

Amusements, etc., This Evening.

BOOTH'S THEATRE.—"The Iron Chest." Booth.
FIFTH AVENUE THEATRE.—"Article 47."
GRAND OPERA HOUSE.—"Lalla Rookh." Miss Childs.
LINA EDWIN'S THEATRE.—"Power of Love." The Casino.
NIBLO'S GARDEN.—"Black Friday."

Business Notices.

GOLD WATCHES OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS.
BATCHLOR'S HAIR DYE.—The best in the world.
HAS PAID SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS A DAY FOR SEVEN YEARS—TRAVELING LIP AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE CO.

FISK & HATCH, BANKERS.

No. 5 NASSAU ST., New-York.
We are having constant inquiries as to the most desirable ways of investing money or reinvesting the proceeds of Fifty-Two Bonds, already called in, or soon to be called in, in the form of portable securities in which the greatest possible safety will be combined with fair and satisfactory returns.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher spoke last night with his usual eloquence and force, favoring the opening of public libraries on Sunday. His position did not differ materially from that sustained in THE TRIBUNE, that while, from every point of view, the consecration of one day in the week to purposes of rest and religion is altogether beneficial, and any encroachments upon its proper observance should be regarded with caution, the question as to what is the manner of observing Sunday which is most advantageous to the moral and material interests of the community, is one which is open to earnest and conscientious discussion.

Secretary Robeson's testimony before the Naval Investigating Committee, yesterday, was important, showing, as it does, what he thinks of the present condition of the Navy. He says that he instituted certain experiments in building, with the hope that these might result in the beginning of a new Navy. As the experiments were melancholy failures, we are left to infer that the Navy is incapable of resurrection. He says it costs more to build engines in the Navy-Yards than outside; in these establishments engines costing millions, without ships in which to put them; good machinery, the Secretary says, can be built, but good vessels cannot be reached. That is to say, machinery which looks well can be fabricated; but the sort of machinery which is of real use is not one of the results of the present system. Can any more lamentable record than this be made? As for that part of the Secretary's evidence which relates directly to his own responsibility in the reopening of the Secor claims, his argument is ingenious enough; but it is the same which has been used before in extension of his action. Nobody needs, however, to be told that Secretary Robeson has already been acquitted of the charges of corruption made against him.

OUR COUNTER CASE.
We have a broadside of new intelligence this morning in regard to the Alabama question. We print an exact copy of our Counter Case, which is chiefly devoted to the correction of errors in the English Case, errors as well of history as of logic and deduction. It seems to us that these corrections are mainly justified. They are stated with an acuteness and a discretion which would have come wonderfully in play in the original Case. As if conscious of the unfortunate manner in which it had presented our original claims, by which the dormant jealousy of a people was outraged and excited, the present argument is distinguished for its courtesy and its candor.

But the evidence begins to accumulate that the tardy change may have come too late. The Opposition in Parliament seem, yesterday, to have resolved that they will at once force a debate upon the Geneva question, and the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Disraeli gave notice that they would call the matter up to-day. Lord Oranmore attacked the Government with especial energy for having compromised themselves by asking questions of the American Envoy in regard to the presentation of the English Counter Case; a charge which Earl Granville promptly denied, but admitted that the question had been asked, though no answer had been as yet received. In the mean time we are not idle on our side. It is reported that Judge Peters still intends to bring up his resolution for the withdrawal of the indirect claims, although the State Department has informed him that the Case will not be withdrawn or modified. This faithful friend intends, however, to stand by the Administration in his own way, and to lift it violently, if need be, out of the slough in which it seems at present hopelessly mired.

INDIGNATION MEETINGS AND FOUL FOOD.
We knew and had made up our minds to meet the consequences before publishing the article on "Foul Food," about which a few indignant butchers have made a commotion. We know what libel suits are—we believe in them whenever anybody has been libeled and correction refused—and we are quite prepared for any which may be brought about by the exposures alluded to. The offended butchers have subscribed \$500 to begin a suit against us, which sum will probably buy an opinion from the lawyer who suggested the unwise and indignant proceedings. We will give them one of greater value for nothing. Don't.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM—ITS ESSENCE AND PURPOSE.
The vote of the House whereby Mr. Willard's bill was recommitted—that is, buried—we regard as one of the most honest demonstrations of the session, next to that which knocked in the head the abolition of the Franking Privilege. Evidently, this House does not believe in either of the Reforms in question, and does not feel constrained to practice any but the most transparent hypocrisy on the subject. And when you mean not to do a thing, and fear no evil consequence of saying that you won't do it, why not say just that?

We believe in the abolition of the Franking Privilege. That is to say: We would make everything that passes through the mails pay fairly for its transmission. We would have a Member of Congress pay postage exactly as the Queen of England and her Prime Minister now pay. One good result of this would be a reduction in the cost of our Public Printing by at least \$1,000,000 per annum. Abolish Franking, and we judge that the Post-Office would pay its own way, as it should, instead of imposing a heavy burden annually upon the Treasury. But, since this Congress will not abolish the Franking Privilege, we honor

Meanwhile the country has the right to inquire whether the Government archives are to continue subject to the spoliation of men inside the Ring, who have friends to reward or enemies to punish?

General and incisive criticism of the disingenuousness of Civil Service reform in Washington has had good effect in the selection of a successor to Controller Hulburd. THE TRIBUNE, some days since, noted the fact that the friends of real reform on one side, and politicians on the other, were striving to secure the office of Controller of the Currency. The President has nominated John Jay Knox, a gentleman whose experience in the Treasury Department, and general character and abilities, make his an appointment eminently fit to be made. For once, the politicians are disappointed.

Let no man at Albany believe for a moment that he can venture with impunity the desperate device of Orange S. Winans. We trust, in spite of all rumors, that his shameful fate is not already an example lost upon legislators. But if any man thinks he can betray his constituents to save corrupt judges from long merited punishment and long impending fate, and then leave his district to practice law in this, relying on his promises to put business in his way and money in his purse, he has failed utterly to recognize with what jealous scrutiny the people and the papers watch to see who of the Legislators elected as Reformers are Traitors.

In commenting upon the action of the Non-conformists of Great Britain at the time of their Conference at Manchester, we predicted the danger to the Cabinet which is announced in the telegrams published this morning. Although it is reported that a compromise has been effected by which Mr. Gladstone has purchased the continued support of the Non-conformists by resigning, to a certain extent, the principle he has assumed, such a compromise can only be temporary in its results, and several important measures still remain upon which the Government may be defeated. If Mr. Gladstone should be in office after this session of Parliament, it will be chiefly because the Conservatives are not prepared to assume the charge of Government.

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher spoke last night with his usual eloquence and force, favoring the opening of public libraries on Sunday. His position did not differ materially from that sustained in THE TRIBUNE, that while, from every point of view, the consecration of one day in the week to purposes of rest and religion is altogether beneficial, and any encroachments upon its proper observance should be regarded with caution, the question as to what is the manner of observing Sunday which is most advantageous to the moral and material interests of the community, is one which is open to earnest and conscientious discussion. Nothing but good is likely to result from such discussion when it is approached in the spirit exhibited by Mr. Beecher, Mr. Hewitt, and others who are now carefully considering it.

Secretary Robeson's testimony before the Naval Investigating Committee, yesterday, was important, showing, as it does, what he thinks of the present condition of the Navy. He says that he instituted certain experiments in building, with the hope that these might result in the beginning of a new Navy. As the experiments were melancholy failures, we are left to infer that the Navy is incapable of resurrection. He says it costs more to build engines in the Navy-Yards than outside; in these establishments engines costing millions, without ships in which to put them; good machinery, the Secretary says, can be built, but good vessels cannot be reached. That is to say, machinery which looks well can be fabricated; but the sort of machinery which is of real use is not one of the results of the present system. Can any more lamentable record than this be made? As for that part of the Secretary's evidence which relates directly to his own responsibility in the reopening of the Secor claims, his argument is ingenious enough; but it is the same which has been used before in extension of his action. Nobody needs, however, to be told that Secretary Robeson has already been acquitted of the charges of corruption made against him.

OUR COUNTER CASE.
We have a broadside of new intelligence this morning in regard to the Alabama question. We print an exact copy of our Counter Case, which is chiefly devoted to the correction of errors in the English Case, errors as well of history as of logic and deduction. It seems to us that these corrections are mainly justified. They are stated with an acuteness and a discretion which would have come wonderfully in play in the original Case. As if conscious of the unfortunate manner in which it had presented our original claims, by which the dormant jealousy of a people was outraged and excited, the present argument is distinguished for its courtesy and its candor.

But the evidence begins to accumulate that the tardy change may have come too late. The Opposition in Parliament seem, yesterday, to have resolved that they will at once force a debate upon the Geneva question, and the Duke of Richmond and Mr. Disraeli gave notice that they would call the matter up to-day. Lord Oranmore attacked the Government with especial energy for having compromised themselves by asking questions of the American Envoy in regard to the presentation of the English Counter Case; a charge which Earl Granville promptly denied, but admitted that the question had been asked, though no answer had been as yet received. In the mean time we are not idle on our side. It is reported that Judge Peters still intends to bring up his resolution for the withdrawal of the indirect claims, although the State Department has informed him that the Case will not be withdrawn or modified. This faithful friend intends, however, to stand by the Administration in his own way, and to lift it violently, if need be, out of the slough in which it seems at present hopelessly mired.

INDIGNATION MEETINGS AND FOUL FOOD.
We knew and had made up our minds to meet the consequences before publishing the article on "Foul Food," about which a few indignant butchers have made a commotion. We know what libel suits are—we believe in them whenever anybody has been libeled and correction refused—and we are quite prepared for any which may be brought about by the exposures alluded to. The offended butchers have subscribed \$500 to begin a suit against us, which sum will probably buy an opinion from the lawyer who suggested the unwise and indignant proceedings. We will give them one of greater value for nothing. Don't.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM—ITS ESSENCE AND PURPOSE.
The vote of the House whereby Mr. Willard's bill was recommitted—that is, buried—we regard as one of the most honest demonstrations of the session, next to that which knocked in the head the abolition of the Franking Privilege. Evidently, this House does not believe in either of the Reforms in question, and does not feel constrained to practice any but the most transparent hypocrisy on the subject. And when you mean not to do a thing, and fear no evil consequence of saying that you won't do it, why not say just that?

We believe in the abolition of the Franking Privilege. That is to say: We would make everything that passes through the mails pay fairly for its transmission. We would have a Member of Congress pay postage exactly as the Queen of England and her Prime Minister now pay. One good result of this would be a reduction in the cost of our Public Printing by at least \$1,000,000 per annum. Abolish Franking, and we judge that the Post-Office would pay its own way, as it should, instead of imposing a heavy burden annually upon the Treasury. But, since this Congress will not abolish the Franking Privilege, we honor

it for manfully saying so. We appeal to the People. Whenever they shall see and feel as we do, Franking will go the way of all abated nuisances. For the present, it is clear that they do not generally care about the matter; for, if they did, the House would be quick to comprehend it and act accordingly.

As to Civil Service Reform, it means that neither Presidents nor Congressmen, politicians nor parties, shall use the enormous patronage of the Government to maintain and extend their own power. The Hon. Member from Buncombe likes his seat, and wants to keep it till he can get something better. But others want it also; and he can only keep it by "doing something" for Jones and Thompson and Smith, who are bell-wethers in the "party," and can send to the next nominating convention delegations either devoted or adverse to his aspirations as they will. So he makes himself thoroughly agreeable to the President and his Cabinet, working and voting for every bill they want passed and against every other, for which they pay him by filling all the post-offices and revenue collectorships in his district in accordance with his wishes. Then he "goes in" for a Mission, or at least a Consulate, with two or three Clerkships in the Executive Departments, and perhaps a Commissioner'ship to examine a newly completed stretch of Pacific Railroad, to be bestowed on the most powerful or most importunate of his supporters as an earnest of what he will yet do for others and a proof that he is appreciated at the White House. Of course, he is for a Second Term, or whatever else may be desired at headquarters; and those who have received and those who expect favors at his hands applaud his preference and second his efforts. There is no bolting, no scorching, no denunciations, no discordant opinion, but everything is harmonious and lovely till the machine breaks down or runs off the track, wrecking all that put their trust in it.

We find no fault with these. They are no better and no worse than other men. They are in, want to keep in, and judge this to be the way. Others in their places would do just as they do. They will admit to you in private that the system is not theoretically perfect; but they are satisfied with its working, and do not see how to better it without incurring disaster. So they praise the bridge that carries them safe over, and leave the building of one ideally better to those who have time and taste for that kind of architecture.

We regard the system as radically vicious and mischievous. It makes the Executive and the majority in Congress partners in a grand Gift Enterprise whereby their proper independence of each other is gravely impaired. The President and Postmaster-General appoint as they must to gratify and retain their supporters in Congress, who in turn legislate and vote in conformity to the Executive's wishes, not always to their deepest convictions. We hope to see the system overthrown and eradicated; but meantime we thank the majority in the House for voting down Mr. Willard's bill. Let us have an end of shams and make-believes. If we are not to have a genuine Civil Service Reform, let us not be amused and deceived by a mockery, however specious.

MIXTURES IN MOBILE.
Lately, in the City of Mobile, a Justice of the Peace, named Le Fevre, married John Brantley, a white man, to Nancy Jones, a reputed mulatto, about whose strain, as will presently be seen, there is some doubt. Brantley had been living in concubinage with this woman, in full sight of the fastidious society of Mobile, for a period of fourteen years; and by her he had become the father of three children. For some reason which is not stated in the report before us, Brantley was arrested for illegal cohabitation with Jones. He employed as his attorneys Messrs. R. & O. J. Semmes, who advised him to marry the woman for the reason that, if he still lived with her in concubinage, he would be exposed to continual prosecution. Like a good client, Brantley followed the advice of his lawyers, and a Justice of the Peace regularly married him to Nancy. All Mobile immediately became indignant. To quote the local newspaper, "the sensibilities of the people" were intensely excited against "the degradations and horrors of mongrelism." "We will have no 'complicity,'" said the exasperated editor, "with that which helps to debase our Southern type of manhood." That is, John Brantley, cohabiting illegally with a woman, and giving to society a crop of illegitimate children, was still a perfect gentleman; but John Brantley marrying the mother of these children and thus legitimating them, was doing something which "helped to debase the Southern type of manhood!" No wonder there was a row, riot, and rumpus about it in Mobile.

In the discussions which ensued, it was held (by indignant editors) that Brantley by these purgatorial nuptials had violated that section of the Code of the State of Alabama which provides that no white person shall marry "any negro, or the descendants of any negro" to the third generation inclusive." Messrs. R. & O. J. Semmes, put upon their trial at the bar of public opinion, defended the advice which they had given to Brantley by stating that "her ancestors had been creoles for many generations, and that she had no negro ancestor as near as the third generation." She did not come, therefore, within the statute, and Messrs. Semmes gave an opinion to that effect, not only to Brantley but to the Justice, who was informed that if he refused to perform the ceremony he could be compelled by a mandamus—and so he could. That is law wherever there is law at all. The Justice married the pair accordingly, and a good and valid marriage it was, according to the statute of Alabama, without any reference whatever to the Civil Rights Act of Congress. The Messrs. Semmes take care to inform the sensitive public of Mobile that they have a little taste for mixed marriages as anybody; but what they properly ask, "has this to do with the administration of the laws of Alabama?"

We trust that Messrs. Semmes and Mr. Justice Le Fevre, and Mr. Bridgeman Brantley and Mrs. Nancy Brantley (born Jones), and all the little Jones-Brantleys, will have no further trouble about this matter. The marriage is just as good a marriage, in the sight of God and man, and by Statute Law, and Common Law, and Civil Law, and Ecclesiastical Law, and for aught we know, by Law Merchant and Maritime Law, as ever was solemnized. Nothing can be found against it in the Pandects of Justinian, nothing in the biggest folios of Puffendorf, nothing in Coke upon Littleton, nothing in Blackstone's Com-

mentaries, nothing in Fearn on Contingent Remainders, and nothing in all Story's numerous volumes. There is not a respectable judicial tribunal in the world with a proper respect for the *lex loci* which would not affirm that John and Nancy are one and indivisible, and cannot be put asunder.

A good deal might be said of the literature of the galls, and especially of the letters and confessions of murderers, written and spoken as the day of their death draws nearer and nearer. We always seek to regard these documents with sufficient charity; but we have never been able to accept them as conclusive evidence of genuine repentance and regeneration. Putting aside as in no need of consideration, those which, with all their show of humility, are merely bids for reprieve or pardon, we can hardly fail to suspect in the others a hope of heaven which is no more than a latent selfishness, and to question that absolute change of the whole character which a protracted effort, under various temptations, can alone insure. There is nothing specially remarkable about the recent case to which we are about to call attention, except that the murderer, in the same letter, protested that he had sincerely repented, using the language customarily employed by persons in his condition, while, before he came to the signature, he characterized as "a vile tissue of follies and untruths" a letter which was written about him, and charged the writer with "cowardice and intentional falsehood." Having thrown this sop to his still surviving Adam, William Frederick Horry, who was hung for wife-murder at Lincoln, Eng., the other day, concluded by saying: "I freely forgive all, even that man, and by hoping that his slanderer might truly repent and lead a new life."

Now, it will be observed, that Horry, so far as his change of heart was concerned, merely said what he was expected to say. There is a formula which all men in his condition employ. They have all been refreshed and comforted in their sore estate by prayer, by Scriptural reading, and by the exhortations of the chaplain. They have lived a bad life, but they are prepared to die a happy Christian death. The only part of Horry's letter in that which he has his sling at the man who has injured him. The reader may draw his own conclusions from this, as we have taken the liberty of drawing ours.

QUICK TRANSIT.

We are informed that an agreement was yesterday effected between the Harlem Railroad represented by Com. Vanderbilt and the up-town interest which has for some time demanded a more complete sinking and roofing over of the track between the great depot at Forty-second-st. and the Harlem Bridge than the Commodore considered necessary or (unless at too great cost) feasible. There is some abatement of extreme pretensions on either side, but the greater concessions are made by the Company—the agreement requiring the track to be sunk so as to be covered for the greater part of the way. Suffice it that Harlem is satisfied, and will no longer insist that the speed of trains passing through that lively village shall be reduced to five miles per hour.

But there is a third party whose interest seems to us to have been overlooked in this adjustment. We allude to the City, whose tax-payers, we understand, are to be molested in half the expense of this costly job. Is this just? With what reason are houses in the 14th Ward or lots on the Grand Boulevard to be made to smart for this tunneling, whereby certain lots fronting on Fourth-ave. are alone increased in value by \$19,000 to \$29,000 each? Assess on the real estate within one hundred feet of that Avenue just half of what this sinking and roofing will cost, and there would be nothing left to be added upon the whole City; and those lots were almost wholly bought by their present owners at a low price because of their proximity to a great surface railroad. Now they are to be doubled and tripled in value at the expense of property which this improvement will not benefit at all. We like not the arrangement.

The lady who wishes to know where she may procure American black silks, complains that she has inquired for them at Broadway stores and has not been able to find them. She was entirely too patriotic and innocent in her method of discovery. Many shopkeepers had no desire to ruin their trade in French fabrics and in Italian "oil-boiled" patterns, by confessing to one unsophisticated lady that they disagreed their shelves with American goods. Still, if any lady earnestly desires to obtain American silks, she may inquire at almost any store for French or Italian goods, and possibly she will have the satisfaction of buying and wearing a dress woven within fifty miles of New-York. She must not, however, be so unfortunate in her choice of language as to use the word American. It is an insult to the shopkeeper, who has a tacit understanding with society that names of silks, like some wines, are improved by coming over the sea.

The *Courier des Etats Unis* makes some forcible remarks on the subject of Civil Service Reform in an abuse of the Franking Privilege to which attention was called in THE TRIBUNE a little while ago. Congressman James H. Platt of Virginia, it seems, is in the habit of franking specimen copies and business circulars of *Le Messager Franco-Américain*, upon what theory of official duty, or of the legitimate uses of postage-stamps, we cannot imagine. Mr. Platt, we dare say, is an eloquent supporter of all the President's professions of reform; but if the professions ever come to the test of practice, we shall expect to see him on the other side.

Rather a remarkable fact in relation to small-pox was recently stated in the hearing of a case in the Superior Court, in Boston, by Dr. Samuel Greene, the City Physician. He said that not less than seven cases of small-pox had come under his notice last Winter in which the patients had before had the disease, the results of the former attack being strongly marked. If this be so, it is not a remarkable accession of numbers to the few exceptions hitherto placed on record against the rule that the disease cannot be repeated in the same person!

A queer thing happened in Philadelphia lately. The van started with three occupants from the court-house for the prison; but when, upon arriving there, the officer in charge unlocked the door, no prisoners were to be seen—only "a long aperture" in the floor of the vehicle. Through this opening the three inmates had got outside and into the street. One of them was Murphy, the New-York thief; the other a Philadelphia burglar, and the third who has been recaptured had been stealing pur-iron. In all the annals of escapes, we never read of another like this.

It is tantalizing to read, that Mr. R. W. Emerson is giving a series of "Conversations" in Boston, and that, by the special request of the talker, they are not to be reported. It is not a great consolation to be told as we are by the *Boston Transcript* that the hour's talk was composed of rich fragments of Mr. Emerson's threefold experience as a scholar, thinker, and observer, charged with wit, wisdom, and keen, subtle criticism—"for this we might have known without the telling."

mentaries, nothing in Fearn on Contingent Remainders, and nothing in all Story's numerous volumes. There is not a respectable judicial tribunal in the world with a proper respect for the *lex loci* which would not affirm that John and Nancy are one and indivisible, and cannot be put asunder.

A good deal might be said of the literature of the galls, and especially of the letters and confessions of murderers, written and spoken as the day of their death draws nearer and nearer. We always seek to regard these documents with sufficient charity; but we have never been able to accept them as conclusive evidence of genuine repentance and regeneration. Putting aside as in no need of consideration, those which, with all their show of humility, are merely bids for reprieve or pardon, we can hardly fail to suspect in the others a hope of heaven which is no more than a latent selfishness, and to question that absolute change of the whole character which a protracted effort, under various temptations, can alone insure. There is nothing specially remarkable about the recent case to which we are about to call attention, except that the murderer, in the same letter, protested that he had sincerely repented, using the language customarily employed by persons in his condition, while, before he came to the signature, he characterized as "a vile tissue of follies and untruths" a letter which was written about him, and charged the writer with "cowardice and intentional falsehood." Having thrown this sop to his still surviving Adam, William Frederick Horry, who was hung for wife-murder at Lincoln, Eng., the other day, concluded by saying: "I freely forgive all, even that man, and by hoping that his slanderer might truly repent and lead a new life."

Now, it will be observed, that Horry, so far as his change of heart was concerned, merely said what he was expected to say. There is a formula which all men in his condition employ. They have all been refreshed and comforted in their sore estate by prayer, by Scriptural reading, and by the exhortations of the chaplain. They have lived a bad life, but they are prepared to die a happy Christian death. The only part of Horry's letter in that which he has his sling at the man who has injured him. The reader may draw his own conclusions from this, as we have taken the liberty of drawing ours.

Mr. Spurgeon expressed his mind freely concerning the Agricultural Strike at a late meeting of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Colporteurs' Association. Mr. Spurgeon took a religious view of the matter which, it appears to us, was sufficiently complicated before. It often happened, he said, that a clergyman in a country district knew as much about the Gospel as a ploughman about medicine. If a poor man went to a Dissenting meeting-house, and the squire heard of it, he told his tenant that he must do nothing of the sort. At any rate, if not directly informed, the laborer learned it "when Christmas, strongly flavored with the Tairyrie Articles and the Catechism, came round." He got nothing himself, and his wife went without a blanket in the cold. The strike, Mr. Spurgeon declared, had his perfect approval. He wondered that the laborers had not stirred long ago. The farmers, if they were pinched by a rise in wages, must pinch the landlords, for whom Mr. Spurgeon had little sympathy, since "they had their thousands of acres, and could stand a little squeezing without being reduced to abject poverty thereby." Mr. Spurgeon evidently feels for the sufferings of the dissenting poor—he feels as a man, and he also feels as a Baptist.

The bill to establish a rifle-range for the National Guard of New-York City and Brooklyn has been received with general favor, but encounters opposition in the Legislature from a number of county members who do not seem to appreciate its importance. Rifles are of no use to soldiers who cannot shoot, and our rustic representatives ought to remember that there is absolutely no place near the metropolis to which our regiments can resort for practice, Canada and the principal countries of Europe are sparing no pains to make marksmen of their volunteers and other troops, recognizing the great and constantly increasing importance which modern improvements in fire-arms have given to the skill of the individual soldier; while with us, on the other hand, a militiaman generally goes through his whole term of service without once taking aim or pulling a trigger. It is understood that the military authorities of the State are anxious to remedy this shameful defect, and will take immediate measures to enforce annual target practice by the militia as soon as the necessary range can be established.

The lady who wishes to know where she may procure American black silks, complains that she has inquired for them at Broadway stores and has not been able to find them. She was entirely too patriotic and innocent in her method of discovery. Many shopkeepers had no desire to ruin their trade in French fabrics and in Italian "oil-boiled" patterns, by confessing to one unsophisticated lady that they disagreed their shelves with American goods. Still, if any lady earnestly desires to obtain American silks, she may inquire at almost any store for French or Italian goods, and possibly she will have the satisfaction of buying and wearing a dress woven within fifty miles of New-York. She must not, however, be so unfortunate in her choice of language as to use the word American. It is an insult to the shopkeeper, who has a tacit understanding with society that names of silks, like some wines, are improved by coming over the sea.

The *Courier des Etats Unis* makes some forcible remarks on the subject of Civil Service Reform in an abuse of the Franking Privilege to which attention was called in THE TRIBUNE a little while ago. Congressman James H. Platt of Virginia, it seems, is in the habit of franking specimen copies and business circulars of *Le Messager Franco-Américain*, upon what theory of official duty, or of the legitimate uses of postage-stamps, we cannot imagine. Mr. Platt, we dare say, is an eloquent supporter of all the President's professions of reform; but if the professions ever come to the test of practice, we shall expect to see him on the other side.

Rather a remarkable fact in relation to small-pox was recently stated in the hearing of a case in the Superior Court, in Boston, by Dr. Samuel Greene, the City Physician. He said that not less than seven cases of small-pox had come under his notice last Winter in which the patients had before had the disease, the results of the former attack being strongly marked. If this be so, it is not a remarkable accession of numbers to the few exceptions hitherto placed on record against the rule that the disease cannot be repeated in the same person!

A queer thing happened in Philadelphia lately. The van started with three occupants from the court-house for the prison; but when, upon arriving there, the officer in charge unlocked the door, no prisoners were to be seen—only "a long aperture" in the floor of the vehicle. Through this opening the three inmates had got outside and into the street. One of them was Murphy, the New-York thief; the other a Philadelphia burglar, and the third who has been recaptured had been stealing pur-iron. In all the annals of escapes, we never read of another like this.

It is tantalizing to read, that Mr. R. W. Emerson is giving a series of "Conversations" in Boston, and that, by the special request of the talker, they are not to be reported. It is not a great consolation to be told as we are by the *Boston Transcript* that the hour's talk was composed of rich fragments of Mr. Emerson's threefold experience as a scholar, thinker, and observer, charged with wit, wisdom, and keen, subtle criticism—"for this we might have known without the telling."

FINE ARTS—DRAMA—MUSIC

FINE ARTS.

MR. AVERY'S GALLERY.
One of the principal places of resort for lovers of art, during the last week, has been the Bonnevilliers Gallery, where Mr. Samuel P. Avery has been exhibiting his collection of foreign pictures, which are to be sold there to-night and to-morrow night. The average merit of the collection is very high, as might be expected from the well known taste and experience of the collector, and the sale will of course be conducted with that self-respecting good faith which all purchasers who have dealt with Mr. Avery are glad to acknowledge. Still, the market has been possibly rather over sold during the present season, and there may be an opportunity to buy excellent pictures at reasonable prices. There are two pictures in the collection of the first rank, one by Broughton and the other by Bouguereau, and the enterprise and pluck of Mr. Avery in buying them and offering them at auction should be rewarded by high prices, though of course the sellers are not numerous who have money enough and fast enough to buy pictures like these. Mr. Bradford's picture of the Icebergs sold, the other night, for \$6,000, and at that ratio there is not money enough in Mr. Bonnevilliers' gallery to buy these two works. The Bouguereau is a fine, showy, academic piece of work, the largest of his ever brought to this country. Its subject is "The Canaphorus," a superbly-built Greek youth, carrying the sacred torch to the place of sacrifice. There are young women accompanying him, but they are thrust into the background, and the artist has devoted all his powers to the presentation of a perfect type of masculine beauty. The artist esteems this picture very highly, and his opinion will be shared by his numerous admirers here. Mr. Broughton's picture is his masterpiece, called "Colder than Snow." A lovely proud princess—one of those frozen blondes who seem misplaced in a world of human weaknesses—is waiting to church one frosty morning of the middle ages, passing out of the picture in a slaty castle, followed by two pretty pages and two attendants who are seeking in vain for the rare smile which is not worth having when it comes. "The Winter wind is not more chill than the cold smile thy frown would win." The crowning merit of this great picture is that, while the group in the foreground has all the finish and elaboration and delicacy of sentiment with which we are familiar in Broughton, the distant landscape, the snowy expanse, the dim walls and towers of the city looming up through the chill foginess of the morning, are treated with a breadth and mastery we have never before seen in him. It is as if he had suddenly widened the scope of his powers and entered upon new fields of conquest and achievement. It is in every sense a masterpiece of Western art, and the buyer who buys it to-morrow may some day sell it for twice the sum he gives for it.

THE DRAMA.

NIBLO'S GARDEN—BLACK FRIDAY.
The well-known leading question that "Goro put to Calaine might be asked, with some propriety, respecting the intent of the managers of Niblo's Garden. They have often abused the patience of the respectable public in this city. How much further do they intend to go? The inquiry is pertinent to the spectacle that was last night seen on Niblo's stage, and that is very faintly described as humiliating to the understanding, offensive to the moral sense, aggressively insolent towards taste, propriety, and every finer feeling in human nature, and an outrageous desecration of the purpose, the privacy, and the capabilities of the theater. If the forces and facilities of libelites and promoters of such spectacles were not held in check upon this stage, is there any limit whatever to the license that the directors of the establishment may assume to take? The sty into which they leaped alone with "The Black Crook" and "Formosa" was pretty foul, but they plunged into a worse pit last night, along with "Black Friday," and it may easily happen—such was the nature of the invention as have hitherto been played—that "the greatest is behind." It would, therefore, be a comfort to know how much longer and further the amiable toleration of the decent public is to be abused. Time will show. Conjecture, in the meanwhile, has ample room to soar. Last night's performance was a most successful one, the delectable exhibitions of fish and dirt that we have ever seen on the stage; and we have been doomed to see a great many. Nor was the repugnance restricted to the inner side of the curtain. A coarse auditory, consisting of three or four thousand men—only a few females being visible in ill-filled the theater, and say, with laughter, hisses, groans, plaudits, silly cries, and tany antics, the apotheosis of James Fish, Jr., and Josephine Mansfield. Ignorance and that coarse tone of thinking and being so often met in his business life pervaded the assemblage, and this, in several instances, was displayed with unmistakable whifly. A group of damaged Philadelphians least spiteful sordid and sordid to the scene, while the worse element of Wall-st. added its auxiliary pungency and sister garble to the unsavory crowd. To such a company the story of Fish, Stokes, and Mansfield was not unlikely to prove a delectation; and no careful observer of the audience could have been surprised to see the current of "Black Friday" followed with attentive interest. That current ran through half-a-dozen scenes illustrative of a scandal far too public to be dwelt upon, and a number of scenes, with the exception of one passage in the second act and another in the fourth, and they were flimsily stuck together; but they were tawdry and tainted with the fish of animal passion, and swathed in an atmosphere of dollars and vice, and those attributes of coarseness sufficed to imprint them on the shallow perceptions of the assembled mob. The first showed *Rob King and Deah Hoffman* engaged in making their "gold corner," on "Black Friday," and introduced *Violet Spearheart* as a speculator. The next showed the panic of that well-remembered day, and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it was made dramatic and significant—something of the same force that animates the well-known fourth act of "Camille." After this came a view of the steamboat *Bristol*, at her pier, attended by *Rob King*, in blue and buttons—as an advertising public remembers him in life. Various notable persons walked upon the steamer—Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Belmont, Horace Greeley, Henry Clow, and others, not in the actual flesh, but in counterfeit presentments. Finally came *Hoffman* and *Violet Spearheart* and it was then seen that the dramatic purpose of this act was to enable King to cause the arrest of his rival, and prevent the lovely pair from going to Boston. The sailing of the boat ensued, and was not entirely a success of scenery, though well devised. Last came the interior of the Railway Office; a stormy talk between *King and Hoffman*, on the subject of forged notes and love-letters; a reconciliation between the two characters; a burglary; and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it was made dramatic and significant—something of the same force that animates the well-known fourth act of "Camille." After this came a view of the steamboat *Bristol*, at her pier, attended by *Rob King*, in blue and buttons—as an advertising public remembers him in life. Various notable persons walked upon the steamer—Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Belmont, Horace Greeley, Henry Clow, and others, not in the actual flesh, but in counterfeit presentments. Finally came *Hoffman* and *Violet Spearheart* and it was then seen that the dramatic purpose of this act was to enable King to cause the arrest of his rival, and prevent the lovely pair from going to Boston. The sailing of the boat ensued, and was not entirely a success of scenery, though well devised. Last came the interior of the Railway Office; a stormy talk between *King and Hoffman*, on the subject of forged notes and love-letters; a reconciliation between the two characters; a burglary; and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it was made dramatic and significant—something of the same force that animates the well-known fourth act of "Camille." After this came a view of the steamboat *Bristol*, at her pier, attended by *Rob King*, in blue and buttons—as an advertising public remembers him in life. Various notable persons walked upon the steamer—Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Belmont, Horace Greeley, Henry Clow, and others, not in the actual flesh, but in counterfeit presentments. Finally came *Hoffman* and *Violet Spearheart* and it was then seen that the dramatic purpose of this act was to enable King to cause the arrest of his rival, and prevent the lovely pair from going to Boston. The sailing of the boat ensued, and was not entirely a success of scenery, though well devised. Last came the interior of the Railway Office; a stormy talk between *King and Hoffman*, on the subject of forged notes and love-letters; a reconciliation between the two characters; a burglary; and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it was made dramatic and significant—something of the same force that animates the well-known fourth act of "Camille." After this came a view of the steamboat *Bristol*, at her pier, attended by *Rob King*, in blue and buttons—as an advertising public remembers him in life. Various notable persons walked upon the steamer—Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Belmont, Horace Greeley, Henry Clow, and others, not in the actual flesh, but in counterfeit presentments. Finally came *Hoffman* and *Violet Spearheart* and it was then seen that the dramatic purpose of this act was to enable King to cause the arrest of his rival, and prevent the lovely pair from going to Boston. The sailing of the boat ensued, and was not entirely a success of scenery, though well devised. Last came the interior of the Railway Office; a stormy talk between *King and Hoffman*, on the subject of forged notes and love-letters; a reconciliation between the two characters; a burglary; and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it was made dramatic and significant—something of the same force that animates the well-known fourth act of "Camille." After this came a view of the steamboat *Bristol*, at her pier, attended by *Rob King*, in blue and buttons—as an advertising public remembers him in life. Various notable persons walked upon the steamer—Vanderbilt, Jay Gould, Belmont, Horace Greeley, Henry Clow, and others, not in the actual flesh, but in counterfeit presentments. Finally came *Hoffman* and *Violet Spearheart* and it was then seen that the dramatic purpose of this act was to enable King to cause the arrest of his rival, and prevent the lovely pair from going to Boston. The sailing of the boat ensued, and was not entirely a success of scenery, though well devised. Last came the interior of the Railway Office; a stormy talk between *King and Hoffman*, on the subject of forged notes and love-letters; a reconciliation between the two characters; a burglary; and the language of the preceding scene was thereby attempted robbery. The third depicted the cynical coquetting with her two love-mad-and-swains, taking wealth from one lover to shower it upon the other. The meeting of the two men in this heroic presence was here contrived, and it