

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 1898.

Amusements Today. Academy of Music-The Taming of the Shrew. 17. M. Opera House-Booth's Taming of the Shrew. 17. M. Grand Opera House-Mary's Victory. 17. M. Grand Opera House-Mary's Victory. 17. M. Grand Opera House-Mary's Victory. 17. M.

Subscription by Mail-Post Paid. DAILY, Per Month..... \$2.00 DAILY, Per Year..... \$20.00 SUNDAY, Per Year..... 1.50 DAILY AND SUNDAY, Per Year..... 7.50 WEEKLY, Per Year..... 118 SUN. N.Y. City.

The Civil Service Law.

Mr. SHERK of Ohio has introduced into the House of Representatives a bill for the repeal of the Civil Service Law. Of course there is no prospect of passing such a bill while the Republicans have the Senate. It is their cue to be, formally at least, passionate lovers of civil service reform as long as it is and the so-called "split" of it can be made useful in keeping Democrats out of office, and in bothering the Democratic party. Moreover, there are Democrats who, while by no means sharing in the President's zeal for civil service reform, would deem it wise to take such a radical course as is proposed by Mr. SHERK. As a repeal, however desirable in itself and however consonant with the wishes of the majority of the Democracy, is clearly impracticable, the best thing to do is to propose such alterations in the existing act as may make it more tolerable and in some degree practical. Doubtless the Republicans will oppose any changes looking to those ends, but it can do no harm to discuss the matter and to expose the glaring faults of the present civil service rules.

Mr. BELMONT of this State has, it is announced, prepared a bill providing for an examination into the workings of that law, and an inquiry as to what changes, if any, are needed in it. Such an inquiry and examination would show that most of the men appointed under the Civil Service law and rules were Republicans; that candidates certified from the eligible list by the Commission sometimes, or often, prove unfitted for the duty required of them, or not as well qualified as other eligible men whose standing in the examination was lower; that many of the examination papers are silly and the responses are equally so; that the Select Commission on Reform in the Civil Service is required to establish these facts, and the last one in particular is obvious to anybody who gets hold of a batch of the examination papers; but it may be useful to bring the whole story out before the country. A change, and a radical change, in the character of the examinations is necessary, and the whole list of the men who pass should be certified up by the Commissioners. The latter change would do something to remove the restrictions imposed at present by the rules upon the choice of the appointing power. It may often happen that candidates at the foot of the list may, through special aptitude or experience, unaccompanied with the art of passing examinations, be really better qualified than the candidates at the top. An attempt to bring about this change is worth making. A thorough exposition of the character of the examination and of the desirability of extending the eligible list would doubtless induce the President to direct the Commissioners to make the changes requisite.

We do not believe in civil service reform by means of competitive examinations, but until the plan is abandoned it is the duty of Democrats to try and do the best they can with it. Governor HILL has indicated some of its present requisites. "The examinations, whenever necessary, should be fair and impartial, entirely practical in their character, and relate solely to the duties of the position to be filled; superior merit should be the only ground of selection, and a sufficient number of names of eligible persons—possibly the entire list—should be certified to an appointing officer, to allow a reasonable discretion in selection."

Much Ado About Nothing. Since the collapse of the farcical speculation launched under the GRANT Administration by "Colonel" STEINBERGER, the Samoan Islands had for some years dropped out of sight. They would still sleep unheeded but for the feverish speculation with which every naval demonstration of Germany in the South Sea is watched, since the acquisition of a part of New Guinea and the attempted seizure of the Carolines by that power. But no sooner has the Captain of a German cruiser a bone to pick with the half-dressed potentate who brandishes a broomstick by way of sceptre at Apia, than we are deluged with pamphlets from all points of the compass, from London to Washington and from Berlin to San Francisco.

Exactly what took place at Apia we have as yet no means of knowing, seeing that the telegrams transmitted from different sources are inconsistent with one another. The British Consul at the Samoan seaport, like the British representative at Zanzibar, clearly labors under the delusion that Lord PATERNON is still master of the Foreign Office, and has not awakened to the fact that the sonorous formula, *Civis Romanus sum*, has of late been translated into German. The text of the report made by the American Consul, Mr. GREENBAUM, has not been published, but it appears, according to a curt telegram from Washington, that a German naval commander has done something to vindicate the rights of German residents at Apia. On the other hand, we have a statement from Berlin that no annexation is contemplated, "Germany having no intention of violating the neutrality agreement with England and the United States," under which the three powers jointly administer the territory, and that the German representative at Zanzibar, clearly labors under the delusion that Lord PATERNON is still master of the Foreign Office, and has not awakened to the fact that the sonorous formula, *Civis Romanus sum*, has of late been translated into German.

The Congressional Record of Saturday, Jan. 9, the Hon. JOSEPH PULTZER announces the engagement of rooms at CHAMBERLAIN'S. This important step is manifestly the result of deliberate consideration; perhaps even of political duty. No other member of Congress, either Senator or Representative, boards at CHAMBERLAIN'S. It is possible that Mr. PULTZER, with far-sighted regard to his future usefulness as a legislator, thought it best to wait until all the other members had established themselves before making his own arrangements for the winter. He thus secures quarters where he will be less subject to interruption by socially or convivially inclined colleagues, and more at liberty to devote his

the German Chancellor's promise to work as drafting matter pick up a crew of two in the South Pacific, it is difficult to see what we can do but could do about it, or why we should want to do anything. We could no more enforce a protest, single handed, than we could prevent the summary arrest of "Colonel" STEINBERGER by an English naval officer and the deportation of that grotesque adventurer to Australia. But we should hardly be disposed to take a dog-in-the-manger posture toward the German Government. The so-called King of Samoa, whose subjects are said to have accepted Christianity, but who still evinces an insurmountable objection to clothing, has already, by ceding to the United States the spacious harbor of Pago-Pago, bestowed on us the equivalent of anything that Germany can under any circumstances obtain. If we can foresee much profit in extending our commercial relations with Samoa, we shall probably have our port of Pago-Pago to fall back on. Meanwhile it is natural enough that Germany should try to retain the trivial export trade of Apia—it comprehends a little cotton and some thirty or forty ship loads of copra annually—since it was wholly built up by Hamburg merchants.

At all events, before we clear the decks and pipe to quarters by way of prelude to swooping the German flag from the Pacific, let us wait to get a little more explicit information. The English are much more deeply concerned than we are in the business, because, unlike us, they have no Samoan harbor formally made over to their separate use. It seems that Mr. BALL's home is in Cedar county, Iowa, but seven years ago he "felt it to be his duty to go down into the State of Missouri to hold Quaker meetings," and his success there was such that he afterward went on a volunteer mission to all parts of the South. During the six years he has been engaged in this work of expounding the doctrines of the Society of Friends, he has held "over 2,000 meetings in about 1,350 cities and towns, and has travelled in all about 25,000 miles, 22,000 of which were on foot," for, as he tells us, he "wished to avoid unnecessary expense, and it was his great delight to dismiss his congregations without speaking of his financial condition." As he has journeyed he has depended upon the kindness of the people for food and shelter, having had "the pleasure of being a special invited guest with over 2,000 different families, who freely bestowed their best luxuries and hospitality."

The Case of a Quaker in the South. We are very much surprised at a long letter we have received from Mr. JOSHUA BALL, a Quaker preacher, who has been travelling through the Southern States during the last six years on an evangelizing tour, for he asks our advice about a matter which should be of trifling concern to him as a consistent Christian laboring for the spread of the Gospel as he understands it. It is that Mr. BALL's home is in Cedar county, Iowa, but seven years ago he "felt it to be his duty to go down into the State of Missouri to hold Quaker meetings," and his success there was such that he afterward went on a volunteer mission to all parts of the South. During the six years he has been engaged in this work of expounding the doctrines of the Society of Friends, he has held "over 2,000 meetings in about 1,350 cities and towns, and has travelled in all about 25,000 miles, 22,000 of which were on foot," for, as he tells us, he "wished to avoid unnecessary expense, and it was his great delight to dismiss his congregations without speaking of his financial condition." As he has journeyed he has depended upon the kindness of the people for food and shelter, having had "the pleasure of being a special invited guest with over 2,000 different families, who freely bestowed their best luxuries and hospitality."

It is a matter of some interest to us, as we are concerned, his mission, as further information, has been astonishingly successful. "The curiosity to see and hear a Quaker was wonderful, and in many instances the churches, freely opened for me by nine denominations, were not half large enough to accommodate the immense multitude of people" who came out in response to his posters announcing his addresses on "The Characteristics of the Quakers," and "Honesty and Integrity from a Quaker's Standpoint."

Whether he made any converts in the South to the doctrines of the Friends Mr. BALL does not tell us, but he says that from "commingling with the Southern people so long" he has learned to regard them with great affection, and has discovered that the stories he had been accustomed to read in Republican newspapers of Iowa about their bitterness of feeling and rebellious spirit were "all malleous lies." Having had his eyes opened to the truth, he has not hesitated to write a letter to a Southern newspaper, in which he has tried to do justice to a maligned people.

All this Mr. BALL recounts at great length, and then he reaches the point at which he was driving. "I have received showers of compliments from the Southern people for my truthful statements," he says, "but hard work and incessant travel" have been the means of breaking me down, so that I feel that my pulpit work is ended; and whereas I had a plenty of good clothes when I started out, I am now in a dilapidated condition and penniless, and I do not like to tell my Southern friends that I am so destitute. I am anxious to return to my home, but dread to do so lest my neighbors condemn me for fooling away my time among rebels. If I could return home as a gentleman," he adds, "it would be all right," but he is loath to go back in his worn-out clothes and with his changed countenance Mr. BALL says, "Therefore,"

What matters it, Friend BALL, whether you go back to Iowa in old or in new clothes, or whether your neighbors approve or condemn your mission, providing you have the support of a good conscience, and know that you have done your duty as you understood it? A Quaker, and yet the vanity of the world has importance in your eyes? Do you not know that, even among the ungodly, a man's dress does not determine whether he is a gentleman or not, and did not CHRIST command His disciples to take no thought as to their raiment? If you have been cared for in the South for six years, will you now be left to suffer, unless you have forfeited the confidence of those you are among?

If your Iowa neighbors are so utterly wrong concerning the South, and entertain feelings of enmity toward the Southern people, why do you propose to give me counsel as to what is right for me to do? What matters it, Friend BALL, whether you go back to Iowa in old or in new clothes, or whether your neighbors approve or condemn your mission, providing you have the support of a good conscience, and know that you have done your duty as you understood it? A Quaker, and yet the vanity of the world has importance in your eyes? Do you not know that, even among the ungodly, a man's dress does not determine whether he is a gentleman or not, and did not CHRIST command His disciples to take no thought as to their raiment? If you have been cared for in the South for six years, will you now be left to suffer, unless you have forfeited the confidence of those you are among?

We congratulate Mr. CORNELIUS VANDERBILT upon the good sense and business acumen disclosed in his action toward the proposed extension of the Erie Canal to the railroad. It was a humane and reasonable concession, and an example which we commend to other large employers of labor in this neighborhood. From the formation of the Government down to 1873 there had been paid to the Erie Canal, and its tributaries, a total of \$10,000,000 in interest, and this sum was largely used for the payment of the canal's debt. Yes! and down to 1873 there had also been coined \$70,248,193.59 in silver halves and quarters of full weight, and which were full legal tender, like gold coins. Besides this, under the law of Feb. 9, 1875, Spanish dollars, French crowns and their equivalents in proportion, were made legal tender, and a total of \$90,000,000 in the form of French five-franc pieces from 1871 to 1873. In 1874 the dollars of Mexico and of the South American States were also made a legal tender at their nominal value. In fact, there are plenty of people now living who remember the time when there was no gold in use, and with bank notes, the only money in circulation in this country.

With a game to the credit of each, the two great chess men, ZIEGLER and SCHNITZER, will begin the third game of their series to-day. The second contest, in which SCHNITZER was beaten by a striking example of remarkable play, was far-sighted regard to his future usefulness as a legislator, thought it best to wait until all the other members had established themselves before making his own arrangements for the winter. He thus secures quarters where he will be less subject to interruption by socially or convivially inclined colleagues, and more at liberty to devote his

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