TRANSPORTATION TOPICS.

SYNOPSIS OF THE RAILROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT.

The Statistics of Transportation—Consideration of the Questions of Discrimination, Competition and Regulation.

The report of B. F. Tuttle, Commissioner of Transportation, has been filed for the years 1877-78. It is a voluminous document, embracing some 550 pages, with transcripts of the reports of the various transportation companies, blank form for reports, extracts from the reports of other Commissioners, etc. Herewith is given a synopsis of the salient points of the text of Commissioner Tuttle's report, which in itself covers 79 closely-printed pages, and embraces many elaborate comparative tables:

REPORTS.

He believes the Commission should make, publish and distribute annual reports, and that the practice would bring about a better understanding between the transportation companies and their patrons.

COMPLAINTS.

Very few complaints have been made to the office, and as to such as have been made the companies have shown a desire to adjust differences amicably. He believes amicable interposition invariably successful. There is little real friction between the transportation companies and that portion of the public having business relations with them.

SERVICE.

The service, considering the small volume of business of some roads, is good, and the roadways and bridges in excellent condition. At the ferry landings in San Francisco he advises the provision of waiting-rooms and separate passage-ways.

REDUCTION OF RATES.

The rates for freight and passengers will always bear a close relation to the volume of business done, if adjusted on correct business principles. He attaches full tables showing important reductions on the C. P. R. R. below the legal maximum rates established by the O'Connor Act. There appear also full tables showing the passenger rates on the C. P. R. R. and the reduction below tariff. The totals show a reduction for 1878 of 29.29 per cent. There appear tables showing reduction of freight rates on the S. P. R. R. and S. and N. P. R. R., and of passenger rates on the N. P. C. R.

"These reductions in freight and passenger rates, while they are valuable in themselves to producers and travelers, are yet more serviceable in showing that an enlightened self-interest is being developed on the part of the transportation companies which cannot but be productive of good alike to the shipper and the carrier. A warfare between common carriers and their patrons is alike detrimental to the interests of both, and when a disposition is shown on the part of the former to meet the just demands of the latter it would seem to mark the commencement of a better era."

MILEAGE—COST.

	1877.	1878.
Standard gauge lines	1,880.8037	1,937.7618
Sidings	225.1411	246.0458
Double track standard	.....	4.6812
Standard, equivalent of single track	.....	2,188.4888
Narrow gauge	218.8350	225.8350
Sidings	18.2530	20.2530
Aggregate of single track	236.7880	251.0880
Total length of all lines, rail and steamer, operated within the State December 31, 1878	.....	2,813.0064
Constructed in the year of roadway and sidings	311.1880	94.2510
Of this, standard	253.6880	82.3210
And narrow gauge	57.50	11.9300

	1877	1878
Average cost of standard gauge per mile, including equipment	$90,266	$101,217
Ditto, narrow gauge	25,669	29,354

The total permanent investment in roads and equipment, including steamboat property, is returned, for 1877 at $253,914,353 03 (not including the California Northern Railroad Company), for 1878, $260,371,931 36.

STOCK AND DEBT.

The corporations represent $268,884,881 61 of securities, of which $116,943,623 09 are in the form of stock. This does not include the California Northern Railroad Company. For 1878, securities, $275,234,526 34, of which stock $115,534,701 66 Black Diamond Coal Company excluded.

	1877.	1878.
Gross increase for year to Dec. 31	$24,190,591 22	$25,891,618 47
For year ending June 30	24,991,756 17	.....
A falling off of	801,164 95	.....
Being 3 31-100 per cent.		
Total operating, interest and other expenses	$21,294,685 30	$22,021,452 06
Dividends paid for the year	4,342,040 00	None.

In 1877 this was 8 per cent. on $54,275,500 which was returned as paid up capital of the Central Pacific Railroad.

	1877.	1878.
Total net earnings, excluding interest (Cal. N. R. R.)	$2,926,535 53	$3,870,166 41
Being per cent. of paid up stock of	2.52	3.337
Average earned per mile operating on standard gauge	7,943 40	8,245 10
Do narrow gauge	3,934 20	2,868 70

PROFITS—COST OF OPERATING.

Per cent. of profit to stock and debts (dividends and interest being included in profits), 3.826 per cent. in 1877 and 4.388 in 1878; ditto, including dividends but excluding interest, 1.201 per cent.

Per cent. of profit to total property and assets, including dividends and interest, 3.511 in 1877 and 3.969 in 1878; including dividends but not interest, 1.102 in 1877 and 1.408 in 1878.

Total cost of operating river steamers and barges, exclusive of interest and dividends in 1877, $14,860,685 23 and in 1878, $15,018,517 55, or 61 per cent. of gross income in 1877 and 58 per cent. in 1878.

Average dead weight carried by C. P. R. R., one mile to each passenger, 19,876 tons in 1877 and 21,468 in 1878.

RATES OF FARE AND FREIGHT PER MILE.

On the Central Pacific Railroad the highest rate for fare is 10 cents per mile; the lowest, 1.05 cents for single fare and 4 mills per mile for commutation rates. For local passengers, not including season, ferry or commutation rates, the rate is 4.03 cents; for foreign passengers the rate is 3.24 cents, and the average for all, 2.95 cents per mile.

On the Central Pacific Railroad the highest rate is 15 cents per ton per mile; the lowest rate is .66 cents per mile; the average rate for local freight is 3.268 cents; the average rate for foreign freight is 1.999 cents, and the average for all is 2.753 per ton per mile, which last is an increase of .076 cents above the average for the year 1877. The average for local freight is an increase of .177 cents, and that for foreign freight an increase of .112 cents, compared with similar charges for 1877.

Total number of persons employed by railroad companies in 1877 was 8,441; in 1878, 7,778.

COMPARISONS.

Placing the population of the coast States and Territories at 107,776, or in round numbers 1,100,000, and placing gross railroad earnings at $25,000,000, and the amount paid per capita for railroad transportation would be about $22 73. In Massachusetts, with 1,650,000 people, the railroad earnings in 1878 were $30,008,513, or $18 18 per capita. New York, with 4,700,000 people, and $84,759,329 railroad earnings in 1877, gives a per capita of $18 03. But it is admitted the average gross earnings per mile of eight leading New England roads is $11,899 33, and of nine others in New England and New York, $10,747 12. The Central Pacific Railroad's showing of earnings per mile is $9,985.

Then follows elaborate comparative tables showing passenger and freight charges on New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts and Connecticut railroads, and the showing of California railroad charges of like kind.

NATURAL HIGHWAYS.

The report next points out the value of the navigable rivers of the State, their vital influence in keeping the cost of transporting agricultural products at a low rate, and the necessity of preserving the rivers and bays, and guarding against their destruction, and improving their capacity for navigation. Tables illustrative of this necessity are given, showing water and rail rates side by side. The report adds:

"It will be seen by the foregoing that the water-craft engaged on our inland waters and along the coast comprises a very important part of the total of the transportation facilities of the State.

"As a rule no railroad can supersede transportation by water, unless it can perform the like service more cheaply and advantageously; and when this happens it follows that the shipper reaps the benefit."

The Commissioner holds that the statistics show the conditions of commerce in California do not warrant the subsidizing of ocean and river lines of steamers to compete with railroads already built, nor for the building of Government railroads. Aid so given would come out of the productive industry of the State, and its effect would be to compel localities not in the remotest degree benefited to contribute in aid of those places immediately interested—a manifest injustice. He equally supports the action of the people in abandoning the plan of subsidizing railroad transportation companies, and adds: "The Government aid to the Pacific railroads has been the means of overcoming distance, of cheapening transportation, and of bringing us into speedy intercourse with the Atlantic States. It is one of those departures from the anti-subsidy principle that California can afford, and if other States do not complain we should not."

AXIOMATIC CONDITIONS.

"One of the implied conditions precedent to having railroads and other transportation facilities is that the public who use them shall maintain them. This fact, which is axiomatic, seems to have been overlooked. Notwithstanding this, it is the great unwritten law which no penal enactments or organic law can set aside. The railroad system of California is grand in its conception, and has anticipated by many years our industrial development. Hence, for a long time, higher rates must necessarily prevail for local freight and passenger service than are charged in more densely populated communities."

CONCERNING GOVERNMENT ROADS.

Referring to proposed Government roads to compete for the transportation business of the center of the continent, the Commissioner points out that neither governments nor individuals can construct railways without the investment of money, the principal and interest of which must be repaid. The principal and interest must be realized, either by a charge on the traffic available to the roads or by a tax upon the whole people. The same may also be said of the cost of operation and maintenance. In fact the same conditions surround the Government roads as those owned by private parties. And the conditions involved in competition are the same, and the Government would have to make the same discriminations in its rates that private roads do, or make up, by direct taxation of the people, what might be lost in operating its roads. It would be compelled to meet rates where rail and water transportation meet, as well as at competing points of other lines of railroads.

All transportation charges must of necessity be paid out of the rewards of productive industry, whether owned by Government or individuals. The same rules also will govern in establishing rates for traffic along the line of a Government railroad as apply to private railroads. If the expense of construction, operation and maintenance is not imposed upon the traffic, then it must be met by taxation, and in either case it will come out of productive industry. It would be of doubtful expediency for Government to enter upon a line of policy which would eventuate in largely increasing transportation facilities, and thus dividing with the existing railroads a traffic the receipts from which, when all of them are pooled, are found barely adequate to meet the annual liabilities of the companies, because of the competition afforded by the system of inland navigation alluded to.

RAILROAD MONOPOLY.

Concerning railroad monopoly the report points out that but for the water ways the railroads would have a monopoly of the carrying trade, but that if these are preserved there is not much to fear from railroad monopoly.

THROUGH AND LOCAL RATES.

Through rates largely influence local rates—if the former are remunerative the latter are reasonable, and vice versa, because then the deficit is taxed upon the local business. Uncontrolled competition is the immediate cause of fluctuating rates and discriminations. In California fluctuations in railroad rates are few because most of the roads are under one management. For the local traffic of railroads there cannot be any competition, and the rates must be regulated wholly with reference to the value of service. Railroads are as permanent as canals and natural waterways, and conditions similar to those controlling the fixing of rates in one case must prevail in the other.

DISCRIMINATION

Is the charging more to one for like service under like circumstances than to another. Unjust discrimination implies a wrong demanding a remedy. But simple discrimination is but another term for competition, or differences founded upon natural distinctions, which are the only obstacle to a uniform tariff of rates proportionate to distance carried. The power of the Government to regulate is indisputable; and, if disputed, is, under the decision of the Supreme Court, set at rest.

Shall the railway companies carry passengers and freight between points where water competition exists at such rates as the watercraft may establish, or shall they abandon business with such points? There are certain fixed expenses connected with conducting railroads that must be met by the earnings—operation and maintenance, cost of equipment, interest on capital employed in construction.

The cost of operation and maintenance obtained, a fair remuneration on permanent investment in construction and equipment fixed, the rates on the traffic should be gradually reduced as the volume of business is increased. If the railway companies abandon business between localities having water communication, because of low rates, the water craft advance their rates, and the railroad advances its rates between non-competitive points. Assuming that the service to non-competitive points is performed at just and reasonable rates, it follows that the freight and passengers, to and from competitive points, must be carried at rates fixed by the competition.

If railroad companies were compelled by law to do business at competitive rates, which natural conditions have made necessary, bankruptcy must follow. To avoid that the roads would abandon competitive business and make local traffic meet their necessities. Hence any profit derived from competitive business is a benefit to the local shipper, as it tends to lessen local charges.

THE COMPLAINT

Is not of too high rates between non-competitive points, but by comparison they are in excess of those for like service between competitive points. Hence the unpopularity of discrimination. To carry between competitive points at less mileage rates than between intermediate points where no competition exists, is not an act of injustice.

Example of Effect.—San Francisco and Sacramento are connected by navigable waters and by rail. On the latter line is Galt, 27 miles from Sacramento and 124 from San Francisco. Before the building of the railroad freight from San Francisco came to Sacramento by water, thence by wagon to Galt. Now it may come by rail direct or by water to Sacramento, and thence by rail. To find the rate to Galt by water add the rail-rate from Sacramento. The latter is below the old wagon rate, and to the extent of the difference the shipper at Galt is benefited by the building of the road, to say nothing of time saved and convenience accruing. If the road terminated at Galt there would be no complaint, but the new route of 124 miles to San Francisco gives rise to trouble. The railroad company must carry from San Francisco to Sacramento at the low water rate, which is below average cost of railroad transportation; but if it derives a small profit from this source, it is enabled to make a reduction in rates between San Francisco and Galt direct, and between Sacramento and Galt. It is obliged to charge the shippers at Galt more per ton per mile for the 124 miles to San Francisco than per ton per mile to Sacramento; but the total can in no case exceed the sum of the water and rail rate from San Francisco to Galt via Sacramento, else the latter would be the preferred route. There is no injustice in this to the shipper at Galt. Common carriers should not be compelled to expend money to overcome natural obstacles and place the benefits arising therefrom at the disposal of places less favorably situated.

DISCRIMINATIONS MUST EXIST

In transportation. The carrier does not create them of his own will. Necessity compels carriage to some points at lower rates than the others less favorably located. Discriminations arise also from classification of merchandise, and from competition between dealers in certain merchandise. Instance: Lumber goes from Truckee to Salt Lake as cheap as to points 100 miles nearer Truckee. If the lumberman gets a small profit at the the distant point and the carrier is enabled to carry it there, it makes the income of each average better and creates a market which could not be had if the same proportionate rate were charged as is charged to nearer points. So, too, as to coal from Wyoming mines, where unloaded cars must go one way; but if they can get freight, whatever they make is again enabling the carrier to run them loaded with coal. The merchant at Salt Lake can get goods cheaper in San Francisco than can the merchant of Virginia City, because he has the option of buying in the East or West market, with equal facilities for reaching them. The latter is confined to the Western market. Hence the San Francisco merchant will sell at a profit in Salt Lake which will not tempt him in Virginia City. Commercial law is inflexible, and legislative enactments cannot affect it, for it adapts itself to those differences founded on natural conditions. No road in England or America has ever brought its average charges up to the maximum allowed by their charters. A large volume of business at reasonable, is more remunerative than a small volume at low rates, and roads recognize this.

INFLEXIBLE RATES

Have proved detrimental in whatever State attempted. Extortion should be made known and punished; the operating results of roads should be made public by Government authority, and unjust discrimination and unreasonable charges prohibited. Let Government provide the method for enforcing on carriers the common law duty, and let all transportation companies be subject to it; let the burden of proof of reasonableness of rates be thrown upon the companies; let the State invoke the enforcement of remedies at common law when private parties might be deterred from seeking legal remedy. If unreasonableness is shown, let the carrier pay the cost of the proceeding as well as the fine; if the carrier proves reasonableness, let the State pay the costs. Such rules will be just to both carrier and shipper. Judicial investigation alone can determine as to the justice or injustice of transportation charges.

THE RULE OF ACTION.

"If transportation companies will not be governed by an enlightened self-interest, nor make rates which the public can afford to pay, let judicial determination be invoked, and when proper rates are so established let them remain in force until the business will warrant reductions. There should be no guessing at what can only be determined by ascertaining the cost and value of the service rendered, duly recognizing a reciprocity of interest between the producer and the carrier."

The cheaper products of the State will bear only a low rate of transportation. The average rate on wheat for all distances does not exceed $2 50 by rail, and in no case exceeds $6. This is the maximum. To charge more would stop its production for general markets, and deprive the carrier of a return freight which would be profitable to him, without being burdensome to the consumer. Hence there must be discrimination to favor the producer of the wheat. Tea and wheat move at like cost; but 15 cents on the tea and 2 cents on the wheat is not unjust discrimination against the owner of tho tea, but is a just discrimination founded on the law of values. The ton of tea is thirty times the value of the ton of wheat, and $5 per ton on the wheat bears heavier on the consumer than $150 per ton on the tea. Therefore a judicious classification of goods is in the interest of both shipper and carrier.

COMPETITION.

Most public complaints of discrimination are the result of competition. Take two competing roads, with like termini, but of unequal length. To forbid differential rates in such a case would direct all the business to the shorter road, i. e., the forbidding a road to charge less for the greater distance. If a navigable river competes with both roads, the enforcement of such a prohibition would shut off through business from both roads, because the low river rates would have to be met, and this would compel a raising of rates for intermediate points on the roads to make up the loss. The enforcement of the rule would tend to cause a combination of the transportation lines and create a monopoly.

LOCAL RATES.

Local traffic on railroads, except at competitive points, is subject to be determined by the cost and value of the service. The determination of competitive traffic on a like basis has not been attained in this country. The Regan bill prohibits the very means of accomplishing it. The consolidation of lines would destroy, in a measure, the greatest incentive to economy and a regard for the public, except where a governing board had power to enforce a division of traffic so as to prevent violent fluctuations. If farmers and merchants would invest somewhat in transportation securities it would be better for all parties. The rights of the shipper are just and reasonable rates to all, under like circumstances and similarly situated; the duties of the carrier are to make just charges for every service, and make no unjust discrimination against any person or place; to meet competing lines, and to manage the business without unjust interference on the part of the public.

The Commissioner here introduces an article on the principles governing railroad rates, written by M. de la Gournerie, Inspector-General of the French Corps of Bridges and Highways, published in the bulletin of the Society for the Encouragement of National Industry of February, 1879, and refers to it as a paper of the highest authority.

GENERAL DEDUCTIONS.

The general deductions of the Commissioner are:

1. Competition based upon transportation by water constitutes a controlling factor in regulating railroad rates on freight.

2. The extensive waterways of the State should be kept open and improved for the public use.

3. The navigation of the inland waters must not be embarrassed by grants of special privileges.

4. No water frontage, now under State control, should be alienated or allowed to pass into the hands of any transportation company.

5. Equal mileage rates are inexpedient and impracticable. Special rates at such points should be permitted, open to all shippers under like circumstances.

6. When competition does not exist, the only correct standard for determining rates is that founded on economics—cost to the carrier and value to the shipper of the service rendered.

7. The advantages arising from freight classification are all in favor of the producer and manufacturer of the cheaper and more bulky commodities of the country.

8. All transportation companies should be required to exhibit their rates at every station for the inspection of all shippers.

9. To prevent railway monopoly of the carrying trade the navigable waters should receive the immediate attention of the Government.

10. Governmental supervision over transportation companies should be directed to the preservation and further development of competing facilities; to giving publicity to any irregularities and unjust discriminations practiced; to the arbitrament of differences between shipper and carrier; to interposing between different companies which jointly perform through service; to afford better facilities than at present exist for the settlement of unjust charges, and to the enforcement of legal remedies for the correction of all transportation abuses.

11. The supervision authorized by the new organic law should not be so exercised as to relieve the common carrier from liabilities now imposed upon him by the common law, or to impose a concurrent responsibility upon the Government.

12. A uniform system of accounts for all railroad companies (except street railroads) doing business as common carriers should be enforced by the governing authority of the State.

SLEEPLESS.

Now let the hours pass onward as they choose;
Swift as a thought, or laggard in their flight;
A crowd of fancies, like a school let loose,
Will throng about us all this silent night.
Some will our hospitality abuse—
Leaving reluctantly at morning light,
While some will cheer us like a friendly face,
And others aid us in life's weary race.

We sleep and wake, and feel our strength return;
Sleep is the oil of life's machinery!
Our morning hopes do ever brightest burn,
At noon our burdens thickly round us lie;
And evening is no time in which to learn
The drift or end of ways long since passed by.
Sleep gathers up the strength dispersed by day,
And serves as staff and prop in every way.

And yet these wakeful nights are worth sometimes
Far more to us than those of dreamless sleep;
The joy-bells of the past ring out their chimes;
We catch faint glimpses of an unknown deep;
We fold the world's best music in our rhymes,
Our day dreams find their level; and we creep
Out of the fairy realms of conscious youth,
And clasp the mantle of eternal truth

It is recompense to lie and catch
Such holy thoughts as waken better life;
To know that angels softly lift the latch
And open our heart-cells, and loose the strife—
The evil passions that we kept to watch
The ills encountered—for the way is rife
With ills and evils—we, alas, are prone
To fling back dust for dust, and stone for stone.

How often in these sleepless, solemn nights,
Our better selves assert their strength and sway;
Our undimmed eyes see visions of fair hights
We had deemed inaccessible by day,
With paths defined in clear and rosy light,
From base to crown thro' all their winding way,
Life's lamp burns brighter—north winds have a charm!
We feel the strength of warriors in our arm!

—[Clara B. Heath.

NORTHERN NOTES.

Up-Country Brief Paragraphs of News.

Seattle has a Chess Club.

Slush, rain, snow and cold weather at Portland, Oregon.

The Walla Walla country shipped 75,000 tons of wheat this year.

Roseburg is making quite a number of substantial improvements.

General Lane celebrated his 78th birthday at Roseberg on the 14th of December.

The Oregon Steam Navigation Company have ordered all their boats on the upper Columbia into winter quarters.

Palouse *Gazette*: From present indications the Palouse country will soon be visited by a season of unprecedented prosperity.

The southern Oregon papers continue to be filled with accounts of the recent floods. Nearly every village reports more or less damage—bridges, fences, etc., washed out.

Roseburg *Star*: Notwithstanding the miserable condition of the roads, several teams from Jackson and Josephine counties have been loaded during the past week with freight for the merchants of that section.

The saloon men of Walla Walla contested the ordinance requiring them to close up at midnight, in the District Court last week. It was held by the Court that the city had no right to pass such an ordinance.

SOCIETY LIFE.

NOTES OF SOCIETY MATTERS AT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

The Fire in the Stewart Castle—General Grant's Receptions—A Reply to Criticism.

WASHINGTON, December 31, 1879.

The fire in the Stewart mansion last evening is the topic of conversation all over the city to-day. The public has always taken a deep and tragic interest in that splendid pile. The most imposing private residence in the city, it was erected in 1872—the costliest year since the war for building—and has stood tenantless and profitless for four or more years of its existence, the tomb of full $200,000 of dead and buried capital. It was too costly to secure a tenant. The Chinese Legation, among other parties, were obliged to forego the luxury of occupying it on account of the enormous rental. Fronting the Connecticut avenue circle, and but a few rods from the British Legation block, in the patrician "northwest end" of the city, its location is proudly eminent, and its towering architecture made it

AN AWFUL SPECTACLE OF BEAUTY

When the flames were raging through its upper portion. It looked like a splendid lost soul in the clutches of a demon. Much of the furniture was made to order in Europe, and the carpets and lace hangings were also imported and were very costly. These last, popular tradition has said, were rotting and a prey to moths from long disuse, only a servant or two being in charge during the owner's long absence. Every one was glad last June when the genial, popular mistress of the mansion came back to it, and put it in thorough repair, opening it to guests but a few weeks since. Only grate fires had been used till yesterday morning, when the enormous furnace was fired up, for the first time in four years—the little ceremony of putting water in the boiler being, it is said, omitted. The ironwork soon attained a white heat, the communications melted, and the pine woodwork—North Carolina pine, very pitchy—was not long in taking the hint to burn, the flames beginning in one of the upper rooms at the rear. With Mrs. Stewart were her sister (Mrs. Wood) and Miss Page, a sister of Mrs. Thomas Bryan, wife of a former District Commissioner. The latter lady and Mrs. Stewart had gone to spend the evening with Mrs. Bryan, a few blocks distant, but were summoned home by the flames. Mrs. Stewart found her kind neighbor, Sir Edward Thornton (the British Minister) and several members of his Legation on the spot, and in the midst of doing noble service in superintending the rescue of valuables, he took Mrs. Stewart and Miss Page on either arm to his own home as Lady Thornton's guests for the night. The six-year-old daughter, May Belle, was also taken there, and when she grows up she can have it to tell the other girls how mamma and herself, at the time of their great fire, were entertained for a day and two nights at the British Minister's. On to-morrow it is Mrs. Stewart's purpose to locate for the winter. She bears up wonderfully under the painful excitement, fortified in part perhaps by the comfortable knowledge that there was $70,000 insurance on the house and $30,000 on the furniture. The property is deeded to Mrs. Stewart and the insurance papers are made out to her. There is a mortgage of $28,000 on the place. To-day the interior looked like

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION.

Tables of the rarest Florentine mosaic, such as a skilled workman of that far land may have spent half a lifetime in working, and selected by Mrs. Stewart herself, in Europe, had been ruthlessly broken and crushed by the bevy of rough men who rushed in "to save things." Exquisite vases of marble, and statues of gods and goddesses lay in ignoble ruins. Drenched carpets and pianos, and costly wearing apparel utterly ruined, sickened the eye. The water which percolated in streams from the upper stories did almost as much damage on the main floor as the flames did above. About the sorriest sight was the little daughter's French governess bewailing her own cherished piano and the modest accumulations of trinkets that were endeared to her by long, slow years of garnering up. Her losses are unsecured by insurance. The firemen did gallant service; better was never seen; and when water was found to be scanty, District Commissioner Thomas P. Morgan, another near neighbor, gave orders to have all the water-cocks in the vicinity turned off, to add to the pressure. Very many have spoken to-day with friendly sympathy, of the ex-Senator away in California, and felicitated him upon the buoyant spirit that rallies so grandly from all reverses. Two elder daughters, both married, reside in San Francisco. Mrs. Hooker was handsome Bessie Stewart and had a brief gay bellehood and grand wedding here a few years since.

SAFEGUARDS.

By the burning of this mansion and the sadder Providence that removed Senator Chandler from life, two homes that were to have been centers of genial hospitality this winter have been closed. This is a misfortune to our social world. Much as "Washington Society" has been abused and undervalued by thoughless pens, it is a great safeguard in times of political turmoil. It lubricates the machinery of partisan strife. It is an effort in the direction of mutual brotherhood, and does away with much unwholesome rancor and friction.

Fernando Wood, in owning a home here and giving handsome entertainments, has done a good thing for the State he helps to represent. Assisted by his daughter, Mrs. Hickok, he gave a graceful evening reception to Miss Emma Thursby two weeks ago to-night, when she was here with her concert troupe. Cabinet officers, Senators, the Chief Justice and several of his associates, with ladies of their families, were among those who paid court to the gifted songstress on that occasion. One cannot help admiring the self-control and indomitable heart of that stiff, unbending old survivor of misfortune. Of many griefs his life has known, perhaps the very sharpest is the insanity of his young wife—an inmate, it is said, of a private retreat where his love provides bountifully for her wants.

SOCIETY NOTES.

Another New York city Congressman—a Republican I am glad to say—Hon. Levi P. Morton, head of the great banking firm of Morton & Drexel, has bought the historic Hooper mansion, 1501 H street, which the Hon. Samuel Hooper, the father-in-law of Charles Sumner, purchased from the Adams family years ago. Here have been given some of the most memorable banquets of the past; and Mr. and Mrs. Morton have rededicated the stately old house to the duties of hospitality. Their first entertainment was a dinner made to a little party of New York Congressmen three weeks ago; their second, a children's party Christmas week; their third, a dinner to General and Mrs. Grant, with sixteen guests invited to meet them, on Monday evening of this week. The house is a great, square mansion, facing the north front of Wormley's Hotel. Fifteen thousand dollars have been expended in repairs, and the great-roomed house, with its square central hall, large enough for a banquet room, has grown vital with warm colors and rich and tasteful furnishing. They keep a corps of French cooks in their cuisine, under an accomplished chef. This dinner given to General Grant was the last and most elaborate of three that was made for him during the three days of his stay, all being elegant. His host, General Beale, a former Minister to Austria, has a large and fine home on Lafayette Square. He and General Grant are long-time friends, and this visit was to him personally, the stipulation being that it should be private entirely. I saw General and Mrs. Grant, with their host, in their old pew at the Metropolitan M. E. Church on Sunday; and the following day, at General Beale's, I had the pleasure of asking his impression of

HIS CALIFORNIA RECEPTION.

He spoke earnestly and with evident feeling: "Few things in my life have touched me so deeply. It was so unexpected, and such a contrast to the struggling years I spent there when I was younger." He recurred to it again, mentioning the receptions both at San Francisco and Sacramento; and, more generally, at all points he visited on the Pacific coast. He recounted the pleasures of his Yosemite trip, mentioning—this to a little group of gentlemen near him—his driving the stage coach through the body of one of the big trees. General Beale told me that scarcely any of the brilliant scenes through which he had passed during his great journey seemed to have left so deep and cherished a memory as his reception on your own coast by his fellow-citizens—strangers, yet not strangers, but grateful to his sight after his long wanderings.

General Beale is a delightful host, and everything was done in perfection to make the Grants' visit restful and delightful. Even those Arabian horses, "Leopard" and "Linda," presented to the ex-President by the Sultan of Turkey, were brought in from the country to his stables in town, where their owner might see them as often as he wished. They are superbly formed creatures—iron-gray in color, and caressing in their manner, even to strangers. Their mild eyes seem always asking you to love them, but their ears and nostrils are full of fire and spirit.

The brief stay of Gen. and Mrs. Grant was full of delightful incidents. She seemed happy to be in Washington again; very many ladies called upon her, and she had a modest greeting for all. It was a graceful feature at Mr. Morton's—the portrait of the General, hanging in life-size opposite the front entrance upon the wall of that baronial-looking hall, dressed in the uniform of his rank, with hat on and field-glass in hand. It is a speaking likeness, and was painted just at the close of the war.

A REJOINDER.

Before finishing this letter it is due to myself that I allude to an ungracious and uncalled-for criticism upon me by name, in the RECORD-UNION of December 20th, by an Oregon correspondent, "C." I am gravely charged with having told my readers that Simeon B. Chittenden, an eminent Brooklyn Congressman, long a New York city importer, once ran for Mayor of Detroit. It was Hon. Zachariah Chandler of whom I wrote you this fact, as my too-ready critic will discover if he refers to his RECORD-UNION file. It would have been in better taste had he done so before rushing into print as a censor of a fellow-correspondent. In the sentence preceding the statement I made regarding Mr. Chandler, I had revised four compositor's rendering of Mr. Chittenden's first name. Hence my talented arraigner's confusion of ideas. With equal clearness he makes an imaginary point on my reference to General Jeff. C. Davis, to whose soldierly traits I both then and always have done kindly justice. *En passant*, I had a pleasant after-dinner interview with the General on that last and ill-fated visit to Washington, to preside at the meeting of the Army of the Cumberland. When I rose at its conclusion and bade him good evening, he said, with a warm grasp of his clay-cold hand, "Not good evening, but good night." He had already contracted the cold that resulted in his death, and was too ill to go to the Capitol ball that night. Yet I little dreamed, during our brief interchange of thought, how soon my grave though kindly interlocutor would be called to bid this warm and breathing world of men "Not good evening, but good night."

EMMA JANES.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"The Western" (G. I. Jones & Co., St. Louis) for January-February, 1880, is an interesting number of a magazine rapidly growing in popular favor. The contents are "My Lorelei," by Octave Thanet; "Women as Architects," by Martha N. McKay; "The Spelling Reform," by M. B. C. True; "Naganandа," by Wm. M. Bryant; "Book Reviews; "Current Notes."

From the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York, we have "Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine." The table of contents includes "Theatrical Reform: The 'Merchant of Venice' at the Lyceum;" "Reata; or What's in a Name"—Part IX.; "Progress;" "Bush-Life in Queensland"—Part I.; "Old Squires and New;" "The Broads and Rivers of Norfolk and Suffolk;" "A Liberal Address;" "Political Babies;" "The Late John Blackwood."

"St. Nicholas," for January (Scribner & Co., New York), is a fine number, and sure to delight the boys and girls of America, with all whom it is a great favorite. The table of contents is very long and includes an appetizing variety of solid and interesting matter, with wit, information, poetry, story and history. Even the very little folk are remembered, and a section of the magazine is given up wholly to matter suited for infantile minds. The illustrations are many, bright, and full of spirit.

From A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, we have the "International Review" for January, 1880. It presents the following valuable papers: "Rubens," II., with portrait by Flameng, by Philip Gilbert Hamilton; "The Islands of Okinawa," by Charles Lanman; "Two Poems," by F. W. Bourdillon; "Yellow Fever," by John S. Billings, M. D.; "The Service of Francis Lieber to Political Science and International Law," by Dr. J. C. Bluntschill; "Current Literature in France," by E. De Pressense; "William Cobbett," by Henry Cabot Lodge; "William Kingdon Clifford," by John Fiske; "Contemporary Literature;" "Recent English Books."

"The Wide Awake" (D. Lothrop & Co., Boston,) is upon our table for January, 1880. It is a bright and welcome number. Ella Furman, the editor, has catered most successfully to the tastes of the young people. The illustrations are especially good this month. The number comes with enlarged pages and a very choice list of articles, story, song, anecdote, and a useful chapter on art. The opening paper, "Us Boys and the Other Boy," is by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, and among the contributors are Mrs. S. M. B. Piatt, S. G. W. Benjamin, John Brownjohn, Clara Doty Bates, Louise Stockton, and other popular writers for the youth of the land, with whom the "Wide Awake" is a deserved favorite.

"The Brooklyn New Monthly Magazine," (W. W. Swayne, Brooklyn, N. Y.), is the title of a new candidate for favor in the magazine world, which presents its claims with the first month of the year. It is edited by Henry Morford. The first number is creditable to the taste and skill of the editor. The magazine evidently does not aim to move in so high a plane as the standard monthlies. It is lighter in tone, more gossipy, devoted more to modern fiction and chat than to science, metaphysics or progress in the arts. Its title page presents it as devoted especially to "literature, art, fashion and society." Its editorials are bright and cheerful, without being laborious, and possess that excellent quality, brevity. The contents are: "Brooklyn," by John Hay Furness; "A Deep Delusion," by Benj. P. Shillaber; "Common Sense Applied to Living," by M. H. Cobb; "Much Ado About Nothing Extraordinary—A Parlor Drama," by Augusta de Bubna; "The Siamese Twins—A Chapter of Biography," by William Linn Keese; "Paul Dubois' Runaway Daughter," by Mrs. Anna M. Pierce; "An Album-Rhyme—Off Color," by John Y. Harris; "At the Morgue," by Mrs. E. C. Foster; "Almost a Countess—A Romance of the Prince of Wales Visit to America, 1860," "Daddy's Content," by Lawrence Kyrle Donovan; "Checking and Guiding—A Study in Morals," by the Grey-Bearded Boy; "An Alpine-Crystal Romance," by the Editor; "The Tarpey Cause Celebre," by the Governor.

"The American Art Review" is the title of a new art journal devoted to the practice, theory, history and archæology of art. It is from the press of Estes & Lauriat, Boston, New York and Chicago. S. R. Koehler is managing editor, with William C. Prime, LL. D., New York, and Charles C. Perkins, A. M., Boston, as associates. It is a quarto of 48 pages, elegantly printed and accompanied by etchings of a high order. It publishes as its list of contributors a column of names of the most prominent artists, art educators and art patrons and critics in the land. The articles in the opening number are: "The Works of the American Etchers," by S. R. Koehler; "The Washington Monument," Henry Van Brunt; "The Public and Private Collections of the United States," William Macleod; "Ancient Literary Sources of the History of the Formative Arts among the Greeks," Charles C. Perkins; "Praxiteles' Hermes with the Infant Dionysos," Thomas Davidson; "The Material of American Landscape," W. Mackey Laffan; "Impressions in France;" "Bibliography;" "American Art Chronicle." The illustrations embrace three fine etchings by Gifford Smillie and Rajon, with twenty-eight engravings in the text, heliogravures, woodcuts and photo-engravings. The magazine starts upon a scale of high excellence. Its standard is set loftily, but the initial number, the names of the contributors promised and the reputation of the publishers, constitute guarantees that the journal will not only fit the field it has entered upon but will take a leading part at once. It is certainly a splendid issue, and it is to be hoped the venture will receive such support that all subsequent numbers may be brought fully up to the standard of the specimen before us. The history and archæology of art in America has been a neglected subject among publishers, and the effort to make the public study of it a special one deserves every encouragement. The "Review" promises to treat contemporaneous art, but to avoid becoming the organ of any school. If it will but attune all its after pages to this key-note it cannot but succeed, for a perfectly independent presentation of the claims of all the schools in a regularly-appearing American art journal is a most desirable thing, and all art journals adopting a like rule deserve well of art lovers.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

HOME ADORNMENT AND DOMESTIC ECONOMY—ALL AROUND THE HOUSE.

[Correspondents of this department will not be limited in their epistles, but conciseness is preferable, and but one side of a page must be written upon. Questions pertinent to this department will be answered in this column.]

Useful Information.

HANGING BASKET.—This is indeed an "age of progress," and I am glad to see that it comes home to us in our domestic arrangements and the adornment of our homes. I was very much interested by Miss Crane's description of a rustic box, in the November number of the *Horticulturist*, and I expect to profit by her example. Allow me to suggest a very pretty hanging basket, a description of which I have never seen in print. Take a large cocoanut shell with the top sawed off, as is usually done for eating the meat, and drill three small holes at equal distance around the top edge. After this, drill quite a number of small holes in the bottom and sides. Into each of the three holes first drilled insert the end of a piece of small wire, leaving each piece two or three feet long; join these, twisting them together at the end, forming a loop or ring, and the basket is complete. The object of the holes in the side and bottom is to prevent the shell from cracking. Care should be taken to thoroughly moisten the dirt before putting it in the basket, as the danger of cracking will thereby be lessened. Owing to putting the dirt in dry, my first effort resulted in breaking the shell. Other adornments might be added in accordance with the taste of the constructor.—[T. S. Price, in the Horticulturist.

USE OF THE POTATO.—In France farina is largely used for culinary purposes. The famed gravies, sauces and soups are largely indebted for their excellence to that source, and its bread and pastry equally so, while a great deal of the so-called cognac, imported into England from France, is the product of the potato. Throughout Germany the same uses are common. In Poland the manufacture of spirits from the potato is a most extensive trade. "Stettin brandy," well known in commerce, is largely imported into England, and is sent from thence to many of her foreign possessions as the produce of the grape, and is placed on many a table of England as the