AMUSEMENTS.

WAVERLEY THEATRE, 720 Broadway—Feb. 15, the Elise Hall Burlesque Troupe.
BIBLO'S GARDEN—Forty Thieves; or, "Striking Oil" in "Family Jars."
BOOTH'S THEATRE, 23d st., between 5th and 6th ave.. Romeo and Juliet.
WALLACK'S—Much Ado About Nothing.
THE TAMMANY—Cousin Schneidler. Matinee on Saturday.
WOOD'S MUSEUM—Fra Diavolo and the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Living and Wild Animals.
BOWERY THEATRE—The Big Woman and Her Dog. Matinee on Saturday.
ACADEMY OF MUSIC—Italian Opera, L'Africaine.
OLYMPIC THEATRE—Humpty Dumpty. Matinees at 2½ o'clock, Wednesdays and Saturdays.
GRAND OPERA HOUSE—Orphee Aux Enfers—Spectacular Opera Bouffe.
THEATRE FRANCAIS—Genevieve Matinee on Saturday.
NEW YORK THEATRE—Merchant of Venice.
NEW YORK CIRCUS, 14th st., opposite Academy of Music—The Brothers Rizarelli. Matinee Wednesday and Saturday at 2½ P. M.
SPRING STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Feb. 15—Grand Concert.

The Sun.

It Shines for All.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1869.

To Subscribers.

In making remittances for subscriptions, always procure a draft on New York, or a Post Office money order, if possible. Where neither of these can be procured, send the money, but always in a registered letter. The registration fee has been reduced to fifteen cents, and the present registration system has been found by the postal authorities to be virtually an absolute protection against losses by mail. All Postmasters are obliged to register letters whenever requested to do so.

The Weekly Sun

Will be published on Wednesday morning. Business men who wish to reach country customers will find this edition of THE SUN a valuable medium. A limited number of advertisements received at 25 cents per line. To insure insertion they must be handed in before 9 o'clock on Tuesday evening.

Repeal the Tenure of Office Act.

Whatever else the Senate may do, or omit to do, before the 4th of March, it should by all means concur with the House of Representatives in repealing the Tenure of Office act, so as to restore to the Presidency, in the hands of President GRANT, the power of removing the subordinate officers of the Government, which it was found expedient to take away from President JOHNSON.

As the law now stands, guilty and corrupt officials practically enjoy an immunity from all interference. They can only be removed after a sort of judicial investigation by the President, or by a concurrence of the Senate in the appointment of their successors. How difficult it is to make either of these remedies available will be apparent when the immense number of offices is considered, and the great pressure of business which burdens both the President and the Senate. The consequence is, that the grossest frauds, especially in the matter of whiskey distilling, are constantly going on, and it is impossible to prevent them. Once in a while an offender like BLAISDELL is caught and convicted, but the bulk of the swindling meets with no obstruction.

The people expect from Gen. GRANT a reform in this matter. They have been led to believe that honesty, efficiency, and economy will mark his administration from high to low. They have been patient under the shortcomings of ANDREW JOHNSON, because they knew that he had not much longer to remain in office. Gen. GRANT, in turn, is aware of all that is required of him, and will, no doubt, do all in his power to perform it. But neither he nor the people can be gratified unless he is vested with sufficient power over his subordinates to make them either do their duty or give place to those who will.

Gen. Grant's Speech—The Cabinet.

The speech of Gen. GRANT which we publish this morning will be read with universal satisfaction and delight. No better or more impressive speech has been made this many a day. It proves that the General knows perfectly how to say what he means, and that when he speaks there is no obscurity or ambiguity in his utterance. He talks just as he is wont to act—like a man of supreme common sense, upright purposes, and an immovable though unostentatious determination to do his whole duty.

This speech disposes of a great many tales and rumors about the composition of the Cabinet that have been flying about of late. No man anywhere has yet been asked to serve as a member of the future ministry. Not even those on whom Gen. GRANT has settled to fill the different places are aware of his determination, nor will it be communicated to them until the very eve of their nomination to the Senate. While the future Secretaries themselves are thus ignorant of the distinction in store for them, it is plain that nobody else can be better informed than they are, and that all pretences to the contrary are unfounded, or at best the mere unauthorized conclusions and guesses of persons who may hit the mark, and may not.

The chief reason for thus holding the names of the Cabinet in reserve until the time of their submission to the Senate is frankly stated by Gen. GRANT. It is, that the unseemly contests of party cliques or personal friends seeking to impose their own candidates upon the President may be avoided. How far these contests were carried in the appointment of Mr. LINCOLN'S Cabinet, we have lately had occasion to show; and every one will be grateful to Gen. GRANT for making them impossible in the present instance. Besides, the Cabinet ought to be chosen by the President himself. Its members are his confidential agents and advisers, and in their selection he should be subject to the constitutional advice and consent of the Senate alone.

Another reason for reticence in regard to this subject, though not set forth by Gen. GRANT in his speech, may nevertheless have had some influence in determining his action. It is found in the natural desire to retain as long as possible the fullest freedom to change his mind as to individuals. He may become convinced, for instance, that some new man would be better for one of the Departments than the one he has fixed upon. Now he remains perfectly at liberty to alter his purpose and to take the new man, while if the appointment had been publicly announced, or even imparted to any friend, it would be comparatively difficult to make the change.

But while nobody knows or will know who are to be Gen. GRANT'S ministers, there are a few simple principles which have given so bright a lustre to his career thus far, that we are sure they will be kept in view in making up the Cabinet, just as he has kept them in view in other matters. Some of his opponents have endeavored to create the impression that he will now begin to follow some arbitrary rule of conduct at variance with his past history; but the event will prove that they are in error. These principles, in their application to the structure of the Cabinet, may be concisely expressed as follows:

I. All the members of the Cabinet will be pronounced and indisputable Republicans.

II. They will be men personally agreeable to the President—not merely such as he is glad to shake hands with now and then, but such as he likes to live with in confidential relations, and to associate with as personal friends all the time.

III. They will be, in his judgment, the best men who can be found for the duties of their respective offices. This test will include honesty, character, talent, and special fitness for the work to be done.

IV. No member of either House of the new Congress will be asked to take a place in the Cabinet without some imperative necessity. They are already under superior orders to perform other duties, from which, we dare say, they will not be called away unless it is quite unavoidable.

V. No military or naval officer will be in the Cabinet unless there be some particular and temporary circumstance which compels it for the time being. The reason for this is the same as will exclude members of Congress. They are already appointed to other functions, the performance of which cannot be dispensed with.

VI. While the Cabinet will consist of men familiar with public affairs and the administration of public business, its members will also be in the full vigor of their faculties. No worn-out or exhausted politicians will figure among them. They will form a working and not an ornamental body. Still less will the Cabinet be a hospital.

Formed under such auspices and with such a head, the new Executive will enter upon its labors with the confidence of the entire people. No President within the memory of this generation has begun so well as GRANT, and we have no doubt that he will continue in the same manner, winning for himself and his country, in this new field, the same success that he won amid the trials and dangers of the rebellion.

The Fifteenth Amendment.

The Senate has materially modified the language of the new amendment to the Constitution, sent to them for their concurrence by the House of Representatives. As the amendment came from the House, it provided that "the right of any citizen to vote shall not be *denied* or *abridged* by the United States or by any State, by reason of race or color or previous condition of slavery of any citizen or class of citizens of the United States." The Senate has substituted for this clause one which requires all restrictions on the right of suffrage to be impartial in their application. It would have the amendment read, "No *discrimination* shall be made in the United States among the citizens of the United States in the exercise of the elective franchise, or in the right to hold office in any State, on account of race, color, nativity, property, education, or creed."

While it is desirable to settle every question connected with the political changes resulting from the war, and while a logical adherence to principle is a great thing in a Constitution, we must say that the proposition of the House seems to us much more judicious and statesmanlike than that of the Senate—first, because it is limited to the right of voting, and says nothing about holding office; and secondly, because the scheme of the Senate prohibits any discrimination as respects either voting or office-holding that is based upon education. This point of the Senate's plan is not merely unwise, it is ridiculous.

It is evidently just as necessary to protect the newly enfranchised colored men of the South from restrictions upon their right of voting as it was to endow them with that right originally. Without making them voters, a discreet and satisfactory reconstruction of the South was impossible; and the good order and progress of the Southern States now require that the political freedom of the blacks should be guarded against the possibility of overthrow. This will be sufficiently accomplished by the amendment of the House. The right of voting being safe, the right to hold office will take care of itself. The addition of the Senate guaranteeing the latter is superfluous, useless, and mistaken.

But to prohibit the States from making education a qualification for voting and holding office is absurd and impracticable. In truth, no man ought to vote who does not possess a certain amount of education; and the system of Massachusetts, which requires that the voter shall prove his capacity to read and write, approaches much more truly the ideal of a republic than that which demands of him no evidence whatever of mental capacity and improvement. It is true that other States are not now prepared to set up such a standard, but that is not a reason why it should be absolutely forbidden.

If from the right of voting we pass to that of holding office, the Senate's prohibition of an educational qualification appears in its full deformity. Are we to be denied the privilege of insisting that our candidates for judges shall know the law? Must that excellent act of Congress be annulled which provides that persons who apply for clerkships in the Executive Departments at Washington shall be examined to ascertain how far education has qualified them for the places they desire? If a State wishes to institute a geological survey, may it not require that the gentlemen who apply to do the work shall know the difference between limestone and hornblende? But it is not necessary to extend further the reduction to absurdity of the Senate's proposition. That proposition affords a striking illustration of the truth that the wisest men may sometimes be led into folly. Let us only hope that those who have thus been deluded may be magnanimous enough to see and repent of their error.

The amendment of the House is sufficient for the purpose. It is the work of Mr. BOUTWELL of Massachusetts, one of the most prudent as well as boldest of our statesmen. The Senate has made a blunder in rejecting it, but if that body will now retrace its steps and lay aside that foolish pride which sometimes leads us to prefer a poor thing of our own to a good thing of any one else, the fault may easily be amended. Besides, it is probable that Mr. BOUTWELL'S amendment would be ratified, but that of the Senate could not possibly fail of rejection.

Triumph of the Independent Press.

The *Evening Telegram* of Saturday last published a spirited wood engraving very much in the style of Doré, in which the editor of the *Tribune*, the editor of the *Times*, and the editor of THE SUN were represented as contending in a race, on velocipedes of PICKERING'S excellent pattern. The design was characterized by a fidelity to truth and nature which cannot be too highly commended, and which does great credit to the brilliant newspaper in which it appeared. THE SUN was depicted as going ahead of its competitors in this interesting struggle. Mr. GREELEY is seen in the picture earnestly laboring to reach the goal first. With a desperate grasp upon the guiding bar, his manly form hoisted from the broad saddle whereon it ought to be supported, and his left foot, heavily shod, raised for a fierce jam upon the crank of his machine, he exclaims that with one more jerk the prize is his. Further in the rear the *Times* is exhibited in danger of capsizing. Both feet of the astute and accomplished editor are off the cranks, and the fore wheel is wrenched aside in such a way that nothing less than the genius of HANLON could restore the imperilled equilibrium. A little in advance of both rushes the rapid SUN, with upright form and head erect, displaying a noble beard that curls in the stirring breeze, the guiding bar gently yet firmly held, both feet vigorously working on the pedals, and all those indications of steady and unexhausted power which alike characterize the great velocipedal artist and the successful journal. To the frantic exclamations of its rivals THE SUN calmly answers, without slacking its speed, "Not for Joe! I've got the inside track!" All of which is true in more senses than one.

There is nothing surprising in that triumph of the Independent Press over partisan competition, which this cartoon of the *Evening Telegram* so significantly illustrates. The *Times* and the *Tribune* are both admirable journals in their way, rich in resources, conducted by men of extraordinary talent and experience, endowed with all the prestige of ancient victory. But they are both the organs of a political party. They are not free in their action. They cannot speak absolutely as they think and feel. Hence it is that the public, which likes independence, spirit, liveliness, good temper, freedom from all party shackles, prefers THE SUN. Why, during the last week our daily sales *increased to the extent of two thousand copies* a day, without any excitement pervading the public mind and enlarging the circulation of newspapers in general. Such is the progress of the Independent Press, even in a dull time. It is bound to win.

We acknowledge that the picture would necessarily have been different had the veteran editor of the *Herald* been represented in the race. He is a man of genius and originality, and knows how to appreciate the dash, boldness, wit, and piquancy with which THE SUN so surprises the commonplace old fogies, and puzzle the dull minds that cannot see an inch beyond their noses. Against him our machine would hardly presume to contend, no matter with what advantage. But, like the shrewd and sage observer of human affairs that he is, we are convinced that he looks upon the velocipede with curious but rather sceptical interest. Wielding a power that all may envy and few can ever hope to rival, he can well afford to look on from his sumptuous chariot, and let the flashing and mysterious bicycles of the day whirl along without tempting him into the arena. Besides, he himself belongs to the Independent Press. Indeed, he is its champion, its Hercules, its Achilles, its Ulysses. As such, he does but justice to his own renown in recognizing the superiority of THE SUN over two of its most muscular and formidable rivals. And long may it shine!

It is reported from Paris, that the real object of the mission of the new Greek Ambassador, Mr. CASSINIATI, to this country, is to sell to Mr. SEWARD one of the numerous islands in the Greek Archipelago, and with the proceeds to buy iron-clad ships to be used in the impending war against Turkey. As, however, Mr. SEWARD has not yet been able to carry through his last bargain, that for St. Thomas, we think Mr. CASSINIATI will have to wait a while. His waiting will do no harm, too, because every day lessens the chance of the iron-clads being wanted, even if he should buy them. Greece does not mean to fight if she can help it, and the great Powers of Europe do not mean to let her.

The *News* reports that the Hon. W. P. FESSENDEN is to be Gen. GRANT'S Secretary of State. It would be a very good appointment; but how does the *News* know? No one knows but Gen. GRANT, and he is not in the way of telling.

The testimony taken before the Board of Health, on Saturday, in reference to the nuisance caused by the Metropolitan Gas Company's works, established it beyond dispute that the Company can, if it chooses, entirely prevent the nuisance complained of, either by using iron as a purifier, or by employing an improved ventilating process. We hope the Board will insist on the Company's making the change they require, and put an end to the intolerable smell it has been so long producing.

We are sorry to hear that BROUGHAM'S Theatre is not meeting with that success which was anticipated from the genius and reputation of its manager. Whether from lack of capital or lack of judgment, the company seems to be poor, the plays injudiciously selected, and the public interest in the performances small. We are sorry for this on Mr. BROUGHAM'S account. A cleverer artist, a smarter writer, or a better fellow does not breathe, and we trust he may yet pick up his crumbs and gain as a manager the same laurels which in every other sphere he has been wont to wear.

Persons who travel much from east to west, or the reverse, are familiar with the annoyance caused them by the continual variation of their watches from the time kept at the different places they come to and on the different railroads they pass over. To obviate this annoyance, it has been proposed to adopt some uniform system by which all the clocks in the world would strike the same hour, at the same time, at every place on the globe, and that the indications of our watches would express a coincidence of time wherever we might happen to be. For example, if Greenwich time were taken as the standard, we should call it 5 P. M. when the sun was at the meridian, and 12 o'clock when it was just risen. Of course the plan will apply only to travellers and hotels, railroads telegraphs, and similar institutions.

AMUSEMENTS.

Italian Opera.

Whatever may be said of Maretzek's management, no one certainly can complain of any lack of variety. The programme is changed every night. Already we have had the "Sicilian Vespers," "Norma," and "Trovatore," and this week "L'Africaine," "Belisario," and "Robert Le Diable" are promised. Of course, where so many operas are produced, it would be unreasonable to expect completeness in any. No manager's pocket could stand the drain. Something must be sacrificed; and if variety is the thing wanted, then the thing sacrificed is finish and detail. The orchestra and chorus will be found a little unsteady, for want of sufficient rehearsal; the scenery only passable, since it does not pay to get up elaborate scenes for a single representation. What does for a saloon in Messina in the thirteenth century one night, at the representation of the "Sicilian Vespers," serves equally well the next in "Norma" for the Council Hall of the Druids, in Ancient Britain, during the "Consulship of Plancus." The architecture of the half savage Gauls gets strangely jumbled up with that of modern Italy, and a skip of twelve or fourteen centuries is the easiest thing in the world for the scenery man. The costumes and all the appointments of the stage share to some extent the fate of the scenery. All the dresses in vogue, and all the armor in use, from the beginning of the Christian era to the time of the invention of gunpowder, are used with the strictest impartiality, and the spectator can pick out from among them whichever pleases him best. His money paid, he is quite welcome to his choice. And, after all, this matter of scenery and costumes is but a secondary affair, and inaccuracy in that respect can easily be overlooked, provided the main point, the singing, is well done. Did not Tintoretto paint a picture of the time of Moses, and represent the Israelites as shooting the quails with guns? But the painting was none the less beautiful on that account. Unhappily, the singing at the Academy does not altogether redeem the other shortcomings. In "Norma" Mme. La Grange was the prima donna, Miss McCullough the seconda donna, a Signor Boetti the tenor, and Antonucci the bass. The quartet was not a strong one; neither, on the other hand, was it positively weak. The tenor has a good strong voice, inclining to baritone quality, and sang with fervor and accuracy. Miss McCullough constantly improves, gaining vocal flexibility and ease in stage action. Certainly no one can help finding pleasure in listening to her fresh, pure tones. Antonucci is an artist and in his prime. Mme. La Grange is also an artist, though unfortunately not in her prime. Those whose memory is ungallant enough to recall Mme. La Grange fifteen years ago, when she was in the perfection of her powers, remember a most charming vocalist. Now she is singing on the interest of the reputation acquired in those palmy days, and drawing perhaps somewhat heavily on the capital. The art remains, the admirable method, the results of the excellent school in which she was taught—a school now with few or no great exponents in this country; but that which lies behind all this, the voice itself, is impaired, and lacks much of its former sweetness and steadiness. Yet Mme. La Grange economizes her wasted resources with marvellous skill, and occasionally, in singing some difficult *cadenza* with faultless precision, discloses the secret of her well-earned fame, and compels anew the acknowledgment of her great artistic ability.

This latest production of Bellini's beautiful opera reminds us, perhaps by way of contrast, of the history of its first performance in this country. To some of our readers the recital may be interesting; to most of them it will certainly be new. The greater portion of those who took part in it have now passed away, and to those who think that artistic triumphs are reserved only for our day the comparison may be instructive.

Thirty years ago, or, to be exact, in the year 1840, the Philadelphians were excited on the subject of an English version of "Norma" translated by Mr. Joseph R. Fry, an enthusiastic amateur, then to be produced at the old Chestnut street Theatre. The neighboring cities were called upon to contribute to the orchestra, which numbered fifty, and was under the direction of one Cline, an excellent musician. Mr. and Mrs. Wood, whose memory is still fresh in the minds of our older citizens, and who were great in their day and admirable singers, judged even by the highest standard, were the *Pollo* and *Norma*. Mr. Brough was the *Oroveso*. So universal was the desire that the work should be well produced, that all musical amateurs hastened to tender their assistance. The chorus was over a hundred strong, undoubtedly the largest and most effective operatic chorus we have ever had in this country. It was made up from the members of the various singing societies and choirs of the city, and ladies and gentlemen of distinguished talent in the musical circles of the town did not hesitate to take part. This fine body of vocalists was thoroughly drilled by Mr. Wm. H. Fry, the well known composer and critic, and under his able direction came to a very high point of perfection. Everything was done *con amore*, and the *mise-en-scène* was all that enthusiasm and money could make it. The details of costume and properties were as exact and accurate as they are accustomed to be at the Grand Opera at Paris. The determination of every one interested seemed to be to show how well the thing could be done, and, as the sensation was a new one and the pride of the Philadelphians enlisted in the enterprise, no pains were spared to promote that end. The result justified all the labor and money that had been expended. The theatre was crowded for twenty consecutive nights, which was a great run in those days, and the occasion was long remembered as that of a brilliant operatic triumph. This was the first of "Norma" in this country. Its airs, now hackneyed and threadbare, were then fresh and captivating, and served in a great degree to mould the popular taste to an appreciation for what was most beautiful in lyric art. The hold that "Norma" then took upon the popular heart it has never since lost, and worn as it is, it can never be heard without gratification.

The Concert of Mlle. Josefina Filomeno.

It is a pleasure to welcome to the musical fraternity of this city so remarkable a young artist as Miss Josefina Filomeno. Nothing was known of her abilities previous to her concert at Irving Hall on Saturday evening last. What we can gather is, that she is scarcely sixteen, and that she comes from the other side of the Andes, and is a true American of Chili. Considering the advantages which her country affords for a musical education, it is quite unusual to meet with such excellence on two instruments in one so young, and a girl at that. Her first essay was in a duet for two pianos with Mr. Ed. Hoffman—the first concerto of Chopin. It abounds in difficulties for the fingers, and requires a grasp for both hand and head possessed by very few pianoforte players. Chopin in a very high degree requires of his interpreters matured emotional natures, great digital dexterity, force as well as lightness, and a dash of the wizard, all combined and kept within proper bounds by an infallible sense of what is good taste in music. Miss Filomeno combines about as many of these essential conditions as could be looked for in one so young. Her playing was clear and exact, her diatonic runs and trills clear and pearly, her command and self-possession complete. We cannot, however, in truth speak in praise of her mode of phrasing or declaiming on the instrument. It is intelligent, but sounds, as perhaps it should, like the immature expression of a very young lady. As a violinist, Miss Filomeno has been excelled by certainly two other ladies, although what she could do on a more resonant instrument than the one she used on Saturday evening we could not say. Generally her playing is accurate, agreeable, and not exaggerated. The same defects, however, which mark her style on the piano are found equally in her violin playing. As the voice is the greatest instrument, and as the best singer is therefore the best exponent of style, it follows that a vocal style is to be sought for to produce the most pleasing results. Our young artist has plenty of time to secure this needful passport to the temple of Fame, and has made so good a start in the race that we look for great results in her future career.

Dramatic Items.

Of course there is no present change in the Shakespearian plays at either Wallack's or Booth's. At the latter theatre, however, there is to be a matinée on Saturday, and in lieu of "Romeo and Juliet" in the evening, Mr. Booth withdraws in favor of Mr. Edwin Adams, who appears for the first time in a romantic tragedy, translated from the German, and entitled "Narcisse the Variant."

The event of the week in burlesque will be the opening of a new theatre devoted to the illustration of that branch of dramatic art—the Waverley. It is the same place of amusement formerly occupied by Kelly & Leon's, but beautified and freshened. The company is an excellent one, and its brightest star is Miss Elise Holt, from whom the company takes its name. This is the opening night.

The Buchanans, who are at the New York Theatre, find sufficient public encouragement and support to induce them to continue there for a time longer. This and to-morrow evening they play "The Merchant of Venice."

At the Olympic, "Humpty Dumpty," ever young and fresh, maintains his hold upon the public favor.

Miss Herring reappears at the "Bowery" every night this week. She is always a favorite there, and attracts large audiences to her support.

The New York Circus continues its brilliant programme of last week, including the brothers Rizarelli, Mr. Stickney, the daring rider, and the splendid company of athletes and acrobats, who give such dash and spirit to the performances at this establishment.

At Niblo's, the very popular Lydia Thompson burlesque company, with its fine *corps de ballet* and stage full of auxiliaries, continue the "Forty Thieves."

A new pantomime is announced at the Tammany for this week, introducing, for the first time, the comedian James H. Budworth.

At Wood's, the performances are both numerous and varied. There are matinées given every day, at which "Ion" and the Morlacchi troupe are the attractions. In the evening two burlesques are performed—"The Field of the Cloth of Gold" and "Fra Diavolo."

Musical Notes.

The "Orphée aux Enfers" is continued at Fisk's Grand Opera House.

At the Academy of Music to-night "L'Africaine" will be presented.

At the French Theatre "Genevieve de Brabant" is restored this week, and will be given on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday the "Fleur de Thé."

A grand concert is to be given in the Spring street (near Varick) Presbyterian Church to-morrow evening. Among the singers are Mrs. Sophie Mozart, Mr. George Simpson, and Mr. J. R. Thomas. Mr. E. L. Merriam will preside at the organ.

FORTIETH CONGRESS.

Senate.

GOV. FENTON'S CREDENTIALS.

The PRESIDENT presented the credentials of Reuben E. Fenton, Senator elect from New York.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN (Rep., N. J.) presented the credentials of his successor, John P. Stockton, Senator elect from New Jersey.

UNIFORM RULE OF NATURALIZATION.

Mr. STEWART (Rep., Nevada) introduced a bill to establish a uniform rule of naturalization, in the following words:

Be it enacted, &c., That all white persons of foreign birth, not convicted of crime, and who have not participated in any action or rebellion against the United States, and who now are, or who shall hereafter become, permanent residents of the United States, and elect to be citizens thereof, are hereby declared naturalized citizens, and entitled to all the rights and privileges of other citizens of the United States.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

Mr. ROBERTSON (Rep., S. C.) introduced a joint resolution proposing the following constitutional amendment:

ARTICLE 17. The Congress shall have power to establish a tribunal for the purpose of considering and determining all questions which may arise as to the validity of the electoral vote of any State for President and Vice-President of the United States, which said tribunal shall exercise its jurisdiction under such regulations as Congress shall make.

UNIFORM SYSTEM OF NATURALIZATION.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN (Rep., N. J.) from the Committee on Foreign Relations, reported a substitute for the bill to regulate the proceedings for the naturalization of aliens, introduced by himself December 7.

FRAUDS AGAINST THE INTERNAL REVENUE.

Mr. CRAGIN (Rep., N. H.) offered a resolution directing the Attorney General to inform the Senate whether he had directed the suspension or discontinuance of the proceedings against parties prosecuted in New York city for frauds upon the Internal Revenue, and if so, in what cases and for what reasons, and if compatible with public interests to communicate to the Senate in correspondence on the subject with the United States District Attorney at New York. Adopted.

RIVER AND HARBOR BILL.

The River and Harbor Appropriation bill was then discussed, and after receiving a veto message from the President, relative to the bill for transferring the duties of the Trustees of the colored schools of Washington and Georgetown, the Senate adjourned.

House of Representatives.

THE OVERLAND MAIL CONTRACT.

Mr. BROOMALL (Rep., Pa.), from the Committee on Public Expenditures, made a report in the case of Wells, Fargo & Co.'s contract for carrying the mails between the terminal of the Pacific Railroads. The Committee exempts the Post Office Department from all blame.

REPORTS OF NATIONAL BANKS.

Mr. HOOPER (Rep., Mass.), from the Committee on Banking and Currency, reported a bill regulating the reports of the national banking associations. After discussion and amendment the bill was passed. The following are its provisions:

That every national banking association shall make to the Comptroller of the Currency, on the first Monday of every month, a report exhibiting in detail and under appropriate heads the resources and liabilities of the association before the commencement of business on the morning of the day aforesaid, and shall transmit the same to the Comptroller of the Currency within five days thereafter; and such report shall be in the manner and form prescribed by the Comptroller of the Currency, verified by the oath or affirmation of the President and Cashier of such association, or by oath of one of them and two of the Directors; and shall be in lieu of the quarterly reports and monthly statements required by the thirty-fourth section of the National Currency act, approved June 3, 1864. The return of each association on the first Monday of January and July shall be verified by the oath or affirmation of the president or cashier, and attested by the signatures of at least three of the directors, certifying that they have personally examined the resources and liabilities of the association, as set forth in said report, and have found the same to be correct; and such reports for January and July shall contain a statement of gross earnings and profits of the previous six months, and shall be published in a newspaper where such association is located, at the expense of the association making the same, and if there be no newspaper published at such place, then in some newspaper to the nearest place of publication within the County, within the county or State where such association is located; and every banking association shall make and transmit to the Comptroller of the Currency a special report, at any time, of its condition on any day specified, whenever required by the Comptroller of the Currency. Any association failing to make and transmit such report shall be subject to a penalty of $100 for each day after its neglect, and the bank shall delay to make and transmit any report as aforesaid, and in case any association shall delay or refuse to pay the penalty imposed, when the same shall be assessed by the Comptroller of the Currency, the amount of such penalty may be retained by the Treasurer of the United States, upon the order of the Comptroller of the Currency, out of the first moneys that may become due to the association from bonds deposited with him to secure circulation, and all sums of money collected for penalties under this section shall be paid into the Treasury of the United States.

Mr. BARNES (Dem., N. Y.), from the same Committee, reported a bill to prevent national banks from loaning money on United States notes or national bank notes as collateral security. After some discussion and alteration of the verbiage, the bill was passed.

FURTHER INCREASE OF THE PUBLIC DEBT.

That being agreed to, Mr. HOOPER (Rep., Mass.) called up the following bill, reported by him from the Committee on Ways and Means, to prohibit the further increase of the public debt:

Be it enacted, &c., That so much of any existing law as authorizes the issue of bonds by the Secretary of the Treasury, except for the purchase to the various railroad companies now authorized by law, be and the same are hereby repealed; provided that this act shall not affect any authority for the transfer of bonds or for the exchange of mutilated or defaced bonds; and that the Secretary of the Treasury may issue, upon such terms and under such regulations as he may from time to time prescribe, registered bonds in exchange for coupon bonds which have been or may hereafter be lawfully issued, such bonds to be similar in all respects to the bonds issued under the acts authorizing the issue of the bonds offered for exchange.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Treasury shall publish monthly a statement of the public debt as it existed at the close of the preceding month, in which statement the United States bonds shall be classed as the funded debt, the United States notes and fractional notes issued for circulation as money shall be classed as currency debt, the three per cent. certificates shall be classed as the temporary loan debt, and any debt that is past due or that will become due within the next year, stating the same in detail, shall be classed as the matured debt, and the interest on such matured debt shall cease after it becomes due. The statement shall also contain the amount outstanding of subsidy bonds issued to railroad companies, the navy pension fund and other recorded obligations of the Treasury, the amount outstanding of gold certificates, and the amount of coin and currency notes in the Treasury.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That from and after the passage of this act no percentage, deduction, or commission, or any amount or sum, shall be allowed to any person for the sale, negotiation, or exchange of any bonds or securities of the United States, or of any coin, or bullion disposed of at the Treasury Department or elsewhere on account of the United States; and all acts or parts of acts authorizing or permitting, by contribution or otherwise, the Secretary of the Treasury to pay any such fees to any other officer of the department to make such sale, or the negotiation of bonds and securities, are hereby repealed.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That after the passage of this act all exchange, purchases or sales of the bonds of the United States on account of the Government, which may be authorized by law, shall be made by advertising the competition of the public by advertising for proposals for any such exchange, purchase or sales, which shall be awarded publicly to the best bidder of bidders, the Secretary of the Treasury reserving the right to reject any such bids should he deem it for the public interest to do so.

On motion of Mr. JUDD the following section was added to the bill:

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That from and after the passage of this act all sales of gold on account of the United States shall be made at public auction, by a proper officer of the Treasury Department, after giving three days' public notice of the time and place where such sales shall be made, by advertising the same for at least three days.

The bill, as amended, was passed.

The Senate bill supplementary to the National Banking act was reported back, and a general discussion ensued upon it until the recess. On resuming the time was devoted merely to debate.

THE M'CONNELL MURDER.

Arrest of Wm. A. Robinson—The Evidence Against Him—His Examination Before the Coroner.

Correspondence of the Chicago Times.

JACKSONVILLE, Ill., Feb. 11.—The mystery by which the brutal assassination of Gen. Murray McConnell was at first surrounded has at last been dispelled, and the assassin arrested and confined in prison to await his trial. The name of the prisoner is William A. Robinson, a young man, formerly clerk in the Mansion House, but, at the time of the murder, the proprietor of a small family grocery store, his stock of goods, which was purchased with money borrowed from the murdered man in June last. He is but 26 years of age, well educated, of pleasing manners, of correct habits in every particular, a genial, social man, esteemed and respected by every one, and possessing as many warm personal friends as any man in Jacksonville; in short, about the last man to whom, under ordinary circumstances, any suspicion would have attached. Robinson was at first held under arrest, not simply as a witness, until further developments should take place. When told that he was desired as a witness, and that he was under arrest until called, he wondered what they could want of him, but added that he had been down past the house about the time the murder must have been committed.

It will be remembered that the General left the breakfast table at about 8½ o'clock; that in the course of a few minutes after the servant girl was in his room; that after she left his grandson brought in the mail—this being, as near as could be ascertained, half o'clock, and the time he was accustomed to deliver it; because the boy at once started for school; that the servant girl came back to the General's room at 9 o'clock, and found him weltering in his blood. Within the space of these 30 minutes the assassin had come, completed his bloody work, and departed. The servant girl testifies that when she left the General's room she went up stairs, and remained there until she came down at 9 o'clock and discovered the murder, with the single exception of coming down once in the interval to receive milk from the milkman. This milkman was then brought before the inquest, and testified that he left the milk and he met a man coming in, whom he described, giving as far a description as could be expected from one of his intelligence of the suspected man Robinson, and being sent to Robinson's store on the pretext of making some trifling purchase, he came back and expressed his belief that this was the man. A Mrs. Mahoney sent word to the Coroner that she had something to tell; and being brought before the jury, she testified that, on passing up the street past Gen. McConnell's residence, about 9 o'clock on the morning of the murder, she was startled out of her wits by a voice calling out, "Stop!" and looking up, she saw a man, who she thinks was William A. Robinson, she knowing him well, he having up to a short time before, occupied one half of the same house in which she resides; that Robinson on the evening of the murder, came to her house at a late hour, and desired admittance to talk over the case, but that her husband, at her instance, refused to admit him; that she was afraid of him, and, at first, did not wish to say anything about it for fear it would cost her trouble.

Robinson was then accused of the crime, without producing any embarrassment. His hands were taken from him after he had confessed to having worn them for some time, and on them were spots of blood, which bear the evidences of having been washed, as with a view of erasing them. No other indications of this character, however, were found about him.

To-day he was on the witness stand before the Coroner's jury for six hours. He stated that he had lived here three years; that he was clerk at the Mansion House up to last February, with the exception of two weeks; that he then went into the grocery store, and has been in that business ever since; that he has known McConnell ever since he had been here, and intimately; that he had had business transactions with him; that in May last he borrowed money of him, and gave his note for $120; that in September last he took up that note by giving another for $60 and paying the balance in cash; that the last note was to draw ten per cent. interest from date, and he gave two names to the note as security; that this last note he paid in December last, either on the 8th or 9th, but was not certain of the date of the payment; that he paid the money to McConnell's house; no one was present but Mr. McConnell and himself; he paid $300; the bills were two $50s, and the rest were $10 notes; McConnell said he had a $5 note in change; I think the interest was included in the principal of the note, and I paid it before I expected to, and in this way $5 became due me; yet I owed him $90. He gave me the note and I destroyed it; I burned it in my store; I keep a correct cash account of all my business, showing all my cash receipts, and all the money I pay out; that account shows the item of payment to McConnell of $90; I am willing to have my books examined." The books were then produced, and the accuracy spoken of in the dispatch preceding this statement was shown him. He said he had no explanation of it to make; that the book showing the payment was right, and the other was wrong; that there was no difference in the kinds of ink; and that the entry of that item was made in the same manner as the others. When asked if he did not make that entry after the murder, he jumped out of his seat excitedly, and raising his right hand, said, "Before God, I did that in December." He said that on the Tuesday before the murder his wife went to Lawrenceville, Ill., on her father's, and that he went with her to St. Louis, and came back on Wednesday; on Saturday he sold his house hold furniture to an auction firm; the house where he had been living was a double house; Mrs. Mahony lived in the other part of it; that, on Tuesday morning, about a quarter before 9 o'clock, he went down to that house; that he left his store, went to a livery stable and stopped there a few moments, and then went directly down the street, passed McConnell's residence; across the railroad track, he saw and spoke to an acquaintance, and on to his house. That he went there to get a bread-board and some nutmegs he had left there, purposing to give them to Miss Barberry, at whose house he had lodgings; that he went into the yard and found his house locked; went around the house, and not finding the key, he came after; went into the privy and then back, out at the gate, and up the same street, crossing it at the railroad crossing, and went up that street on the opposite side of McConnell's residence. While going down the street first, he did not see any one on the street, except Mrs. Mahony; he saw no one on the opposite side of this street, just north of McConnell's residence. (Note the fact that he says he saw Mrs. Mahony at just the place she says she had reached, going up the street, when she saw him coming out of McConnell's yard, and the meeting of an acquaintance at the same place.) He saw no one up the street when near and opposite McConnell's residence; he saw persons on the street—a man and a woman. The man was George M. McConnell, coming toward McConnell's. He went to his store, and shortly afterward heard of McConnell's death. "An acquaintance came into the store, and asked me if I and Mr. Stephenson, who was standing near me, if we had heard of McConnell's death. I was reading. Stephenson said, 'Is it so?' I did not believe it; thought he was fooling us. He was smiling, and I thought he was joking. My stock of goods is worth about $1,800. I owed, I believe, $500, and during the last week had made arrangements to pay it in groceries, and made an invoice of the goods he was to take. The $300 I paid to McConnell accumulated in my business. My trunk is a new one, bought within a week. I did not inform my security that I had paid the note to McConnell. I came down here on the afternoon of the murder, and stayed around the house, timing, but did not go in and see the body."

The character and the antecedents of the guilty man, and the paltry sum of $300 for which this terrible crime was perpetrated, all repel the idea that it was premeditated. If money, and money alone had been the motive of the murder, and the crime had been deliberately planned in order to evade the payment of his note, the murderer would have despoiled his victim of his pocketbook, his watch and chain, and his diamond pin, the aggregate value of which must have been $2,000 at least. It is probable that he went there that morning for the purpose of obtaining an extension of the note or paying it; and, having an honest purpose, walked deliberately and boldly into the house. The note was produced, and proceeding to settlement, some difference may have arisen between them. Gen. McConnell was 65 years of age, and always very decided and strong. He had, of late years, grown somewhat petulant, especially when feeling unwell, and which a little angered he was one of the most bitter and sarcastic men to be found anywhere; and, in business matters