NEWS OF THE THEATRES.

Lent has no effect in the way of diminishing theatrical audiences. On Ash Wednesday there were vacant seats even in the houses from which people were turned away on every other evening of the week, and at the other end of the penitential period Good Friday will deplete the assemblages; but between those fast days neither fashion nor religion seems to cause any appreciable abstinence from dramatic indulgence. The cessation of balls and great receptions gives time and inclination for theatre parties, which seem to be considered entirely good form this year. This is seen particularly at the theatres where our stock companies make their homes. In three of these places, the current plays command so much of modish attention that there is no probability of any change of bill before the end of the season. "Americans Abroad" at the Lyceum, "The Girl I Left Behind Me" at the Empire, and "Lady Windermere's Fan" at Palmer's are the fortunate objects of this esteem. The performances at these three houses are artistic in as high a degree as anything to be found on the stage anywhere. The fourth stock organization, at Daly's, will be employed in old comedies until its retirement about May 1. "Twelfth Night" will be presented on Tuesday in an elaborate and probably effective manner.

The season of Charles Frohman's Comedians has gained strong headway already at the Standard, where they have been helped quickly to success by "The Sportsman," which is one of the best pieces of fun in its particular field and is acted with an expertness that forces it into a triumph of laughter. A mistake was made in the choice of a short play to precede the principal one on the opening night. The humor of "The Judge and the Burglar" had set fashionable London into guffaws, but to us the teasing of the judge by the burglar was not very funny. So a change has been promptly made, and yesterday a sentimental little comedy, entitled "The Better Part," was acted prior to the repetition of "The Sportsman." The half-hour play gives a natural, engaging, and pathetic incident in the lives of two chums. It serves to introduce Frank Gilmore to America in the rôle of a young actor who sacrifices an opportunity to distinguish himself on the stage in order that the husband of a former sweetheart may prosper. "The Better Part" is a small but pleasant affair. Mr. Gilmore is likely to become important on our stage. He is a good-looking, young, romantic, and emotional actor of a scarce and desirable type. He was engaged by Daniel Frohman in London last summer for two years at the Lyceum, but the prolongation of "Americans Abroad" at that theatre renders him unavailable there, and so he has been loaned to Charles Frohman's Comedians. Another New York début in "The Better Part" is that of Evelyn Campbell, lately leading actress at the Boston Museum, from which same celebrated dramatic educational institution comes Charles Abbe, who plays the third part in the curtain raiser at the Standard. The performances of "The Sportsman" are accompanied by the almost incessant laughter of audiences of the best Broadway character, and the comedy is pretty sure to stay there for months.

Only one play in town will be new to us this week. The unknown piece is entitled "For Revenue Only," and is described by its author, Milton Nobles, as a satirical comedy, with a newspaper reporter as its hero and politics as its theme. Mr. Nobles is an actor and playwright who gained considerable popularity with "The Phœnix" and several other comedies, his playing and his plays being popular rather than particularly fine. In this present venture he has undertaken a peculiarly difficult task, for nobody has yet succeeded in putting a reporter on the stage otherwise than in false and offensive caricature, but it may be that Mr. Nobles has learned something from the failures of others that will lead him to success. He admits that he has drawn upon Mark Twain's sketch of the fighting editor and M. Quad's *Arizona Kicker* whimsicalities for his fun, and this leads to the presumption that it is far Western newspaper crudity and absurdity that he has tried to embody in "For Revenue Only."

This is the last week of some of the good things that we have had with us for protracted periods. "A Society Fad" will have its one hundredth and final repetition next Saturday night, and will then leave the Bijou stage clear for "A Mad Bargain," thus insuring a continuance of variety farce in its liveliest form at this theatre. This is the closing week of "The Fencing Master" at the Casino. The piece has served to set the J. M. Hill opera company going prosperously and to restore the Casino to its original purposes. Marie Tempest and her companions will go on a tour of the country, and their place here will be taken by the Duff company in "The Basoche," an opera which was in successful use for a long time in Paris. Preparations for the production are far advanced. "Der Vogelhaendler" will add a week to Prince's popularity at the Amberg, thus postponing to that extent the first performance of "The Child of Fortune," for which everything at the theatre is in readiness. Marian Manola and John Mason will close their extended term at Herrmann's with the week, and will use "Friend Fritz" to the end of their stay. A new quartet of singers has been engaged, and the pretty little comedy, with its musical interpolations, fills an agreeable evening. Only one week remains of "The Marriage Spectre" at the Fourteenth Street, where the Dumas play, with Mrs. Jamie Brown Potter as its heroine, will give way on Feb. 27 to "A Nutmeg Match," a rustic and realistic comedy. "The Mulligan Guards' Ball" will be superseded soon at Harrigan's by a revival of "Cordelia's Aspirations," which is now in rehearsal, but the date of the change has not been fixed upon.

The continuances in Broadway theatres are diverse and generally deserving. Eleonora Duse will act in "Francillon" to-morrow night at the Fifth Avenue, the Italian version of the Dumas play following the original French closely, and therefore not differing appreciably from the English piece now being played at the Fourteenth Street under the title of "The Marriage Spectre." The Duse arrangement for the rest of the week will give "Camille" on Wednesday, "Cavalleria Rusticana" and "La Locandiera" on Friday, and "Fedora" for the Saturday matinée. There will be a performance of "Divorcons" on Tuesday afternoon, in order that the employed actors may have an opportunity to see her, but the house will be open to everybody desiring to purchase tickets, of course. The Italian actress is maintaining fully the reputation which she established quickly and firmly on her first night before this public. She is a perfect mistress of literalism in acting. "On Probation" lasts at the Star beyond the time calculated on, the fun of the piece, and William H. Crane's interpretation of it, having taken a firm grip on the public. The 100th time of "A Trip to Chinatown" will be reached on March 10. Company C of the Seventh Regiment will go to the Madison Square to see the Hoyt farce next Tuesday. The quantity of scenery in "Ninety Days" at the Broadway is so great that during the first week one set had to be omitted, but now celerity has been attained and none of the pictorial effect as originally planned is crowded out of the exhibition. The illustration of the experiences, comic and serious, of the Americans who go to Burmah, constitutes a remarkable stage display. A dozen recruits for the ballet in "The Black Crook" are promised for this week at the Academy of Music, along with new specialties for Comedian Tollins and Sadie MacDonald, who are important contributors to the show as it goes now. The special week of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" passes into a second week at Niblo's, with its plantation scenes, its gifts of various articles to the audiences, and its bevy of girls as ushers.

Somebody writes to THE SUN asking why people should go to the Casino to-night and pay in money for the benefit of Max Freeman, "a healthy actor and stage manager always in receipt of high wages for his services." If there should be a big audience, it will consist of people expectant of their full money's worth of entertainment, we suppose, and not as a matter of charity at all. The inquirer asks further: "Why should actors contribute their services?" We don't know. That is a question between them and Mr. Freeman. They wouldn't perform for him if they didn't wish to. The volunteers include Marie Tempest, Lily Post, Laura Schirmer Mapleson, Ada Rehan, Rose Leclercq, Grace Golden, Bessie Cleveland, Agnes Sherwood, Mabel Stephenson, Ella Levy, Mrs. Pemberton Hincks, Annie Yeamans, Jennie Yeamans, Louis Harrison, J. W. Kelly, Frank Lincoln, Hubert Wilkie, Henry Bergman, William Broderick, Signor Montegriffo, A. Michelena, Signor Bologna, the Cecilian quartet, the Gregory banjo trio, the Martens trio, and an orchestra of forty. They can hardly fail to give a good entertainment. Another man of the stage with professional friends enough to give a benefit show is Edwin French, and at the Standard this evening a concert for him will have these volunteers: William Jerome, Harney Reynolds, Lizzie Derious Daly, Kitty Kelly, James Thornton, Rose and Fenton, Edwin French, Billie Mitchell, Lew Dockstader, John H. Mack, Bonnie Thornton, J. W. Kelly, Tom Browne, Harry Conor, Maggie Cline, Ike Weir, Bernard Dyllyn, Ward and Vokes, Fannie Osborne, Sam J. Ryan, James F. Hoey, Alf Hampton, and Charles V. Seamon. The Five A's Club of Actors is not an object of charity, but it has a perfect right to give an entertainment to replenish its treasury, and it will do so a week from to-night at the Star, where the novelties usually disclosed in the performances by this club will probably be enjoyed. "Pinafore" is to be performed by members of the Twenty-second Regiment's Company C Opera Club under the direction of Member E. J. Rice on Feb. 28 at the Manhattan Club Theatre. Fifty persons will be engaged in the representation, to which much social favor is likely to be accorded. Arthur Moreland has been kept in a darkened room more than a month in an almost hopeless attempt to save his eyesight, and he is without money. A performance will be given by his professional friends for his benefit at the Bijou next Sunday night.

A weekly change theatre that gets its entertainments directly from Broadway is the Harlem Opera House, where "Gloriana" will be performed to-morrow night by Henrietta Crossman, May Robson, Grace Henderson, Margaret Robinson, Edwin Stevens, Otis Harlan, and the rest of the cast which has been enforcing its rule down town. "The Major's Appointment" is included in the bill, as before. The Columbus has a dramatic illustration of Southern life in "The New South," a recent production at the Broadway, where Phebe Davies and Joseph R. Grismer gained New York attention and the play found favor for its original and engrossing depiction of current characteristics in Georgia. The Grand Opera House often gets its plays from the central theatres, too, but this week it makes a melodramatic choice of "The Diamond Breaker," which has been thrilling east side audiences of late with its episode of a man thrown into a coal breaker. Etelka Wardell is about as stirring as the diamond breaker itself, and the whole performance may be described as fetching. Jacob's audiences will doubtless take kindly to "The White Slave," one of the late Bartley Campbell's popular dramas, in which a rain storm of real water has been put as a tribute to literalism, and for which Julia Stuart has been engaged for the part of the white human chattel. Good illustration is promised in the plantation scenes. Another of Campbell's well-remembered plays, "Siberia," goes to the Windsor, where its scenes of nihilism in Russia and torture in Siberia will rouse the lower Bowery audiences. "Blue Jeans" is placed for a week at the People's, and its humorous, graphic, and at times thrilling expositions of Indiana rural life should prove potent there, especially the episode of peril and rescue in the sawmill.

There was a vogue in London, amounting almost to a mania, for the variety show, or at least for the best things done in that commonly despised part of the theatrical business. Monologue entertainers, like Chevalier, with his costermonger sketches, and violently artistic singers and dancers, like Lottie Collins, were countenanced by the aristocracy and discussed seriously in the newspapers. Actors and managers of the regular drama suffered in pride and purse from this successful competition, and ascribed to it the lack of prosperity attending their own efforts. It has be noted, however, that no really powerful play has failed in London, and so it is fair to believe that some of the drift of public regard to the variety shows was caused by a lack of good entertainment on the legitimate stage. As New York follows London in many matters, it was presumed that we would go crazy over variieties, too, and it was only when the music hall experiment at the Casino had failed that our managers got over their dread. However, the demand for variety shows is as great as ever in this city, and it has never been met by a fuller or more diverse supply. The seeker of specialties has only to discriminate in order to find just the kind that he likes and the place that is congenial to his taste. We have theatres in which variety is given with perfect decorum and with no vicious associations. In other resorts it goes along with tobacco and alcohol, and in a manner to render it something of an exploit for ladies and gentlemen to witness it. At Proctor's and Tony Pastor's a rigid censorship of the stage is maintained by the managers. Variety actors are, to a considerable extent, the originators or collectors of the fun which they indulge in, and some of them are not to be trusted for refinement. Mr. Pastor and Mr. Proctor insist upon full rehearsals of all the acts set down in their bill for the ensuing week, and everything immodest or any way offensive to good-minded people is eliminated. The contracts with performers provide that, in case of a relapse into a use of the forbidden matter, the offender may be discharged without remorse. This has been so long a rigidly enforced rule at Pastor's that the actors dare not misbehave, and it is only fair to say that most of them are glad to be polite. At the beginning of the present policy at Proctor's several comedians discovered the intention to be properly, and in each case the curtain was instantly dropped before them, shutting them out from either finishing their act or getting any opportunity to try it again. Thus it is that nobody need expect to blush at Pastor's or Proctor's. Some of the entertainment may fall below the level of artistic worth, but none of it is indecent. On the other hand, a fair proportion of each evening is filled by the doings of genuinely artistic and amusing entertainers. The bill at Pastor's retains Paquerette, the grotesque French impersonator; J. W. Kelly, whose talks are humorous in a highly original way; Frank Bush, a dialect comedian whom nobody can help laughing at; Bonnie Thornton, an engaging topical singer, and a round dozen more of well-known specialists. At Proctor's, which is a theatre of brief comedies and condensed operas, as well as of variety, this week's performers include Minnie Renwood, the Taylors, the Tickets, James McIntosh, the Big Four, Millie Clive, Valerie Bath, and a dozen others. The regular programme here is ten hours long, but on Washington's birthday it will be lengthened, the show beginning at 10 in the forenoon.

The variety show this week at the Park is of a sort that will be discountenanced by virtuous people, and for the sound reason that it will give a daring exhibition of women in real and imitation nudity. The late artist, Matt Morgan, once devised and managed a series of living statue groups, in which draperies were used but sparingly, and some of these were present plentifully. These tableaux are to be reproduced as part of the female minstrel entertainment. It is evident that there is no censor at the Park. But at the Vaudeville Club, where the performances begin late and are accompanied by some of the accidentals of revelry, Reginald de Koven is employed as a stage manager, and it is his duty to see what the actors do elsewhere before bring them to come to this particular resort. The Vaudeville gives a sunday evening show, but it consists of a little more of a conventional character, while on other nights riskier things are done.

We have two concert halls that are much like the London Alhambra in character, although not to be compared with that or several other London establishments in size or pretentiousness of auditorium, or in the production of elaborate ballets on their stages. These are the Imperial and Koster & Bial's, fabulous resorts, and quite unconventional, yet not disorderly. The entertainment in each of these places is interrupted for a few minutes for lectures, the rest of the evening being filled out with less costly matter. Instead of revising the specialties, the utmost license is given to them, and so vulgarity abounds. The doors are permitted to be quite sociable across the footlights, and their recognition of friends in the audiences, not only by winks and ogles, but often with spoken greetings, serves the purpose of entertainment for the general assemblage, and are an insult to those who pay their money for the best efforts of the persons on the stage. A Sun reporter at Koster & Bial's, a few nights ago, saw a sad example in the case of Frederick Solomon, who slighted his role in "Orpheus" in order to catch flowers thrown to him by some women in a box, to talk back to them, and to indulge in other exceedingly unpleasant exploits. The actresses took their cue from him and behaved badly. In contrast was a very good performance of "The Rehearsal," a Farnie opereta not greatly vulgarized. There are admired doings on the Koster & Bial stage along with that which is careless. This week Dorothy Denning will introduce an electric dance, in which her skirts will be illumined in a probably astonishing manner; Marinelli will continue his amazing feats of contortion; Mlle. Violette and James Thornton will show their talent in impersonations, and Stebb and Tropp, comic acrobats, will be seen. Albert Dial will start for Europe on Wednesday to engage things for next summer. At the Imperial the reporter found that a deplorable quantity of the show was graded down to a low level, and that the appeals to the taste and understanding of vicious people were frequent. Several performers directed their humor almost altogether to the comprehension and liking of social outcasts. Specialists who redeem their companions' inartistic doings at the Imperial, and who constitute the real attraction that draws crowds to the place are Eugenie Fougere and Lottie Gilson. It is true that the French woman's songs and pantomime are as reprehensible as anything that has yet been imported from the Paris café gardens, but she is so dainty in touching the filth, and she so polishes the foulness with her skill, that praise of her art cannot be withheld. Miss Gilson is contrastingly demure and modest in her manner, and she begins her songs with the innocuous ballad, "Mollie and I and the baby," but before she is done she gives a ballad descriptive of a wanton's exploit in drunkenness, depicting the inebriety with laughable mimicry, but making the judicious observer grieve. Fleurette is still a remarkable dancer at the Imperial. Ancion is a seemingly reckless trapeze performer, and in minstrelsy, music, and acrobatic feats the programme is provided liberally.

Lent is a season of lectures, and some particularly good talking will be done by experts this week. Lieut. Peary, the Arctic explorer, will describe his recent journey toward the North Pole, and illustrate it with a hundred views, at the Star this evening. George Grossmith, the London humorist, will give his monologue entertainment at Chickering Hall on Tuesday and Friday evenings and on Saturday afternoon. Very elaborately illustrated oratory will be that of Garrett P. Serviss in connection with the new series of Urania exhibitions, beginning at Music Hall a week from to-morrow. The forthcoming spectacle is entitled, "The Wonders of America," and it was shown recently at the Manhattan Opera House, but it will have the advantages of scenic elaboration at Music Hall, where the stage has been fitted out with all the necessary mechanism, so that the views of American marvels of nature will be marvels also of theatrical illusion. A novel experiment will be tried next Tuesday evening at the Berkeley Lyceum in a recital of scenes from the Greek tragedies of Æschylus and Sophocles as part of the graduating exercises of the Academy of Dramatic Arts. The pupils will also give a modern piece in the Ibsen style entitled "The Intruder."

Washington's Birthday falls on Wednesday of this week, and at some of the theatres where Wednesday matinées are not regular extra ones will be given, so that holiday seekers of theatrical amusement will find a wide range of plays from which to choose in the afternoon.

Brooklyn has at least three distinct types of plays for this week. Variety-farce of the sort that is liked by a good part of the public is at two theatres. The Bedford Avenue has "April Fool," new to Brooklyn, and Gus Williams, an old acquaintance, whose humor as a German dialect comedian is not likely to fail of its usual effect. The other variety-farce is "The Idea," which Hallen and Hart will perform at the Grand Opera House. In each of these cases the comedians are accompanied by a selected party of singers and dancers. Comic opera may be found at the Columbia, in "The Isle of Champagne," sung and acted by Thomas Q. Seabrooke and his company. A stirring and spectacular war drama, the well-known "Across the Potomac," is at the Lee Avenue, with the Pitou company not depleted or impaired. A concert will be given to-night at the Grand, with the Black Patti as the chief singer.

The museums afford interesting sights. The Eden has three new groups of wax works, representing a jolly couple at luncheon after the French masquerade ball, Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland with Baby Ruth cosily cradled, and an aged Quaker man and wife looking at a statue of Venus. The stage performances still combine music, necromancy, and Japanese feats in jugglery. The exhibits at Doris's Museum include John Pandley, shown as literally the longest-headed man alive; Krao, nicknamed the monkey girl; Rowe, likened to a pouter pigeon on account of his expanding chest; Orsino, a man with hair so strong that he can lift heavy weights with it, and a legless and armless whistler and other curiosities of humanity. The Doris theatrical show consists of drama and variety, the attraction as usual. Worth's Museum contains for the principal wonder the million-dollar gold exhibit, but other things there which confound and amaze the multitudes are King's golden castle, a man described as headless, and Prof. Worth's immense collection of inanimate objects. Duncan Ross, John L. Manning, and others provide the hourly stage entertainment for Worth, and there are performances, too, in the curiosity hall. Huber's Museum has the original and genuine Dr. Mary Walker as a lecturer on its stage. She will speak on scientific subjects, and, as a woman who has been conspicuous for many years in trousers, she should prove an interesting exhibit. Marquise, the wonderful trotting horse with a pedigree as long as his legs and tail, is still shown at Huber's, where the curiosities are numerous, and the stage is occupied by a variety and a dramatic company.

A comic opera revival expected for this week is now dated for March 2 at the Garden, when Lillian Russell and her company will appear in "Girofle-Girofla." This favorite work of Lecoq will have the advantage of Lillian Russell in its principal rôle, the music of which she is sure to sing brilliantly, while as to the acting she will have an opportunity to show what she can do. Hayden Coffin, Louis Harrison, Charles Duncan, Laura Clement, and Rose Leighton are in the cast, and it is promised that a rich presentation as to costumes and scenery will be given. In the mean time the last performances of "The Mountebanks" will not be slighted by the company, and probably not by those who have deferred their visits to the Gilbert-Cellier opera.

Edwin Booth has no thought of acting again. That the great tragedian meant to return to the stage was the utterly baseless assertion of a manager who desired him to do so. Joseph Jefferson is taking his ease in idleness. Yesterday afternoon he took a party, including Brander Matthews, Richard Watson Gilder, and Marion Crawford, to the Empire Theatre. William H. Crane says that some Wall street men have offered to build a theatre for him in upper Broadway. Henry E. Schwarz has a plan for a big theatre and roof garden at Third avenue and Fifty-eighth street, and he has started on it promisingly. Oscar Hammerstein says he has heard of nothing about the future of the Manhattan, except that it is a large and sumptuous house, which he is glad to own. Henry E. Abbey's new theatre, at Thirty-eighth street, is to be ready for an opening with Henry Irving next November. W. J. Farrelly, whose "Shadows" fared so badly with the Theatre of Arts and Letters, is a clever writer, and it is hoped that he will not abandon work for the stage. Lillian Russell sends word to THE SUN that Gilbert and Sullivan have reunited once again, and have offered to her for American use the opera in which they are collaborating. The practice of duplicating a star comedian was not considered feasible formerly, but it is done nowadays with considerable success in some instances. The experiment in that line to be tried is that of sending out Louis Aldrich to play William H. Crane's part in "The Senator." Trewey, the shadowgrapher, lost $5,000 in Panama bonds. Thomas W. Keene, the Shake-spearean tragedian, will renew his season with us on March 6, at the Union Square, and with him will be Frederick Paulding, once a star on his own account. Charles Frohman has gone away for a rest from the season's battles fought and won. Heinrich Conreid is going to Europe to hire a short season for his Amberg. At Houston, when Jeffreys Lewis reached the point in "Forget Me Not" where she searches her pocketbook in vain and says "I have no small change," a coin was thrown on the stage by a gallery boy. The incident so delayed the play for several minutes. The threatened coming of hoopskirts has already been anticipated by the skirt dancers in what they call a crinoline dance. A kind of lottery scheme for advertising an actor in the West is to number the copies of a local newspaper in red ink, and then give the chosen number receives $50 at the end of the company's stay. A manager in Rochester gives once a week to the holder of a winning coupon a railway ticket to the Chicago Fair and return with incidental expenses thrown in. The manager of a new theatre in Missouri has named each of the eighteen boxes in his house after some noted actor, and so does away with the letters usually seen. In a Montreal theatre the thunder sheet fell and nearly scalped an actor. The stage hands of a Pittsburgh theatre think they have made a record by adjusting forty-eight pieces of scenery in two minutes. The California town of San Diego was the latest to revolt against the indecent posters of a burlesque company. The advertising agent of a farce company has been scattering fake Western cities imitations of folded $10 notes, and upon opening them the finders read the playbill of the show.

WHITTLING PARTIES.

A Winter Nigh Social Recreation in Rural Pennsylvania.

SCRANTON, Feb. 18.—Whittling parties are all the rage this winter in the rural districts of northeastern Pennsylvania. They have taken the place of apple bees and other social amusements, and they are the most popular evening diversions the young men and maidens now have. The desire to become skilful with the jacknife has got to be a craze in some neighborhoods. Nearly all of the whittlers are the descendants of Yankee farmers, and therefore handle the jacknife with dexterity. The whittling contests take place in the farmhouse kitchens, the whittlers and their families having been invited by the man who gives the party. He furnishes all the wood, and he puts up prizes of $2 and $1 for the most perfect and second best axe helve, hammer handle, potato masher, or other useful thing, and he appoints three disinterested men of good judgment to decide on the merits of the work turned out. The decision is final, and the things shaped out of wood that evening become the property of the giver of the prizes. The only implements allowed in the contests are a jacknife and a file, and the work must be finished within two hours.

Rosy-cheeked girls compete with the young men for the prizes. Some of them are expert with the jacknife, and can whittle faster and to a better purpose than their competitors of the other sex. In Palmyra township one night last week a bright-eyed girl of nineteen whittled, filed, and sandpapered out of a piece of ash as shapely a rolling pin as the most particular housewife could wish for. She did the work in an hour and twenty minutes, and she won the first prize in a company of seven competitors.

If the prize giver decides to get his guests to work on hickory axe helves, they have to submit to it; if there are more women than men competitors, the giver of the party almost invariably favors the former by selecting something that will be easier to whittle than an axe helve. While the whittlers are busy the non-whittlers have a jolly time in other parts of the house playing cards and chatting, and occasionally peering into the kitchen to see how the contestants are getting along with their work. The kitchen is cleared as soon as the prizes have been awarded, supper is served in the front rooms, and by midnight the whittlers and their companions are on the way home.

QUESTIONS BY SUN READERS.

Please give me the amount received in salaries and length of term of office of the several principal heads of the United States Government and State of New Jersey, commencing with the President, his legal advisers, Vice-President, Speaker of House, the Supreme Court, Senators, members, principal Foreign Ministers, United States Treasurers, and Secretary; in New Jersey, the Governor, Chancellor, Supreme Court, Senators, members, Boards of Health, and Medical Examiners. R. A. S.

The President receives $50,000 a year; his term is four years. The members of the Cabinet receive $8,000 a year each; they hold office during the pleasure of the President; the Vice-President gets $8,000 a year for four years; the Speaker gets $5,000 a year for two years; the Chief Justice receives $10,500 a year, the Associate Justices $10,000 a year each, for life. Senators and members of Congress get $5,000 a year each. Senators for six years, Representatives for two years. Five of our Ministers get $17,500 a year for four years, six get $12,000 a year, seven yet $10,000 a year, others get from $5,000 to $7,500 a year. The Treasurer of the United States gets $6,000 a year for four years; Assistant Secretaries in the executive departments get $4,500 a year for four years. In New Jersey the Governor gets $10,000 a year; his term is three years. All the Judges in New Jersey hold office for seven years; the Chancellor gets $10,000 a year; the Chief Justice $7,500, and Associates $7,000. Members of the Legislature are elected each year, and receive $3 a day for forty days of a session, and $1.50 a day thereafter during the session. We don't know about the Health Boards and the Medical Examiners.

Kindly inform me which was the first steam engine (practical) built, who was the builder, and about what speed it was is able to make; and until 1840 what was the fastest time made? W. J. F.

Spanish writers say that Blasco de Garay used steam to propel a vessel in the harbor of Barcelona in 1543. Sir Samuel Morland, an Englishman, in 1683, constructed a steam engine for forcing water above its source, using the Marquis of Worcester's invention of a separate boiler; and he built his engines commercially. The first practical steamboat was that of Fulton, in 1807, though there had been other steamboats as far back as 1736. The builders of Fulton's engine were Boulton & Watts, an English firm. The vessel, the Clermont, ran from New York to Albany at an average speed of 5 miles an hour. The earliest practical locomotive was that of George Stephenson, 1814-1829; in the last year he built "The Rocket," which ran more than 35 miles an hour We think it was in 1839 that an engine on the Boston and Maine road ran for a time at a rate of nearly 100 miles an hour, a speed not yet beaten.

How many votes was a Southerner entitled to before the late war in proportion to the number of slaves that he owned? TAM O' SHANTER.

He was entitled to only one vote; but, as the Representatives were determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, except Indians, three-fifths of all other person, the slaveholder's vote counted for more than the non-slaveholder's vote in the North. For example: in 1853 it required 93,423 persons to obtain a Representative in Congress; at that time, in the Southern States there were 3,200,000 slaves and 6,184,000 whites; that is to say, in determining the number of Representatives, 8,000,000 whites and slaves were represented in the South, where only 6,000,000 whites were represented in the North. Thus the slaveholder's ballot counted for a third as much again as the Northerner's, though he had only one ballot to cast.

1. What is the diameter, revolution, and distance of Jupiter's fifth moon? 2. What is the exact position of Uranus at present opposition? W. T.

1. The diameter of this satellite is equal to that of a star of the thirteenth magnitude; its revolution is complete in 11 hours 57 minutes, and it is 112,000 miles from the centre of the planet. 2. Uranus is in opposition on April 28; he is in Libra near the bright star *A*, and on the evening of his opposition will be rather more than 4° west by north of that star. On April 27 he will be in 14 hours 26 minutes 8 seconds Right Ascension, and 13 hours 59 minutes 22 seconds Declination. Much new information about Mars was obtained last year, but it has not been digested for publication as yet.

Please to inform me if there are such languages as pure Scotch and Irish. I claim that there are, but a friend claims that Scotch and Irish are only provincial or impure or broken English. Also, are they written languages? J. P. H.

There are such languages; but they are variations of one original language, the Gaelic, which is a Celtic language in its turn. The Erse, or Irish, variation of the Gaelic, is spoken in the western parts of Ireland, and has a literature of value; Gaelic is the name given to the variation spoken in the Scottish Highlands; it is written, but has no literature to speak of. What is called "Scotch" is simply English spoken with a Scotch "awksent"; but real Scotch and real Irish are not merely provincial English.

Do all the descendants, on the male side, of a German nobleman inherit his title? If not, how many generations? R. H.

It depends largely on the family. The titles of non-reigning and never-having-been-reigning houses in Germany are duke, prince, count, and baron. Sometimes all the children of a duke are princes and princesses, the eldest son being Prince so-and-so, the others being Prince August So-and-so, Princess Caroline So-and-so. At other times the sons will be princes, the daughters countesses. But the grandchildren will be counts and countesses down to the last syllable of recorded time. So with princes and counts; but seemingly not with barons.

What is the meaning of the word "agnostic"? COSMOPOLITAN.

One who does not know. The word is from the Greek, being compounded of *a* (alpha privative) and *gignoskein*, to know. The word is applied to persons who claim that because nothing can be proved about God's existence they know nothing; the emphasis comes on the "proved" and the "know." Theoretically an agnostic holds himself open to conviction; when anything can be *proved* he will gladly *know*. Practically, however, an agnostic has made up his mind, and is not open to conviction; he is willing to hear argument because his mind is made up.

1. Into what building has no woman entered for 1,400 years? 2. What is the key of death? 3. Where and whose tomb is it on which is carved an inscription so arranged that it may be read in 270 different ways? PH. O.

1. Into the convent of St. Catherine, on Mt. Sinai. 2. A key said to have been devised by an Italian, the handle of which concealed a needle which entered the hand of the person pressing the key, carrying with it deadly poison. The maker is called Tebaldo. He killed with it the fiancé of a woman whom he loved, then killed the woman's parents, and when she entered a convent tried to kill her. He was seized and executed. 3. We do not place this portentous epitaph.

Please print the formula for finding the ratios for centuries and months, to be added to the date, for finding the day of the week that any given date falls upon. J. J. H.

We don't understand what you mean. The simplest rule for finding the day of the week is this: Divide the year number by 4, discarding fractions; add to gether dividend, quotient, and the number of the day in the year, and divide the sum by 7; if there be no remainder, the day is Saturday; if the remainder be 1, the day is Sunday, and so on. In a leap year, add to the dividend and quotient the number of the day in the year, less 1, and proceed as before.

What was the day and date of Burchard's celebrated "Three Hs" speech? H. O. R.

The speech was delivered at the Fifth Avenue Hotel on Wednesday, Oct. 29, 1884.

G. and M.—On Tuesday, March 18, 1873, Arsons walked across the East River on the ice.

M. Fur.—Glass is not porous; if it were, you couldn't let water stand in a glass, for it would come through.

C. F.—In 1890, when Salvator won the Suburban, Cassius and Tenny ran respectively second and third.

J. D.—The general rule is, we think, that heirs who are citizens may take property left by a deceased alien.

A. R. J.—The last name of Signora Eleonora Duse is pronounced Doo-seh, with the accent on the second syllable.

H. M. Pinder.—There are several books on the cultivation of roses; you can get some from any dealer in horticultural supplies.

Ch. Sch.—We think that New York State is not paying back bounties now; as to the United States, write to the Secretary of the Navy for information.

Ortering.—For books on mechanical engineering get the Van Nostrand Company's catalogue, and pick out what you want. Thurston's "History of the Steam Engine" is a standard book.

Reader.—We do not know the rules governing admittance to the Massachusetts bar. Write to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of any county, Middlesex, for example, asking for a copy of the rules.

"Comp."—We find no book that we are certain will help you; but Mackellar's "American Printer" may do so. (Munn & Co., 361 Broadway, $2.) Examine it and see if it will suit you; if not write to us again.

Searcher.—The General Secretary of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle is A. M. Martin, Pittsburgh, Pa. The Rev. Dr. J. H. Vincent, Buffalo, is the head of the circle, and may be written to for information.

Lesy.—In this country actresses are seldom "taken up" by the most fashionable society. It is not a question of their character; it seems to be a transplanting of the feeling in France which until recently prevented the Legion of Honor from being conferred upon an actor. It exists everywhere.

James F. Brennan.—The engraving "And Every Soul Was Saved," depicts the transfer of the passengers of the steamer Dannark to the steamer Missouri, Capt. Hamilton Marrell, on April 6, 1888. The Dannark was on her way to this city from Copenhagen; on April 4 she sprung a leak; on April 5 the Missouri took her in tow, and on the 6th, having thrown over part of her cargo to make room for them, she took 400 passengers and sailors aboard. Some of them she left at Fayal, but she landed 365 at Philadelphia on Easter Sunday, April 21.

SOME POEMS WORTH READING.

The Finding of Heem.

They have found him, they have found him,
Weave a lace of joy around him,
Hall and hymn and loud resound him,
For they've found him!

Where'd they find him? How should I know?
All I know is, bet your rhino
That they've found him!

Who is he? What is he? He is he.
Read not the robe of his mysteres,
But accept the fact with solemn glee
That they've found him!

Why are my eyes so full of tears?
I pity the poor, defrauded years,
Unfortunate years that came and went,
And never discovered him for a cent.

Columbus, Galileo, Daniel Pratt
Saw much, but such fortune never got.

From Bill Tell Junior's head the apple's gone,
Smashed is the yarn of Poe and Capt'n John;
Delphi is silent, and Bologna's cold,
Yet there are gods still, for we still have Hoke.

He's been found! He's been found!
Strew with flowers the happy mound;
Heap flames upon the focus, and decorate the locus,
Sacred to Hocus!

The Wonderful Ride of J. A. C. Meng.

From the Globe-Democrat.

You have heard of Sheridan's noted ride,
And of Putnam's down the stair,
And of Paul revere, to memory dear,
And of Jennie McNeil, the fair;
You have heard of Tam O'Shanter's ride,
And of William of Deloraine,
And a hundred lies that I despise
And treat with cold disdain.

But Meng is no soldier with battle scars,
No hero of old romance,
No chivalrous knight with harness bright
And word-defying lance.
His name is not found in history's page,
For glory he gives not a straw;
He is only a drummer, or traveling bummer,
As they call them in Arkansas.

He rode from Varner to Williamsburg,
The aforesaid J. A. C. Meng,
He hired a pony, both shaggy and bony,
A poor little bit o' a thing.
He carried some grip that contained his blanks,
For he had some collections to make,
The pony was slow, but Meng had to go,
So he cut a long cane from the brake.

At first he tried coaxing the gentle brute,
But he found that was vanity quite,
So he gave her the rein and laid on the cane,
And away that pony flew
He had just an hour to ride five miles
And see a couple of men,
And catch the train or else remain
Till it came next day again.

So he slacked not his speed for the corduroy,
He galloped through mud and slough,
He jumped the logs logs and plunged through the bogs,
And the wind through his whiskers blew;
Whitened with foam and spattered with mud,
The pony was thumping and lame,
And Meng, it is said, was almost dead,
But he got there all the same.

Once Upon a Time.

From Kelsey.

Oh, yes, he's a decent young fellow:
I've nothing against him, my dear;
And it's likely he thinks he is courting,
And I'm willing to think so, I fear.
But when I think back to my girlhood,
And your grandfather, he was the boy!
If these days were those days, my darling,
By this I'd be twenty-two!

He courted at fair and at frolic:
He tossed me more than he ought,
And I don't like to think, to this day, dear,
How he looked the day after he fought.
'Twas an awkward mistake that he fought for;
The other boy wasn't to blame;
'Twas only a fancy of Talbot's
That Mike laughed in speaking my name.

And the ways Talbot asked me to have him!
He'd not even pass me the tea,
But he'd look in my eyes and then whisper
"If I was that teacup, machree."
If I gave him my hand just in friendship,
He'd sigh as his hosts or at dogs,
And say in his beautiful accents,
"Ah, when can I have it to keep?"

It seemed that I couldn't well help it;
I just plagued him out of his life,
Though I'm free to myself I keep saying
That I should some day be his wife.
And then came the day of the jaunt, dear,
'Twas to end in rain or worse;
And he wandered me off with himself, like,
And I, for the once, was content.

I fancied a little blue flower
That grew in the crack of the wall,
And he climbed like a goat till he'd pick it,
And some way he managed to fall.
I don't know to this day how I did it;
He'd have slipped to his death, at the last,
But I caught his feet in my hands, dear,
And held for his life safe and fast.

And that boy, as he hung upside down there,
And groping about for his life,
Calls up: "You've my fate in your hands, dear,
Let go if you'll not be my wife!"
Could I murder him? No, that I couldn't!
I gave him no answer at all,
I only held fast till he'd managed
To catch the two hands on the wall.

I stood there all laughing and crying,
And, well, you might fancy the rest
If you could; but these days are so different,
And each thinks her own day the best.
There's not be another like Talbot,
No matter the day or the year,
And your boy's nice, quiet, well-mannered;
I hope you'll be happy, my dear.

MARGARET VANDEGRIFT.

The Commercial Traveller.

From the Amusing Journal.

His home is in the sleeping car,
No vine or fig tree's shade,
His music is the rattling wheels,
His poetry is trade.
This missionary of the mart
He spreads the true faith's germs,
The endless merits of his house
Above all other firms.

He buttonholes the kings of trade,
His sample case unrolls,
And talks until the love of life
Grows feeble in their souls.
The bolted doors swing wide for him,
He heeds no locks nor bars,
And there are any fine of man
Beneath the sun or stars.

The heroes of baronial times
Were armed from hair to heel,
With iron pots upon their heads
And pantaloons of steel;
The traveler here of modern
Is armorless and weak,
But for the vigor of his tongue,
And business breadth of cheek.

He meets all men with fearless mien,
Nor knows to pause or swerve,
With Hippitian bashfulness
And Brobdingnagian nerve.
No dint can make an impress on his soul;
His creed and happiness
Is just to make a sale and catch
The two o'clock express.

S. W. F.

Hidden Things.

*From Home