must be confessed that the Bishop had a great time of it, since we read that the good Erwin had fought against him with all the powers of the Church, and granted absolution for all sins, past, present and future, for forty thousand spires, by whatever should contribute to the building of the spire, to money, material, or labor. Owing to the scarcity of parchment, these grants of absolution were made out of asses' skins; and it will be seen, that in the great struggle, these instruments retained in a very eminent degree that quality of stubborn resistance which had cost them their original state many a beating from the driver's staff. The greatest enthusiasm was kindled among rich and poor; year after year, thousands of pilgrims flocked hither from all Germany to offer their aid, without reward or recompense, to the building of the tower; and out of the farthest boundaries, even from Austria, came wagons loaded with building-materials, the gratuitous offering of the pious. Rich legacies were left to the work, and many a cloister devoted a fourth part of its yearly revenues to the same object. So much for "asses' skins!"

Meanwhile the Devil was not idle. In the night-winds he and his legions would shriek and yell and rattle among the scaffolding and cranes in vain. In the latter part of the thirteenth century, he shook the structure with a frightful earthquake, which terrified all Alsatia, and, although whole streets were thrown down in Strasburg, yet the foundations of the *Wanderer*, as the Germans love to call it, were loosened, and no stone was moved from its place. A few years afterwards, in 1289, he once more made use of his favorite element, and laid in ashes the market-place of Strasburg all around the minster. More fortunate than his great competitors, St. Paul's of London, and St. Peter's of Hamburg, it miraculously experienced but trifling damage.

Well, the great Erwin died at last, when he had built the tower as high as the roof-ridge of the nave. His son succeeded him, finished the tower to the platform, when he, too, was gathered to his fathers in 1333. John Hiltz followed as master; and finally his nephew, Hiltz II., in 1433, finished the grand pyramid, fixed the colossal cross in its place, and crowned the whole with a gigantic statue of the Virgin. Thus, from the laying of the foundation-stone till all was completed, were one hundred and sixty years; yet throughout this time the work was never discontinued, and five successive generations labored upon its walls.

But the wrath of the Arch-Enemy, as may well be believed, waxed greater as this prodigious structure gradually developed itself in all its lordliness and strength, and was not at all appeased at its triumphant completion. Ever since then he has visited its stately heights with especial marks of his malice. The most furious tempests have ragged about it, and more than sixty times it has been struck by lightning, and five times have earthquakes shaken its foundations. But in the power of "The Golden Legend" tells us how Lucifer and the Powers of the Air stormed about the spire, and how he cried,—

"Hasten! hasten!  
O ye spires!  
From the clouds drag the ponderous  
Cross of iron that to mock us  
Is uplifted high in the air!"

and how the voices replied,—  
"Oh, we cannot!  
For around us  
All the Saints and Guardian Angels  
Through the ledges to protect it,  
They defeat us everywhere!"

At one point, however, the evil spirits were successful; the colossal statue of the Virgin, which crowned the dizzy summit, and was familiar with the screws of the upper air, and which, like its dread Enemy,  
"above the rest,  
In shape and stature proudly eminent,  
Stood like a tower,"  
after having for fifty years borne the insults of these airy powers till it had lost all its original brightness and its face "Deep scars of thunder had intrenched,"  
was taken down and the present cross put in its place. And where it stands to this day, high up in the silence of mid-air, where the voices of the city below are rendered small and thin by the distance,—four hundred and seventy-four feet above the heads of the populace, who, in their littleness, crawl about and traffic at its base. This amazing summit, "moulded in colossal calm," in its unapproachable grandeur, seems to forget the city that within it rises, and to hold communion only with that vast circle of "crowded forms and lessening towers" which it surveys. It is a worthy companionship; on the one hand, the great Vosgian chain, the closed gates of France,—on the other, afar off, the hills of the Black forest, and, more near, Father Rhine, winding his silver thread among the villages and vineyards of Germany.

There is (or was) an enormous key suspended just beneath the cross of Strasburg Cathedral, its use, and why it was placed there, having passed away from the memory of man. If it were not to open the gates of heaven for those who built this ladder of light and those who worship in its shadow, it remains a riddle and a blank by the lens of accept interpretation, and, made mid-eyed by the loss of tender memories, we shall behold in every spire a means of grace and a hope of glory.

DEATH OF THE TALKING FISH.—This wonderful *luxus natura* died last week in London. Soon after the hard weather set in it began to give indications of being "out of sorts," and was very ill for 3 days previous to its death, being unable to perform. It was covered with blankets, and the water let out of its tub. Several medical gentlemen, acquainted with the natural history of such animals, gave what advice they could, which was not heeded. The animal, however, continued to get worse, and on Wednesday afternoon, being unable to eat anything, the wife of the proprietor went in to see it. It distinctly recognised her, and answered her inquiry by its peculiar grunt of "mamma." In trying to raise itself to come near her it fell over on its side and expired. The loss will be a heavy one to the proprietor, as he was deriving a good income from its exhibition, and not long since was offered £1500 for it.

## Gleanings from late Papers.

A SMART FOX, OR A TONGUE-SPOON.—In a recent lecture upon his experience in Arctic life, Dr. Rae said:—"On the journey I saw a very curious instance of the sagacity of the Arctic fox. Conscious that I was aiming at him, he tucked his tail under his legs, cocked up his ears, and endeavored to look as like a hare as possible (which is an animal comparatively worthless). Another fact of this kind occurred to me, whilst being detained at a particular place. Our mode of doing this was with a spring gun, connected with a bait, which, when touched, produced the explosion. One instance showed us that a fox, either from observation of a companion's fate, or from hard-earned experience, had gone up to the gun, bit off the cord connected with the bait, and the danger being averted, went and ate the meat in undisturbed comfort. And it is a common occurrence for the fox to make a trench up to the bait, seize it, and permit the charge to pass over his head."

THE LATE ELOPEMENTS.—In alluding to Mrs. Gurney's elopement with her footman, the *Observer* states that the lady left her husband a note, in which she consigns to his care her two children, and regrets that her passion for her paramour compels her to follow the bent of her inclinations. Under the new act, a portion of her lady's property can be settled by the court on her children. The second case of elopement is very deplorable. A millionaire in Kent, a large landowner, had a daughter upon whom he was prepared to bank his fortune. This young lady was wooed and won by the curate of the parish in which she resided. The rev. gentleman wished to make her his wife, but the father resolutely refused, and eventually she was induced to marry a rich Dutch merchant. Upon her marriage her father settled £100,000 upon her. The lady was married about four years, and about a fortnight since eloped with her former admirer, the parson.

THE LONDON WORKHOUSES.—The London workhouse kept their Christmas Day as usual, by giving the inmates an extra supply of creature comforts, including, of course, the standard national fare of roast beef and plum-pudding. Private benevolence assisted in a great measure in affording the means for the hearty celebration of the festivity, and among the numerous donors to the metropolitan workhouses stands prominently a Greek merchant, who presented to a great many places a case of currants, weighing 168 lbs. A London contemporary publishes some interesting details connected with the London workhouses, from which it appears they contained from 40,000 to 50,000 people on Sunday, though this immense number shows a considerable decrease from that recorded last year. Increased commercial prosperity has absorbed a large amount of those who were last year recipients of public charity. Throughout the kingdom the observance of the 25th as a holiday seems to have been general.

A STARTLING OCCURRENCE.—A lady who had returned from India three years ago, was the other day opening a drawer in what is termed a bullock trunk. To her amazement and horror a snake reared up its head; her first impulse was to push the drawer to, but it was stiff and heavy. She ran, screaming, down stairs for help. Her brother, who was in the drawing-room, went to her assistance, and preceded her again up stairs. The snake was not to be seen, and the gentleman thought it must have been his sister's imagination. A few moments after some little time, the search was given up. The following morning a canary, that always hung in the lady's room, was missing, and in looking into the cage, the male bird curled up at the bottom of it, and all that remained of the bird by his side. There was no difficulty in destroying the snake, and it was discovered to be what is termed a green snake, whose nature is to make a spring at the eye, when death immediately ensues. The marvel is how the reptile lived so long and the lady escaped.—*Court Journal*.

INTERESTING STATISTICS.—The United States are composed of thirty-one States and nine Territories. They contain a population of 27,000,000, of whom 23,000,000 are white. The extent of sea coast is 12,550 miles. The length of the ten principal rivers is 20,000 miles. The surface of the five great lakes is 93,000 square miles. The number of miles of railroad in operation is 20,000, which cost \$78,000,000. The length of canals is 5,000 miles. It contains the longest railroad on the globe—the Illinois Central—which is 784 miles. The annual value of its agricultural productions is \$200,000,000. Its most valuable production is Indian corn, which yields annually 40,000,000 of bushels. The amount of registered and enrolled tonnage is 4,407,010. The amount of capital invested in manufactures is \$600,000,000. The annual amount of its internal trade is \$600,000,000. The annual value of its products of labor, other than agricultural, is \$1,500,000,000. The annual value of the income of the inhabitants is \$1,500,000,000. The value of farms and live stock is \$500,000,000. Its mines of gold, copper, lead and iron are among the richest in the world. The value of gold produced is \$100,000,000. The surface of its soil fields is 135,121 square acres. Within her borders are 80,000 schools, 5,000 academies, 234 colleges and 3,800 churches.

SHIPWRECKS IN THE BLACK SEA.—A letter from Constantinople, received in Paris, Jan. 2, contains the following account of the loss of an English merchantman (three-masted), name unknown, and all hands on the coast of Asia, in the Black Sea. The English bark Elizabeth was wrecked the same day on a sand bank near Chilia, a village situated on the Black Sea. The crew were fortunately saved.

"The inhabitants of the village, on hearing of the accident (says the writer of the letter), proceeded to the shore, and some Philicris, famous swimmers, seeing that three of the crew of the Elizabeth were endeavoring to save themselves by swimming, and fearing that they should not have the strength to reach the shore, plunged into the sea, and were so fortunate as to save the three swimmers, one of whom was a pilot. The captain and four of the crew remained on board. The Philicris made repeated signals to the captain and the others to throw themselves into the water, but they hesitated to do so. A wealthy inhabitant of Pera, who happened to be a spectator of the scene, addressed the Philicris, and said he would give five purses (2,500 piasters) to any one who would save the shipwrecked sailors. At the same moment a raft was floated off from the Elizabeth. The Philicris swam out to the raft, and succeeded in reaching it. One of them quickly detached a cord from his wrist and tied it to the raft. The captain, four sailors, and three Philicris were on the raft, and it had been drawn some distance towards the shore, when, unfortunately, the rope broke. The Philicris then dived under the water, brought up the rope, and again tied it to the raft which was safely hauled into Chilia at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. A few minutes afterwards the Elizabeth experienced the fate of three-masted English merchantmen, and was smashed into a thousand pieces. Nineteen of the crew of the English ship were drowned."

WRECK OF THE FLORA TEMPLE.—The *New York Herald*, received last evening, gives a detailed account of the loss of the American bark Flora Temple, bound from Macao to Havana, on the 14th of October. She had on board a crew of fifty, and eight hundred and fifty coals. She sailed from Macao on the 8th of October, and on the 11th the coals attempted to take possession of the vessel. On the morning of the 11th, the watch on the deck being scattered about the ship, and the guard at the port door of the barricade which had been erected between the coals and the crew, who slept aft—being away from his post, the coals, who collected on the deck in large numbers, suddenly fell upon the iron plating guard, struck him, and as he was being as a guard bolting him, drew out his sword, and as he was