The Sunday Herald
AND
Weekly National Intelligencer.

THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER
ESTABLISHED 1800.
THE SUNDAY HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1886.

Entered at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., as Second-class Matter.

Editorial and Publication Offices, No. 409 Tenth Street Northwest.

I. N. BURRITT.....Editor and Proprietor
T. B. KALBFUS.....Publisher

WASHINGTON.....MARCH 6, 1887.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscription (in advance) per year.....$2.50

Remittances should be made by postal note, money order, or checks on New York or Washington. When checks on banks in other cities are sent the cost of collection will be deducted.

The Gas Company furnishes some information to consumers which may help those who care to benefit by it to get more satisfactory returns for the bills paid with so much grumbling. People who are observing and take pains to experiment have already discovered these facts and learned to regulate the flow of gas, but most persons light their gas, and if they do not get satisfaction from the gas they get it from condemning the Gas Company, and let it go at that. Whatever may be the duties of a manufacturer of gas, it is certainly not one of them to do the dusting for his consumers, and yet dust is a prolific source of clogged burners and poor light. Every one who uses lamps expects to give them care and attention every day; but with gas, people do not even give the minimum of care which is necessary to keep the burners clean, the flow regulated, and to have the pipes cleansed once in several years.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

The radical cure for such a state of affairs as was seen during the closing hours of Congress cannot be found by simply putting a different Representative at the head of the Committee on Appropriations. Neither would it be cured by distributing all the appropriations among separate committees. The real trouble about our system of legislation is that there is no head upon whom the responsibility of failure can be visited. When Congress does not do its duty or performs its functions badly, it is only the country which suffers. When good legislation is enacted the country is benefited, but the party and men whose efficient work has passed the bills are not rewarded. What we need is a Cabinet responsible for legislation. A Constitutional Amendment requiring members of the President's Cabinet to be members of one or the other House of Congress would do more than any other measure to bring order out of our legislative chaos. This is the great reform which would bring the Executive and Legislative branches of our Government into harmony and facilitate the work of both.

CALL AN EXTRA SESSION.

Were there no special reason beyond the ordinary business of legislation it would be the duty of the President to call an extra session. Congress ought to meet and organize on the 5th of March, and so long as there is no law requiring it to do so the President should use his power and discretion in the interest of the country. There is no reason whatever why nine months of the life of each Congress should be absolutely wasted, with no progress made in the preparation of business by the committees. Each session the pressure of measures is greater and each final adjournment finds a larger amount of important matters neglected. The remedy at hand is simple: Congress ought to be fully organized, its committees appointed, bills introduced and referred, and any pressingly important measures considered at an extra spring session at the opening of each Congress.

Congress has, however, adjourned leaving the general deficiencies unprovided for, and with various important measures lost. The President must now naturally call upon the chiefs of the various Departments and Bureaux for a statement of the condition in which their business will be left. Until these reports are gathered it will be impossible to decide whether the current business of the Government can be carried on until next December. When he has all the information before him the President can decide whether the unfinished state in which Congress left the appropriations does not require a spring session.

At this time there is a further reason for a session of Congress so urgent and so generally understood by the country that the President cannot overlook it without serious risk to his own prospects. This is the accumulation of surplus revenue in the Treasury, which is a menace to business that may produce serious results. Congress by failing to reduce taxation leaves the process of collecting unneeded millions of money from the people and locking it up in the Treasury to go on unchecked for another year or more. How great a stringency this may produce no man can tell. It is the plain duty of the Government to take up this subject and deal with it. As the late Congress has failed to reduce taxation, it is the clearest duty of the President to call the new one together and set it to work on the most important task which a government can undertake—that of relieving the people of unnecessary burdens. Nothing the President could do would strengthen him so much with the country at large—the tax-paying masses—as calling an extra session for this purpose. His failure to do so may prove the turning point in his hitherto surprisingly lucky career.

THE TRAMWAY QUESTION.

The Traction Railroad bill having failed, it will now be necessary for the public and the District Commissioners to take up and consider carefully and exhaustively the subject of passenger transport within the city. The cable job has only received a temporary check. Its opponents may consider themselves in luck that the new company, with its extensive privileges, was not fully created by the Congress which has just expired.

We must not now expect that our transportation facilities will remain as they now stand for an indefinite period. The managers of the present companies will find it a wise and prudent policy to improve their plants and facilities. The paving between the tracks, in too many cases, is execrable and ought to be speedily remedied. The Tenallytown road should be abolished. The F-street managers should hasten the exchange of their bob-tails for two-horse cars with conductors. The Avenue Company should connect their tracks and run cars through from Fourteenth street to the Navy Yard. They would do wisely also to put back the little three-cent cars.

The present officers of this and the F-street lines are to be commended for the many improvements they have made, and which the public are perhaps too ready to forget, but there are yet many others possible. Let them determine to give the public the best and cleanest cars, and a service first class in every respect. This is the only safe policy for them. Congress will then be less likely to charter competing companies and more likely to give them the authority they need to make necessary extensions of their lines, and to use cables or the most improved motive system which can be found.

Finally, the District Commissioners should take up the question, and after considering it in all its bearings should embody their conclusions in their annual report in an elaborate statement with full recommendations. If they treat the subject ably and thoroughly, what they say will have great weight. They should not wait to have the subject thrust upon them. It belongs to them by virtue of their position, and they can deal with it in such a way as to commend themselves afresh to the confidence of the community.

THE CHAIN-GANG CONTROVERSY.

The worthy battle waged by the Federation of Labor against the District Commissioners about utilizing chain-gang labor on the streets has some rather amusing phases. The suggestion of the Federation, that if the convicts must be made use of some of them might be used as District Commissioners, is hardly in the line of serious discussion. Now, if they had suggested Recorder of Deeds, it might have met with some attention, but there are some really insuperable objections to using convicts as Commissioners. The Federation is willing that the work-house people should be employed at something useful, but it insists that it shall be something which does not come in "competition with any branch of labor." Now, what can it be? There is no class of work they can do which other men might not be employed to do, and it really seems as if a work which no other men can possibly be hired to do now, because there is no money to expend for their pay, is as far from the competition deprecated by the labor unions as anything can be, and yet be useful work. Whether there might not be money appropriated for that purpose, which would enable the District to pay for all its alley-cleaning and snow-shoveling, is another question. At present it cannot pay for it, and if we live in the less frequented streets, and must wade knee-deep after a heavy snow, past all vacant lots and public lands, because there is not enough money to pay for cleaning them, we are very grateful to see the chain gang appear with its shovels and make our walks and crossings passable. As for its effects upon the men themselves there are different opinions. The Federation says it is degrading, and that its influence upon every one who sees them is bad. No doubt there might embarrassing situations arise from this public employment, if a man's former associates happen along while he is handling a shovel and arrayed in a custom made suit of conspicuous pattern, but we must remember that every man so employed has been published in the paper with the details of his crime and his sentence, and his friends are supposed to know his present residence. How, then, can it make it any worse for him to work out of doors? If the publicity is degrading—and certainly the Federation of Labor does not mean that work itself is—then the proceedings of the Police Court should be secret. A man is disgraced if he is caught stealing, but he is not disgraced by useful work, whether he does it voluntarily or not. As to the effect of chain-gang labor upon others, so long as the jail and work-house are conspicuous buildings, the police are familiar features of our city population, and the Police Court news is printed in the papers, and all this machinery for protecting society is so well understood by every youth in town, it is hard to understand how the employment of petty criminals at the sort of work which is most healthful for them and most useful to the city can be a degrading spectacle to any sensible person, boy or man.

TOPICS OF THE TOWN.

Senator Blackburn scored two notable triumphs in the closing hours of the session of the Forty-ninth Congress. It was a revelation of the power of genuine eloquence, when sleepy Senators, accustomed to the formal methods and dull platitudes of eulogy upon deceased Congressmen, were awakened by the clear and ringing voice of the Kentucky Senator, as he characterized his loved friend, the late Mr. Arnot, of New York. On both sides of the Chamber Senators listened to the rounded periods which conveyed the sincere expression of friendship to a man worthy of personal love. The monotony of average Congressional eulogy was broken by the splendid pathos of the Kentuckian.

But a display of power by Blackburn on another line occurred Thursday night, when Senator Hoar gave him an opportunity, which Blackburn handsomely used. Massachusetts and Kentucky are historic Commonwealths, and both have contributed to American eloquence and to the illustration of our national character. The able and cultivated Massachusetts Senator appeared in his speech to impeach the fairness of Speaker Carlisle's official conduct, and Senator Blackburn spoke for Kentucky in behalf of a son of Kentucky who served in the Union army while Blackburn served in the Confederate army. There was as much of candor as of ingenuity in Blackburn's use of the *argumentum ad hominem*. He dealt the Massachusetts Senator no foul blow, but he made a fine display of the personal individuality that distinguishes Kentuckians.

Blackburn is essentially in appearance, and in his general make-up a symbol of the best traits of his native State. For years he represented the famous Ashland District which Henry Clay and John C. Breckinridge represented, and he represented it creditably. Senator Blackburn is a Democrat of Democrats, and Kentuckians speak of him as a Kentuckian of Kentuckians. He has already taken high rank in the fore-front of the Senate.

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Trotter, Trotter, has been in everybody's mouth during the latter part of the week, almost to the exclusion of the probability of Congressional action on important bills. The office of Recorder of Deeds would now seem to be considered an office especially for outside colored men. It was a smart trick played by Matthews and Trotter in swearing in the latter as Deputy Recorder, doubtless acting under instructions from higher authority. It is the general belief that Matthews, having been rejected, had no right to appoint a deputy except until the end of the session, when he goes out himself. The precedent is apt to prove a boomerang in the future. However it may be, it was surely in villainous taste to attempt to override by a sharp dodge both the will of the Senate and the wishes of the people.

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It is gratifying to learn that the rumors floating about as to the probable disbandment of the Washington Light Infantry have been dispelled. That there is some dissatisfaction in the Corps is true, but at the last meeting several new officers were elected, a number of recruits added, and the report of the treasurer showed the Corps to be in fair financial condition.

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The town has literally been taken by tourists during the week, all the hotels being crowded. To judge by the remarks made by the excursionists, they were enthusiastic over the beauties of Washington, especially the old soldiers who had not been here since 1865. Those of them who witnessed the closing hours of Congress will go home with but an indifferent opinion of the manners of the "grave and reverend" Senators and the people's Representatives.

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The bill for the building of a Memorial Bridge across the Potomac at Arlington failed in the House. It was unfortunate in that it was introduced in the Senate so late in the session. The press of the country almost universally have commented favorably on the project, and the sentiment of the Senate was clearly indicated by the vote of an appropriation of $500,000 to begin work on the structure.

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The prospect of a collification of the ambiguous and contrary-wise laws of the District in the near future looks glowing enough, and the Judiciary is hampered with overloaded calendars, especially now that Chief Justice Cartter is practically laid upon the shelf. The Congress might have given us another judge without doing any remarkable violence to the feelings of their constituents, or breaking down any panels of their political fences. More outsiders have business in the District courts than perhaps in those of any city of the country.

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The Columbia Democratic Club is hopping mad over the repeated violations of the principle of Home Rule in the District. But would it not be waste of powder, so to speak, to issue an address to the country? The newspapers, except those of Mugwumpian proclivities, will herald the matter throughout the length and breadth of the land.

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The Michigan Legislature has passed a bill offering one cent a head for English sparrows, which has excited the enthusiasm of the bean-shooting boys of that State. In the plenitude of their newly-conferred powers the Commissioners would do well to offer the same reward, so that these noisy, filthy, and quarrelsome pests may be reduced in number. Not content with littering up the cornices of the public buildings, these birds have grown so numerous that they have seized upon every coign of vantage in private dwellings to build their nests.

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Public Printer Benedict, just confirmed, deserves credit for one thing which his predecessor overlooked. He will not allow any employe to remain in the office who neglects to support his family or refuses to pay his honest debts. Many discharges have been recently made on this account.

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Congressman Henderson, in a debate on District appropriations, charged that the authorities seemed inclined to run affairs in the interest of the claw-hammer element. More truth than poetry about that epigram. It is almost as good as the one ex-Governor Shepherd got off about Postmaster General Jewell.

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The Commissioners, now being freed from dancing attendance before Congressional committees, should forthwith turn their attention to the condition of the streets. It is no exaggeration to say that the thoroughfares, even the principal ones, are excessively dirty. If the contractor for garbage and street-sweeping is unable to do the work satisfactorily he should be required to give way to some one who can.

The Wrong Girl Got the Note.

He is a Treasury clerk and she a Treasury "countess." He had met and "mashed" her, and they had walked together and enjoyed each other's company immensely; but whether they had been introduced or not is not known; if they had been he had evidently and unfortunately forgotten her name. The day after the evening of their delightful stroll and *tete-a-tete* he wrote her a tender note telling her how much he had enjoyed her society, and asking her if she would not make "a date" for a repetition of the blissful pastime. To this point all ran smoothly, and love's young dream was about to bud into a second dose of ecstatic reality, but for one thing—he had through some sunkind freak of fate addressed the note, commencing "my precious darling," to the name of another lady in the same office. The young lady who received the endearing epistle found out whence it came and indignantly put it in the hands of the chief of division for investigation. He in turn took it to the chief of the office in which the would-be romeo is employed. Romeo's surprise and embarrassment upon being confronted by his chief with his love note in his hand, and demanding an explanation, can be better imagined than described. His offer to "set up" the Mumm in order to keep the thing mum was not accepted as an offset to his "crime." Satisfactory explanations and apologies were made, however, and all is well in the big building on Fifteenth street except the atmosphere. Moral: A young man should first learn his sweetheart's name before writing her gushing epistles. This is the first trouble growing out of the season which causes a young man's fancy to lightly turn to thoughts of love and, as a rule, badly break him up in consequence.

The Funeral of Mrs. Slack.

The funeral of Mrs. Slack took place on Monday, February 28, from St. Paul's in Baltimore. Rev. Dr. Gray and Rev. J. S. B. Hodges officiating. Gen. Hagner, Senator McPherson, Mr. William A. Gordon, Mr. James M. Johnston, Admiral Worden, Mr. Wylie, Mr. Stockett Matthews, of Baltimore, and Dr. Ruth were the honorary pall-bearers. The interment was at Greenmount, where the parents of Mrs. Slack are buried. Mrs. Archibald Hopkins, Mrs. McPherson, and a number of other Washingtonians went over to the funeral.

LETTER FROM NEW YORK.

The Passing Boodlers—The Albany Lobby—Bridging the Hudson—Personal Jottings.

[Special Correspondence.]
NEW YORK, March 4, 1887.

The passing week has seen the passing of the third of the Aldermanic "boodlers" into Sing-Sing and a striped jacket; and the trial of the fourth one has fairly begun. O'Neil, the third one convicted, took his fate with little grace. He pretended almost to the last day before his trial was to begin that he had not thought of employing any lawyer, but it is a matter within my personal knowledge that he paid out money to men who gave him to understand that they could drive the District Attorney into non-prosecution of the indictment by threatening him with newspaper attacks. Now, I can readily understand that a man with such little intelligence as to believe that the newspapers could be influenced by such persons as made him this proposition to use the press in an attack on the District Attorney, might be idiot enough not to engage counsel to defend him until the eleventh hour. There are any number of such idiots in New York, and the unscrupulous scamps who prey upon them are ingenious, if they are not very numerous. It is the old game of selling "sawdust" for greenbacks, and the safety of the swindlers lies in the fact that the men they rob are silenced because they are confederates. O'Neil undoubtedly fell into the hands of some of those bunco-steerers of the press, and is now paying the penalty (among other penalties) of over-confidence in the newspaper men who tell you they own the paper, manage the editor, and hold a mortgage on the publisher. His threats of what he could do through the papers against District Attorney Martine soon came to the latter's ears. It only angered that official into a more vigorous prosecution, and O'Neil was thus worse off than if he had never listened to the press people. (Heaven save the mark!)

Alderman Cleary, now on trial, is being injured in the same degree and the same way by injudicious yet strong and influential friends. He is the janitor of the Equitable Life Assurance Company, and its president, Henry B. Hyde, one of the manliest of noble and honorable men, is a firm and constant friend of Mr. Cleary. So are Messrs. Alexander & Green, the attorneys of the company. And these gentlemen come forward to assist Mr. Cleary in his troubles, not only by contributing to his defense, as they have an undoubted right to do, and by promising to testify in his behalf, but, through Mr. Hyde, they give out to the public press that they believe Mr. Cleary to be innocent, and that they mean to defend and protect him. That isn't what they publish, but that is the idea which is conveyed to the public and to the panel of jurors from which twelve men are to be selected to try Mr. Cleary. These twelve men, from their examinations in court when being selected as jurors, get the impression that there is a great corporation trying to save Cleary from the punishment he deserves for selling his vote to another great corporation. They know that the people are a jealous people and suspicious, and that if they find Mr. Cleary innocent as against the evidence, they will look under public suspicion. This fear—and the evidence and Justice Barrett's charge—are going to convict Mr. Cleary, and the Equitable's highly commendatory defense of its old servant is going a long way to bring about this inevitable result.

After Mr. Cleary's conviction there will be no more long trials. The rest will "skip" or confess. Not one of them can escape exile or the State's prison, and it will be a serious questioning with each of them as to how he may shorten his term. Exile is for life, and some of the exiles are weary already of that sort of life. O'Neil gets off with three years and three months. It will begin to dawn upon some of the other guilty creatures when Cleary goes up, that an open confession is good for considerable shortening of their term of imprisonment. Conviction is almost absolutely certain in each case, and in those of Jacob Sharp, James Richmond, and Mr. Kerr, the famous "Bill" Mooney will be a witness for the prosecution. What he will testify to is already in the hands of the District Attorney. He is satisfied that he has plenty of testimony without that of Mooney to convict the Aldermen who yet remain untried, but it has been found necessary to deal gently with Mooney in order to convict those accused of paying the bribes.

Right upon the heels of these convictions of "boodle" Aldermen, Chamberlain William M. Ivins comes out with a carefully prepared statement, giving names and figures, showing what it costs candidates to get into positions where they can make in the "boodle" occasionally. Some of the figures are startling, and all the more so in connection with some of the names given. It costs $12,000 to be elected to the $2,000-a-year office of Alderman. When a man wants to serve this city as an Assemblyman at Albany on a salary of $1,500 he must pay $3,120 for the privilege. Our $18,000-a-year Mayor pays about $20,000. Mayor Grace, when he first ran for office, in 1880, paid that amount, but in 1885 he got off with an expenditure of only $10,000, because only one faction nominated him. The present Mayor, Abram S. Hewitt, is said by Mr. Ivins to have paid $24,000 to the two Democratic factions which supported him; and the Mayor does not deny it. Hewitt and Grace can afford to pay for such luxuries, yet remain honest and content with the honors (?) of the office of Mayor; but how can these cheap Aldermen and Assemblymen afford to pay such political assessments? The only rational answer I can think of is that they pay it with the deliberate intention to make money out of the positions.

They do not always succeed, however, and I am told by an experienced man that there never was at Albany a hungrier crowd of lobbyists which herds this year on the State House there. He says that in a long experience he never saw such a cheap lot of mediocrity in any Assembly. Until within a few days there has been no "boodle" in Albany. The introduction of the High License bill has brought a big sum from the small liquor dealers and big brewers in this city, who hope to defeat the bill, while there is money to be had from the hotel men and large bar-room proprietors to pass it, so the Assemblymen are a little more cheerful. But they had to resort to all sorts of schemes until the High License measure was introduced. One of the most desperate schemes was the introduction of a bill to repeal the charter of the Poughkeepsie Bridge Company. This is a Pennsylvania company with $5,000,000, which has undertaken to construct a steel-cantilever, double-track bridge across the Hudson. It will be, with its viaduct connections on each shore, over four miles in length. It will be higher above the water than the East River Bridge between New York and Brooklyn. It will make a direct, all-rail route from New England to the Pennsylvania coal fields, and the traffic which the seven railways that have agreed to make use of it will bring will amount to thousands of freight-cars each day. The three piers which are located in the river are already above water, and work is progressing with great rapidity, the whole to be completed this year. Yet, in spite of the progress made, and the immense importance to the State and to commerce of this magnificent enterprise, a bill is introduced to repeal the charter and undo the work, because, it is argued, the piers will be dangerous to canal-boats when coming down the river in long tows! That's all the argument advanced, except one other—that the construction of three piers will narrow the channel. To this the company replies, by a statement from Gen. John Newton, to the effect that the channel between any two of the piers is wider than the natural river at a point a few miles below Poughkeepsie. Of course the company pays no attention to the bill. They know that Assemblymen cannot afford to vote for the repeal of a charter for so important a work, in which the people of the whole State are interested, and the matter is worth alluding to only as an illustration of the character of the present Assembly of the great State of New York. It looks as if the time had come for Mr. Ivins's reform, or somebody else's to reform such representatives into obscurity.

I was talking with a well-informed German on this subject, and he suggested that a wise reform of our election method would be the engrafting of a part of the German system on to ours. In Germany a majority is necessary to an election. When there are more than two candidates, and no one has a majority of all the votes cast, a new election must take place, and the two candidates having the largest number of votes at the first election become the only candidates on the second trial, thus giving the minority voters a chance to select as between the two leading men. I was curious enough to calculate the effect which such a system would have upon our present rulers. Mayor Hewitt was elected by a small plurality, but if a new election had followed as between him and Henry George, the latter would, in all probability, have been snowed under. The complexion of our Senate and Assembly would have been greatly changed—and probably improved. And who will doubt that the second election would have made Blaine President?

I hear that Julian Hawthorne has suddenly severed with more or less violence his relations with the New York *World*. He has been its literary editor for some month back, and was telling a friend a few days ago about the pleasantness and big pay of the position. Within forty-eight hours he told that the pay had ceased, and, I presume, the comfort also. I do not understand that Hawthorne and Mr. Pulitzer parted, as the latter and Joseph Howard did, at the loss of an eyelash to each.

The return of the body of Larry O'Brien, who died from wounds received a year ago at the hands of a fellow-gambler, has revived again the suppressed version of the real cause of their desperate quarrel, which connected a prominent and wealthy society man with them, and which brought a society man into the scrape. It was suppressed at the time with great difficulty, but it is likely to come out soon, for the editor of *Town Topics* is on the fresh scent of it.

Mr. A. A Hayes's novel, "The Jesuit's Ring," A romance of Mount Desert, was published by the Scribners to-day. I hear that the personality of the heroine, *Helen Thornton*, is a study of Miss Kate Beach, of Washington.

WILLIAM F. G. SHANKS.

Brady Asks the Blessing.

[Boston Traveler.]

A gentleman recently returned from Atlanta tells a good story at the expense of Henry W. Grady, of the *Constitution*. Grady was telling a story about a celebrated vendetta at the tea table, concluding by saying: "The two men approached each other with bowie-knives. Simultaneously they plunged the gleaming blades into each other's heart—"

"Henry," interrupted Mrs. Grady, with a meaning glance, "the blessing, please."

With a meek face the orator said: "O Lord, make us truly grateful for what we are about to receive—and Mr. Blank—the blood spurted out and both men fell dead in the street."

THE STAGE.

The long-anticipated Bernhardt engagement at the National has come and gone, and left the mind in doubt whether American Opera and Wilson Barrett need longer strive for first honors in our dramatic season now so rapidly drawing to a close. If the houses were not uniformly so crowded as during those two notable engagements, they have been of equal social and intellectual distinction, and as might not unreasonably have been anticipated in emotional success the great French *artiste* stands easily first in the comparison. In the exquisite symmetry and perfection of her art, as well, she stands as easily first, if not alone, among the artists of the world, by virtue of a genius so fine, so delicate, and yet so tremendous and irresistible that all climes and all races have done reverence to its power. The genuine tears that start from those wonderful eyes, the face all aglow with love or convulsed by unutterable grief, the heart-breaking tones of that low and thrilling voice, the significant and moving eloquence of every look and poise and gesture, these are the syllables of a universal language, and find their ready answer in the unbidden tears and smiles of thousands who know not a word of her rapid and graceful French. It is the touch of nature that makes the world akin, the burning and magnetic touch of the consummate and perfect artist, striking what harmonies or discords it will from the chords of the great universal human heart. Those who witnessed for the first time her gentle, touching, and most sympathetic portrayal of poor *Marguerite Gautier* on Tuesday night, felt they had never been fairly confronted with Dumas's ideal till now. Those who remembered Mme. Bernhardt's rendition of the character at her previous visit were aware of, perhaps, a still further refinement and exaltation in her conception and treatment of it than before. "La Dame aux Camelias," to our thinking, is not as has been said the apotheosis of the *coculte*, but rather the rescue through love and sacrifice and suffering of a being inherently pure, gentle, sweet, and full of tenderness and truth, from a life superimposed by her fate, but wholly foreign to her nature. Hence the gayety of Sarah Bernhardt's *Camille* and her happiness in her new-found love seem almost the innocent, unatural, and spontaneous gayety and happiness of a young and pure girl, and in the misery that follows the idea of expiation is swept away in the flood of sympathy. How by a thousand touches so full of subtle art that they seemed but nature, she led the feelings of her audience, step by step, always upward to the climax, can be very vividly remembered, but not at all described. In each of her impersonations throughout the week, in their widely differentiated ways, this consummate art was in all things manifest. The pathetic petulance of the sick and dying *Camille*; the volcanic passions of the terrific "Fedora," with its semi-savage Tartaric fires smouldering beneath the thin crust of Russian civilization; *Frou Frou*, the bright little butterfly broken on the wheel of destiny; *Claire*, the noble central figure of Ohnet's great drama; *Adrienne*, child of genius, passion, and misfortune—in all of these strongly divergent types does the powerful personality of this marvelous artist subordinate itself to her art, till she is no longer herself, but each and all of these loving and suffering women in turn. It is not practicable now to specify by example the minutiæ of this artistic conscience which forgets not the smallest detail of stage business and accessories, and has very noticeably asserted itself in the selection and training of the supporting company. They all do their work so well, and so easily and naturally fit into their several niches in each drama, that like their great principal, though in lesser degree, they seem not to be acting so much as living.

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The lovers of melodrama were out in force last week at Albaugh's, and in the four acts and innumerable scenes of Messrs. Wilson Barrett and Henry Jones's "Hoodman Blind" no doubt contrived to sup full of horrors to their hearts' content. The curtain rises upon the inspiring spectacle of a gentleman apparently in the most robust health stretched out upon a lounge and doing his best to convince the audience that he is dying in his boots and the full possession of a stentorian voice which makes the footlights flicker. As he does not die quite fast enough, however, to suit the convenience of two other gentlemen of almost equally prepossessing appearance, they kindly assist his efforts by a little judicious compression of the windpipe. From this hilarious beginning, which is really by contrast one of the cheerliest and most blithesome incidents of the evening, the play proceeds through a variety of places where you would not care to be, and introduces a number of people you would not wish to meet, until the villains are all duly "come up with," and Virtue, with eyes upturned to the proscenium arch, and its hand on its heart, is properly rewarded in the final tableau. For those who like that sort of thing (and it must be confessed that the melodrama, like some of its tough characters, dies hard) "Hoodman Blind" is very much the sort of thing they would be up to, and it is unquestionably "strong" and presents a most undeniable abundance of "incident." Whatever its merits, they are very thoroughly brought out by the present cast and mounting. Mr. Joseph Haworth is an actor who is capable of much better things, but his *Jack Yenlett* in this play is a personation of such intense emotional power and pathos that we are loth to believe Mr. Barrett himself could have given the lines very much better. Miss Sydney Armstrong, in her dual assumption of *Nance Yenlett* and *Jess the Waif*, gave evidence of remarkable versatility of talent, her portrayal of the wretched outcast especially being characterized by an almost painful realism of treatment. The *Mark Lezzard* of Mr. Augustus Cook was such an abominable bit of scoundrelism as almost to justify the rather repulsive brutality of the last act, and Mr. Fleming, as *Kridge*, the associate villain, might well have divided some of the final popular honors with his partner. Mr. Sidney Howard enacted the honest British blacksmith with an apparently indigenous accent and highly commendable fervor, and Little Maude, Miss Frances Bishop, was as delightful as ever in the role of *Little Mags*, and gave plenty of work, which is done in a manner that could not be surpassed. The singing and dancing is a feature that alone would make the entertainment an unqualified success, while the entire cast is far above the average. She has a wonderful future, and before many years will rival the famous Lotta. She has a very sweet voice which she uses with skill. The company has been selected with great care and discretion.

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The first of the series of grand sacred concerts at Kernan's Washington Theatre takes place tonight. A most excellent entertainment is provided, including Manager Kernan's own importation, Gus Gilbert's Vienna Ladies' Orchestra; Miss Hattie Howard, the charming young balladist; Gilbert B. Walden, the celebrated humorous lecturer, and others. The falser sex, which is respectfully invited, is guaranteed front seats without extra charge.

COULISSE CHAT.

Mme. Rhea makes her farewell bow to America on April 2 in Chicago.

Scalchi, the celebrated contralto, has given her house in Turin to the city as a hospital for the poor.

Mr. J. C. Duff goes abroad next month in search of operatic novelties for his trio of fair singers.

The receipts for the thirteen weeks of the Wild West Show at the Madison Square Garden are placed at the high figure of $156,378.25.

Mrs. D. P. Bowers is studying the part of *Katherine*, in "Henry VIII." She will appear in the tragedy in the early part of the season.

The first score of Verdi's "Othello" has arrived in New York from Milan. It was addressed to Signor Faure-la-Medi, with the composer's compliments.

Mr. Wilson Barrett says he is always very nervous when he goes on the stage, and perspires until he can hear the sweat-drops patter from his face like rain.

Preparations are already on foot for the presentation of "Rienzi" in New York. Mr. Barrett promises to give a production that, in a scenic way at least, will be remarkable.

"Fin McCool" still holds the boards at the Bolte-street Theatre, in Boston. Mr. Boucicault brings it to Brooklyn next month and to New York in April, where it will be seen at the Star.

Bertie Crawford, who has made some strides in comic opera in recent years, will be the prima donna of a company that will shortly open an engagement in Chicago the coming summer. Her latest success was *Virginie*, in "The Maid of Belleville."

Mrs. Langtry has decided to spend the summer in California, where her season will close, and will not return to New York until next fall. Genevieve Ward has perfected arrangements to reappear in New York, a season at the Windsor having been arranged for.

Eugene Canfield will leave the "Bunch of Keys" Company at the close of the season, having been engaged by Charles H. Hoyt to play the part of *Rafe*, in "A Tin Soldier." William J. Coyne has been secured to replace Mr. Canfield as *Grimes* in the "Bunch of Keys."

Mme. Jenny Lind-Goldschmidt is now white-haired and has a rather severe expression of countenance. But it is scarcely to be credited that she "bemoans the days when she was so sinful as to appear on the stage," or that she sneers at all young singers with whom she comes in contact.

Maude Fortescue will close her season in this country in the West within a couple of weeks, and will leave for England March 16. On March 28 she will begin a season of nine weeks in the English provinces. Miss Fortescue laughingly denied the report that she is to be married to Marcus Mayer.

Helen Hastings, the English actress who undertook a season at Union Square Theatre and failed because there were dozens of actresses of native birth and hundreds of better plays than hers, has returned to England, probably with the conviction that Americans do not appreciate beauty and talent.

There has been some talk of Mr. Richard Mansfield presenting the "Parisian Romance" during his stay at the Union Square Theatre. "Prince Karl," however, is so well liked that it will in all probability remain in possession. Mr. Mansfield contemplates a summer season at the Madison Square Theatre.

A new summer theatre, to be known as the Grand Opera House, is being constructed at Asbury Park, and will be opened in June. The seating capacity will be 1,500. The house will be lighted by electricity and ventilated by electric fans. John B. McDonough, treasurer of Miner's Newark Theatre, will be the manager.

A cable despatch announces the successful production of Suppe's new comic opera, "Bellman," at Vienna, after the excision of sarcastic allusions to Russia, which it was feared would be bristled. Messrs. Conried & Herrman, of this city, have the American rights for the production, which may first be in German, though this has not yet been decided upon. It will certainly be produced here in some form next season.

Mr. G. W. Smalley, writing from London to the New York *Tribune*, says: "Mr. Irving's recitation of *Hamlet* on Ash Wednesday evening drew a large and distinguished audience to the Birbeck Institute, far from the West End. Those present heard, probably for the first time, the speeches of all the characters of the play read by a real artist. Mr. Irving held the audience three hours perhaps more closely than ever when the play was given on the stage."

The London *Telegraph's* Paris correspondent says that "although Mme. Albani is more than sixty years of age, the voice of the great songstress is in exactitude unaffected by time. Thanks to her perfect method of singing, her voice even now betrays none of that detestable tremolo which is the most striking defect of the modern school, and the superb tones of her incomparable contralto has the effect of the notes of an organ in Rossini's "Agnus Dei," which no artist has ever rendered so well. Mme. Albani's singing is a lesson in a now bygone school.

The leading newspapers of New York were not enthusiastic over the first production of "Ruddygore" in that city last week. The *Tribune*, however, admits that "its pictures will surely give delight, and the freshness and melodiousness of the majority of the musical pieces will charm for a long time." The *Times* thinks it is draggy after the first act. The *Herald* predicts that it will be a popular success. The *World* said: "There was no fault to be found with the musical numbers. They followed one another like a string of pearls. Melody was almost continuous. "Ruddygore" is unquestionably one of the best things that Sir Arthur Sullivan has ever done. But though he was triumphant in the first act it became evident that the only possible interest in the performance was to be found in the music. A hopeless incongruity was apparent in the story."

Under the head of "The Critics at the Play," *The Mirror* makes the following allusion to Mr. William Winter: "On any first night at Daly's or Wallack's or the Star, you are pretty certain to see in the front orchestra chairs William Winter, of the *Tribune*; John Hallington, of the *Sunday Dispatch*; Andrew C. Wheeler, of the *World* and *Mirror*; Stephen Fiske, of the *Spirit of the Times*; Joseph Howard, Jr., of the *World*—the Old Guard of the dramatic critic dom of New York. Winter, tall, slight, stooping, with a fine head and disheveled hair, dreamy eyes, a melancholy expression, has been on the *Tribune* about twenty years. He hails from Gloucester, Mass., was educated in Boston, studied law at Harvard, private secretary to Sumner, squifes at the Hub and in Gotham, called himself 'Melancholy,' contributed, among other papers, to *Vanity Fair*, lounged at the clubs, chummed with actors and actresses. Twelve he lives at New Brighton, Staten Island, and comes to town as little as possible. He has published a life of Edwin Booth, of the Jeffersons, of Mary Anderson. There are several volumes of his poems and his travels on the market. He has collected his criticisms on Henry Irving, and Coombes has published them in his best style. Winter is a *litterateur*, writing dramatic critiques rather than a newspaper man. His articles never seem to have been struck off on the spur of the moment, in the press-room of a theatre, or amid the click and clatter of a hurrying office. He works with care and afterthought. He turns continually to authorities, precedents, old play-bills, old papers, and books. He is as fond as was Gautier when he wrote of Victor Hugo, as rich in superlatives as was Macaulay when he wrote of Milton. Edwin Booth and John McCullough, Adelaide Neilson and Mary Anderson, Joe Jefferson and Lawrence Barrett are his friends and his idols. Though emotional and hyperbolical, Winter is brilliant. He is so brilliant, in fact, that when I read him I feel like doing what Lamartine said he did when reading Paul de Saint Victor—I put on blue glasses."

Forgetful Play Writers.

[The Mirror.]

This story on Fred Marsden may have appeared before, but I haven't seen it. The dramatist was riding up to his Harlem home on the L. A smooth-faced man dropped into the seat beside him and began talking. Marsden has a bad memory for names and a good one for faces. He recollected the countenance, but couldn't "place" the man. By and by it became embarrassing, and Marsden tried some strategic queries.

"How is the wife?" he asked.

"Very well, thanks," responded the clean-shaved stranger.

"And the children?"

"Flourishing, sir, flourishing."

"And where are you playing this week?"

"Playing—I don't play, sir; I preach. I am still located at the One Hundred and Twenty-eighth-street Baptist Church."

This recalls the old story of Sheridan Knowles, whose atrocious memory for names furnished a theme for countless anecdotes. One day in the Strand he met an acquaintance that he didn't recollect, and he determined to try an ingenious scheme for ascertaining the name and saving mutual mortification.

"How are you, old boy?" began Knowles. This is most fortuitous. I've wanted to see you to settle a doubt as to the correct spelling of your name. Will you relieve my perplexity?"

"With pleasure. It's J-o-n-e-s."

"Ah, to be sure. I'm much relieved by your decision."

A Thorn in the Flesh.

[Life.]

Mr. Watterson calls George William Curtis the Bunthorne to an Oscar Wilde Administration. Better call him the Bunthorne in the Republican flesh.

THE 57th ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE

Equitable Life Assurance Society

OF THE UNITED STATES.

For the Year Ending December 31st, 1886.

AMOUNT OF LEDGER ASSETS, JANUARY 1st, 1886.....$62,087,513.83

Income.

Premiums	$16,252,134.62	
Interest, Rents, etc	3,601,578.57	19,853,713.19
		$81,941,227.01

Disbursements.

Claims by Death and Matured Endowments	$3,121,473.91	
Dividends, Surrender Values and Annuities	3,912,113.28	
Discounted Endowments	198,020.71	
Total Paid Policy-holders	$8,336,607.90	
Dividend on Capital	7,000.00	
Commissions, Advertising, Postage and Exchange	1,906,040.03	
General Expenses	1,305,901.98	
State, County and City Taxes	169,409.12	11,764,958.74
NET LEDGER ASSETS, December 31, 1886		$70,196,268.30

Assets.

Bonds and Mortgages	$19,881,459.94	
New York Real Estate, including the Equitable Building and purchases under foreclosure	10,496,391.10	
United States Stocks; State Stocks; City Stocks, and other investments	26,568,537.31	
Loans Secured by Bonds and Stocks (Market Value, $1,876,937)	1,392,006.00	
Real Estate outside the State of New York, including purchases under foreclosure and Society's Bu