The Sun.

VOL. XLIX.--NO. 175. NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1882. PRICE TWO CENTS.

MORTON'S GUANO CONTRACT.

HELD ON CONDITION OF INTERVENTION IN PERUVIAN AFFAIRS.

The Bargain Entered Into at Paris by the Credit Industriel in Accordance with an Assurance Given to Secretary Evarts—Morton, Bliss & Co. to be Sole Agents in America, with a Commission of 5 per Cent.

From the Boston Daily Advertiser.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20.—The contract printed below was executed in Paris soon after the arrival there of Minister Levi P. Morton, between the representatives of the banking house of Morton, Bliss & Co. and the representatives of the French company now known as the Credit Industriel. This is one of three companies striving to obtain the promise of intervention by the United States to prevent Chili from dismembering Peru. Each was seeking to obtain in return for securing such intervention the sole right to work the guano and nitrate beds of Peru. The two rival companies before the State Department were the Peruvian Company and the Credit Industriel. The latter had a heavy financial support in Europe, and a recognized contract with Peru based upon the condition of securing the intervention of the United States. The duly accredited agents of the French company, as appears from the diplomatic correspondence lately submitted, appeared in Washington in January, 1881, and presented the programme of their company to Mr. Evarts. In brief, it provides for paying Chili and Peru each $500 and a settlement of principal and interest with the Peruvian bondholders. On Feb. 17 Mr. Evarts commended this programme in very friendly terms to Mr. Christiancy, and on Feb. 18 M. Seance, the Washington agent of the Credit Industriel, notified the President of the committee of French bondholders as follows:

I must suppose you think in order to render the grounds for American intervention more evident and to justify the dominant attitude of the United States Government in the Pacific question, I have thought it right and proper to inform your excellency Mr. Evarts, that the agency for guano and nitrate in the United States should be placed under the patronage of a first-class American house.

A few months afterward, in August, 1881, the following agreement was executed in Paris:

Memorandum of a contract entered into this twenty-second day of August, 1881, between Pedro, Louis & Henri Gautreau of Paris, France, and Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. of New York and Messrs. Pedro, Louis & Henri Gautreau of Paris, France.

Whereas, the said Messrs. Gautreau did, on the 20th day of January, 1880, enter into an agreement and contract with the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, by which they were appointed the concessionaires of said Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, or its assigns, for the sale of the guano and nitrates, specific rights, privileges and authority had been granted and ceded to and conferred upon the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial by the Peruvian Government under agreements and contracts entered into on the 7th day of January, 1880, and the 1st and 8th days of February, 1881, and which said rights, concessions, and authority were subsequently assigned, transferred, and set over to the Compagnie Financiere et Commercial du Pacifique on the 11th day of February, 1881, by the said Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, therefore, it is agreed by the said Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. and Messrs. Gautreau:

First—That the said Messrs. Gautreau, under the powers and authority granted to and vested in them by the agreements and contracts hereinbefore mentioned, do appoint Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. the sole agents in the United States of America for the sale of the guano and nitrates which constitute the objects of the contracts aforesaid of the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial and the Compagnie Financiere et Commercial du Pacifique, and in consideration of these services, to be rendered as said agents as aforesaid, Messrs. Gautreau, for themselves and as the representatives of the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial and the Compagnie Financiere et Commercial du Pacifique, agree to allow, pay, and cause to be paid to Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. a commission of five per cent. (5 lots on the gross sales of the guano and nitrates, the same to be paid by the purchasers of said guano.

Second.—In case, for any cause whatever, the contracts aforesaid between Messrs. Gautreau and the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial shall cease to exist, then, and in such case, this agreement will become void.

Third.—The guano and nitrates will be shipped direct to Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. by Messrs. Gautreau at such times and to such ports of delivery as Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. shall require and direct, and in such quantities as the market shall demand, the same to be a matter of mutual understanding between the same; but said Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. shall always be able to require Messrs. Gautreau to deliver an equal quantity to the amount sold the preceding year; *provided*, that there shall not be in store the said quantity unsold, and that the directions for the delivery shall be made so that the shipments shall not arrive in the United States over six months in advance of the period of sale. Messrs. Gautreau, however, not being responsible to Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. in case of non-delivery, unless the same shall be due to laches on the part of Messrs. Gautreau. The guano and nitrates will be delivered to Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. at sea side of the vessels at the designated port of delivery free from all charges and expenses, including tare of bags, the same in every instance being delivered by Messrs. Gautreau, and all subsequent charges and expenses of handling and warehousing, if Messrs. Gautreau shall so require, shall be advanced by Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. who shall remember thereon, as advances, with interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, out of the proceeds of the sales when made of each distinct account sale.

Fourth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will act under the direction and instruction of Messrs. Gautreau, who reserve to themselves the authority to fix and name the prices, wholesale and retail, at which Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. shall have power of authority to sell the guano and nitrate. It is understood, however, that in case no instructions are given and received, then Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. are authorized to act on their own judgment, and for the best interests of all concerned. All sales are to be for cash, at least so far as Messrs. Gautreau are interested; but if Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. for any purpose believe it to be wise to sell on time credit, they are at liberty to such sales, however, being at the sole risk of Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co., and the considerations previously agreed and fixed shall in every instance be credited to and accounted for to Messrs. Gautreau, and to be based upon and the time shall have matured for the payment of such time sales; *provided, however*, that no sales on time shall be at a longer credit than ninety days.

Fifth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will make out and forward to Messrs. Gautreau every three months a quarterly settlement and amount of all transactions; they shall remit upon the sales being effected as moneys collected, payable to Messrs. Gautreau by virtue of the contract by first-class bills or drafts on Paris or London; the necessary charges, or benefits that may accrue in the negotiation of these bills or drafts shall be for the account of Messrs. Gautreau. Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will further furnish to Messrs. Gautreau every fortnight the necessary data to enable them to make a fortnightly statement of the guano and nitrates received, sold, or in store during such period, together with the names of the purchaser or purchasers and the amount purchased, as they are bound to make, to the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, or its assigns, by their contract of the 20th day of January, 1880.

Sixth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. agree to use their best efforts to prevent the guano and nitrates from being adulterated, and that during the existence of this contract and agreement they will not become interested in any article or articles that may in any manner compete with the guano or nitrate that shall be consigned thereto.

Seventh—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will account to Messrs. Gautreau for interest and moneys that may be realized or paid under charter parties on outward cargoes from the vessels which have brought the guano and nitrates to the United States.

Eighth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will endeavor to obtain, from the owners of vessels they engage, all other commissions or sums of money stipulated by the charter parties or otherwise due by the vessels. It is further understood and agreed that if it should be deemed advantageous by the Compagnie Financiere et Commercial du Pacifique in any manner, or in any manner proper, the guano and nitrates for sale by Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. shall be the only parties who may be authorized to so mix and manipulate or prepare guano and nitrates for sale in the United States, under regulations to be fixed and determined by Messrs. Gautreau and Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co.

Done in duplicate in Paris on the 27th day of August, 1881, and in New York.

I approve the above by written authority of Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. hereto attached, by which I am directed to execute the same on their behalf. ROBERT E. RANDALL.

MEMORANDUM.—To the contract for the sale of the guano and nitrates entered into on the 27th day of August, 1881, between Messrs. Pedro, Louis & Henri Gautreau of Paris, and Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. of New York, it is further declared and stipulated that the said contract shall continue in full force and effect for the period [illegible] of the contracts entered into on the 7th day of January, 1880, and the 1st and 8th days of February, 1881, between the Peruvian Government and the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, [illegible] *to pledge the revenues and expects [illegible] to pledge herein, conditions and clauses.* Morton, Bliss & Co. shall come and begin at the expiration of six years from the date of said contract. It is understood that in case the contracts aforesaid of the 7th of January, 1880, and the 1st and 8th of February, 1881, shall be modified or altered with the consent of the Compagnie Financiere et Commercial du Pacifique, now substituted in place and stead of the Societé Générale de Credit Industriel et Commercial, such modifications and alterations shall in no manner affect or invalidate the contract between the parties, dated the [illegible]

It is furthermore expressly and formally declared that the two contracts, signed and executed simultaneously with the above and contract, dated this day, for the consignment and sale in the United States of the guano and nitrates, shall be held to form an integral part of said contract, and that all stipulations contained in said contract or agreements shall be considered in their totality as belonging to one single contract.

Done at Paris on the 27th day of August, 1881, and at New York on the [illegible]

Approved of the above by the written authority of Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co., hereto attached, by which I am directed to execute the same in their behalf. ROBERT E. RANDALL.

MRS. SPRAGUE'S DIVORCE.

The Scandals Stricken from the Record—Custody of the Children.

PROVIDENCE, Feb. 21.—The counsel in the Sprague divorce cases did not get to work today until 4 o'clock P. M., owing to the unavoidable absence of Mr. Clarke. All the attorneys were present and participated in the proceedings except Messrs. Sayles and Parkhurst. There was a half hour's consultation in the jury room before the party came into court. Gov. Sprague was accompanied by Willie, who has grown to be quite a man, and is the exact likeness of his father.

Mr. Britton announced that Mr. Sprague's counsel were ready to proceed.

Mr. Clarke said he was instructed, on behalf of Gov. Sprague, to withdraw the latter's cross bill for divorce. Judge Potter at once entered upon the records the withdrawal of the petition. Then Mr. Britton said:

"In view of the very just suggestion made by the Court, we ask leave to amend so to strike out and expunge from the original petition filed by Mrs. Sprague all accusations of criminality contained therein."

Judge Hoadley, at the suggestion of the Court, took a pen and carefully struck out all of the sensational and scandalous matters.

Then the formal proof of marriage, desertion, and non-support was put in. Mr. Britton submitted the marriage certificate, which was dated at Providence, Nov. 12, 1868, and signed by the Right Rev. Thomas M. Clark, D. D., Bishop of the diocese of Rhode Island. To conform to the requirements of the law, two witnesses were sworn and gave evidence that the Governor had deserted and failed to provide for the support of his wife. Where was no cross examination of these witnesses, no evidence was submitted by the defence, and Mr. Britton rested his case.

Judge Hoadley informed the Court that the Governor wished to retain his son, and Mrs. Sprague the three daughters, and said that the wife would like to have the option of resuming her maiden name.

Judge Potter said that in matters of this kind he always hesitated, especially when there were children.

Judge Hoadley added that perhaps Mrs. Sprague might not desire to resume her maiden name. As a matter of fact, he had not talked with her on that subject. She did, however, desire to reserve the right to apply for alimony until now. Sprague had spoken of his property as worth $1,000,000 only. On this the Court adjourned, took the papers in the case, and will enter a formal decree in a day or two. After the decree, his counsel, and his wife's attorneys had signed articles of agreement, the nature of which was kept private, but which provided for arrangements for the removal of the personal effects of Mrs. Sprague and her children from Narragansett Pier, the Governor and his boy set out for Canonchet.

ARION'S GALA NIGHT.

A Great Crowd at the Annual Masquerade in Madison Square Garden.

An outlay of some $60,000 prepared Madison Square Garden for the masquerade ball of the Arion Society, which took place last night. Across the Fourth avenue end of the interior was a large picture representing the starry heavens, introducing in the canopy portraits of many faces familiar to the society. On the earth the President of the society was seen flying with evident intent to reach the North Pole, near which was "Beringer's Strait." Surrounding the base of the dome of the garden was a series of rectangular pictures representing different quarters of the globe, alternating with clusters of bags, the same in every instance being displayed by Messrs. Gautreau, and all subsequent charges and expenses of handling and warehousing, if Messrs. Gautreau shall so require, shall be advanced by Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. who shall remember thereon, as advances, with interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, out of the proceeds of the sales when made of each distinct account sale.

Fourth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. will act under the direction and instruction of Messrs. Gautreau, who reserve to themselves the authority to fix and name the prices, wholesale and retail, at which Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. shall have power of authority to sell the guano and nitrate. It is understood, however, that in case no instructions are given and received, then Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. are authorized to act on their own judgment, and for the best interests of all concerned. All sales are to be for cash, at least so far as Messrs. Gautreau are interested; but if Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. for any purpose believe it to be wise to sell on time credit, they are at liberty to such sales, however, being at the sole risk of Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co., and the considerations previously agreed and fixed shall in every instance be credited to and accounted for to Messrs. Gautreau, and to be based upon and the time shall have matured for the payment of such time sales; *provided, however*, that no sales on time shall be at a longer credit than ninety days.

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Sixth—Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co. agree to use their best efforts to prevent the guano and nitrates from being adulterated, and that during the existence of this contract and agreement they will not become interested in any article or articles that may in any manner compete with the guano or nitrate that shall be consigned thereto.

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RIVERS NEVER SO SWOLLEN.

GALES AND COLD WEATHER FOLLOWING THE WESTERN FLOODS.

Railroads Disabled and Wires Down—Helena Half Under Water—Plantations Submerged and Stock Drowned—The Losses

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 21.—The weather turned very cold about 2 o'clock this morning. The river has risen over five feet since last evening, and is now 27½ feet high, a total rise since Sunday of about 17 feet. The rise is much slower now, and the water will probably begin to fall by to-morrow. The only train from Chicago this morning arrived over the Vandalia road, and the only eastern train came in by the same line. The incoming trains on all the other roads were either abandoned or have been indefinitely delayed. The Chicago and Alton, Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, and the Indianapolis and St. Louis trains are stopped at Wood River, about twenty miles from here, and have washouts, bad bridges, or overflowed tracks at various other places. The Vandalia and Louisville and Nashville tracks are flooded at Silver Creek and other places. The Wabash eastern division has trouble beyond Alton, and the Western division has bad land slides between here and the Missouri River. At St. Charles, on the Missouri Pacific, there are several land slides within fifty miles of the city, and considerable of the track is overflowed. The Keokuk and St. Louis road is also under water in several places. The Iron Mountain road, besides the land slide reported last night, has an extensive washout about sixteen miles below the city. The St. Louis and San Francisco has suffered no serious damage, and trains have not been stopped. The rise in the river here is said to be unprecedented. No such amount of water was ever known to come down so suddenly. The rainfall amounted to within 17-100 of an inch of as much as the average fall for the entire winter for the past twenty-five years. The telegraph lines west of here are still prostrated.

LAWRENCEBURG, Feb. 21.—This city is entirely surrounded by water. All communication with neighboring towns and cities is cut off, except by way of water. The Ohio and Mississippi railroad track has been washed out for nearly a quarter of a mile between here and the Miami River. Several hundred people, driven from their homes, have flocked to the Court House for shelter.

CINCINNATI, Feb. 21.—The Ohio River is now here 1 foot 1 inch. It has been since the great flood of 1847. At 11 o'clock this morning it was fifty-eight feet six inches, and rising half an inch an hour. High winds prevailed this morning, and colder weather, with light snow. This will check the rise, though not immediately. The track of the Ohio and Mississippi railroad has been abandoned, owing to injury to the West street bridge. All freight business is practically suspended. The wind this morning blew down many of the telegraph lines. All of the coal yards are submerged, and are obliged to suspend business.

BATAVIA JUNCTION, Ohio, Feb. 21.—The bridges and trestles on the main line of the Cincinnati and Eastern Railroad are safe. The water is over the track about two feet deep on the "fill" between Batavia Junction and Newton, making it necessary for passengers to walk from Newton Station, on the Little Miami road, to Newton by wagons. Several places in the track on the Ohio River branch are under water, and all trains will be abandoned on the branch until the river falls.

MEMPHIS, Feb. 21.—The river is rising rapidly. The lower part of the town is flooded, and it is feared the principal business streets will be under water before many hours.

CHICAGO, Feb. 21.—The weather has grown much colder and snow has been falling since midnight. The rise in the lake and river navigation in all directions is seriously interfered with, or entirely cut off. Private despatches from Rock Island say that a part of the great Government bridge there, a solid stone and iron structure, was blown down the night before. Advices from Vandalia say the Okaw River has overflowed its banks, and the bottom lands, comprising an area of some three or four square miles, is one vast sheet of water. A large amount of live stock and immense quantities of lumber have been washed away. At Carrsville, Ill., it has rained for forty-eight hours. All the trains have been abandoned. Bridges and houses have been swept away, and great damage has been done to farms.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Feb. 21.—The Ohio River at this point is higher than it has been since 1847. It resembles a great lake here now, the entire territory covering the falls being submerged, making a three-mile width of water. The wind has been blowing a terrible gale all day, and navigation is entirely suspended. The fleet has submerged all the upper and lower part of Louisville on the river front. All the large manufacturing establishments and the distilleries have been compelled to stop work. In the direct front of the city from Second to Tenth street the water has reached the second stories of the business and dwelling houses. Hundreds of families have been forced to abandon their homes and in many cases leave their furniture behind. A dozen frame houses are being tossed around in the eddy opposite the city by the wind. Skiffs and small flatboats have been all day removing families to places of safety. Several brick houses have caved in, and on Fourth street, 100 feet from Main, this evening one of them injured several persons in its fall. The river now is 26 feet 6 inches, and it is feared it will be falling by morning. The reports from below are distressing. All of the bottom lands are submerged, miles of fencing and hundreds of our houses have floated away, and crops are ruined. Despatches say that all that part of Crittenden county, Ky., between the Ohio and Cumberland rivers, is one vast sea, the farmers living on the river is covered with water and that its crotton crop is destroyed. In New Albany the water has reached the business part of the town. Depauw's glass works has shut down, and the water will do it great damage. The extensive ship yards at Jeffersonville are also submerged. In many places the railroads are submerged, and to-night all trains are from three to twenty hours late.

JACKSON, Miss., Feb. 21.—At a meeting of the Senators and Representatives from the river district held this evening in the office of Gov. Lowry active measures were taken for the relief of the sufferers from the flood. The Legislature will be requested to make appropriations. The Governor was requested to solicit the aid of the Chambers of Commerce of New Orleans, Memphis, and St. Louis in relieving the sufferers. Steps will be taken to call further assistance from the Senators and Representatives in Congress.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Feb. 21.—A despatch from Helena says the river has been at a stand for the past twenty-four hours. The water in the city continues to rise, and it is now over knee high in Main street at the Presbyterian church. All the mills and works-shops in the lower part of the city have suspended operations, and many laborers are thrown out of employment. A few more days of such distress will leave many in actual want. The only means of communication between Main street and West Helena is by skiffs. Business is at a standstill. There are no mercantile transactions, except for actual necessaries of life.

At many points between Memphis and Vicksburg the river is twelve inches higher than was ever known before. This is accounted for by the fact that the Mississippi River has overflowed its banks above Osceola, Ark., ninety miles up the river, and a large volume of water pours through that country into the bayous of St. Francis River, and again finds its way back into the main stream fifteen miles above Helena, Ark., where the St. Francis River empties into the Mississippi. Every plantation between Memphis and Friar's Point, Miss., is submerged, and the water extends back from the river shore fifteen miles. The planters are enduring great hardship from the loss of mules, cattle, hogs, and sheep by drowning. In nearly all the overflowed sections stock is suffering. What were saved are kept huddled together on hastily-built platforms.

LITTLE ROCK, Feb. 21.—A special from Helena states: "The disaster caused by the break in the levee at Williamson's place has prevented communication with the outside world to a considerable extent. The Iron Mountain Railroad track was submerged and the telegraph lines were stolen last Thursday night. The levee has been temporarily rebuilt. The entire lower portion of the city and the main street at the corner of Market and Ferry streets are under water, and the only communication with West Helena is by skiffs. In the bottoms contiguous to the Mississippi River thousands of horses, mules, and cattle have been drowned, miles of fences swept away, houses destroyed, and corn cribs floated off with their contents, in many instances leaving the people without actual necessaries.

SHREVEPORT, Feb. 21.—A heavy wind and rain storm passed over this city to-day, causing much damage. Trees and fences were carried away. Reports from all directions are that the rivers and bayous are rapidly rising. The river here is higher than it has been for years.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21.—The chief signal officer furnishes the following special river bulletin:

The Ohio River is above the danger line at Cincinnati 8 feet 11 inches, with 1 foot 3 inches rise since yesterday morning; at Louisville 6 feet 6 inches, with 32 inches rise. The Mississippi is above the danger line at Cairo 4 feet 4 inches, with 5 inches rise; at Memphis 11 inches and stationary; at Vicksburg 4 feet 3 inches.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Feb. 21.—A heavy snow storm prevailed yesterday and last night, the first of the winter. Interruption of trains by drifting snow is anticipated.

OTTAWA, Feb. 21.—A severe northeast blizzard passed over the city to-day, and about a foot of snow has fallen. The drifts in the great country roads are almost impassable.

BUFFALO, Feb. 21.—A severe storm of wind and rain visited this section this morning. The skylight of the New York Central depot here was lifted by the wind, and about 200 large panes of glass, each three-sixteenths of an inch thick, and a number of sashes were destroyed.

POUGHKEEPSIE, Feb. 21.—A storm of sleet, hail, and rain prevailed along the Hudson River to-day, and to-night a snow storm has set in. The telegraph poles between Boston Corners and Millerton have been prostrated by the wind and the load of ice. The wires here are heavily coated with ice.

HARVARD GRADUATES AT DINNER.

Two Hundred at Delmonico's Tables—A Sonnet by Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The Harvard Club of New York city had a merry sixteenth annual dinner last evening in Delmonico's large hall. Two hundred members and a few invited guests spent two hours over ten courses, with five kinds of wine, and then were called to order by the President, Francis M. Weld, to hear the speeches. The hum of reminiscent and other conversation ceased, and all turned an attentive gaze through the blue tobacco smoke toward the high table. Mr. Weld quoted in his brief address some rules in force at Harvard in 1798, imposing a fine of two cents for tardiness at morning prayers, and three for entire absence; thirty-three cents for neglecting Sunday services, eleven cents for being out after 9 o'clock at night, $1 for profane swearing, and $1 for gambling. He closed by imposing the fine of 33 cents on President Elliot, who had written that he could not come to the dinner. He read a letter from the poet Whittier, who regretted inability to be there, and added that, while it was his misfortune to be a graduate from no college, he gave all honor to the one which had conferred a degree upon him. Speeches followed. Dr. Bowditch praised the Medical School, and tersely presented its claims for further endowment, so as to enable it to reduce the enormous fees, nearly equal to tuition given anywhere in America. Mr. William M. Fuller, speaking for Yale, gave a humorous and picturesque description of the Yale-Harvard boat races on Lake Quinsigamond. The Hon. John C. Rogers said that Harvard had somehow managed to impress upon her graduates that there is such a thing as progress, and that the lesson had affected the religion, politics, and business of the country. The Hon. John O. Sargent, one of the Overseers, spoke of Harvard as prosperous, yet always with extra exceeding its resources. Judge Granville P. Hawes said, funnily, that a Harvard graduate was the most modest of human beings, and, seriously, that Harvard stood alone in this country as a model university. Mr. Leverett Saltonstall remarked, as an overseer, he was sometimes in doubt about his duty at home, but here in New York it clearly was to say that Harvard necessities still demanded more money.

Songs were sung by Mr. A. A. Hayes, Jr., Mr. Henry Lee Higginson, and Mr. Nathaniel Smith, with hearty choruses by the whole company, which also joined in "Fair Harvard" with a yum that made it heard out in Broadway and Fifth avenue.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes sent a letter enclosing a sonnet, which, he said, expressed the feeling that, "besides the roof which shelters us, we have need of some wider home, where we can meet and find ourselves in a more extended circle of sympathies than the narrow ring of the family; and why should we not utterly forget our earthly pilgrimage and its companions." The sonnet was as follows:

Yes, home is sweet! and yet we needs must sigh,
Restless until our longing souls have found
Some realm beyond the fireside's narrow bound
Where slippered ease and simple comfort lie—
Some fair ideal form that cannot die
By age disunited and its charms unwound,
Else life's sweet web is woven in a weak and faulty round
And the low ceiling hides the lofty sky.
Ah, then to thee our truant hearts return,
Dear Mother, that art ever young and fair!
Thy sacred walls a larger home are find,
And still for thee the wandering children yearn
While with undying fires thine altars burn
Where all our holiest memories rest enshrined.

BRADLAUGH TAKES THE OATH.

He Tries to Take his Seat, Too—The House to Sleep on its Outraged Dignity.

LONDON, Feb. 21.—In the House of Commons to-day Mr. Labouchere (Liberal) member for Northampton, moved that a new writ be issued for an election in Mr. Bradlaugh's constituency, as the latter was disqualified by a resolution of the House. This motion was supposed to be an attempt to draw a declaration from the Government in favor of Mr. Bradlaugh. Lord Randolph Churchill (Conservative) moved an amendment that Mr. Bradlaugh was "legally disqualified." The Attorney-General advised the House to vote neither for the motion nor for the amendment; but, as Mr. Gladstone had already advised, to permit Mr. Bradlaugh to swear, subject to subsequent legal liabilities. Both the motion and the amendment were rejected, the former by a vote of 307 to 18.

Mr. Bradlaugh then walked up to the table, took the oath, signed it without waiting for the clerk, and declared that now, having taken the oath, he would take his seat.

The Speaker told him to withdraw below the bar.

Mr. Bradlaugh said he would obey, but would claim his seat.

When Mr. Bradlaugh reached the table to take the oath he produced a Testament from his own pocket. Obeying the Speaker's injunction, Mr. Bradlaugh withdrew below the bar, and then readvanced and took a seat. When the Speaker again ordered him to withdraw and to remain below the bar he retired under the gallery.

Lord Randolph Churchill moved that a writ for a new election be issued, Mr. Bradlaugh having, by his action, vacated his seat.

Mr. Gladstone moved an adjournment of the debate until to-morrow to enable the question to be discussed calmly. The members of the opposition agreed, but expressed hope that the Government would be prepared to propose something to vindicate the outraged dignity of the House.

Chasing Out the Austrian Garrison.

LONDON, Feb. 21.—The *Manchester Guardian's* correspondent at Ragusa says: "The Herzegovinians, after a four days' siege, have captured fort Veriskolna, commanding a defile of the Upper Drina, between Foutcha and Gorazza. The Austrian battalion forming the garrison were pursued, with loss, to Gorazza. Two cannon were captured. The whole population on the Upper Drina has joined the insurrection. Foutcha is surrounded by three insurgent divisions, and the commandant of the place is treating for its surrender."

The foregoing despatch is the most recent account of affairs. The Austrians maintain a strictly defensive attitude in Herzegovina, but are strenuously preparing a concentric movement against the insurgents, with more than one thousand men. Meanwhile the American commander has left Ragusa to lead the operations.

VIENNA, Feb. 21.—A band of insurgents or robbers attacked Molina on Friday, Feb. 17, and some houses burned and burned a number of houses. During the fighting ten women and six children were killed. Ultimately the villagers defeated the assailants.

Must Skobeleff Go?

LONDON, Feb. 21.—A Berlin despatch to the *St. James' Gazette* this evening says it is understood that the Czar will be immoderately requested either to retire Skobeleff or to dismiss him.

BERLIN, Feb. 21.—The *Cross Zeitung* says: "The enormous condemnation which has Skobeleff's harangue has called forth in Germany a call to have the world with the Russian Government." The *National Zeitung* believes that Germany and Austria will certainly take official steps in the matter.

ST. PETERSBURG, Feb. 21.—The *Journal de St. Petersbourg* directs attention to the circular issued on the occasion of the present Czar's accession to the throne, and it reminds the public that Russian policy will remain true to the historical traditions and inviolable and adapted to securing the tranquillity and development of the material and economical condition of the country.

PARIS, Feb. 21.—The *Inflexible* publishes a telegram from Cettinje stating that a Montenegrin chief is expected at Prince Nikita's court, and adds that it is said it is current that Gen. Skobeleff has to-day agreed notice of his impending visit to Cettinje.

Ex-Confederates at Dinner.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 21.—The annual banquet of the Society of the Army and Navy of the Confederate states in Maryland took place to-night at the Eutaw House. Among the guests were Gens. W. H. F. Lee, Hooker of Mississippi, Lilly of Virginia, and Williams McComb of Virginia; Senator Gordon of Mississippi, the Hon. J. W. Jones, Secretary of the Southern Historical Society, and the Rev. John Lansdrent of Virginia. Gen. Bradley T. Johnson presided, assisted by Gens. Isaac R. Trimble and James R. Corbett.

RAILROAD LEGISLATION.

MACVEAGH'S ARGUMENT AGAINST THE REAGAN BILL.

The Railroad Side of the Question Put Before the House Commerce Committee in Behalf of the Pennsylvania Railroad Co.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21.—Ex-Attorney-General MacVeagh appeared to-day before the House Commerce Committee, as counsel for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, in opposition to the bill to regulate inter-State commerce. There was a full meeting of the committee, and MacVeagh, seated at the end of the long committee table, talked vigorously and effectively for an hour and a half. His argument was very able and adroit, and however much any of the members of the committee may have differed with him, all were evidently impressed by the way he put the railroad side of the question. MacVeagh was particularly emphatic on one point, viz., that the proposed legislation would be vicious because of its centralizing features. It was calling on the Government to exercise an enormous power, which would result in vastly increasing the strength of the centralizing forces. He held that the principles of the Reagan bill were repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution. Reverting to the practical effect of the proposed legislation, he asked that the citizens of no part of the Union could justly deny that during the past twelve months their products had been carried to the seaboard at rates below a fair compensation to the railroads. The railway question had two different aspects. Railways were, first, common carriers, and, second, commercial undertakings. These two classes of duties should be considered together. It was misleading to speak of railways as monopolies. Neither Congress nor the States give them exclusive privileges. The Government does not restrict competition, and competition is sharper and bitterer among the railroads than perhaps in any other business. Addressing the committee, he said: You spend our money and yours in improving the Mississippi River, and take wheat from us which we would be glad to carry." Other waterways were added by the Government and the railway mileage in transportation facilities had been so largely increased that they more than supplied the demand, and low rates were the result. MacVeagh claimed that the mass of the people do not desire radical legislation bearing on the railroad system. Practical business men, he said, would laugh in your faces if you told them you were spending your days and nights in attempting to frame legislation to protect inter-State commerce from the rapacity of railway stockholders." While he admitted that secret drawbacks were totally indefensible, he said it would be unjustifiable for Congress to attempt to strike down all drawbacks and special rates on inter-State traffic. He claimed that by means of drawbacks or special rates railroads were often able to get through traffic which enabled them to retrieve the lost traffic. He urged the committee to recognize the fact that no law could compel competing lines from striving to get a fair share of inter-State commerce. As to the pooling system, he argued that Congress should encourage pooling rather than prohibit it, as was proposed by the Reagan bill. He asserted that to force the railroads into unrestricted competition and to prohibit pooling would inevitably hasten to what was now going on, viz., the consolidation of railroads, a result which would be the end worst to disadvantage of the people. He claimed that pooling had become a necessity of the separate existence of the leading roads of the country. MacVeagh will conclude his argument to-morrow. The other side of the question will be heard on Thursday, when the Chicago, the New York Board of Trade and Transportation and other commercial bodies will appear before the committee.

Stolzer and Balzer.

PITTSBURGH, Feb. 21.—Living on Charlotte street, Lawrenceville, one door above Thirty-fourth street, in a two story dwelling house, were two families, one named Stolzer, the other Balzer, each consisting of husband and wife and two children. Stolzer, down stairs, was a stout, able-bodied man of 30, and worked at Carnes' mill as a rougher. Balzer, up stairs, was 30, and worked at the same mill as a helper. The mills are within a mile of the house. Last night Balzer, in a drunken fit, got out of bed, crawled down stairs, blackened some of the wires, and was instantly killed. The exact manner of his death is not known, but it is believed he had been carrying his body home knocked at the door of his house. Mrs. Stolzer, hearing the knock, went to the door to see who was there, and, as she thought, the lifeless form of her husband fell into her arms. She at once ran to awaken her husband and tell him. He was dead of heart disease.

Mardi-Gras Pageants.

NEW ORLEANS, La., Feb. 21.—The weather was clear and cool to-day, and many Mardi-Gras masks were in the streets. The pageants made a procession over two miles long. All the subjects illustrated in the fifty floats were of a comic character. The subject of the Rex pageant was the Pursuit of Pleasure. First came Rex, mounted on a large elephant, representing Pleasure. Then came the Knights of Momus, the Prince Rex, Fleurs, Fun, Puck, and Bacchantes. Then came another cavalcade, the characters representing certain games and diversions, such as dice, billiards, croquet, cards, and so on. That of Lord Illinois was also brought up the rear. The Proteus Phoenix Phallows presented a modern scene, illustrating the public holidays, Washington's birthday, Mardi-Gras, and others, in Japanese dress, mounted and in carriages, and the Independent Order of the Moon, which had sixteen cars, illustrating popular ballads.

Father Leeming Playing Othello in Boston.

BOSTON, Feb. 21.—An actor billed at the Gaiety Theatre for a week's engagement under the name of Sydney Clifford turns out to be the Rev. Father Leeming of Australia, who has been lecturing through New England for a few months in aid, as he says, of his parish in the antipodes. His freak has excited among the Catholic clergy of the diocese some doubt of the genuineness of his pretensions, but his credentials to Archbishop Williams are in the form of a letter from Cardinal Cullen, which, however, he did not present. His lectures have been frequently celebrated masses and preached at St. Joseph's church. As a lecturer he is said to be very eloquent, and his audiences have been large. He appeared last evening as Othello, and the critics are inclined to include his conception of the character, later in the week he will appear as Iago.