

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

KAPP'S LIFE OF STEUBEN.

THE LIFE OF FREDERICK WILLIAM VON STEUBEN, BY FREDERICK KAPP. 12mo. pp. 738. Mason Brothers.

With the growing interest in the study of American history, this is a prominent characteristic of the times, this elaborate monograph on the life and services of an efficient foreign officer, who devoted himself to the cause of our national independence...

In the preparation of his work, Mr. Kapp has spared no pains in the accumulation of materials; his faithful research is visible on every page; he has diligently explored every source from which information could be expected...

The history of Baron Steuben is probably known only in its general outline, to the majority of our readers. They will find ample materials in this volume for a clear and complete view of his career...

The fame of Steuben had preceded him to York. He was welcomed and courted by all. General Gates in particular paid him the most assiduous attention. The Committee of Congress, of which Witherspoon was chairman, waited upon him...

The deplorable condition of the army at Valley Forge is well known. Everything was in confusion. The soldiers were scattered about in every direction. The arms were covered with rust—half of them without bayonets; many from which not a shot could be fired...

Having obtained from Franklin letters of introduction to General Washington, Samuel Adams, President Laurens, Robert Morris, and other men of distinction in this country, Steuben commenced making arrangements for his departure...

the fortress, and from the ships in the port. Several thousands of inhabitants welcomed me in the most flattering way. Mr. Langdon took me to his house to dine. In the meantime, all the inhabitants of the place crowded together to see the 'elephant'...

While at Portsmouth, Steuben wrote to Congress and to Gen. Washington, inclosing his letters of introduction, and offering his services as a volunteer in the American cause. He left Portsmouth for Boston on the 12th of December, where he met Mr. John Hancock, and received the reply of Gen. Washington to his letter, requesting him to repair at once to York, Pa., where Congress was then sitting...

Our party," says he, "consisted of Baron Steuben and his servant, Carl Vogel, a young lad whom he had brought from Germany, Mr. De Francey, an agent of Beaumarchais, and myself. We traveled on horseback. Without the aid of the recent capture of Gen. Burgoyne, the situation of the United States at that time was extremely critical. The enemy was in possession of Rhode Island, New-York, and Philadelphia, with well-organized and disciplined troops, far superior in number to our own...

"We had been cautioned against putting up at a certain tavern in Worcester County, Massachusetts, not far from the frontier of Connecticut. We were told that the landlord was a bitter Tory, and that he would refuse to receive us, or, at least, treat us very ill. We determined, however, to make no such provision. Unfortunately, when we were at some distance from it, we were surprised by a violent snow storm; it was in the evening, and we were compelled to take shelter in the very house we wished to avoid...

"Another anecdote, which I now recollect, is strictly characteristic of the patriarchal manner of those times. As we passed through the State of Connecticut, we put up one night at a house where, for some reason that I do not remember, we had no bed, and were obliged to sleep on the floor. The utmost decency was observed, and the women and children, had all to bundle together, as it were called. The bedding was spread all around the room, and every one took his place and went very comfortably to sleep. The utmost decency was observed, and the women and children, had all to bundle together, as it were called...

"We died," says he, "twice or thrice a week with General Washington. We visited him also in the evening, when Mr. Washington was at headquarters. We were in a manner domesticated in the family. As to the situation of our army, suffice it to say, that we were in want of provisions, of clothing, of fodder for the horses, and of everything. I remember seeing the soldiers popping their heads out of their miserable huts, and calling out in an under tone, 'No bread, no shelter!' Their condition was truly pitiful, and their courage and their perseverance is beyond all praise...

"In the midst of all our distress there were some bright sides of the picture, which Valley Forge exhibited at that time. Mrs. N. Whiting had the courage to follow her husband to the dismal Abge, and other women followed her example. Among them was the lady of Gen. Greene, a handsome, elegant and accomplished woman. Her dwelling was the resort of foreign officers, because she speaks the French language and was well versed in French literature...

Once, when dining with General Washington, Mrs. Washington asked him what amusements he had. 'I read, and I play chess, my lady,' said the Baron, 'and yesterday I was very good at fishing. It was understood to be a very fine amusement. I sat in the boat two hours; though it was very warm, and caught two fish.' 'Of what kind, Baron?' asked the lady. 'Indeed, I do not recollect perfectly, but one of them was a whale.' 'A whale, Baron, in the North River?' 'Yes, on my word, a very fine whale, as that gentleman informed me. Did you not tell me it was a whale, Major?' 'An eel, Baron.' 'I beg your pardon, my lady, but the gentleman certainly called it a whale. But it is of little consequence. I shall abandon the trade, notwithstanding the fine amusement it affords.'...

Immediately after the act of Congress in June, 1780, allowing him a handsome annuity as a compensation of his claims, Steuben retired to his farm, alluded to above, where from that time he regularly spent the Summer months, returning in the Autumn to New-York to pass the Winter among his old acquaintances. 'The idea of cultivating his lands, of which about sixty acres were then cleared, and of erecting a fine mansion on it, had been a favorite plan of Steuben since he began to enjoy his annuity, and to feel easier in his money affairs. At that time some sixteen families resided on his patent, who had durable leases at from \$10 to \$20 for every one hundred acres of land. He was fond of talking about his farming prospects, about the artificial lake, which he proposed to make by using the water of two fine brooks that flowed through his land; about the fine quality and situation of his land and its settlement. On his little mare Molly he rode through the fields, watched the improvements, and gave directions. In the evening he saw his friends and neighbors, played chess with his companions, read newspapers or spoke of the politics of the day, which, just at that time, when the French Revolution had reached its culminating point, and when the revolutionary armies fought victoriously against Prussia and Austria, were particularly interesting. Steuben subscribed to The Leyden (Holland) Gazette, a weekly newspaper which, at that period, held the rank of the present Galvani's Messenger, and gave the best and quickest information about the events of the day.'...

Thus a few years passed away, until the Autumn of 1794, when, on the 25th of November, in the apparent enjoyment of perfect health, and the best humor, after spending the evening as usual, he retired about 11 o'clock, and early in the morning was found by his servant stricken with paralysis and in a dying state. He remained, however, apparently sensible during the greater part of the day, although he was often in convulsions. The medicines which were administered gave him only temporary relief. The stroke was too violent, the case was hopeless, and after lingering till a little after noon of the 28th, he expired without any struggle or visible pain. Steuben had often expressed the wish, in the circle of his friends, that his remains should be wrapped in his military cloak, and buried without parade. The place for his interment was selected under a hemlock tree, on a hill in the midst of a wood. The funeral was appointed at noon on the 30th. 'His neighbors, about thirty in number, hastened to the farm to pay their last respects to their beloved old townsman. It was a simple and modest cortege which, on a shivering, Winter day, accompanied his remains to the grave. No mourning or music was there; no carpet-covered caissons or cauls were to be seen; no cannon fired a military salute; no word was spoken; no funeral oration delivered. Some handfuls of earth, and the tears of a few many and sincere friends, were the last tribute paid to the citizen soldier, who, having contributed in no small degree to the attainment of American Independence, now found lasting repose in the unbroken stillness of her primeval forests.'...

In addition to the immediate subject of the biography, many interesting details are interwoven in the narrative in regard to the leading military men in the war of the Revolution. The author has discussed the character of Lafayette with freedom and boldness; but the comparatively unfavorable estimate which he has formed of that illustrious patriot is hardly confirmed by historical evidence, and we are persuaded, will produce little change in the cherished convictions of the American people. We have no space to follow the active services of Steuben through the remainder of the war; but ample proof is here given that he was no less brave on the battle field, than punctilious on the parade. His choleric temper often made him enemies; nor was his obstinacy at all adapted to the work of conciliation; professional jealousy embittered personal hostility; but it is now clear that no stain rests upon his character; and his memory will be cherished as that of a brave and honorable man. Upon the establishment of peace in 1783, Steuben had nearly reached his fifty-fourth year; he too old to engage in any new pursuits of a civil character; and feeling that he could be of no further use in America, proposed to return to Europe, and spend the remainder of his days in retirement. But he had large claims upon Congress, which was in arrears for the payment of his services during the war, and when at length he succeeded in obtaining a settlement in 1790, he was unable on account of his debts, to leave the United States. He accordingly decided to devote himself to the cultivation of a tract of land in Oneida County, N. Y., of which he had received a grant from the Legislature of the State. Soon after resigning his commission, he returned to New-York, where he rented a country house in the middle part of the island, in which he lived with his old companion in arms. Here he spent the little money he had left; his companions soon went away to establish themselves in more eligible situations, and he remained alone in his solitary dwelling. Still he retained his interest in public affairs. He corresponded with his old friends, took part in the politics of the day, and wrote pamphlets about the military affairs of the United States. Poverty, however, soon compelled him to abandon his dismantled and deserted residence. He accepted the invitation of one of his old ad-venturers, B. Walker, to make his house his home, where he remained for some time, but afterward occupied different lodgings till his removal to Oneida County. He was a great favorite in social circles, and especially among the ladies. He engaged in their amusements, and by his wit and pleasantry added to the charm of every party at which he was present. He was treated with great attention; was intimate with Duer, Duane, Livingston, Jay, Varick, Hamilton and Fish; was on familiar terms with all the prominent and fashionable families in the city, while at the same time he was very popular among all classes of the people. 'When, at the famous doctors' mob, produced, in 1786 or 1787, by the careless exposure of a subject from the dissecting room of the hospital, he was accidentally wounded, the mob made room to let him pass, and cheered him while they went on in their work of destruction. 'Though never perfectly master of the English language, he understood and spoke it with tolerable correctness. He would sometimes, and as a matter of jest, miscall names, and blend or adopt words similar in sound, dissimilar in meaning.

THE CENTRAL PARK. The half million of days' work which have been upon the Central Park begin to render it an attractive place of resort, and thousands of visitors can be seen scattered over the grounds every pleasant day. Although only about 35 acres, lying immediately north of the reservoir, are as yet very nearly completed, the progress of the work on the rest of the Park, the way of men employed, the military discipline everywhere apparent, an occasional cascade of blasting, a little gash of a mill which grinds up rocks in its jaws with as much noise as if they were pebbles, and a number of objects of minor interest, are striking sources of amusement. It requires careful study and considerable imagination to realize even approximately the appearance of the Park when completed. Upon nine tenths of the area, it is only the last work which will be seen. From detailed inspection of the state of the work, aided by the admirable report which the Commission has just made to the Common Council, we will attempt to give some idea of what has been done, and what remains to be done. Below the reservoirs the drainage is nearly finished, a labor which has caused dry land to appear in places of many a little bog. The drive to the most part graded, and portions of it have been completed in different methods, in order to test the relative cost and efficiency of each. The ride for equestrians is in progress. Several miles of the walks are graded, drained and gravelled, and in a condition for use. Three bridges of viaducts, over which the carriage road is carried, and under which the horseback ride is to pass, are in a state of forwardness, and promise to be structures of beauty as well as of utility; the promenade, a prominent feature of the Park, is nearly complete, with its broad walk and rows of transplanted trees of twenty years' growth. The planting of the Park with a great variety of shrubs and trees is rapidly progressing. The odor of the shanties, which were the past of the lower part of the Park, has been replaced by the freshness of the unpurged earth, of which 600,000 cubic yards have been moved—enough to fill Broadway to the fourth story of the buildings, from the City Hall to Union Square. The sunken cross-streets, which excited so much opposition, are already sufficiently advanced to show that the opposition was unfounded. They will be noticeable only at their extremities, where they unite with the exterior streets at a higher grade than the surface of the Park appearing as causeways, a few hundred feet in length, terminating upon a hill-side. The Park not being directly accessible from these cross-streets, it will be necessary to close them at night, when the public are shut out from the Park itself. They will furnish the means of direct transit across the Park for business purposes, without causing inconvenience to its visitors. The casual observer might think the selection of the site unfortunate. At present, except in a few places, its aspect is one of mere unadorned ruggedness. This is due almost entirely to the absence of soil and foliage. When these are supplied, that peculiar picturesque effect, which can only be obtained where rocky masses exist, will become strikingly obvious. Although it will require a heavy expenditure to make the Park complete, the final artistic effect will be much finer than could be obtained upon a tract of the richest and most easily worked soil, the actual outlines of which were tame and prosaic. Of the central plateau, near the center of the lower Park, the boggy portions, about ten acres, has been filled in to an average depth of two feet; some large protruding have been removed by blasting; some large ledges of rock adjacent have been reduced, and the intervening depressions filled in a similar manner, so that there is about thirty acres of slightly undulating ground. This will form a stretch of turf a quarter of a mile across, unbroken by any road or foot-path. It may be used upon special occasions for military displays. Ordinarily it will be like a great country grove or open common—a place where children may run about and play until they are tired, in nobody's way, and without danger of being run over, or injured if they fall. A rocky ridge bounds this green on the north-east, which has been reduced by blasting sixteen feet, throwing open from opposite points the two finest views on the Park. The rock and earth removed from the ridge, together with that taken from a low hill a quarter of a mile to the southward, have been used to fill a swampy lying east of the green, and this being further covered with made soil to the depth of four feet, an additional level space has been obtained, about eighty rods in length and twelve rods in breadth, only separated from the green by a slight depression of the surface, through which passes a carriage-road. This spot has been planted with four rows of American elms, forming a broad mall, with a fountain at either end, seats for visitors, and accommodations for an orchestra. From its southern extremity, views of a quarter of a mile in other directions, terminating in a forest of spruce, and the general ruggedness of the Park is for a space entirely obliterated. The diagonal direction of these views gives great apparent breadth to the Park, an effect which is highly desirable. From the greater portion of the southern valley, all rocks of insignificant size, and such as were calculated to give an appearance of barrenness, have been removed. Some low parts have been filled up, and a level surface fourteen acres in extent thus obtained, upon which no trees will be planted, it being intended more especially as a play ground for match games at cricket and base ball. Some fine rocks overhanging the lower and narrower end of the valley, which will be occupied by a small pond. Of the central valley, the western part has been made more spacious by the removal of the smaller rocks, and the earth surrounding the larger, so as to form a shallow basin of irregular outline. This basin is occupied by a pond nearly twenty acres in extent, the view across which, from the most favorable point, will be of considerable breadth, and entirely unbroken for upward of a quarter of a mile. The excavation of this pond is nearly completed. This is the pond which afforded so much pleasure to the lovers of skating last Winter. Next Winter the apparatus for flooding the pond at night will be more perfect than last; a small portion of the upper end will be separately dammed off, the water kept twelve feet higher in it than in the remainder, for that purpose. In summer it is hoped that boats will be allowed to ply upon it. To the north and east of the pond is a broad hill-side, broken by ledges of rock and boulders with bowlders. It furnishes an interesting picture, viewed from almost any point; but particularly from the end of the promenade, on the descent from which to the pond is a fine view. At the highest and most remote part of the hill, as seen from this terrace, a small tower will be erected, and this will be the vista point of the avenue of the mall. Looking northward from the terrace, it will be the only artificial structure in sight (the Reservoir being 'planted out' and the rising ground on the right and left starting out the city). The whole breadth of the Park will be brought into this landscape, the foreground of which will be enriched with architectural decorations and a fountain, the middle-distance, composed of rocks, and with evergreens and dark shrubs interspersed among them, reflected in the pond; and the distance extended into intricate obscurity, by carefully planting shrubs of lighter and more distinct foliage among and above the gray rocks of the background. This hill-side, so admirably isolated in position, is crossed by no road, but is laid out with secluded walks, bordered by shrubbery.

JUDGE EDMONDS ON SPIRITUALISM—III.

THE CIRCLES.

To the Editor of The N. Y. Tribune. Sir: I devote this paper to the Circles and the conditions best adapted to the due manifestation of the spirit power.

But as it happens that some are already induced by these papers to investigate the matter, I ought to utter a word or two of caution. In the first place, then, I remark, that the evidence is generally so personal in its character, that it is quite impracticable for any one to convey it to another as vividly and forcibly as it is realized by him who receives it directly. Thus, when my person is touched, I can convey to others the same realizing sense that I have of the fact. And so when my secret thought is revealed, or something is said that is known only to me, and one who is dead, it is quite out of the question that I can make any one know the fact as unmistakably as I know it. And we are thus warned to be patient with those who are obliged to receive our testimony, instead of obtaining it for themselves; and are admonished not to be too ready to receive that of others, especially when the direct evidence is so attainable by all.

In the second place, I remark, so great is the variety of forms in which the manifestations come that we cannot safely reach a conclusion until after long and patient investigation. I was over two years investigating before I became a believer, and even now, after more than eight years' experience, I find I am all the time learning something new. Six, or twice or three six times, I ought not to omit to mention. Let me illustrate: I once had a Reverend Bishop at my house, who witnessed the manifestations for several hours, and apparently to his satisfaction, till I asked him how he knew that all he had heard had not come from the mind of the medium? So the medical professors at Buffalo, after a few sittings, attributed it to the toe or knee joints of the medium, while a little patience would have shown them the power displaying itself by ringing a bell. The Harvard Professors, after five or six interviews, pronounced it injurious to virtue, when they had not beheld enough to determine that it existed, much less to know what it taught. How much even of my eight volumes of manuscript—the record of only three years' research—could have been rapped out, letter by letter, in half a dozen sittings! And Professor Parady would not have ascribed the movement of the table to the magnetism of the hand resting on it, if he had only waited long enough to see it move without a hand's touching it. Such hasty conclusions are always painful to me, and are never, in my opinion, safe.

But to come to the Circles. In the earlier stages of investigation, the assemblage of a few persons—from four to twelve—is very advantageous, and often necessary. It is now as it was of old—where two or three are gathered together, that the spirit power can most readily descend in their midst. It was when four were together that Messrs. and Elias appeared again on earth, and it is now of common occurrence that a "Circle" of a few persons greatly aids the manifestations.

It is generally best to have an equal number of both sexes; and the advent of the power is often hastened by taking hold of hands or laying them on a table. It often occurs that the display of the power is interrupted by the withdrawal or the addition of some one after the manifestations begin.

So, too, it is not a little advantageous that all the Circle should have a calm, gentle and devout feeling; and hence it is that music and prayer are always beneficial, and sometimes indispensable.

Now, why is this? Who can tell so long as we are ignorant as we are of what is the power that is at work? We know a little—a very little—about it, and until science shall aid us with its researches, it is almost idle to speculate about it. But what we do know may as well be stated.

Electricity is one element used. This we know from various experiments, and the use of an electrical machine has at times been serviceable. Magnetism, both animal and mineral, is another. Sometimes the use of a large magnet has hastened the display, as has the presence of those who possess much animal magnetism.

But there is something more than these elements, and among other things it is that which the German writer Reichenbach calls 'Od' or 'Olio force'. This is an extremely subtle fluid—invisible to most persons—which is emitted by the magnet, by crystals and by the human body, being the product, in the latter, of the chemical action of respiration, digestion and decomposition. I have myself beheld it issuing from both ends of a magnet, and forcing itself out, like a pale, shadowy smoke, from under its armature. I have seen it issue from the human head and fingers. On one occasion I saw it so plainly that in a dark room I saw my own hand in that which issued from the head of the person who stood by my side.

It is that which artists have so long been painting around the heads of their saints and glorified ones. It is ever, as I understand it, generating in the human form, and its natural flow can be disturbed or interrupted by strong emotion.

As we can see electricity and magnetism only by their effects, so we often know of the existence of this element only by the distress which its interruption causes.

I have tried very hard to learn more about this, but the answer to my inquiries has been that science must discover it, and that until it does, it will be in vain to attempt to describe it to me. Something has, however, been done to enlighten me a little. On one occasion, through a very reliable medium, was displayed the manner in which ponderable objects were moved. I published the account of it in the appendix to my first volume on "Spiritualism." On another occasion I saw the process of preparing a Circle for manifestations. From each member of it I saw a stream of this fluid issue and slowly ascend to the ceiling. At the same time, from the surrounding spirits, I saw similar streams issue, but in greater quantities and with more force. The streams united and gradually filled the room from the ceiling down as smoke would. I could trace it in its gradual descent by the pictures on my wall and the books on my shelves, and I observed that, as soon as it descended so far as to envelop the heads and breasts of the Circle, the medium was influenced, and the manifestations began.

This is as far as my knowledge extends; and how earnestly I would that they who, from their scientific attainments, are far better fitted than I am for the investigation, would pursue the subject to a better understanding of this mighty and mysterious power.

But from what we do know it is easy to see how important the topic of "conditions" is, and how easily they can be disturbed when even emotion can affect them.

The investigator, to be successful, must not only himself be in a proper condition, but he must conform to those which experience has shown to be necessary. This is a stumbling block with many, but surely it ought not to be. How can we see without being in a condition to have light, or hear without a condition fit for the transmission of sounds? And as to his own condition, of one thing the investigator may be assured, and that is, that he will be most successful when he approaches the subject with a feeling of devout and solemn reverence. And why not? He is talking face to face with immortality. He is, while yet in the mortal frame, communing with the spirit; holy and divine. And now, as of old, it cannot do many mighty works because of unbelief. And to the question, "Why could we not cast him out?" the answer is, as of old, "Because of your unbelief, for 'verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed ye shall say unto this mountain, 'move hence to yonder place and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.'" J. W. EDMONDS. P. S.—You are right in supposing that I am not

UNITED STATES DEMOCRATIC REVIEW.

This periodical, which has completed its twenty-second year as a monthly magazine, is hereafter to be published quarterly, and in an enlarged form. The present number, in addition to the political articles, which are "Democratic" (so-called) to the backbone, has several literary papers of a good deal of interest. Among these we may mention the review of Prescott, which makes some excellent points on a well-igh exhausted theme, though the writer is mistaken in the assertion that " Bancroft passed his early years as a tutor at that college where Prescott graduated," nor are we among the "few who are aware of the fact that New-York possesses a college equal in age to Harvard." The article on Michael Angelo is spirited and appreciative, which can hardly be said of the biographical sketches of the distinguished politicians whose portraits grace the number.

A new and enlarged edition of Maury's Sailing Directions has been issued at Washington, and is sold by D. Egger & Son, in this city.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

The Precious Stones of the Heavenly Foundation. By Augustus S. Phelps. 12mo. pp. 328. Sheldon & Co. Sermons Preached and Revised by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. Fifth Series. 12mo. pp. 44. Sheldon & Co. A Treatise on the Soul, and on the Moral and Spiritual Theories of Francis Bacon. 12mo. pp. 358. J. B. Lippincott & Co. The Agreement: Being Five Discourses. 12mo. pp. 156. American Tract Society. Memoir of Robert Haldane, and James Alexander Haldane. 12 Shakspeare's Legal Acquirements Considered. By John Lord Campbell. 12mo. pp. 44. Appleton & Co. Life of Frederick the Great. By Macaulay. 12mo. pp. 77. Dutton & Co. Mothers and Infants, Nurses and Nursing. Translated from the French, by M. Al. Dumas. 12mo. pp. 503. Phillips, Sampson & Co. Plan of the Creation. By the Rev. C. L. Hays. 12mo. pp. 391. The same. On the Fall of the Value of Gold. By Michael Cheever. Translated from the French, with Preface, by Richard Cobden, etc. 12mo. pp. 100. Appleton & Co. A Practical Treatise on the Hives and Honey Bee. By S. L. Langstroth. Third Edition. 12mo. pp. 66. A. O. Moore & Co.

CANAL STEAM PASSENGER BOATS.—We learn that a company has been organized in this city and Rochester, for the purpose of building and running two steam canal packets between the two cities. The Rochester Union of last evening mentions the enterprise as in progress, and says the stock is being raised along the line of the canal, and considerable has been taken. Two Rochester firms have taken \$1,000 stock each, and confidence is expressed in the feasibility of the scheme. Lockport, Medina, Albion and Brockport people are anxious for the success of the enterprise, and subscribe liberally. The business in light weather, freight and passenger traffic, it is expected, will prove remunerative. The steamers are to be constructed with special reference to the trade, just large enough to pass the locks, of light draft, and great speed. The Union says they are to have side wheels constructed upon a new plan, and that they will run ten miles per hour, with thirty tons of freight, leaving ample accommodations for passengers. The passage between the cities can thus be made in a night, or in eight hours by day. We do not know the extent of the way business, but the scheme is by no means an impracticable one. (Buffalo Advertiser, April 19.)