

Poet's Corner.

THE VETERANS OF THE GRAND ARMY MEETING NAPOLEON'S ASHES FROM ST. HELENA.

FROM THEOPHILE GAUTIER. BY F. H. DOYLE, IN THE 'PILOT.'

BORED, and thus forced out of my room,
Along the Boulevard I passed,
Around me hung December's gloom,
The wind was cold, the showers drove fast.

Then straight I saw (how strange the sight !)
Escaped from their grim dwelling-place,
Trampling through mud in sorry plight,
Ghosts at mid-day, ghosts face to face.

Night is the time when shades have power,
Whilst German moonlight silvers all,
Within some old and tottering tower,
To sit across the pillared hall.

'Tis night when fairies from the floods
In dripping robes rise like a breath,
Then drag beneath their lily buds
Some boy whom they have danced to death.

'Twas night, if Zedlitz singeth true,
When (half-seen shade) the Emperor
Marshalled in line, for that review,
The shades of Austerlitz once more.

But spectres in the public street,
Scarce from the play house paces two,
Veiled not by mist, nor winding-sheet,
Who stand there wearied and wet through.

Well may we wonder as we gaze :
Three grumbling phantoms hover dim,
In uniform of other days,
One ex-guard, two hussars with him.

Not these the slain, who, though they die,
Still hear through earth Napoleon's drum ;
But veterans of a time gone by
Waked up to see his relics come.

Who, since that last, that fatal fight,
Have grown, or fat, or lean and grim ;
Whose uniforms, unless too tight,
Float wide around each wasted limb.

Oh noble rags, still like a star
To you the Cross of Honour clings,
Sublimely ludicrous, ye are
Grandeur than purple worn by kings !

A nerveless plume, as if with fear,
Trembles above the bearskin frayed ;
Moth-fretted the pelisse is, near
Those holes by hostile bullets made ;

The leathern overalls, too large,
Round the shrunk thigh in wrinkles fall,
And rusty sabres, wearying charge,
Drag on the ground or beat the wall.

The next one is grotesque, with chest
Stretching a coat too small by half ;
But for the stripes that deck his breast,
At the old war-wolf we might laugh.

My brothers, mock them not too much ;
Rather salute, with heads low bent,
Those heroes of an Iliad, such
As Homer never could invent.

Greet each bald head with reverence due,
For on brows, bronzed by many a clime,
A lengthening scar oft reddens through
The lines that have been dug by time.

Their skins, by a strange blackness, tell
Of Egypt's heat, and blinding light ;
Russia's snow-powder, as it fell,
Has kept those thin locks ever white.

Their hands may tremble ; yes, still keen
The cold of Beresina bites ;
They limp, for long the march between
Cairo and Wilna's frozen heights.

They droop, bent double, since in war
No sheets but flags for sleep had they.
The helpless sleeve may flutter, for
A round shot tore the arm away.

Laugh not, though round them leaps and jeers
The howling street boy with delight ;
They were the day of those proud years,—
The evening we—perchance the night.

They recollect, if we forget,
Lancers in red, ex-guard in blue,
And worship, at his column met,
The God-like brow they loved and knew.

Proud of the pains endured so long,
Grateful for miseries nobly borne—
They feel the heart of France bent strong
Under that clothing soiled and worn.

Our tears then check the smile that played
To see this strange pomp on its way—
The Empire's ghostly masquerade—
Dim as a ball when dawns the day.

Through skies which yet her splendors fill
The Eagle of our armies old,
From depths of glory, burning still,
Spreads over them her wings of gold.

INTERESTING CEREMONIES.

AT St. Mary's Catholic Church, Nelson, on the Feast of All Saints, a most edifying ceremony took place. Upwards of thirty children made their first communion, also four converts lately received into the Church, among them Dr. Sproule. For some months previous the Rev. Fathers Garin and Mahoney spared neither time nor trouble in preparing the boys ; and the good Sisters of the Mission did all they possibly could to prepare the girls. A few minutes before eleven the girls formed a procession at the convent and marched two deep, each bearing a large candle. All the girls were dressed most tastefully in snowy white with wreaths and veils. Father Mahoney celebrated High Mass and addressed his sermon to the children in eloquent terms. At Vespers all the children renewed their baptismal vows, and were enrolled in the Scapulars. Father Garin preached at Vespers, and although his discourse was addressed to the children, many of the adult congregation were moved by it.

WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE LAST MAN ?

VARIOUS theories that have been seriously maintained by scientific men are described in the *Scientific American*, and we summarise them :—

1. The surface of the earth is steadily diminishing, elevated regions are being lowered, and the seas are filling up. The land will at last be all submerged, and the last man will be starved or drowned.
2. The ice is gradually accumulating at the North Pole and melting away at the South Pole, the consequence of which will be an awful catastrophe when the earth's centre of gravity suddenly changes. The last man will then be drowned by the rush of waters.
3. The earth cannot always escape a collision with a comet, and when the disaster comes there will be a mingling of air and cemetery gas, causing an explosion. If the last man is not suffocated he will be blown up.
4. There is a retarding medium in space, causing a gradual loss of velocity in the planets, and the earth, obeying the law of gravitation, will get closer and closer to the sun. The last man will be sun struck.
5. The amount of water on the earth is slowly diminishing, and simultaneously the air is losing in quantity and quality. Finally the earth will be an arid waste, like the moon. The last man will be suffocated.
6. Other suns have disappeared, and ours must, sooner or later, blaze up and then disappear. The intense heat of the conflagration will kill every living thing on earth. The last man will be burned up.
7. The sun's fire will gradually burn out, and the temperature will cool. The earth's glacials will enlarge, driving our race toward the equator, until the habitable space will lessen to nothing. The last man will be frozen to death.
8. A gradual cooling of the air will produce enormous fissures, like those seen in the moon. The surface will become extremely unstable, until the remnant of humanity will take refuge in caves. The last man will be crushed in his subterranean retreat.
9. The earth will at last separate into small fragments, leaving the people without any foothold. The last man will have a dreadful fall through space.
10. The tenth theory, proving that there will be no last man at all, is thus expressed : "Evolution does not necessarily imply progress, and possibly the race may have retrograded until the human being possesses the nature of the plant louse ; such being the case, this single inhabitant will spontaneously produce posterity of both sexes.—*American paper.*"

In an article on the leaders of Dublin society, the *Whitehall Review* says, with only too much reason, that the old glories of Dublin society have vanished. The reason is obvious. Before the Union, Dublin had a House of Lords, and every lord had a residence in Dublin. But when the Parliament was annihilated the lords gradually sold off their houses and disappeared. Rank, splendour, and fashion vanished ; and now not a single nobleman has a residence in Dublin. It is melancholy to walk through the streets of the Irish capital, and to see the fate of all these magnificent mansions of the Irish nobles—Leinster House given up to cattle shows ; Mornington House, the Mendicity Institution ; Powerscourt House, a draper's ; Tyrone House, the National Schools ; the mansion of the Lords Talbot, a training school for female teachers ; Lord Meath's, an hospital ; Lord Castle-reagh's—where the Union was decided upon and signed—a public office ; Charlemont House, given up to Census clerks. But it would be endless to go through the catalogue ; enough has been adduced to prove the accuracy of the statement that Dublin does not now possess an aristocracy.

THE *Gazette de Valois* states that a certain Abbe Alphonse Krieger, who had been preaching as an "Old Catholic" in the pulpit of the illegally sequestered Church of Notre Dame, at Geneva, has just published an energetic retraction of his errors.