CHRISTMAS DAY.

ITS OBSERVANCE IN THE CITY AND ELSEWHERE.

The merry Christmas-day has once more been reached and passed, and what we think of it this morning depends upon whether we were wise or foolish yesterday, in our choice of the manner of its celebration. If we were liberal in proportion to the gifts with which we had been intrusted, if we looked upon the day as one of religious and social cordiality, and while we rejoiced ourselves, gave, by word or deed, some fellow-being reason for rejoicing with us, then we may be comfortable within ourselves, and complacent as to the expenditure from our pockets. If, on the other hand, we were stingy, being rich; if we denounced Christmas trees as rubbish, and all cakes and candies as poisons; if we were crabbidly spiteful toward baby-rattles, and vindictive toward tin horns; if, being old, we used Christmas as a stuffing time of game and pastry, or, being young, thought it a manly thing to celebrate the day with a succession of whisky punches, then we shall to-day growl at the whole holiday institution, and alternate the throbs of the headache or the gout with anathemas against the whole Santa Claus fraternity. Of course, the majority of the readers of THE TRIBUNE do not belong to the latter class; they will therefore be glad to know what was done yesterday throughout the city, and the story is told below from Grace Church to the Almshouse, from Madison-square to the tenement-house with 87 families. Business was generally suspended—even the grave-digger had a holiday—leaving to metropolitan policemen, city railroad employés and morning newspaper men a monopoly of labor. The sky was clear, the air delicious, until toward night, when a keen wind betokened early snow. There was no slippery coasting or skating, but the streets were alive with young New-York, ready to be uproariously jolly upon the slightest provocation. The mercurial mildness, which disgusts the market men and poulterer, has been a blessed boon to the struggling poor, and it was a pleasant thought yesterday that, in the midst of the general rejoicing, no man or woman was dying with the cold which poverty made too bitter to be borne.

CHRISTMAS IN THE CHURCHES.

TRINITY CHURCH.

As is usual at Old Trinity, the celebration of Christmas attracted a far larger crowd than its capacious aisles could accommodate. Long before 11 a. m. the crowd choked up the doors, and entrance became difficult if not impossible. The interior of the church was beautifully decorated with evergreens and flowers, the absence of the cumbrous masses of green which have before blocked up the church, giving a full view of the beautiful screen which in Christmas dress divided the nave from the more sacred chancel with its blaze of light.

To those who had not seen the services since Easter the processional hymn on the occasion, the *Adeste fidelis*, was a surprise. The service was Boyce in C, followed by a very peculiar and ancient chant to the Nicene creed. The Litany was omitted. The Anthem in which the aria was sung by Master Grandin, and the recitatives by Masters Raeburn and Somers, was the well-known "O thou that bringest glad tidings" from Handel's Messiah. After the sermon was the beautiful *Gloria in Excelsis* from Mozart's 12th Mass, adapted to the Christmas Anthem "Glory to God in the highest."

This was followed by the usual communion service. The music was under the direction of Mr. Alfred Messater, and the choir gave pleasing evidence of the thoroughness of its instruction and drill.

The sermon was delivered by Dr. Vinton, and in consideration of the necessary length of the service was short and condensed. His text was the 2d verse of the 32d chapter of Isaiah, "A man shall be a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest." In connection with the season he dwelt on the manhood of Christ, denied by Gnostics and Docetes in earlier days, but now accepted by all. He concluded his sermon with an earnest invitation to the Lord's Supper. At the close of the Communion service, which was largely attended, the choir retired, singing the processional hymn. The anthems were repeated at the evening service.

GRACE CHURCH.

At this celebrated temple of religious worship the services were exceedingly impressive. The usual morning service was read, and a discourse was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Morgan, on the trite but peculiarly appropriate theme of "Peace and good-will to men." The music with which the services were interspersed, was as grand as the occasion was sacred. Mr. George W. Morgan, the organist of the church, was absent on account of illness, but his place was very creditably filled by Prof. G. W. Colby. The choir consisted of Jules Lombard, bass; George Simpson, tenor; Mrs. Badestein, soprano; and Mrs. Raeburn, contralto. The vocal music, as well as that of the organ, is always an attraction at this church, and, notwithstanding the absence of Mr. Morgan, it lost none of its high reputation by the performance of yesterday. The solos were superb, and, had they been listened to in another building than a church, the audience could not have resisted the temptation to applaud. The principal selections were Mosenthal's Gloria Jubilate, recitatives from the Messiah, and Mozart's Grand Anthem. The concerted music was fully equal to the offerings of the best singing to be heard in the concert hall where vocalists *celebres* entertain their auditors. This, however, is only repeating what has been said many times.

Dr. Morgan's discourse was a scholarly effort and bore a peculiar fitness to the anniversary of our Savior's nativity. It was filled with most excellent advice, which, if the congregation were impressed by it, must result in increasing the exercise of that greatest of the Christian virtues—charity.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH.

Christmas-day is always observed in the Roman Catholic Church as perhaps the greatest festival of the year, and the ceremonies yesterday were in accordance with this custom. The solemnity of the services attracted a great number of strangers, and at the 5½ a. m. mass the church was thronged, and several hundred people were left without room even to stand, and so remained on the street. At the High Mass at 10½ o'clock over 4,000 people filled the seats and aisles. At 10½ the choirs and orchestra commenced Haydn's Imperial Mass, by singing the "Kyrii," during which the procession entered and approached the altar. The Rev. Father McEvoy celebrated the Mass, assisted by the Rev. Father McGlynn as deacon, and the Rev. Father Gambouville as sub-deacon, the Rev. Father Poole acting as Master of Ceremonies. The music was well selected and the Imperial Mass was appropriate to the day. The sweet soprano solos of the "Kyrii" and "Gloria," and the grandeur of the "Credo" and "Agnus Dei," all enhanced the sublimity of the ceremonies. The sermon was preached by the pastor, the Rev. Dr. McGlynn. The reverend gentleman appealed to the congregation to remember that the orphan's of New-York were dependent on charity, and since it was for them that the collection of the day was to be taken up, he trusted that all would give in proportion to their ability. The response of the congregation at three masses was most hearty, the receipts being barely contained in a oox two feet long by one foot ten inches high and eighteen inches wide; said box being crammed with a heterogenous mass of bills, shinplasters, pennies, and a few gold dollar pieces and silver coin. The collection was estimated at not far short of $3,000.

THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The various reformatory and benevolent institutions, on Blackwell's Island, contrary to the usual custom, so far honored the day as to provide an unusual cheer to the inmates of the different houses.

AT THE PENITENTIARY.

The ordinary routine of every-day work was suspended, and the convicts partook of a hearty dinner, composed of delicacies seldom or never seen before within the walls of the institution.

THE ALMSHOUSE.

The inmates of the Almshouse were also regaled with a Christmas dinner, composed of chicken fricasse and fresh pork. The relish with which these edibles disappeared testified strongly in support of the theory which states: "That which cometh through charity is doubly welcome." Many worthy persons are confined in this institution, brought thither by manifold misfortunes more than by their own acts. In previous years the merry day of Christmas, kept everywhere with such rejoicing, was passed by in this institution without anything extraordinary being done. Many were the blessings heaped on the heads of the donors of yesterday's entertainment.

AT THE WORKHOUSE.

The 500 pounds weight of chickens and 115 pounds of fresh pork were amply sufficient to feed the 600 inmates of this institution in a manner becoming the day.

THE LUNATIC ASYLUM

was able to boast of more, in the way of entertainments, than its neighbors on the island. After the Christmas-dinner at midday, there was dancing in the different wards during the afternoon, which was participated in with great spirit by the patients of both sexes. During the evening a magic lantern was exhibited by one of the patients, the pictures for which had been painted by himself. He gave a lecture on the subject, chosen by himself, in a manner to excite the emulation of many a professional. A musical treat was also afforded. In fact, everything was done to make the inmates as happy as possible. A new building is in contemplation for this institution to be devoted to a gymnasium, and a hall capable of giving accommodation to a full-sized audience. This hall is to be used for entertainments. It has been found that few things are more beneficial than a certain class of amusement for the cure of many otherwise almost hopeless cases of insanity. The Superintendent looks forward to the erection of this building with the hope of accomplishing much good through its use.

ON RANDALL'S ISLAND

the juvenile delinquents in the House of Refuge were entertained in a manner which will long be remembered by them in the years to come. The fare was sumptuous and plentiful. The boys and girls disposed of the delicacies in an amazingly short space of time, and altogether appeared to be very happy.

THE FIVE POINTS HOUSE OF INDUSTRY

gathered some 500 happy children together yesterday at noon, and before a large concourse of visitors they went through various exercises, such as calisthenics, singing, reciting, etc. The way in which these exercises were performed reflects the highest credit on the careful and patient manner in which the teachers, who are all ladies, have performed their duty. At 2 o'clock the children marched down to dinner, where they partook of turkeys, chickens, geese, ducks, etc., to their great satisfaction. After dinner the children again entered the school-room. Speeches were made, and a large Christmas-tree was deprived of its fruits. Presents were given to the children, after which visitors and children were dismissed.

THE HOWARD MISSION.

The exercises were somewhat similar. A plentiful Christmas dinner was served out to some eight hundred children, after which presents were distributed and a general jollification indulged in. In the evening the parents of the children were gathered together in the school-room, where a musical entertainment was afforded them. The Rev. L. M. Van Meter, Superintendent of the Institution, has recently returned from Europe where he has been visiting the principal charitable institutions with a view of giving the benefit of his experience in the erection of the proposed new Mission House. Contributions to the fund for the erection of this building are earnestly solicited.

THE NEWSBOYS.

A Christmas usually brings to the newsboys of Fulton-st. a good dinner, so regularly and well have the Children's Aid Society cared for their little household on this day of days. The "little household" in question have their quarters on the sixth story of the building No. 128 Fulton-st., which is generally known as the Newsboys' Lodging House, and here they passed a merry Christmas yesterday. There are about 160 young boys at present living in the institution, none of them probably over 16 years of age. Only a few of this number represent the genuine type of the ubiquitous newsboy, as he existed before and during the war. He became a character of the city, with his ragged and dirty dress, his stentorian shoutings of sensation news, and his frequent "sells." But the newsboy to be more fully known should be seen as a gastronomer at the dinner table of his favorite haunt, in Fulton-st., when mastticating, as on last evening, something better and more delicate than his ordinary daily diet. After their Christmas meal, last evening, the boys amused themselves with singing ballads peculiarly their own, and in a variety of newsboy ways, generally entertaining to the visitor. To-night the usual Christmas presents of clothing will be distributed among the occupants of the lodging house.

GIRLS' LODGING-HOUSE.

This branch of the Children's Aid Society furnished a large number of poor girls with a Christmas dinner yesterday, at the lodging house No. 205 Canal-st.

THE TOMBS.

Yesterday the male and female prisoners at the Tombs, 200 in number, were treated to a bountiful dinner by the Commissioners of Charities and Corrections. The meal was composed of 100 chickens, dressed; beef in various forms of cookery, and all the accessories that go to make up a hearty, substantial dinner. With the exception of Jerry O'Brien and Wagner, who are under the sentence of death, all the prisoners were allowed the freedom of the corridors from 11 till 3 o'clock. All behaved themselves well, and seemed to appreciate the kindness of the authorities.

THE DAY AMONG THE GERMANS.

No day is celebrated by the Germans in every clime with more sincerity than Christmas. From the cradle to old age the Germans tenaciously adhere to the customs concerning Christmas which have been handed down from generation to generation. Even in this busy city, where time is so emphatically money, nearly every German pater familias sacrifices a day in order to prepare a Christmas-tree and adorn it with the best his means allow. On Christmas day itself no observances peculiar to the German people took place, but all the saloons and other places of amusement bore evidence by their crowded state that this was a festive day. The Stadt Theater in the Bowery and the Thalia in Broadway had an extra performance for the edification of the juvenile Teutons, which were well attended. In the Atlantic Garden a brass band under the leadership of Mr. Weichman, gave a concert; in the National Garden a miniature mine with moveable figures and scenery amused several thousands of juveniles during the day, while in the Bowery Garden similar entertainments were had before large audiences. In the evening, almost every singing society had its sociable and Christmas festival.

CHRISTMAS IN A GERMAN SCHOOL.

An illustration of the felicity with which our German-born citizens manage Christmas festivities, was had in the Reception given by Steinheimer's Select School, at Grove garden, No. 234 William-st., on the evening of the 24th inst. The main features of the exercises were declamations and dramatic representations. With a couple of exceptions all the compositions produced were original. These performances, alternated with vocal and instrumental music by the pupils and by the German glee-club "Frauenloh," and with the distribution of "nice things" from the Christmas trees to the young folks (in which ceremony Mr. S.'s daughter, attended by a train of *quasi* angels, personated the beautiful German myth of the "Christkind"). At the close, each of the children presented some substantial gift of their own making or selection, to their parents, accompanying the token of affection by a little spoken address in verse. Pure love seemed to be the governing and disciplining principle of the school as well as of the occasion.

Mr. Steinheimer was led by his native inclination toward children to abandon other pursuits and take up his present labors for their education, to which object he has brought much personal and pecuniary sacrifice. His name figures on the roll of those proscribed by the Administration for the sake of their political faith.

CHRISTMAS IN A TENEMENT HOUSE.

The greatest and most populous—the model tenement house of the city is in the Fourteenth Ward, and extends from No. 45 Elizabeth-st. through to No. 98 Mott-st. It was erected by a company of tradesmen who sought to solve the problem of how to provide shelter for the city's less favored of fortune, and at the same time to secure adequate returns from their investment of capital. And they have succeeded. An exterior view of this vast edifice, from the south, shows only a dreary wall, as of a lofty and extensive prison-yard; but the interior shows you an arcade of tenements, rising one above the other to the hight of six stories. On the right, as you enter and pass from Mott-st. up a broad staircase, over which the Fire Department could draw a common hose-cart with ease, you observe what might well be termed a street, whose doors all open on a level with the sidewalk—the iron and brick-arched corridor being the sidewalk. On your left is a massive dead wall, which was seemingly built to support the fire-proof staircases and corridors; but therein you observe a door on the Mott-st. end and another on the Elizabeth-st. end, and passing out through one of these, you note a series of closets built outside the outer wall, and rising from the basement to the roof. These are so arranged that every family may have their own closet on the floor whereon they dwell. Like distinct apartments are provided for every family's coal. The dwelling part of this immense building—you are nearly at a loss to determine whether the tenements have been attached to the corridors or the corridors to the tenements—may be described by a sketch of one apartment, that of the janitor, on the third story. Entering, you pass one room which is dimly lighted from the corridor, then a dark bedroom, and then you reach an apartment which is lighted by a wall-window, and which is used as sitting-room, kitchen and parlor, and is quite cheerful notwithstanding its circumscribed space. The other 15 tenements on this floor are precisely like the janitor's, and so are those of the other stories above and below. This part of the building is not fire-proof. The cost, and the consequent price of rentals, would have been too great to be borne by the class of tenants which the projectors expected to fill their apartments; and therefore the proprietors contented themselves with erecting a structure which, should it be consumed, would afford the surest means of escape.

The roof covers 91 tenements, and now shelters 87 families, nearly all of foreign birth. They hire from month to month; and while in one month every tenement may be full, the next a dozen may be empty and to let. None but families of average respectability are admitted within the walls under any consideration, and all must abide by the rules of the place. Gas is shut off in the corridors at 10 o'clock every evening, and at that hour the outer doors are closed. The families on the first floor pay $12 a month; those on the second, $13; on the third, $12 50; on the fourth, $12; on the fifth, $11 50, and on the sixth, $11; and when the building is full it yields the proprietors $1,152 a month. The number of occupants at this time may safely be estimated at 400. But basing an estimate upon the troops of children who romped in the corridors and climbed the staircases yesterday, a casual observer might have been misled into a guess that the population of the place is a thousand. The older people kept within doors, away from the children's Bedlam; but the latter rendered day hideous with their Christmas drums and trumpets and hobby-horses, and were all the afternoon in high revel, of course; and the only scene to which Capt. Garland could liken the resounding corridors was the grand opera at rehearsal, raising the ancient Nicholas on the stage in an empty theater.

BROOKLYN.

Christmas in Brooklyn yesterday passed off much in the style of preceding years. Ushered in with much tooting of horns by the juvenile portion of the community, the day was one of general enjoyment and jollity, mingling with a deeper current of quiet happiness.

The churches were neatly decorated with evergreens, and most of them were well filled during the exercises of the day.

At Holy Trinity the combined attractions of fine music, a beautiful service and an eloquent rector, gathered a crowded audience. After the reading of the regular Christmas ritual of the Episcopal Church, an able discourse was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Littlejohn on "the day, its associations and its significance—a true type of what every-day Christianity should be." The music at Holy Trinity under the supervision of Mr. Geo. Warren, organist—was as usual excellent.

At the Sand-st. M. E. Church there was a Sabbath-School Festival, and the exercises were quite interesting. Each class handed in the amount collected by it for the missionary cause—in all nearly $2,000.

The Sabbath-School of the Washington-st. M. E. Church had a pleasant Christmas Festival, at which presents were exchanged between teachers and pupils, and addresses were made by the Rev. A. S. Hunt and others. Mr. Hunt was presented with $500 from some Dutchess County friends. The greenbacks were inclosed in a baked potato.

At the Church of St. Charles Borromeo (R. C.), Sidney-place, the services were of a very solemn and imposing character, and the congregation was an unusually large one. The Rev. Dr. Friel delivered a discourse upon the advent of the Savior. The pastoral, by Lambelotte, the Christmas hymn "Adesta Fidelis," selections from the "Messiah," &c., concluding with Haley's "Le Jubre," were rendered by the choir in exact and elegant style.

At the Church of the Saviour, corner of Pierrepont-st. and Monroe-place, a new chapel for the use of the Sabbath-School was dedicated with addresses by the Rev. Dr. Farley, the Rev. A. B. Putnam, and others.

At the Centenary M. E. Church, corner of Jay and Johnson-sts., the usual Christmas Festival was held, with addresses by the Rev. Mr. McAllister and Mr. Barnddollar, the whole affair passing off most pleasantly.

At the Church of the Pilgrims addresses were made by the Rev. Dr. Storrs and others, and the children of the Sabbath-School were presented with bibles, testimonials and other appropriate gifts.

The children at the Warren-st. Mission, Bethel Mission, and the Industrial School also received a liberal portion of the good things which Santa Claus carries with him for his numerous little friends.

At the "Newsboys' Home," No. 69 Poplar-st., there was a grand Christmas dinner of roast beef, genuine English plum pudding, and all the traditional fixings. Some 70 boys made merry havoc with the good things set before them, and had in reality a "Merry Christmas." A year ago Mr. J. D. McKenzie, at a Christmas dinner given the newsboys of Brooklyn, promised them they should have a home within a year. Last night he was present at their meeting and stated that his promise had been kept—and right well it has been kept. Addresses were also made by the Hon. John W. Hunter, Mr. Briggs and others, and everything passed off in merry Christmas style.

The day was very quietly observed throughout the Eastern District, and but for the touch of an occasional fish-horn it would have had much the appearance of a Sunday. Except in the candy and pea-nut line, no business was transacted after an early hour in the forenoon. Interesting services were held in the Episcopal and Catholic churches, and they were largely attended. At St. Mary's Church, Rev. Father McDonald, a High Mass was celebrated in the forenoon, after which a sumptuous dinner was given in the basement to some seventy poor children. Father McDonald asked a blessing on the good things so generously provided, and the hungry young ones were filled with delight and turkey for the first time, probably, in their lives. Thirty poor families were supplied with poultry by this church. The usual Christmas services were held at the Churches of Sts. Peter and Paul, the music at the former being particularly good. Father Malone celebrated High Mass. At Grace Church, Conselyea-st., there was a very good attendance, and an excellent sermon was preached.

HUDSON COUNTY, N. J.

Christmas Day was more generally observed yesterday than ever before. The banks, public buildings and business places were closed the same as on the Sabbath day, and all unnecessary labor being suspended, the people gave themselves up to rational enjoyment, and were unusually circumspect in their behavior. There were but two arrests in Jersey City during the day, and none in Hoboken or Hudson City. The Episcopalian and Roman Catholic churches were all tastefully decorated with evergreens, and in all of them the usual Christmas services were held. In Jersey City the morning was ushered in by the celebration of a midnight Mass at the New St. Peter's Church, corner of Grand and Van Vorst-sts., previous to which the chimes were sounded.

The children at the Home for the Friendless, in Jersey City, were provided with an excellent dinner, toys, &c., through the liberality of the citizens.

A company of fantastics—members and friends of Engine Company No. 3 of Jersey City—and styling themselves the "Hound Town Rangers," paraded, and attracted a great deal of attention.

A fox chase came off at Martin's Mansion House on the Bergen Point Plank Road, and was well patronized by the sporting fraternity.

In the evening, the eleventh invitation hop of Diligent Social Club took place at Cooper's Hall, and the National Base Ball Club also had a hop at Iroquois Hall, Jersey City.

NEWARK.

Since the Yankee settlers of Newark first named it "New-arke towne upon the Passaike," never has the Christian's holiday been more generally or more joyously observed than yesterday. The balmy air and shining sun tempted thousands into the streets, and all day long the sidewalks in Broad-st. were filled with gay groups, dressed in holiday attire. As usual, the little folks rejoiced over the rich gifts bestowed upon them by St. Nicholas, and the discordant bellowings of Christmas horns were heard in every direction. Business was suspended generally, and services were held in many of the churches.

In St. James's Church, in Elm-st., and St. Patrick's Cathedral, Midnight Mass was celebrated. The former church was brilliantly illuminated, and Selle's Mass was performed by the choir, assisted by eminent solo artists, and a full chorus, accompanied by the organ and orchestra. During the offertory "*Ecce panis Angelorum*," by Verdi, and the anthem "There were Shepherds," by Hayden, were finely sung. At St. Patrick's, Farmer's Mass was performed. In both of these churches services were also held yesterday at 10½ a. m., and Vespers at 3½ p. m.

At the House of Prayer (Episcopal), in the morning, at 10 o'clock, the pastor, the Rev. W. A. Maybin, preached a touching and appropriate sermon upon "The Manger at Bethlehem."

Services were held in all the other Catholic and Episcopal Churches, and also in many of the Methodist Churches, most of them being beautifully trimmed with evergreens. The Central M. E. Church in Market-street was very handsomely festooned with laurel and cedar along the galleries, each festoon encircling a Maltese cross. In the rear of the pulpit, and to the right and left of it, were pendant tablets, upon which, in letters of gilt, red, and blue, were inscribed passages of Scripture, while over the altar a wreath was suspended, within which were fixed the letters "I. H. S." An anchor, emblematic of the Christian's faith, and a star of cedar were conspicuous, while the "ivy-green" was twined tastefully about the pillars of the gallery.

At the Home for Disabled Soldiers a Christmas dinner, provided by the citizens, was served up, at which Gov. Ward and many invited guests were present. The veterans enjoyed the entertainment highly, and the guests indulged in toasts and speeches until late in the afternoon.

A great variety of public entertainments were given during the afternoon and evening, all of which were liberally patronized. Fairs for the benefit of charitable institutions and churches were to be found at various points about the city, and all seemed to be doing a thriving business.

At the First Baptist Church in Academy-st. the oratorio of the "Messiah" was performed by the Newark Harmonic Association, assisted by Jules Lombard, the celebrated basso, and Richard Coker, the boy soprano. The instrumental music was performed by a full orchestra.

Until a late hour in the evening many signs were given that Bacchus was not without worshippers, but very little downright drunkenness prevailed.

BOSTON.

BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.

BOSTON, Dec. 25.—The observance of Christmas to-day had been quite universal, nearly all places of business being closed.

The weather is quite genial, and more like May than December.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

WILMINGTON, N. C., Dec. 25.—The day has generally been observed as a holiday. National flags were displayed from the public buildings and shipping.

PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 25.—The holiday is being enjoyed with much spirit. The weather is clear, and business is entirely suspended.

ALBANY.

ALBANY, Dec. 25.—The day has been appropriately observed, business suspended, and service held in most of the churches. A splendid dinner was given at the "Home" to the soldiers. Gov. Fenton was present, and made a handsome and effective speech.

THE DRAMA.

WALLACK'S THEATER.

The new comedy of "Ours" has already been subjected to a pretty thorough analysis, both by the public and the press. Little, if anything, therefore, is left to be said about it. Our previous notice indicated its character, its chief merits, and its principal defect. On witnessing its representation a second time, we see no reason to qualify the verdict of approbation which accepts it as a valuable and lasting addition to the realistic school of comedy. It suggests, indeed, more than it contains; but that is an indication of reserved power on the part of the author. If Mr. Robertson does but develop the inventive faculty—so that the interest of his plots may be commensurate with the effectiveness of his incidents—he cannot fail to attain the highest rank among modern dramatists. In the matter of dialogue, he leaves nothing to be desired. His dramatic persons talk in the most sprightly, and, at the same time, in the most natural manner, and each person's talk is appropriate to the speaker. This is a great and a significant excellence. It denotes, on the part of the dramatist, distinct conceptions of character. Furthermore, those conceptions are found to be true to life. *Chalcote*, and the old *Colonel*, and *Mary Netley*, and *Sergeant Jones*, and *Lady Shendryn*, and even the *Russian Prince* and the two young lovers, are manifest portraits from reality. Their precise counterparts could readily be found. This is the proper province of comedy—to hold the mirror up to society as it actually exists; and we like Mr. Robertson's comedy because, within a prescribed limit, it fulfills that province. A success of this sort is not often to be pointed out. When it does occur, it is well worthy of emphatic remark, since it illustrates the supremacy of mind over stage business. The latter is the staple of many admired plays. "Effects" is its designation. To be sure, these are not absent from the comedy of "Ours." The thunder-shower scene, which closes the first act, the march of the troops by moonlight, which closes the second, and the illumination and martial concert wherewith the piece terminates, belong in the category of stage effects. But it is to be observed that they are collateral embellishments, and not the substance of the comedy; and that they are reached in natural sequence of events, and not lugged in by the head and shoulders. To effects of this kind, thus managed, there can be no reasonable objection. There is a vast difference between a play of this sort and a five-act melo-drama all words and dullness, save, perchance, for one case of murder or arson by way of culmination. In "Ours" the effects are part of the story. There is a fine feeling for the pathetic and the heroic, too, in the scenic culminations of acts second and third. In the one case the troops begin their march to embark for the Crimea. The old Colonel in the foreground is bidding farewell to his wife, who doubts him, and to his friend, who honors him. Mr. Gilbert plays this part, while Mr. Wallack is *Chalcote*, and we cannot hesitate to say that their parting is—in the simple expression of manly affection, and of the complex emotions natural to such a moment—as true a bit of acting as the sternest critic could wish to see. Then, while this spell of personal pathos is still strong upon our hearts, the music breathes sadly forth, changing soon to some inexorable melody of farewell, and the soldiers march grandly away. There is an analogous effect—which this scene calls to mind—in that magnificent chapter of "Vanity Fair," which describes the departure of the troops from Brussels to the field of Waterloo. The culmination of act third is less stirring, because it involves no element of sadness. The war is over, peace has been declared, and the affairs of all the characters in the drama have been happily arranged—and all that seems now needed is a burst of joy. This is realized in the bonfires and the music. The stage presents, at this point, a most animated and graphic picture. The scene is the interior of a sort of barrack. All the discomforts of military life are gathered here. But, at the climax, all trouble and vexation are swallowed up in gladness. The personages of the play are skilfully assembled: the soldiers pour in; the band arrives, playing a march; the light of the bonfires gleams over all, and the curtain falls over this happy tumult. One other scene in this piece ought also to be noticed, as a remarkable piece of scenic art. That is, the pastoral landscape with which the play opens. An English park is disclosed. Huge trees droop their branches over the foreground. A lofty avenue winds away in the distance. To the right, a vast stretch of meadow-land is seen, on which sheep are feeding, or sleeping amid the grass. Purple hills close in the view. A more beautiful picture, of its kind, has not been seen hitherto upon the New-York stage. We hear, indeed, that "Ours" is far better done at Wallack's than it was in London. Its present setting could not well be improved—and this is a new proof, alike of the genuine talent and taste of the scenic artists, Messrs. H. Isherwood and G. Evans, and of Mr. Lester Wallack's skillful and careful management. The piece is, likewise, fortunate in being presented by good actors. Mr. Wallack's temperment is precisely suited in *Chalcote*, who is a kind of good-hearted cynic, a man who has had sad experience, and is drifting, in an easy, aimless way, through London life. The type of character is not uncommon. Mr. Wallack finds scope in it, as well for his farcical mood as for his vein of sentiment; and he plays it with admirable consistency, and with perfect finish of detail. The bluff, dignified, manly, and crusty *Sir Alexander* finds, too, a perfect representative in Mr. Gilbert. Arch and lively and piquant *Mary Netley* falls to the lot of Miss Gannon, and is delineated with charming grace and mischievous spirit. Mr. Norton plays *Sergeant Jones*, and presents a faithful photograph of the humble British military officer. The play further includes Miss Henriques, as *Blanche Hay*, Mr. Ringgold, as *Angus*, Mr. Fisher as the Russian Prince, Miss Moranz, as *Lady Shendryn*, and Mr. Leonard, Mr. Pope, Mr. Ward, and Miss Scott, in subordinate parts. Of the popular success of the comedy our readers have already been advised. Little can be said, in way of fault-finding; but we may remark that the third act would endure condensation, and that some of the allusions to the twins, and to Sir Alexander's slips, might well enough be spared. It is but fair to add that Mr. Lester Wallack has pruned the dialogue of a number of somewhat indelicate passages. "Ours" will be acted every night, and few people can see it without being pleasantly entertained.

MR. VALENTINE VOUSDEN.

Whoever does not wish "to burst in ignorance" as to what constitutes a "Polynational Mimic" should visit Clinton Hall and see Mr. Valentine Vousden. His entertainment, which is styled "The Unity of Nations," is given in the lecture-room of that building every evening, and at Saturday Matinées. Mr. Vousden is an actor, who evidently has had a great deal of professional experience, but who prefers, as the old song says, to "go it alone." He assumes, in the course of a performance which lasts two hours, six different characters, illustrative of six different nationalities. As a sort of prelude, he first appears in the garb of *Time*, to utter a few versified remarks on human nature and social conditions. Then, in rapid succession, he places before his audience a German girl, a Yankee, a French dancing-master, an English sailor, an Irish peasant, and a Scottish soldier. His changes of costume are effected with startling rapidity. The make-up, in each instance, is excellent. For the characterizations we cannot speak as cordially. Mr. Vousden's Irishman is his only admirable piece of acting. As *Paddy Branigan*, his facial expression, his brogue, his humor, his sentiment, his drollery, and, above all, his repose, betoken true and practiced talent. In the other personations the Irish element always preponderates, and, of course, is always out of place. But there is no lack of fun in any of the mimic efforts. Mr. Vousden has a cheerful face and a pleasant voice, and his talk and his songs are pervaded by a warmth of humane feeling that is sure to win a kindly response. The purpose of his entertainment is, while making his auditors laugh, to illustrate the time-honored truth that "one touch of Nature makes the whole world kin." We are a band of brothers, Mr. Vousden seems to say, and laughter and tears naturally bring us into brotherly communion. On the whole, the "Polynational Mimic" is likely to afford a good deal of amusement to a good many people—though we think that Mr. Vousden will attract larger audiences in the country towns than in a city so full as New-York is of more powerful attractions in the way of amusement.

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

A very pleasant performance was given last evening at this theater. The plays presented were "Still Waters Run Deep" and "Kiss in the Dark," and, notwithstanding the many home attractions of Christmas night, the performance was witnessed by a large audience. Mr. George Jordan, whose engagement at the Olympic Theater terminated on Saturday last, made on this occasion his first appearance in Brooklyn since his return from England. He was warmly welcomed, and, in the character of *Captain Hawksley*, was cordially applauded—being, at the end of the second act, especially called before the curtain. A similar compliment was paid at this point to Mr. Duff, who enacted *John Mildmay*. We have never seen *Captain Hawksley* played with more thorough conception of the glittering wickedness of the character than was manifested by Mr. Jordan. The part of *Old Potter* was personated, with equal correctness and humor, by Mr. Thomas Placide, a comedian who only too seldom emerges from a retirement that seems to have grown habitual, but who never fails to win a hearty welcome. Mrs. Winter played *Mrs. Mildmay*, and Miss Andrews played *Mrs. Stanhold*. The general representation of the comedy was not without defects, such as are incidental to theatrical performances that are somewhat hastily prepared; but the audience made all requisite allowance for trifling short-comings; and it is proper to congratulate Mr. Taylcare on the successful inauguration of the series of dramatic entertainments with which he intends to enliven the season in Brooklyn.

RISTORI.

Our readers are reminded that that Madame Ristori will make her rentrée at the French Theater this evening as *Queen Elizabeth*.

BOOTH MATINEE.

"Richelieu" will be presented at the Winter Garden to-day, at the Matinee. This performance is given for the especial accommodation of rural residents who may be passing the Holidays in town, and may wish to see Mr. Booth in a famous impersonation.

THALIA THEATER.

Mr. Bogumil Dawson will play at this theater to-night, making his ninth appearance. The bill comprises two favorite German plays—"Das Fenster Ein Erzhenstock," and "Die Ungluecklichen."

MR. HARTZ.

"Multum in Parvo" has proved a great hit at Dodworth's Hall. We shall improve an early occasion to describe this wonderful feat. The "Human Head Floating in the Air" is still nightly exhibited.

THE NEW-YORK CIRCUS.

At this holiday season the circus possesses peculiar claims upon the attention of the seekers of pleasure, and especially upon the attention of persons who wish to contribute to the amusement of children. By a new arrangement a performance is given here every day, as well as in the evening. To mention the prominent features of the programme will be to indicate a variety and merit of the entertainment. Mlle. Carlotta De Berg, who is well described as the most daring of female riders, executes a spirited and unique piece of horsemanship. Mr. Stickney, the famous pad-rider, performs an act in his peculiar line of art. The Australian Family appear in gymnastic exercises and classic groupings. Mr. James E. Cooke rides, in an astonishing manner, upon the backs of four fiery steeds. Various clowns, and tumblers, and trained mules also appear, and a comic pantomime closes the performance. The circus troupe, as we have often noted, is the best that has ever been established in New-York; and we can confidently say that the visitor to Mr. Lent's establishment will be amply gratified.

FENIANISM.

THE FENIAN PRISONERS IN CANADA—THEIR CONDITION AND HOW THEY ARE PROVIDED FOR.

At present there is but very little excitement existing in Fenian circles, owing to the fact that James Stephens has allowed the last week but one of the year 1866 to pass without making good his promise of leading a rebellion to a successful issue in Ireland. The general feeling prevalent among well-informed Fenians is that Stephens has allowed a golden opportunity to pass by without any effort, and attempting to incite an armed insurrection at this juncture in Ireland is mere humbug, if not something worse. At the Fenian headquarters, No. 766 Broadway, there is great activity manifested, and all day long men are employed packing and unpacking uniforms, caps, jackets, pantaloons, and overcoats, for transportation to the numerous circles of the Brotherhood throughout the United States. In regard to the stories and false rumors circulated about the Canadian prisoners captured during the raid in June, it is only necessary to state that President Roberts and the Senate of the Fenian Brotherhood have been and are now engaged in doing everything in their power to ameliorate the sufferings and provide for the necessities of the men confined in the Canadian jails, all statements in the Canadian newspapers to the contrary notwithstanding. The $300 sent to Bishop Lynch of Toronto by President Roberts was returned by that prelate without any regard for the wants and necessities of the prisoners, although they were, without exception, countrymen and coreligionists of the Bishop. A special agent of the Fenian Brotherhood was sent to Montreal and Toronto by Col. Roberts with $500 in gold to provide for the prisoners. This agent called upon the American Consul, Mr. Thurston, and informed him that he was authorized to furnish the prisoners with the means to procure the necessaries of life, and also informed Mr. Thurston that the Fenian Brotherhood would be responsible for any relief furnished the prisoners by the Consul in the name of the Fenian Brotherhood. Mr. Thurston willingly acquiesced with the instructions furnished the special agent by Col. Roberts. This conversation occurred in the presence of Mr. B. Devlin of Montreal, who was also engaged by the special agent to defend the prisoners at an expense of $2,500 to the Fenian Brotherhood. The special agent of the Fenian Brotherhood actually risked his life to make known his presence to the prisoners, in visiting the jail, and although he was not admitted into the dungeon, still, he managed to make the prisoners aware of his presence in the jail, and of his instructions from headquarters to serve them and make them comfortable. Bishop Lynch in returning the check for $300 sent him by Col. Roberts, stated that although he could not accept the trust of distributing the money or its equivalent to his prisoners, as it came from the authorized headquarters of the F. B., still, that a donation might be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph, who have relieved the prisoners voluntarily, and that it would no doubt be accepted in the evening of the offer. Accordingly, President Roberts, who is most anxious to relieve the Fenian prisoners by any means in his power, sent a draft for $200 and a box containing 34 warm overcoats to the charitable ladies of the House of Providence, in Toronto, to be distributed to the prisoners, with the intention that whatever the necessaries might be, they would have their wants attended to by the Fenian Brotherhood. Robert B. Lynn, who was not a Colonel in the Fenian army, though he dubbed himself into that title, and the Rev. Father McMahon, a few days since, refused the aid proffered by President Roberts, although Bishop Lynch, through his private Secretary, Father John R. Lee, of Toronto, states that McMahon and Lynch were "eating the bread of the orphans for the past six months." The American Consul, Thurston, also has received a letter from the Fenian authorities through Secretary of Civil Affairs D. O'Sullivan, asking him to be kind enough to distribute the clothing and overcoats to the prisoners, with also the request that he will let Col. Roberts know what the prisoners stand most in need of from time to time, in order that they may have the necessary supplies sent them by President Roberts. These statements are all positive and truthful, thus disposing of the charges made that the Fenian Brotherhood was neglecting their compatriots in Canadian jails. It is also hinted pretty broadly that the Canadian Government are using Lynch, who is of a weak nature and easily swayed, as well as McMahon, to injure as much as possible the Fenian Brotherhood.

NEW-JERSEY NEWS.

CHARGED WITH STEALING A $25,000 DEED.—