WASHINGTON GOSSIP.

The Week's Doings at the National Capital.

RATS IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

RATS! Rats!! Rats!!! That is the cry at the White House, and the problem is how to be rid of them.

This is not intended facetiously to refer to the throngs that swarm the Executive Mansion and pester the life half out of the Chief Magistrate for gifts of public office where the duties are few, the labors light and the cash returns large, but I just mean Rats; rodentia, genus *Mus*.

These swarm throughout the great building in greater numbers than ever the office-seekers did, and are a blamed sight more cheeky and familiar. I know that I am open to suspicion in making this remarkably-broad assertion, but from some observation and considerable hearsay I feel that I am warranted in the statement, if only to give an idea of the legions upon legions of the rodents that scoot in promiscuous manner all over the property.

They have been in full possession of the basement for fully 30 years, and as long ago as when Gen. Grant first became President they had become so numerous and aggressive that Mrs. Grant interposed her authority as Matron of the household and demanded the removal of the White House stable, which was then a long, low building, one story in hight, that was an extension eastward from the building just under the East Room windows, as the conservatory projects out from the west end. Gen. Grant, like Mrs. Grant, thought that the proximity of the stables had attracted the rodents, as stables usually do, and the present stable was built far enough away to put an end to the trouble, as was thought.

It was a mistake. The removal was too late. It is probable that originally it was the stables that attracted the rats, but a long time before

SHE SAT DOWN ON IT.

the removal the knowing vermin had tasted of the better grub to be found in the main building and had taken quarters there.

Rats are wise creatures; you never have to step the second time on the tail of one to teach him to keep his unnecessary but ornamental appendage out from under your feet. When the first colony moved into the main building and began an administration of their own, for their own good instead of that of the general public, the menials in their rude manner used to go skurrying about utterly regardless of the rights of way of the new colony, and were even known to chuck chunks of coal or shy saucepans and skillets at them, accompanied with bitter personal remarks.

There seemed really to exist an animosity on the part of the sable servants of the mansion toward the rodents, and it is stated that on one occasion a fat female cook, new to the place, stepped on an aged *Mus* that had resided in the house much longer than she had, and had a large family of children and several dozen consorts. Then the fiendish fat cook emitted a loud yell from her rotundity, and sat plump down on her victim. The story goes—and Serg't Dinsmore tells it, to prove its truth—that the poor rat was so mortified that she died right there.

I believe Dinsmore, because he is on duty in the official residence of the Nation to head off cranks, watch newspaper men and prevent lying; that is all he has to do, except to look pretty when tourist ladies go there, and show them through the Blue Parlor, letting on that it is against the rules. But the Sergeant is not a rodent, so I will resume the subject.

As long ago as when Mr. Johnson was President, the basement swarmed with thousands of rats, that had constructed a net work of tunnels and nests beneath the brick pavements and even underneath the massive walls, that enabled them to easily outwit any and all schemes against their extermination, capture or eviction.

When the servants were busy in the kitchen, they came out and played tag in the laundry and through the dimly-lighted halls; but when evening came, and the basement was deserted by the bipeds, they held grand balls and picnics everywhere. They had side-doors opening from their subterranean residences that led into every room, and they took stock of everything eatable that could be found; and ate it up with gusto and dispatch.

After the rodents colonized in the building had built their homes and promenades, and raised immense families, they became like unto

"HAVE I GOT 'EM AGAIN?"

the Roman people in the latter days of the Empire, and so pampered by their prosperity, that they wouldn't deign to touch the stale bread left to soak for the bread pudding, the cold mush set out to cool for frying, or the cold potatoes saved up to stew over for breakfast, but took their pick of roast meats, pate-a-fois and cookies saved over from State dinners. Dinsmore tells that when ex-Private Crump, 23d Ohio, was Steward of the White House, under his old Colonel, President Rutherford B. Hayes, a banquet committee of the older rats used to examine the Steward's books each night to see what would be served for dinner the next day, and report to the full house; these reports were privileged and could be made at any time, whether there was a quorum present or not.

In Mr. Johnson's time the intruders had begun to feel as much at home as the Normans did in England a century after William's time, and used to hold their soirees in the grand vestibule up-stairs. That was bad, for there were persons resident then in the White House and members of the President's family to whom the presence of rats—real or imaginary—was annoying, and decidedly unpleasant to the nerves. One of these persons was given at times to a devotion to exhilarants that was persistent if not praiseworthy, and on such occasions was wont to hie away to a favorite retreat, where he usually remained until he was hunted up and carted home. On his return after one such hiatus in his alleged official duties, the sad-faced President remonstrated, and urged that when his malarial attacks came on, he should seek his own quarters and stay there.

The weary one dimly eyed Mr. Johnson, and replied:

"Not much, Mr. President; there's so —— many rats running around here that I can't tell whether I've got 'em or not, and don't know when to begin on bromide." It was sad, but it was true. (Dinsmore does not tell this story.)

Of more recent years the growth of the colony of which I write has so increased that they

"O, MY!"

needed more room, and the niggardly conduct of Congress in failing to build a new Executive residence has so crowded them that they have taken possession of the comfortable spaces between the ceiling and floors of the upper-stories, and have been using the attic for a gymnasium and 100-yard race track. They have lots of fun promenading around the corridors and rooms up-stairs, and make things pretty lively at times for the inmates. It's a mighty good thing for a Private Secretary to be a Sunday-school man if he intends to stay at the White House to recover from a severe surgical operation. I know lots and lots of people that would never recover in the world if they had to undergo such an experience as Private Secretary Halford did recently. Several times of recent years the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds has torn up the floors and rebuilt pavements and sewers, but all to no effect. The rats infest the pantries, the store-rooms, and even the dining and sleeping-rooms.

Several years ago a funny story was told of a belle that was one of the guests at a dinner party given by that prince of hosts, President Arthur. The dinner was progressing joyously, when suddenly, this beautiful girl leaped to her feet, thence to her chair-seat, and, grasping her dainty skirts about her dainty ankles, yelled bloody murder, fire and rats, while at the same time a veteran rodent that had been picking up a slight lunch under the table, where the guests had dropped the bread out of their folded napkins, slid rapidly, though gracefully, over under the sideboard, and thence out of the banquet hall before he could be headed off. The rat was half scared to death, and told one of his sisters-in-law "that that was just like a blamed woman, to yell as if the top of her head was coming off." An elderly Senator held the young woman so tight that she could neither faint nor get down off the chair, and she told him he was an old rat himself, after the excitement was all over.

After that Col. Rockwell, then Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds, put about half a ton of warranted sure-kill rat poison all over the house, but the only effect was to kill a pet poodle that belonged to the boss laundress, and it was noticed that the rats were growing fatter.

Col. Oswald H. Ernst, the new Superintendent, has been reading a lot of fairy stories of how professional rat-catchers clear out the offensive rodents, and has made a contract with a New York man in that business to clear the White House. The professional has started in on a contract of $10 a day, to continue until the rats are all gone, and is using ferrets, terrier dogs, rat-tongs, gloved hands, nerve and patience. Last week he slipped a ferret into a hole that promised good results, and sat down to wait; that is where his patience comes in, for the ferret has not yet put in a return, and there are those who believe that the rats got acquainted with him, gave him a grand lunch and induced him to marry and settle down with them. They are cousins, you see, both animals belonging to the *Mus* family, and the inference has a shadow of possibility. Still, the rat-catcher has a good job, and the rats are still having a good time.

(P. S.—Dinsmore says it was the rats, instead of the Mugwumps, that used to make Mr. Cleveland go away so often on fishing trips; but then I fear Dinsmore may be prejudiced, because Grover put a New York man in his place four years ago.)

"Who said rats?"

CAPT. GRIFFIN'S RESIGNATION.

Capt. Eugene Griffin, who resigned from the Army Oct. 15 as Captain of Engineers, was not a veteran of the late war, but is so intimately related to prominent ones that were, that a brief sketch will interest the reader.

Capt. Griffin is a younger brother of that brilliant soldier, Gen. Griffin, of the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, who was rewarded after the war for his services with the Colonelcy of the new 26th U. S. Inf., and died during the yellow fever epidemic of 1867 while commanding a military district at Galveston, Tex.

The Captain, who is a native of Maine, entered at West Point in 1871, and graduated in 1875 at the head of his class, thus securing a commission in the Corps of Engineers. (The next ranking graduate was Capt. Willard Young, of Utah, a son of Brigham Young, and now in the Engineers.) In 1879, when he gained his promotion to First Lieutenant, young Griffin was ordered to Governor's Island, New York Harbor, in charge of the responsible work of building a seawall around the island.

About that time the Headquarters of the Military Division of the Atlantic, commanded by Maj.-Gen. W. S. Hancock, was removed from New York City to Governor's Island, and the young Engineer attracting the attention of that distinguished commander, he was made a member of Gen. Hancock's military family. Gen. Hancock and Mrs. Hancock having before that lost their only daughter, they had adopted the eldest one of the daughters of Col. John Hancock, of this city, who is a brother of the late General, and was a member of his staff during the war.

Capt. Griffin and Miss Hancock became attached to each other, and their affection meeting the approval of her own and adopted parents, Miss Hancock was married in the Fall of 1882 to Capt. Griffin, and they now reside permanently in this city.

During President Arthur's Administration, and some time before Gen. Hancock's death, Capt. Griffin (then a Lieutenant yet) was ordered to Washington for duty as one of the Assistants to the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia, and had immediate charge of the streets and pavements.

While on that duty he made a special study of modern systems of pavements, and made an extended official trip to Europe and to the principal cities in this country to study the subject, and his report of his observations is to-day the accepted authority in such matters.

In 1885, having been promoted in 1886 to Captain, he obtained a leave of absence for a year to accept the offer of an asphalt paving company to become its General Superintendent of all its work in this country and Europe, and after the expiration of this leave tendered his resignation to enable him to continue in that employment.

ARMY AND NAVY ORDERS.

The record of the Retiring Board in the case of Commander George T. Davis, recommended for retirement for incapacity, the result of an incident of the service, has been submitted to the President for his action; also the record in the case of Lieut.-Col. George W. Collier, Marine Corps, to be retired under similar circumstances.

The Navy Department Library and Office of Naval War Records, heretofore attached to the Bureau of Navigation, have been transferred to the office of the Secretary.

Commander F. M. Green has been ordered to the command of the Nautical Schoolship Saratoga.

Lieut.-Commander William H. Brownson is to take command of the Petrel.

Lieut. Thomas D. Griffin has been ordered to duty in the Bureau of Navigation.

Commander Henry Glass has been detached as a member of the Board of Organization.

Commander R. P. Leary, Lieut.-Commanders R. N. Berry and John C. Rich, and Ensign R. P. Schwerin have been detached from the Naval War College and placed on waiting orders.

Lieut. W. L. Field has been transferred from the Naval War College to the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting.

Lieut. E. M. Mason has been transferred from the Bureau of Ordnance to the Petrel.

Chief Engineer Philip Inch has been transferred from the Washington Navy Yard to be Inspector of Shafting at the Vulcan Iron Works, Chicago. He succeeds Chief Engineer John Lowe, who is placed on waiting orders.

Commodore T. F. Jewett has been ordered to duty on the Board of General Organization, Drill and Tactics of the Navy.

First Lieut. H. C. Fisher, Marine Corps, has been ordered to the Marine Barracks, Norfolk, Va.

First Lieut. H. G. Ellsworth has been ordered to the Marine Barracks, Mare Island, Cal.

First Lieut. O. C. Berryman has been ordered to the Marine Barracks, Portsmouth, N. H.

Leave of absence for one year, with leave to go abroad, has been granted Chaplain J. S. Wallace.

Michael Wozan has been appointed Acting Boatswain.

Quartermaster-General Holabird will visit Elmira, N. Y., on public business.

Capt. George N. Burford, 18th Inf., has been ordered to report to Gen. Wesley Merritt, President of the Army Retiring Board at Fort Leavenworth.

The General Court-Martial convened at Columbus Barracks June 8, 1889, is dissolved and the following detail made for a new one: Maj. Van Buren Hubbard, Surgeon; Capt. Augustus A. De Loffre, Assistant-Surgeon; Capt. John L. Cim, Assistant Quartermaster; Capt. Geo. S. Wilson, 12th Inf.; Capt. Leon A. Matile, 11th Inf.; First Lieut. Charles L. Hodges, 25th Inf.; First Lieut. George B. Walker, 6th Inf.; First Lieut. Leven C. Allen, 16th Inf., Judge-Advocate.

TO BRING GRANT TO ARLINGTON.

The family of Gen. Grant have stated that the remains of the General will be removed from New York to Arlington Cemetery if there is any decided expression of opinion and action on the part of the G.A.R. During the recent Conclave of the Knights Templar the beautiful Cemetery at Arlington was visited by many thousands, and the Superintendent reports that nearly every one asked to be shown the grave of Gen. Sheridan, and then expressed sorrow that the greatest Captain of the Union army was not lying by the side of Sheridan. Arlington is becoming the Mecca of America, and thousands visit this sacred spot to draw lessons of patriotism, and here among the soldiers whom he led into battle should repose the remains of Gen. Grant. With this object in view, at the last Encampment of John A. Rawlins Post, No. 1, Department of the Potomac, it being the 23d anniversary of the formation of said Post, it was unanimously resolved that, in the opinion of that Post, the remains of Gen. Grant should be removed to Arlington Cemetery, and requests all other Posts in the United States to take similar action, and to send notice to the National Headquarters through Department Headquarters.

ARMY AND NAVY.

Maj.-Gen. George Crook, Col. Thos. F. Barr, Military Secretary to Secretary of War Proctor, and Maj. Robert H. Hall, Acting Inspector-General of the Department of Arizona, Commissioners of the Military Prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., have been directed to meet at the prison Oct. 29 to make the semi-annual inspection which is required by the Revised Statutes.

Army officers are greatly interested in a longevity ration case which is now pending before the Second Comptroller of the Treasury, which involves the question of pay for longevity rations for almost every officer in the Army. The total amount of all the claims involved is about $1,500,000. When the first claim was presented it was disallowed. The Court of Claims, however, decided that officers were entitled under the law to longevity rations, which decision was affirmed by the Supreme Court. The Second Comptroller still hesitates to allow the claims, as he is doubtful whether the decision of the Supreme Court operates to reopen the accounts, which have already been settled. The Second Comptroller has devoted much time and thought to the case, and has finally written to the Attorney-General for his opinion on the question.

The United States Cruiser Thetis has just returned to San Francisco from Alaska, after a very extraordinary cruise last Summer, during which she sailed along the entire coast of Alaska, past Point Barrow, and up to the mouth of the Mackenzie River in the Arctic Ocean. A fleet of whaling vessels went with the Thetis. Ice caught the cruiser near Point Barrow, and she barely escaped destruction. But two exploring vessels have ever reached the Mackenzie River, and no Government vessel ever got that far northward before.

COMMODORE RAMSAY.

President Harrison last week did himself credit in appointing Commodore Francis M. Ramsay, U. S. Navy, to be Chief of the Bureau of Navigation in the Navy Department, to succeed Commodore John G. Walker.

In making this appointment he has honored an excellent officer of high professional standing as a sailor and fighter, who possesses rare qualifications for the position he is to fill. This Bureau has charge of all details of service in the Navy, and its Chief should be a man who is a good judge of others and who is also strictly impartial; for in no office in the Navy Department can so much injustice be done by partiality in distributing the details of service.

"Coburging," as it is known in the service, has been carried to such an extent—or rather been permitted by Chiefs of this Bureau in times past—as to create dissension between officers and ill-feeling on the part of those unjustly thrust aside. It is in the knowledge of the writer where a case in point caused the loss to the service of an excellent officer of high professional standing. A vessel was being fitted for a distant cruise on a station that is not a favorite in the service, and first one and then another officer ordered to her rushed with his friends to the Department and used influence to have the disliked orders revoked. At last it was suggested that Lieut. Blank be ordered, for he never was known to question an order, and although he had not long before returned from a full cruise and was entitled to a home detail that would permit him to be with his family for a time, and that had been promised him, he was ordered to the ship. It was the "last straw" in this case, and he promptly forwarded his resignation in his just indignation at such treatment. Such cases will never be likely to occur during the administration of Commodore Ramsay.

The new Chief is of a thoroughly military family, and is the eldest son of the late Gen. George D. Ramsay, Chief of Ordnance, U. S. Army, who was retired in 1864 and died in the Summer of 1882. He was born in this city in 1835; was appointed Midshipman in 1850, promoted to Passed Midshipman in 1856, and to Lieutenant in January, 1858. When the new grades were added to the Navy in 1862 he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander, and commanded the ironclad Choctaw in Admiral Porter's Mississippi fleet until the Fall of 1864, taking distinguished part in a number of heavy engagements. In September, 1864, he was transferred to command of the gunboat Unadilla, in the North Atlantic fleet, where he took part in both battles at Fort Fisher, the capture of Wilmington and the subsequent capture of Richmond.

He was promoted to Commander in July, 1866, to Captain Dec. 1, 1877, and to Commodore in June last, since which time he has been commanding the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

One of his brothers, Lieut. Douglas Ramsay, was appointed in the 1st Art. in 1855, and was killed in action at the first Bull Run while commanding his battery. Capt. Joseph Gales Ramsay, 2d Art., another brother, was appointed in the Army in August, 1861, and distinguished himself in the light artillery. Still another brother, Capt. George D. Ramsay, jr., was appointed in the 1st Art. in 1863, and became a Captain of Ordnance; dying here in 1878.

PRESERVING OUR HARBORS.

An affidavit has been sent to the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, to the effect that while the steamer Bombay was passing through the Swash Channel, New York Harbor, Oct. 8, a constant stream of ashes was being shoveled into the water. It seems that the work of deepening the channels of New York Harbor have been greatly impeded by the dumping of ashes by passing steamships, garbage, etc., and this in violation of the law of the United States and of State of New York. It has, therefore, been determined to put a stop to this practice, and the Department of Justice has been called on for an opinion. The penalty is a fine of from $250 to $2,500 and imprisonment; and it is proposed to give the offenders the fullextent of the law.

THE NEW POSTAGE STAMPS.

The contract for furnishing adhesive stamps for the four years beginning Jan. 1 next, has been awarded by Postmaster-General Wanamaker to the American Bank Note Co. of New York, the lowest bidder. The award was made for stamps of reduced size, about one-eighth smaller than those in present use. The designs will be changed to conform to the reduction in size and new engravings made throughout. The new contract also calls for some changes in colors. The one-cent stamp will continue to be printed in blue; the two-cent stamp, now green, will be bright carmine, while changes will be made in the colors of some of the other denominations.

TO PROTECT THE MAILS.

The Postoffice Inspectors have been in session at the Postoffice Department for the past week considering the problem of how to improve their means of detecting fraud and theft in the mail service and render the transit of valuable property more safe. They have been trying to find an improved form of envelope for registered packages which cannot be opened and rifled without being entirely destroyed, thus enabling them to better trace the loss of a package directly to the guilty man. Nearly 100 samples have been submitted, but so far none of them have proven satisfactory, as even the best of them could, in the hands of an expert, be opened, rifled of its contents, sealed up again, and sent on without giving any indication of having been tampered with. An envelope used in the English service is the best that has been presented, and it may be adopted by the Department.

VETERANS APPOINTED QUARTERMASTERS.

Two veterans of the late war received tardy recognition last week for long service, in being appointed Captains and Assistant Quartermasters in the Army.

President Harrison seems to believe that it is due to the service that the staff vacancies shall be filled from the Army instead of by appointment from civil life, as he is authorized to do if he chooses, and his action in these cases has been received with great satisfaction by Army officers generally.

Capt. Theodore E. True, who is a native of Illinois, entered the service in April, 1861, as Corporal in the 7th Ill., and five days after his three-months' term was up he re-enlisted as Sergeant in Co. D, 41st Ill. He was promoted to Second Lieutenant in February, 1862, and Nov. 28, 1863, was discharged to accept the commission of Captain, 6th U. S. Colored Art., which he resigned in September, 1864. In July, 1866, he was appointed Second Lieutenant, 4th U. S. Inf., and served nearly 10 years in that grade before being promoted to First Lieutenant, when he was made Adjutant of the regiment. He remained as Adjutant until 1881, and now, by selection and appointment, gains the rank he held just 26 years ago, and after nearly 14 years of service in the one grade of First Lieutenant. He succeeds Maj. James H. Lord, who was promoted Oct. 4, on the death of the late Gen. Asa P. Blunt.

Col. John McE. Hyde, First Lieutenant and Adjutant, 8th Inf., who succeeds the late Col. George H. Cook as Captain and Assistant Quartermaster, is a New Yorker who served as private in Co. A, 71st N. Y. militia, in the first three-months' service, and in the following January was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the 38th N. Y. He was promoted to First Lieutenant in June, 1863, and in the following December was transferred with the same rank to the 39th N. Y., in which he was promoted to Major in January, 1865, and held that position when he was mustered out with the regiment the following May. He was brevetted Lieutenant-Colonel for gallantry at the battle of Cold Harbor, and Colonel for gallantry in front of Petersburg. On his return home he found civil life irksome, and in the Fall of 1867 accepted a commission as Second Lieutenant, 33d U. S. Inf. When the Army was reduced in 1869 he was transferred to the 8th Inf., and promoted to First Lieutenant in 1878. He was appointed Adjutant of the regiment by Gen. Kautz in May, 1886. It is singular that in more than 28 years of almost continuous service he has worn the uniform of every grade of commissioned officer but that to which he has just been appointed.

GEN. "BOB" GRANGER.

Gen. Robert S. Granger (retired), U. S. Army, arrived here last week with Mrs. Granger on their semi-annual visit, flitting this time from their old-time home in Zanesville, O., to the southward to avoid the cold of a Northern Winter. Gen. Granger is a very hearty man in general physique for his years (he went to West Point in 1833), but his advancing years make the Winter in the North too severe for him. Each year of the past 10 the General and Mrs. Granger leave Zanesville for Washington in October, and their stay here depends upon the weather. If the sun is bright and warm, they sometimes stay as late as the holidays; but if storms and cold set in, they are off like a flock of migratory birds by the next train or steamer. Fort Monroe is usually the first stopping-place to the southward, but as the Winter brings cold winds they are off again, to North or South Carolina, then to Macon, to Thomasville and St. Augustine. By the time the robins begin peering around the grass plots here for Spring food, the General packs up and begins his easy journey back, reaching here about the middle of April to stay until the heat drives him to his home in the cool hills of the beautiful Muskingum Valley. It is a very pleasant way to spend the declining days of a long and busy life, and the veteran General tells me he enjoys it very much, after his long service. They will be here probably for two weeks yet.

NEW APPOINTEES.

The President made the following appointments during the past week:

Edward T. Green, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for New Jersey.

Alfred E. Buck, of Georgia, to be Marshal of the United States for the Northern District of Georgia.

Joseph W. Ady, of Kansas, to be Attorney of the United States for the District of Kansas.

Albert M. Lea, of Mississippi, to be Attorney of the United States for the Southern District of Mississippi.

CHAT ABOUT PEOPLE.

Miss Annette Williamson, daughter of Gen. J. A. Williamson, was married on Thursday last at St. John's Church to Passed Assistant Engineer Warner Baldwin Bayley, United States Navy, in the presence of a large and fashionable audience. The bride was richly and tastefully dressed, and is one of the prettiest girls in society in Washington.

A nervous gentleman from the West called on Secretary Rusk last week, with a lighted cigar in his mouth. He wanted to talk and use both hands at the same time, and what to do with the cigar puzzled him, until he thought of depositing it over his ear. Secretary Rusk asked him he was not a bookkeeper, and he answered that he was.

Miss Maria Raum, daughter of Gen. Green B. Raum, Commissioner of Pensions, was married to Lieut. Franklin B. Moses, United States Marine Corps, on Wednesday last. Gen. Raum gave the bride away, and after the ceremony resumed his duties at the Pension Office.

VETERANS IN THE CITY.

Maj. William P. Atwell, Captain (retired), U. S. Army, wisely went "down to Maine" last June to pass the Summer on that rocky and cool coast, but he returned to Washington last week and will remain here during the Winter. He is one of the "boy soldiers" of the rebellion, for he was too young to go out when the war began, and finally, in the Spring of 1864, when his friends found him determined to don the blue, they procured him, when he was only 18, a commission as First Lieutenant in the 37th Wisconsin. His military career in the war was brief and brilliant; he was mustered in May 13, 1864, lost his right leg, close to the hip, while leading his company in the assault of July 30 on the works at Petersburg, and was mustered out Nov. 22, 1864, for his disability, but wearing the Major's leaves that represented two brevets given him for his gallantry. In January, 1867, he was commissioned Second Lieutenant in one of the Regular regiments provided for disabled officers and men, and when the army was reduced in 1870 was retired as a Captain for having been in command of his company when disabled. Since then he has been part of the time a Consul in Germany.

Gen. James A. Williamson, President of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad Company. Gen. Williamson's home is now in New York City. Some time ago THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE said that the General, when he was the Adjutant of the 4th Iowa, was requested by all the officers of the regiment to resign. This was just before the battle of Pea Ridge, and was because Adjutant Williamson proposed that every man and officer in his regiment should do his duty. He refused to resign, however, alleging that there was a battle to be fought, and that he would be disgraced at home if he complied with the request. Therefore he went into action supposing that some of his own men who might have taken a dislike to him because of his rigid discipline, would shoot him from behind. Every old soldier knows how many of these threats he has heard, and I venture to assert that there was never an instance where an officer, no matter how severe and unjust he may have been, was ever killed or wounded by his men intentionally. The writer can say that he does know of one case where a Colonel of a Union regiment met his death at the hands of his own men. This was Col. Worthington, 5th Iowa, in front of Corinth, Miss. But the Colonel got outside his pickets, who had instructions to shoot at anything without challenging. After the battle of Pea Ridge every officer of the 4th Iowa united in a petition for the promotion of Williamson. He had shown such courage and good sense in action, that the petty shortcomings of which he had been accused sunk into insignificance, and he became the hero of the regiment, one of the best in the trans-Mississippi army. Instead of resigning he was promoted to Major, and soon became Colonel of the regiment. He commanded a brigade for several years, and was brevetted Brigadier-General for gallantry. He finally was recognized by his superiors, and was made Brigadier-General. After the war he practiced law in Des Moines, Iowa, but had little success, luck going against him all the time. One of his most intimate and best friends once said that if you would give Williamson a chicken-pie to open, he would undoubtedly cut either the back or the neck. But the General's time came when he was appointed Commissioner of the Land Office by Gen. Grant. When he left that place he was placed in charge of the Land Department of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad, and he did such good work in that position that the Directors of the road have made him President of the company.

Theodore Feldstein, Captain, 68th N. Y., 266 Grand street, New York City.

Capt. Charles Porter, 8th U. S. Inf., who is here on sick leave from Fort Niobrara, Dak., is visiting his father-in-law, Col. John D. Wilkins (retired), U. S. Army, at No. 1923 G street, and will remain about a month longer. He first entered the service in the 5th Inf. in April, 1858, and was promoted to Second Lieutenant in the Fall of 1863. In 1870 he was transferred to the 8th Inf., and has now been a Captain for more than 17 years.

Maj. J. M. McGill, 5th Ind. Cav. and 10th Tenn. Cav., Valparaiso, Ind.

RECENT LITERATURE.

A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION IN OPTICAL TELEGRAPHY. By Lieut. John P. Finley, Signal Corps, U. S. A. Published by J. H. Soule, Washington, D. C. Price 75 cents.

The invaluable service rendered by the Signal Corps during the war is well known, and all over the world the utility of the optical telegraph has been confirmed in the most decided manner. The radical changes now being effected in the handling of great bodies of men, as represented in the armies of powerful nations, necessitates the employment of means most effective in accomplishing these changes with certainty and celerity. This little manual has been prepared for the use of the National Guard of the United States. Its construction, while embracing essentially all the important forms of apparatus and methods of instruction and application authorized for the work of the Signal Corps of the army, involves further much important information based upon the experience and investigations of the best Signal Corps organizations in Europe. It is well illustrated by cuts of the different instruments and apparatus that have been and are now in use, from the old flag system to the latest heliograph and the helio-telegraph for night work.

TWO RUNAWAYS AND OTHER STORIES. By Harry Stillwell Edwards. Published by the *Century* Co., New York, and for sale by Robert Beall, Washington. Price $1.50.

The hosts of readers who have admired the sketches and stories of Mr. Edwards in the *Century* Magazine, will pick up with renewed interest this embodiment of some of his former writings and other new ones, in book form. The author's own grace of diction adds a charm and freshness to the effectiveness in humor and dramatic situation with which his thorough acquaintance with the dialects, superstitions, traditions and customs of the people of the South enables him to treat his subjects. The collection includes, beside "Two Runaways," "Sister Todhunter's Heart," "Elder Brown's Backslide," "Mine—A Plot," and "De Valley and De Shadder."

Magazines.

National Poultry and Pets, published by Charles Caughling at Toledo, O., has shown marked improvement in the last few numbers, and is a valuable little paper. It has a new outside cover now, and is brighter and more attractive in many ways. Price 25 cents a year.

Mr. Herbert Ward, whose important service in the Congo Free State, in Africa, is well known, and who left there only last Spring, has written an article for *Scribner's Magazine* of the utmost interest, describing this wonderful country along the Congo River, which has lately been so much discussed all over the world. Mr. Ward occupied a number of important positions, and had innumerable adventures during his years of residence on the Congo. Having so recently left there, his narrative will contain the latest and most authoritative information. The article will be fully illustrated from photographs taken by Mr. Ward.

A passage in the "Life of Lincoln," to be found in the November *Century*, shows as nothing else can how great a friend was lost to the South when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. It is the first publication ever made of the draft of a message and proclamation which the President submitted to his Cabinet on Feb. 5, 1865. In it he proposed the payment of 400,000,000 as an indemnity to slaveholders, complete pardon for political offenders, and the release of confiscated property, except under certain circumstances. Such magnanimity was, however, too much for his councilors, who "unanimously disapproved." Along with the document is given a full account of this best kept of Cabinet secrets.

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Joseph Jefferson.

The history of this magazine has been one of constant growth since its beginning nineteen years ago, and its serial successes from "The Great South" papers, in 1873, to the War Papers, the Lincoln Life, and George Kennan's series on "Siberia and the Exile System" have been unprecedented in the history of magazines. The November number begins a new volume, the plans for which include the publication of the long-expected

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

JOSEPH JEFFERSON,

first chapters of which—full of delightful reminiscences of the great actor's boyhood and richly illustrated—are in the November number. Here, also, begin the

NOVELS

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON AND AMELIA E. BARR.

Mr. Stockton's is a story, by the author of "The Lady, or the Tiger?" describing the remarkable voyage of the *Merry Chanter*; Mrs. Barr's is a powerful love story of the days of Cromwell, by the author of "Jan Vedder's Wife." The first of the

"PRESENT-DAY PAPERS,"

BY BISHOP POTTER, SETH LOW AND OTHERS,

is printed in this number—a series of discussions of timely social questions by prominent men who are associated for this purpose. In December the series by Prof. Fisher of Yale, on "The Nature and Method of Revelation," will begin. Accounts of the latest discoveries at the Lick Observatory, by Prof. Holden, and illustrated articles on "Prehistoric America," by Prof. Putnam of Harvard, will appear soon. The November number contains, also, a new illustrated story, "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," by

MARK TWAIN.

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