FROM THE GULF SQUADRON.

Operations of the Gunboat Sagamore—Capture of a Sloop Loaded with Cotton—Courageous Proposition of the Men—Brave and Successful Assault—Capture of a Prize Loaded with Salt.

Correspondence of The N. Y. Tribune.

UNITED STATES GUNBOAT SAGAMORE, AT SEA, March 9, 1863.

All quiet along the Gulf at present, but on the Eastern coast we have, in some degree, been annoying the enemy recently. On the morning of the 1st inst., happening to be steaming along off Musketo Inlet, we discovered the topmasts of a schooner looming above the trees inside the Inlet. The river at this point is very intricate and full of shoals, also bluffs make up along the shore, forming an excellent spot for ambuscade; and which, by the way, was used by the enemy about one year ago, and resulted in their capturing the boats, with their officers and crew, belonging to the U. S. bark Fernandina.

Our Captain, therefore, not deeming the schooner worthy the risk, did not send the boats in, but getting within as short range as possible, threw over a few "Parrotts," hoping they might induce the Rebels to fire her, but, the shells not reaching her, they did not have the wished-for effect. As we were about leaving the place a large portion of the crew signed and sent in a petition to the Captain requesting permission to go in and burn the schooner, and officers immediately volunteering, consent was given.

Accordingly, before daybreak the following day, the expedition left the ship in charge of Acting Master's Mate J. A. Stamm, proceeded cautiously up the river, meeting with no resistance on the way; when within a mile of the schooner, a party was seen to run on board and then quickly leave, the same instant she was discovered to be on fire; pulling as strong and fast as possible, the boats soon reached her, and while in the act of boarding, a volley of bullets was showered upon them, killing one man and wounding five, among the latter, Acting Master's Mate F. E. Ford, in charge of first cutter; instantly the howitzer sent back a charge of canister where the light smoke curl was seen, and, judging from the yells and groans which immediately followed, more than one traitor laid down his arms; only one of them showed himself, and he, while in the act of aiming his rifle, was shot dead by Mr. Ford.

The schooner proved to be upward of 150 tuns burden, laden with cotton, and apparently ready to sail. Being satisfied that she was well fired, the object of the expedition being accomplished, they returned to the ship, on the way throwing shrapnell and canister among the trees and bushes that line the river banks, occasionally receiving a scattered fire from the enemy, but meeting with no further casualties than afore-mentioned. This little affair reflects credit upon the crew and the officers in charge, who were all only Acting Master's Mates, if I except one Third Assistant Engineer, F. G. Coggin.

A few days since another expedition left the ship for Indian River, where they succeeded in capturing the English schooner Charm, with 20 odd bales Sea Island cotton. Beside her master and crew, were nine passengers, endeavoring to escape to the happy land of Nassau. One of the passengers is a Capt. Dorrety, C. S. A. (uniform and all.) He swore he had no weapons of war, but, alas for the eccentricities of genius! he carried a revolver in his *bootleg*. The only regret he has is in allowing himself and 11 men to be taken by a party of seven. Quarters are now awaiting him at Fort Taylor. Thus, you see, we endeavor to keep up some little excitement, to prevent ourselves from growing moldy.

The gunboat Gem of the Sea, on the 10th, captured the sloop Petee of Savannah for Nassau, while attempting to run the blockade at Indian River Inlet, East Florida. She had a cargo of salt. Being old and leaky, she was destroyed.

HOWITZER.

FROM KEY WEST.

Departure of the Colorado from New-York Rough Sea and Some Danger—Sickness—Deaths on Board—Incidents of the Passage—Arrival at Key West—Something about that Locality—Descriptive—Vessels-of-War there—New-York 90th—Pennsylvania 47th—Fort Taylor—Morgan's Order of Exile—Countermanded by Col. Good—Black Battalion—Slavery Defunct—A Senator's and Secretary's Daughter—Sale of Prizes—Another Rich Prize to the Vanderbilt.

Correspondence of The N. Y. Tribune.

UNITED STATES STEAM-FRIGATE COLORADO, KEY WEST, Fla., March 7, 1863.

As I wrote you by the pilot off Sandy Hook, this large war vessel steamed away from the lower bay of New-York on Saturday, Feb. 21. A lively northwester springing up bore us rapidly out to sea, and in the desired direction, so that we soon lost sight of land. Next day—Sunday, 22d—the weather became muddy and boisterous. Our ship being loaded down with coal, ordnance stores, and with a heavier battery than she was designed to carry, did not rise buoyantly from the sea, but wallowed a good deal, and sometimes the sea broke over her, deluging her decks. By a kind providence, however, no very serious accident occurred. The bob-stays were broken and carried away, and the Captain's cabin and the ward-room pretty well drenched.

On Monday the wind fell off a good deal, and finally changed to the south-east, so that for most of the passage we had head winds; and as we had sought a full offing, by running far out into the Gulf Stream, we had both wind and current against us. Still we made steady progress, though slow, and on the 24 inst. made land a little to the south of Cape Canaveral, Florida. Meantime, the extremely cold weather to which our crew had been exposed at New-York and in the lower bay resulted in a pretty large sick-list, chiefly pneumonic affections, and we buried on the passage two of our men, Walter Monroe and James McGowan, both Scotchmen—the first on the 27th ult., and the last on the 3d inst.

Just after midnight on the morning of the 4th, the night having been peculiarly beautiful and calm, a sudden flaw struck our rigging, and snapped off the main-topgallantmast, just above the cap of the topmast, breaking the cap and tumbling toward the deck with all its sails and cordage; about sixty feet of it came down, and it was a foot in diameter at the point of fracture.

The same morning, about 10½ o'clock, we cast anchor in this harbor, having saluted, as we bore up, with fifteen guns, the blue pennant of Admiral Bailey, and received nine in reply. We found the St. Lawrence (flag-ship), the Huntsville, Magnolia, National Guard, Octorara, Tioga, Tohopa, Dale, and some other war vessels here, and the Adela and some other prizes taken from English blockade runners. The Huntsville, Tioga and Octorara have gone out on a cruise. The Adela is to go North (to New-York) to-day, to be disposed of as a prize, and I expect to send this letter by her.

This little island is one of the countless low cays, or keys, that form the chain that encircles the southern extremity of the coast of Florida. It is one of the largest of them. It is of coral formation, and the white bottom imparts a peculiar tinge to the water around it, softening the deep blue of the Gulf and the ocean to an inimitably beautiful pale emerald. The name Key West, I am told, is a corruption by Anglo-Americans of the Spanish Cay-Huesa (pronounced kay-wnessa), Isle of Bones.

It is about five miles long with an average breadth of one mile. It is about fifty miles west by north of Cape Sable, the southern extremety of Florida Peninsula. The city is a straggling town of about 3,000 residents, not including the soldiers and sailors here on Government account. It is chiefly built of wood, painted white, and the better class of houses are surrounded by verandahs, and embosomed in groves of cocoa-nut trees. These give a peculiarly tropical appearance to the place, with their tall ringed trunks, shaped like a Dahlgren gun, their long fern like stems and leaves clustering into a bunchy top like the palm-tree. These huge leaves or stems with leaves attached in two regular rows on the outer edges, range from three to fifteen and even eighteen feet in length. The nuts grow nestling near the heart of the cabbage like top, at the junction of the stems with the trunk.

The place is held by the 90th New-York, who mount guard day and night at every street corner. A new barracks has been built, and is now occupied by them. Four companies of the 47th Pennsylvania Regiment garrison Fort Taylor. This is a small but strong work, built on the south-west point of the island, or rather off that point; for a moat of some 200 yards in width, through which the sea tide passes, must be crossed before reaching the fort. The fort is built of a pale yellowish brick, very hard, founded on massive stone masonry. It is a semi-hexagon, three sides washed by the sea, and the diameter facing the land and the moat. It is casemated all round—has three tiers of guns, besides those *en barbette* on the ramparts. At the angles are bastions that enfilade every approach.

Quite a sturdy battalion of black soldiers was raised in this town, and a short time ago sent up to Hilton Head, S. C. Slavery seems extinct in the Key, and nearly all the colored people remaining here are the women, children and old men. The rest are off to the War. When our ship swung in to the wharf, several negro and mulatto women came aboard to offer their services as laundresses. Of these, one bright young mulatto woman, of fine figure and sedate countenance was pointed out to me by a gentleman acquainted in the place, as the daughter of quondam U. S. Senator, now Secretary of the Rebel Navy, Mallory; and upon subsequent inquiry, the statement was confirmed by a citizen.

This place is worthy of the name Key, in the English sense of that term; for it is the key to the eastern entrance of the Gulf, and very important to our Government on this account.

We expect to steam away from here in a few hours, in the direction of Pensacola and Mobile. I will keep you apprised of our movements and of public affairs in the line of our course, as opportunity offers. Yours &c., VOYAGER.

There were several prizes sold here yesterday. They bring good prices, and are usually bought by Cubans for the purpose of running the blockade. The same vessels have been taken and sold, taken and sold, again and again.

P. S.—Just as I was enveloping this letter a valuable English steamer, with an assorted cargo, was brought in, a prize captured by the Vanderbilt. I have heard no particulars of the capture, and must close this instantly.

NEW-YORK LEGISLATURE.

SENATE....ALBANY, March 18, 1863.

Sundry petitions were presented for Croton water in Manhattanville.

Mr. FARRAR made majority a report in favor of holding the New-York charter election at the same time as the general election, Mr. LOW dissenting.

The bill incorporating the Medical College for Women was ordered to a third reading.

The bill to change the location of the Merchants' Bank of Erie County, and to reduce the capital of the Union Bank of Rochester, were reported favorably.

Mr. SMITH introduced a bill providing arms and equipments for the State militia.

The bill relative to the fees of Supervisors, and prohibiting Supervisors from holding other county offices, or being parties to contracts with the county, was reported favorably; also the Brooklyn Fire Department bill.

A communication was received from the State Engineer, recommending an appropriation for a survey of the Hudson River next Summer, with a view to its permanent improvement.

BILLS PASSED.

The bill providing that failure to express consideration shall not vitiate contracts or agreements.

The bill amending the charter of the Metropolitan Insurance Company.

The bill allowing the North American Insurance Company to insure against injury to travelers.

Adjourned.

ASSEMBLY.

Bills of exchange were stricken out of the second section of Mr. Dean's gold bill, on his motion last evening, with the view of adding a new section more stringent, prohibiting all loans on such bills.

The bill appropriating the surplus revenues of the canals, after debate by Messrs. ANDRUS, OSWALD, POST, McGOWAN, SEYMOUR, MURPHY, REDDINGTON, DEPEW, HULETT, and McSHEA, was ordered to a third reading, without amendment. Recess.

EVENING SESSION.

The Assembly met at 7.

The Masterson New-York Contract bill was ordered to a third reading.

The Grinding Committee reported as complete the following bills:

The bill relative to the fraudulent sale or use of barrels and casks for malt liquors.

The bill amending the Fire Department law of Brooklyn.

The bill incorporating the Dry-Goods Clerks' Early Closing Association of New-York.

BILLS PASSED.

The bill relative to a Bureau of Military Statistics.

The bill authorizing justices of the peace, in certain towns in Kings Co., to hold inquests.

The bill authorizing the City of Brooklyn to establish a public market.

The Flushing Town Hall bill.

The bill relating to the fees and costs of the Justices' Court of Brooklyn.

The bill incorporating the General Saengerbund Association of New-York.

Adjourned.

From Our Special Correspondent.

ALBANY, March 18, 1863.

THE GRINDING COMMITTEE.

At the opening of the session of Monday evening, the Speaker of the Assembly announced the Grinding Committee. Mr. Loveridge is Chairman, of course, and associated with him are twelve members, of whom the Union men and the Democrats number respectively six. The Democrats are selected exclusively from among those who supported the resolution giving the Speaker the power of appointing the Committee.

It is generally admitted that the selection of this Committee has been made judiciously. The members have the respect of the House for ability and character, and very little complaint is heard from any quarter upon the subject. It has commenced operations promptly and in earnest, and reported complete a considerable batch of bills, which were ordered to a third reading. These were local bills not of any great importance.

As there may be some of your readers who do not understand clearly what is the province of the "Grinding Committee," it may be as well to state that, while by the rules of the Assembly, as of most other legislative bodies, all bills must be discussed in Committee of the Whole House before they can be put upon their passage, the Grinding Committee—which is sometimes, and more properly, termed the "Sub-Committee of the Whole"—does this duty as a substitute for the Whole House, and being a smaller and much more manageable body is enabled to dispatch business with far greater rapidity than when all bills have to be subjected to the pro ix discussions of a body of 128 men.

It is true this system is liable to be much abused, and no doubt has been very greatly abused in times past; but it is regarded by all who have had experience in legislation as unavoidable, and as leading to evils of less magnitude than those which would follow an adherence to the more regular system. It must be remembered that the Committee has no actual power to pass bills—the utmost it can do being to recommend bills to the House, which agrees or disagrees with the report of the Committee, as it sees fit. And as a further safeguard against improper legislation the rule under which the present Committee is constituted provides that any two members, by filing a protest against its action in the case of any particular bill, can take it from the Grinding Committee and send it back to the Committee of the Whole.

GAS IN BROOKLYN.

The greater part of yesterday's session was occupied over the bill prohibiting Gas Companies in Brooklyn from charging their customers in different localities different rates for gas. The Brooklyn members, with one exception, went earnestly for the bill, while it was stoutly opposed by several from New-York. After a long discussion in a style of eloquence quite akin to the subject, the bill was ordered to a third reading.

JUDGE DEAN'S GOLD BILL.

This bill was discussed in Committee of the Whole last evening. There seemed to be considerable diversity of opinion in the floor as to the expediency of the provisions of the bill, and it will probably be taken up again to-night and passed through Committee of the Whole. The telegram which appears in the Associated Press this morning is inaccurate, inasmuch as it is calculated to give the impression that the clause prohibiting loans on foreign bills of exchange was stricken out. This was done at the request of Mr. Dean, and solely for the purpose of enabling him to introduce a more stringent provision on that subject.

THE USURY LAWS.

The Hon. Mr. Johnson of Kings County reported the following bill relative to the usury laws. It was not favorably reported, but Mr. Johnson prevailed on the Judiciary Committee to allow it to be reported for the consideration of the House. It will be perceived that it is local in its application:

AN ACT regulating the rate of interest on the loan or forbearance of money.

The People of the State of New-York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

SEC. 1. No grant, transfer, bond, note, bill of exchange, contract, or agreement, or loans, or forbearance of any money, goods or things in action, made or executed in either of the Counties of New-York and Kings, shall be void by reason of any paying and receiving, or agreement to pay or allow, such rate of interest as the parties may agree upon.

SEC. 2. In all cases where the rate of interest is not specified the interest shall continue to be at the rate of $7 upon $100 for one year, and after that rate for a greater or less sum, or for a longer or shorter time.

SEC. 3. No greater rate of interest than is specified in the second section of this act, shall be charged on any judgment after the date of the rendition thereof, rendered in any of the Courts of this State, upon any obligation originating in either of the two Counties of New-York and Kings of this State, as named in the first section of this act, although such judgment may have been founded upon a writing stipulating a higher rate of interest.

SEC. 4. So much of Title 3d, Chap 4th, and Part 2d, of the Revised Statutes and so much of the Laws of 1857, Chap. 456, inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 5. This act shall take effect immediately.

The prejudice against any modification of the usury laws is very strong here, and the bill is not very confidently expected to pass.

LONG ISLAND OIL COMPANY.

Mr. Murphy introduced a bill incorporating the Long Island Oil Company, to be located at Long Island City, in Queens County. Corporators, James A. Cowing, Lewis B. Joy, William T. Wordwell, George C. Webster, and James R. Cowing. Capital, $50,000. Object the manufacture of oil and all other substances which can be produced from petroleum, coal, lard and other dangerous matter; also to make marine insurance and insurance against loss by fire upon any of the articles, when in its possession, or when consigned to it.

PUBLIC LANDS FOR AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES.

Mr. Pruyn, of the Literature and Finance Committee, submitted a majority report, embracing two bills relative to the distribution of the lands donated by the late Congress for the benefit of agricultural colleges.

SECTION 1, authorizes the Controller to receive from the proper authorities of the United States the land scrip to be issued for the lands granted to this State for the establishment of a College for the benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, and to give all necessary acknowledgments for the scrip so received by him.

SEC. 2 provides that the Controller, with the approval of the Chancellor of the University, may sell the said land scrip or any part thereof, and to execute all proper transfers thereof. But no such scrip shall be transferred until the same shall have been fully paid for.

SEC. 3 empowers the Controller to make such arrangements as he may deem most expedient for effecting a judicious sale of the land scrip, all the expenses to be borne by the State.

SEC. 4. The money accruing from the sale to be invested by the Controller, with the approval of the Chancellor of the University, in stocks yielding not less than 5 per cent per annum, and the money so invested to constitute a perpetual fund, the capital of which shall remain forever undiminished, except as provided for by Congress.

The second bill provides that the revenue from said investment shall be applied as follows:

The —— part of said revenue shall be paid semi-annually to the Trustees of the People's College; provided, that within —— years said Trustees shall show to the satisfaction of the Regents of the University that they own and possess suitable college grounds and building for the care of at least 150 students. The remainder of said fund, from time to time, to be paid over as the Regents may determine to such colleges of this State as shall be willing to comply to their arrangements to the requisition of the act of Congress aforesaid, giving preference, as far as may be, to such institutions as shall receive endowments after the passage of this act for the purpose of advancing instruction in Agricultural and the Mechanic arts.

Mr. Angel submitted a minority report by bill, which pledges the entire income of this fund to the People's College until the Regents of the University shall decide that said College, by endowment or otherwise, is fully provided for, and no longer needs assistance from this fund.

COMMISSIONERS OF DEEDS.

On motion of Mr. Cornell, the adverse report of the Judiciary Committee on the bill confirming certain Commissioners of Deeds irregularly appointed by the Common Council of New-York, was referred back to said Committee for the purpose of giving the Corporation Counsel a hearing thereon.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENTS FOR THE MILITIA OF THE STATE.

Mr. Smith introduced the following:

SECTION 1. The moneys unexpended of the $500,000 appropriated in 1861, and so much in addition thereto as shall make the sum of $500,000, are hereby appropriated as follows:

SEC. 2. The said sum of $500,000 hereby appropriated may be expended under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney-General, and Controller, for the purpose of effectually arming the militia and providing for the public defense.

SEC. 3. The arms, equipments, and munitions to be distributed as the Commander-in-Chief shall direct.

SEC. 4. Provides that the Commander-in-Chief shall report to the next Legislature all his proceedings under this act.

SEC. 5 requires that a bond shall be given by commandants of regiments, receiving such arms, equipments, and munitions of war for the safe-keeping and preservation of the same, and the return thereof to the arsenals of the State whenever such return shall be demanded.

SEC. 6. The Inspector-General shall report to the Legislature the number and condition of the arms, equipments, and munitions of war procured under this act.

SEC. 7. No moneys appropriated by this act shall be paid from the State Treasury except for arms, equipments, and munitions of war actually purchased or repaired and delivered by the direct order of the Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-Governor, and Controller, and for such other purposes connected with the public defense, as they may approve.

Academy of Music.

M. MARETZEK'S COMPANY.

Another brilliant audience was present at the opera last night; giving thus continued indication of a public desire to support a good lyrical company. The composition of *Un Ballo in Maschera* came out in several points in fresh and very lucid colors. We may instance in point, the admirable manner in which the tenor acted and sang the masquerade sailor scene in the witches' abode; calling down the most fervid and general applause. The duet subsequently with the soprano—Madame Guerrabella—excited approval, and so with other pieces. The mortal throes of the hero at the close were most interesting as a death-bed scene, though clinico-musically prolonged.

Reinhart, "Secretary to Count of Warwick, Governor of Boston," Massachusetts, did his pen-and-ink and other duties with a musical unction that would have inspired Governor Andrew to issue a new patriotic proclamation. The part of the Page affords but little scope to the abilities of Mlle. Brignoli, and Ulrica "the Astrologer"—Witch, we should say,—is a less fascinating character than the copper-colored *madre* in *Il Trovatore*, for Mlle. Sulzer. There was a sufficiency of applause.

On Friday, the *Favorita* will be given with Mlle. Sulzer.

Theaters.

At Wallack's, this evening, Mr. H. Isherwood, to whom the public is indebted for whatever fine scenery this theater exhibits, will have a benefit. "The School for Scandal" will be performed for the last time this season, with its usual effective cast.

At the French Theater, Niblo's Saloon, Mr. E. Gravier, the accomplished "Young First" of the company, announces the performance, for his benefit, of the capital comedy, "Nos Intimes," the plot and incidents of which are familiar to New-York audiences through the English version produced at Wallack's under the title of "Bosom Friends."

Mr. D. Setchell, a very talented and popular comedian, commences a brief engagement to-night at the Winter Garden. His first performances will be in "Dombey & Son," and "One Thousand Milliners," in which he appears as Captain Cuttle and Madame Vanderpants, respectively.

We willingly publish the following note from Miss Mary Provost, with the remark that the comments which elicited it were directed rather against the general system of complimentary theatrical benefits, as they are now-a-days devised and arranged, than against the special occasion with which her name was associated.

To the Editor of The N. Y. Tribune.

SIR: If you will take the trouble of looking at the advertisement of this day you will find the words "kindly consent" have disappeared by my order. I hope that neither you nor any of your readers have so poor an opinion of my sense, or that of the management, as to think we could have been guilty of such an absurdity. The entire advertisement (with the exception of my own letter) was written outside of the theatre, and the unlucky phrase was altered soon as noticed. I could not help laughing heartily, though somewhat annoyed, at the idea of kindly consenting to my own benefit. Will you please publish this, and thus inform those who may think otherwise that I am only too happy to take as many benefits as the management will allow, and the public will uphold me in; though I must say, in justice to myself, that I do not think I have been too importunate, when they consider that I have played three engagements in New-York city, but have only called for two benefits.

Very respectfully, MARY PROVOST.

Wednesday, March 18, 1863.

FIRE IN MAIDEN LANE.—At 7 o'clock yesterday morning, a fire took place in the building No. 140 Maiden lane. The stock of John Oakes, nautical instrument maker, on the first floor, was damaged by fire and water to the amount of $150; insured in the Union Mutual Insurance Company. Loss on building $100. The building belongs to Joseph Barnett; insured in the Home Insurance Company.

CITY ITEMS.

NEW-YORK ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—The opera of La Favorita will be performed at this house to-morrow evening. On Saturday, a matinee, when the opera of Un Ballo in Maschera will be given.

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—To-night the new Havana Opera Company give their first performance at this house, when the favorite opera of La Traviata will be illustrated. The disposition of the principal roles will be the same as that adopted on its presentation at the New-York Academy, when the opera met with marked approbation.

THE ATMOSPHERE.—The Rev. Wm. C. Richards will deliver his concluding lecture on "The Atmosphere" at Clinton Hall, this evening.

SEVENTY-NINTH REGIMENT.—A grand ball in aid of the widows and orphans of the brave men who have fallen in defense of the Nation, while fighting in the ranks of the Seventy-ninth (Highland) Regiment, is to be given at the City Assembly Rooms this evening.

THE GERMAN LADIES' SOCIETY FOR THE AID OF POOR WIDOWS AND ORPHANS.—A grand Concert is to be given at Irving Hall, this evening, for the benefit of the German Ladies' Society for the assistance of poor widows and orphans.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S COLLEGE SEMI-ANNUAL DEBATE.—The semi-annual debate of the students in the St. Francis Xavier's College will take place this evening at the College, No. 40 West Fifteenth street.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY.—The Thirty-third Annual Commencement of the College of Pharmacy will be held at the Chapel of the New-York University this evening.

Professor Britton's lectures and experiments in psychology, and kindred subjects, will hereafter be given at Stuyvesant Institute, commencing to-morrow evening.

LECTURE ON THE TOWER OF LONDON.—The Rev. Dr. Rodgers appeared before a large and most respectable audience last evening at the Cooper Institute. The platform was decorated with flags and diagrams, and graced with the presence of his Honor the Mayor and other distinguished gentlemen, many of whom were dressed in military costume. The eloquent speaker gave a graphic description of the Tower, and referred to many thrilling facts connected with its history. He illustrated his lecture with diagrams, and the entertainment was enlivened with music by the 7th Regiment Band. The proceeds of the meeting will be given to the Ladies' Relief Fund for the Sick and Wounded Soldiers.

AID TO IRELAND.—At a recent festive gathering, Mr. Barney Williams put in a plea for the suffering poor of Ireland, and proposed to give a professional benefit at the Academy of Music, free of expense, for the purpose of furnishing means to aid the destitute people of that country, pledging himself to make up the difference if the receipts should fall short of $1,000. The President of the St. Andrew's Society immediately offered a subscription, on behalf of its members, of $500 for the same object; a Boston Irishman, who said "he had recently won a bet of $50," offered that sum to aid the enterprise, and Mr Bell announced that Mr. A. T. Stewart had already chartered a ship at his own expense, to be filled with food for the destitute Irish, and sent forthwith to them from this port.

OUR MILITARY PROGRESS.—There are in process of organization in the State eight infantry regiments, six cavalry regiments, and one artillery regiment.

THE HUDSON, Capt. E. E. Morgan's new and splendid London packet ship, now loading at the foot of Wall street, was opened yesterday to a very large company of his friends, embracing some of our best citizens. After thoroughly inspecting and admiring the ship, the younger portion of the company joined in two or three quadrilles to the music of a capital band, and then all partook of a sumptuous oil-hand collation, wherein mirth and sociability bore sway, though wine and all intoxicating liquors were conspicuously absent.

The Rev. Dr. Bellows returned the Captain's thanks to the company for their ready response to his invitation, concluding with a few words in well-deserved praise of the stanch and beautiful vessel on which they were gathered, which elicited a brief and fit acknowledgment from Capt. Morgan, who in turn called out R. H. M'Clardy, esq., who close d an emphatic tribute to the ship and her owners with the following sentiment:

The good ship Hudson—Copper-fastened and copper-bottomed, but not *copper-headed*—May she prove as profitable to her loyal owners as they are true to their country.

The Hudson was launched from Westervelt's yard a few weeks ago, and is to sail on her first trip for London in about 10 days. She is now nearly half laden. She is 1,650 tuns burden, and about 230 feet long.

LEFT SUDDENLY WITH $10,000 IN GOLD.—On Tuesday, Joseph Cox, a youth about 17 years of age, in the employ of Weston, Dortic & Co., No. 17 William street, who was sent to deliver the sum of $10,000 in gold, contained in two bags of $5,000 each, suddenly disappeared with the specie. The usual steps have been taken to arrest him, but up to yesterday afternoon no tidings of him or the gold had been received at police headquarters.

CARPENTERS ON A STRIKE IN JERSEY CITY.—A number of the journeymen carpenters of Jersey City turned out on a strike yesterday. According to a previous arrangement, they demanded 20 cents advance per day, and it is stated that all of the employers, with the exception of two, acceded to the demand. The men who were refused the advance suspended work, and have issued handbills requesting their fellow-workmen in New-York, Brooklyn, and elsewhere not to step in and work for less than the established rate of wages.

AT HER POST AGAIN.—The City of Boston, Capt. Wilcox, of the New-York and Boston Steamboat Company, took her place on the line yesterday afternoon at 5 o'clock, at the foot of Vestry street. She has been newly painted and varnished inside, and thoroughly overhauled. The traveling public are indebted much to the efficient agent, Mr. E. S. Martin, for luxurious steamboat accommodations.

ICE.—Conklin & Co., of this City, have purchased the right to draw ice from the pond known as "Belden's," on Ida Hill, at the back of the city of Troy. They commenced to cut ice from the locality in question on the 6th of March. Over one hundred men and numerous teams are employed. The firm engaged in this enterprise expect that the pond will yield them over 60,000 tuns of ice. The ice is about sixteen inches thick, and of the very best quality.

The Knickerbocker Ice Company, who are deprived of their usual supply from Rockland Lake, are cutting ice from the West Troy basin, and have also purchased the right to use Richardson's Pond, on the Wynantskill.

Capt. David Pye Fraunces, who is now engaged in teaching the colored men of this city the art of war, has recently been presented with a beautiful sword and sash by his friends.

A propeller for Fancher & Co. of this city, the third from the same yard, will be launched at ¾ o'clock this morning, from the yard of E. S. Whitlock, at Greenpoint.

THE HARBOR DEFENSE COMMITTEE.—This body met on Monday evening, when the Board were addressed by Admiral Paulding, Professor Trowbridge of the United States Engineer Department, and who is connected with the fortifications of the harbor, Col. Stiles, and Messrs. Norman Wiard and William H. Webb. The Board adjourned to next Tuesday evening. The Committee on Water Defenses and also the Committee on Ordnance will hold meetings and give hearings on next Monday.

THE BUTCHERS' HIDE AND MELTING ASSOCIATION.—At a meeting of the Butchers' Hide and Melting Association on Tuesday, Capt. Phillips presented to S. P. Patterson, the President of the Association, a splendid gold watch. In making the present he said:

The occasion, Sir, that has called us together this afternoon, is only another event in the history of this Association that will enable its members to look back to it in after years with pride and satisfaction.

I have for many years been of the opinion, Sir, that this Association was misnamed. Instead of calling it the Butchers' Hide and Melting Association, it should have been called the Butchers' Mutual Protective Association, for it has done more to protect their interests, to establish their character for fair dealing, and place them in such a position before the community as they were always entitled to hold, than all other associations combined, and my only regret is, that it is not more highly appreciated.

Its history, Sir, I believe stands without a parallel. During the period of its existence (now some twenty-five years) it has never had any special enactments passed for its protection, neither has it availed itself of any existing acts of incorporation. It has been sustained by a mutual confidence reposed in each other and those whom they have selected as its officers. And I see some around me here now, including yourself, Mr. President, who have grown old in their service, devoting their time, their talents and the best energies of their mind for the advancement of its interest and the promotion of its welfare, without one farthing of compensation. I repeat, Sir, that after an existence of some twenty-five years its history stands without a parallel.

Notwithstanding the immense amount of business that is transacted by the Association (near or quite a million annually), I believe it has never sustained but one material loss since it was established, and that occurred through your immediate predecessor, a man of reputed wealth and then respected by the profession.

But this loss, I think, Sir, has proved to the association great gain. It has taught them this great truth the world is so slow to learn, viz: virtue and integrity are not always surrounded by wealth. It has done more, Sir. It prompted them to the selection of you, Sir, as their presiding officer, who have served them so faithfully and so honorably for the last twelve or thirteen years. And for your many virtues, your devotion to the varied interests of the association, the sterling integrity you have always exhibited in the discharge of these duties, the gentlemanly manner in which you have presided over their deliberations, together with the moral Christian character you have sustained, have prompted them to solicit me in their behalf to present you with this elegant gold watch and chain, as a small testimonial of their regard for you as their presiding officer and a gentleman.

Permit me, in conclusion, Sir, on behalf of myself, of the members of the association, and I may safely include all the employees of the establishment, to express to you our most earnest and sincere desire that you may continue to practice those many manly virtues that have so distinguished you here until the end of life's journey, thereby enabling you to leave to your children a legacy that they may always point to with pleasing emotions, as they read this epitaph inscribed on your tomb-stone, "Here lie the remains of an Honest Man."

Mr. Patterson, who was taken by surprise, said:

This beautiful gift from the members of the Butcher's Hide and Melting Association, presented by our friend Mr. Phillips, affects me so that I find it difficult to give utterance to the feelings of my heart. This watch and chain I shall value far above their intrinsic worth, as a mark of your esteem. Jewels and gold can be purchased, but in presenting me with this, you have given me something that cannot be bought or sold. My friend has alluded to an inscription on a tombstone. However little of this world's goods I may leave my children, I hope I shall be able to leave them the comforting reflection that their father was an honest man. Gentlemen, I heartily thank you for your very elegant present.

The members of the association and guests then partook of a sumptuous dinner, provided for the occasion. The beef was a present from the butchers of Philadelphia—a good gift worthily bestowed. Among the prominent gentlemen present were Thomas P. Way, John M. Seymoure, A. Odell, B. Rice, J. L. Stewart, J. W. Clinch, Mr. Laylor, Mr. Gwyre and others.

STABBING CASE.—At a late hour on Tuesday night, two sailors, Daniel Ahern and Matthew Lyons, got into a difficulty in an Oak street dance house, when Lyons drew a knife and stabbed Ahern about the head and face. The wounded man was taken down to the Hospital, and Officer Brew of the Fourth Precinct arrested Lyons.

ROBBERY BY A DOMESTIC.—Yesterday Catharine Leg, a native of Ireland, a servant in the family of Mrs. Downs of No. 134 East 14th street, was arrested and taken before Justice Steers, at Essex Market Police Court, charged with stealing from her employer jewelry, clothing, &c., to the amount of $100. She was held for examination.

ARREST OF PICKPOCKETS.—Yesterday Detective Farley arrested Charles Ferguson and Charles McDonald, charged with picking the pocket of John Walsh of 85 Watt street, while passing the corner of Canal street and Broadway, having snatched his watch out of his pocket and away from his chain. The accused were taken before Justice Dowling, at the Tombs Police Court, and committed in default of $500 bail each to answer.

Sales of real estate, March 18, by A. J. Bleecker, Son & Co.:

4 houses and lots cor. Water and Roosevelt-sts., 31x58	$16,600
House and lot No. 19 Vandewater-st	6,000
House and lot 37th-st. west of 10th-av	1,125
1 lot on 2d-av., bet. 56th and 57th-sts., 2.12x100	1,600
1 lot on 2d-av., bet. 56th and 57th sts., adjoining	1,795
Premises on New Chambers-st., near Bowery	11,500
House and lot No. 132 Degraw-st., Brooklyn	6,600
House and lot No. 155 West 15th-st., New-York	6,350

[Advertisement.]

MADAME DEMOREST'S MIRROR OF FASHIONS.—The Spring number furnishes a splendid combination of Fashionable Novelties, elegant Fashion Plates, numerous Engravings, three full-sized Cut Patterns, together with an epitome of all the French Fashions for Ladies' and Children's Dress. This unrivaled Fashion Magazine has met with unusual prosperity, having been in existence less than three years, and already reaches a circulation of thirty thousand. The immense amount of interesting and valuable information to the Ladies furnished by this Magazine will readily account for its wonderful success.—[Home Journal.

[Advertisement.]

AT CHURCH, AT HOME, and VISITING CARDS, in elegant styles; also, a large assortment of French and English Note Papers, at J. EVERDELL'S, No. 302 Broadway, corner Duane-st. For specimens by mail send stamps.

[Advertisement.]

"WHO ARE OUR BEST MEN?"—What of the scheming politicians? Who will serve, and who will cheat the Government? In short, whom shall we trust to lead? Ask PARKMONOUT. Would you have the right man in the right place? Let him be selected on chronological principles, and appointed. The office of FOWLER & WELLS is at No. 308 Broadway.

[Advertisement.]

The best place in the City to procure HUMMING BIRDS, now so fashionable for Ladies to wear in their hair and bonnets is at J. G. BELL'S, No. 339 Broadway, where over 100 different species may be seen, some of which are of the most brilliant plumage.

BROOKLYN ITEMS.

INAUGURATION OF A NEW REPUBLICAN HALL.—The Fifth Ward Young Men's Republican Club of Brooklyn inaugurated their new hall, No. 130 Prospect street, last evening, with appropriate ceremonies. The Club was organized about two months since, for the purpose of consolidating and increasing the strength of the party in the Ward, and thus far has met with most gratifying success. The Club number, nearly 300 men, and new names are added at each meeting. The officers are: President, Wm. H. Bromell; Vice-President, Elting Post; Recording Secretary, Joseph G. Ward; Corresponding Secretary, Daniel Collins; Treasurer, J. C. Burling; Sergeant-at-Arms, John Orrington.

The hall is capable of accommodating about 600 persons, and more than half that number were present last evening. A band of music was in attendance, and the room was tastefully decorated with American flags.

Patriotic and encouraging addresses were made by the Hon. James Humphrey, the Hon. Seth B. Cole, Wm. H. Gale, esq., Geo. B. Lincoln, esq. and several others. Mr. Cole, in his remarks, observed that the resources and power of the nation had been developed to so great a degree since the war commenced that it was now shown to be the richest and most powerful on earth. The Government felt more confidence now in their ability to crush the Rebellion than at any time in the past two years, and were convinced that the nation could never be put down by treason at home or by invasion from abroad. The gentleman advocated the Hon. Eli Thayer's project of colonizing Florida—giving every Rebel who would lay down his arms and support the Union a tract of land—as the best way with the military operations now in progress, of bringing the Rebels to their senses and securing a lasting and honorable peace, with the old flag floating and acknowledged, over the whole land.

The speeches of the other gentlemen were equally patriotic and hopeful, after which the Club adjourned.

The hall has been leased by the Club for three years, at $400 per year. The regular meetings will be held semi-monthly.

ALLEGED MURDER.—On Sunday last a man named James Kellet was found lying on the Hunterfly Road, beyond the city line, suffering from injuries sustained, as then supposed, by falling with his head upon some sharp stones, while in a state of intoxication. Mr. Garrett Stoothoff, who discovered him, put him in his wagon with the aid of a lady and gentleman passing at the time, and conveyed him to the farm-yard of Mr. Vanderberg, where he left him. The face of the injured man was bleeding badly, and there was blood on and about the stones. Mr. Stoothoff asked him where he lived, and he answered that he did not know. He did not complain of any person striking him. Just before Mr. Stoothoff arrived at his place, where Kellet was lying, he met four colored men, named John Jackson, Henry Jackson, Samuel Jackson and Frederick Johnson. The first named had a pair of skates. They were laughing and seemed very merry. Kellet died of his injuries during the night, and an inquest was held on Monday, resulting in a verdict that deceased died of injuries sustained by a fall while in a state of intoxication. Some circumstances having come to light showing that the man, so far from falling and injuring himself, had been knocked down and bea