ture, which was limited to the most necessary articles. There was the smokiest of all smoky stoves, an old iron shovel, two India rubber buckets, two lanterns, two oil cans, one axe, no table, no chairs, no beds, no blankets, one clam shell ingeniously converted into a drinking vessel and four coils of rope, which were made to serve as so many mattresses. The discovery of the stove was a subject of general congratulation, and never did we more thoroughly appreciate its importance in domestic economy than on this occasion. We went to work with an energy that would have gladdened the heart of any housewife, and in less than half an hour had it in active operation, and a pile of firewood broken up and laid in for the night. But of all the obdurate, hard-hearted and smoky stoves, that stove was the most obdurate, the most hard hearted and the smokiest. We coaxed it with paper, with hemp and with pieces of tarred rope; we fed it with the smallest of chips, we puffed it as politician never was puffed by his friends; and after a great deal of persuasion it broke out at last into a bright, merry, cheerful blaze, that put us in the best of humor with ourselves. And made us indifferent to the terrors of the bleak coast and the black and stormy night. We could hear the surf as it thundered along the beach, and the wild wind as it careered unchecked over the sandy plain without rocked our wooden habitation to and fro like a cradle, but we soon became accustomed to it and gathered around our fire watching its cheerful blaze as it shone out upon us through the chinks and crevices of the stove, lighting up our faces and throwing rays of light into the darkest corners of our habitation. But it had its weak points, and, like some benevolent people, its generosity was somewhat marred by the manner in which it was dispensed. The warmth it gave was mingled with smoke, and we were often compelled to lengthen the distance between us. But after all we were inclined to be good natured, and told stories and sung songs, and laughed at each other's jokes and conundrums till the wooden walls of our house rang again. Even the smoke, which came down in clouds through the pipe, was the subject of an old riddle, which was considered so good, and so absurd, and so ridiculous that it was repeated at least once every half hour for the amusement of the company. For the sake of those who may be hard up for a laugh, we will give it in full, and as it was told in that government house on that ever to be remembered, never to be forgotten night, on the Barnegat beach. Here it is, and as we feel certain the answer could never be guessed, even by the shrewdest Yankee, we give it without charge:—Conundrum—"Why is a swallow like a smoky chimney?" Answer—"Because it has got a crooked flew." Is it any wonder that we laughed or that it should prove an inexhaustible fund of merriment through that long winter's night?

The stories, too, like the riddles, were of the best kind, and although we have heard Alboni and Sontag and Jenny Lind and Kate Hayes and all the great singers of the day, we never listened to them with more unfeigned delight than we did to our own voices as we sang in chorus that magnificent eulogy on "Old Dog Tray," or the praises of the extraordinary bob-tailed nag which performed such wonders at the Camptown races. We became acclimated to the smoky atmosphere, and what with singing, and story telling, and joking and laughing, we passed the first half of the night right merrily. In the early part of the evening it is true we suffered some from want of water—in fact, we doubt if the Ancient Mariner, himself was reduced to greater straits for that necessary. There was, it is true, in the language of that venerable character, as well as we can now remember it—

Water, water, everywhere,
But not a drop to drink.

If, however, there was no water there was plenty of snow, one old shovel, one hot stove and two India rubber buckets, with all of which combined we succeeded in getting something more than "a drop to drink." Some fastidious individuals on the Fifth avenue might object to the flavor as strongly impregnated with old iron smoke and caoutchouc, but to us it was as sweet as that famous beverage with which old Homer says the dwellers on Olympus regaled themselves. The water was served out in a clam shell, and each individual was limited to a certain quantity, three shellsful forming the allowance. The biscuits were now brought into requisition and proved to be most palatable. We had, as we have said bought them with the intention of distributing them among the shipwrecked passengers, and they now proved the means of saving us, if not from actual, at least from partial starvation. We had more than enough, however, for our own use, and taking a few with us on leaving our shelter, we left the remainder behind as a memento of our visit. As it was absolutely necessary that our fire should not go out, the cold being so intense, a watch was organized, and each person had to keep guard over his sleeping companions and the stove at the same time for the brief space of one hour. "It is a long night," says the Italian proverb, "that has no morning;" and we found it correct in this instance. About half past six a faint glimmering of the dawn broke through the diminutive windows of our dwelling, and by seven o'clock we had cleared away the coils of ropes on which we had slept, and placing all the articles in the hovel, the buckets, the lanterns and the clam shells where we had found them, we started on our long and weary journey towards Squan. The cold wind beat upon us with relentless fury, sweeping the mingled sand and snow into our faces; but we got used to it after a while, and like Jack Bunsby, who had been educated by the application of marlin spikes and ringbolts, we rather began to like it; and like him, too, were "never a bit the worse for it." After a walk of five miles through snow drifts and sand drifts, and marshes covered with thin ice that broke under our feet, we arrived at a human habitation. Its occupants, Mr. and Mrs. Herring, received us with a hospitality that is unknown in the Fifth avenue, and we were soon seated before a blazing wood fire, with an audience of six or seven bright eyed intelligent little creatures, who looked at us with wondering eyes and appeared so happy to see us that we parted from them with a feeling of regret. The good housewife cooked such a breakfast for us as we have never eaten, and as we believe we never shall eat. We had fried pork, splendid fried pork, eggs the like of which have never been got up by any other hens than those that laid them, buckwheat cakes that required no butter to make them palatable, and such coffee as no cook or housekeeper in New York can ever hope to make. And then to cap the climax and prove to us that the people on the Jersey coast know something about good living, we had preserved tomatoes which were beyond all praise. Our breakfast finished we started on our journey with renewed strength, after leaving a substantial token of our appreciation of the hospitality of the kind hearted wrecker and his worthy wife.

Five or six miles through more snow drifts, sand drifts and ice bound marshes, brought us to a little row of four or five dwellings standing together in close companionship. Here we found Mr. Shattuck and Mr. Bryan, two of the most daring and best wreckers on the coast—men who have done deeds of humanity that would immortalize any man but a Jersey wrecker, but for which others have hitherto received all the credit. The manner in which they and their brave companions along this coast have been treated by those whose duty it should be to remunerate them for the saving of property, should not be allowed to pass unrebuked, and we hope that hereafter every injustice done to them will be made the subject of public censure and condemnation.

Here we found it necessary to look into the condition of our travelling wardrobe a little more closely, as we had various intimations on our journey that it was rapidly giving out, and that it would be necessary to repair damages. We accordingly did so, and found that, besides the other expenses, we would be minus one pair of boots, one do. of gloves, one hat, and one pair of unmentionables. The latter article was so seriously damaged that even Marcy's celebrated fifty cent patch would not cover the rent. The legs and the body came so near parting company that it was only by the kindly aid of a few pins that they were kept together.

We hired a conveyance for our company, and after travelling over marshes, sand hills, frozen cornfields and potato patches, we arrived at our Squan, where all our labors and troubles were finished by a splendid supper. Thus ended our experience on the Barnegat beach.

Our Nebraska Correspondence.

OMAHA CITY, Nebraska Territory, Nov. 27, 1856.

Result of the Elections in Nebraska—The Herald and the Squatters—Presidential Election in the Territory—Nebraska Legislature, &c.—General News

The result of the Territorial election in Nebraska—mean for members of the Council and House of Representatives—does not surprise us much. But very few indeed of the old members are returned. There is, I believe, a majority elected of Buchanan democrats on joint ballot. The names and residence of the members elect I will send you by the next mail.

There is considerable interest manifested here concerning the course the HERALD's correspondent for Nebraska will pursue during the coming winter, (one, by the way, of considerable interest to the Territory,) and in order to set the minds of all at rest I will state the course your correspondent here will pursue. He will ferret out all official rascality possible, and expose the same to the HERALD's readers. He will honestly and truly afford the HERALD's readers a correct statement of the progress of the Territory, its advantages and disadvantages for actual settlers. Each location shall have its just deserts, and each man, (provided he deserves a notice,) shall be portrayed according to his merit in the eyes of honest squatters. Social nor political position shall shield a man or his interests from that honest condemnation or compliment which in our own and a majority of the settlers he or they may seem to demand.

On the first Monday in January next the third session of the Nebraska Legislature meets here, and much of interest will be offered before it. The session holds but forty days.

The election of James Buchanan is hailed (as Fremont's would have been) as the forerunner of a revolution in our Territorial government. Good and true democrats here now look forward to the day when nearly every office in the Territory at the disposition of Uncle Samuel will be changed. We have been cursed with inefficient and intriguing officers long enough, (an expose of their policy and schemes I shall endeavor to lay before the HERALD's readers ere long), and I can but hope that the day is now approaching when there will be a good and glorious change in our governmental affairs.

I am of the opinion that the coming Legislature of Nebraska will be one of credit to the Territory, but I cannot too safely predict just now. The amount of schemes and skulduggery will, probably, tell the tale.

There is not much of importance here just at this moment, only the interest manifested in the sales of the public lands, which will probably take place in about four months. The land will probably be open for pre-emptions ere long. There is at present no news of Indian troubles anywhere on our frontier, and the social troubles of Kansas, now that the Presidential contest is over, will subside. The health of the Territory is very good, and settlers, even at this late season, are fast coming in.

TRIPLETS.—A German woman living at No. 12 Pine street, in the Fifth ward, gave birth on Wednesday morning to three children, all girls—the same woman having given birth to two children fifteen months ago, which makes five within fifteen months. As the woman is poor, and has now a large family to support, any assistance rendered to her would be very acceptable.—*Pittsburg Post, Dec. 20.*

THE THEATRES, &c.—As the managers of most establishments propose to repeat the novelties with which they so successfully entertained their friends yesterday, it is scarcely worth while to waste room with a repetition of the attractions offered for to-night. See the amusement directory at the head of the editorial page.

Celebration of Christmas Day.

ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY—RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY—FIRTY, POULTRY, PLENTY, PENURY AND PUDDING—CHRISTMAS EVE—MIDNIGHT MASSES IN THE EPISCOPAL AND ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES—HOME FOR THE FRIENDLESS—SOCIAL FESTIVITIES—MILITARY PARADE, ETC.

Another Christmas, with all its pleasant associations to young and old, has been added to the past, and one brief week will see the end of the holiday season. There was but little recognition of the day in a public manner, yet it was very generally observed privately, and if any business was done it was done in a quiet way. Stores were closed, and private houses opened, while the streets had all the stillness and solemnity peculiar to the Sabbath. The little folks had a good time, of course, as Santa Claus this year was propitious, and was most generous to his little favorites. Storekeepers say the sale of toys was enormous—there was never the like of it before. This circumstance is no doubt due to the fact that trade and business have been good during the past season and people have money to spare for toys, and indeed all kinds of fancy goods. People usually look to the stock market and bank returns for indications of the prosperity of a country, but after all they do not tell as truly as do the sales in the jewelry and fancy stores on Broadway. The slightest cloud on the business horizon casts a shadow upon them to begin with, for the first impulse after a business reverse with most people is to stop the buying of trinkets and the amount of money afloat in the community is easily gauged by the sales in the Broadway stores.

The prosperous season, therefore, was good for the little folks, and for all who had friends with money enough who cared to give them presents.

The weather was exceedingly pleasant yesterday, and very unlike former Christmas days, for though the associations of the season are joyous and bright, the day is generally murky and gloomy outdoors in our latitude. But yesterday it was a marriage of the earth and sky, and all nature seemed to rejoice in the bridals. Our citizens ought to have enjoyed the day, for an immense number of turkeys were consumed. The old song fitly supplied the motto of the day:—

Without the cold 'let sorrow lie,
And it for cold it hap to die.
We'll bury it in a Christmas pie,
And ever more be merry.

This holiday has long been a favorite one with Christians of all countries; yet strange to say, it was not observed for many hundred years after the birth of our Savior. Nor was it the first which was observed in his honor. Easter is the most ancient, and was deemed of the greatest importance, for on the fact of the actual resurrection of the Savior the whole truth and force of his doctrines rested. His birth would have been but of little consequence to mankind if he had not triumphantly risen from the grave. The feast of the Nativity, or Christmas, was only introduced about the fourth century, at the close of which the festivals and fasts of the church began to assume some order, having reference rather to their origin and meaning than to their chronology. So the churchmen of those days arranged their cycles of Christmas, of Easter, and of Whitsuntide; beginning and ending at particular periods, and commemorative of Christ's ministerial history and his ascension into heaven.

But it is a very curious fact that we are by no means certain on what day the nativity of the Savior actually occurred. In the Eastern church it was for hundreds of years celebrated on the sixth day of January; the Western church regarded the twenty-fifth of December as the correct date, and observed it accordingly. The latter opinion finally prevailed, and the Bishop of Jerusalem adopted the Roman custom in the year 431. It certainly was attended at first without any great devotional feeling, originating in the judgment of some, with the taste of the age for festivals and holy days, by others as an offset to the heathen Saturnalia which attracted too much the weaker brethren.

It certainly was at once marked by merry making and the interchange of presents, which are not usual upon any other Christian holiday. Very many curious tracts and books have been written on this subject, some of which are noticed by Brande in his "Popular Antiquities," a text book in great demand by Christmas critics. The old Scotch Presbyterians could never endure Christmas or Theophany. One of this sort, preaching against its observance, pitched into it as follows:—

Ye will say, good sirs, good old Youlday!
I tell you, good old fool day.
Ye will say it is a brave holiday!
I tell you it is a brave belly day.

And the quaint old parson was pretty nearly right. It is not only a day for the church, but a frolic for "the rest of mankind." More eating and drinking and playgoing occur on Christmas than on any other day in the year. In New York it is a cause of large expenditure. Among the resident Germans forests of mimic trees are seen in their dwellings, bearing the presents of the preceding evening. The French, not so full of legends and old practices, bestow their gifts on New Year's day. The Americans do just as they—please. Many years ago it was the custom in this city and Albany for the servants of gentlemen, particularly if they were blacks, to go round among their master's friends to receive Christmas boxes, and this practice led genteel families not to give or receive presents in themselves on that day.

Those who were in Broadway on Wednesday evening could have seen thousands of people moving in and out of the toy and confectioners' shops until a late hour of the evening. The mistakes of the night were humorous enough. Parcels were sent everywhere to wrong addresses, and presents came anonymously to wondering people. All blunders were probably rectified in the morning. Large commercial speculations are connected with Christmas day. Orders of great value are executed, and by large houses, with sole reference to the demands of these holidays. After the first of January prices of numerous articles will fall twenty five per cent.

The moral and political questions of holidays too many or holidays too few belong to other columns than to those of the "brief chroniclers of the times."

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS EVE.

The religious observance of Christmas eve was confined to Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches. The midnight mass was duly performed in honor of the birth of Christ. Formerly twelve o'clock at night was the time chosen for performing this service, but of late years the time has been changed to 4 o'clock on Christmas morning, and notwithstanding the fact that it is an unusual hour, many churches were crowded to witness the high mass. In the Church of the Redemptionists, in Third street, Fathers Hecker and Helmprachtl, and assistants, went through the sacrament of high mass in the presence of a large auditory. In St. Stephens', in Twenty eighth street, a dense crowd assembled to listen to the splendid vocal and instrumental music for which this church is celebrated. In the cathedral, in Mott street, high mass was said by the Very Rev. Vicar General Starr, at 6 o'clock A. M. In this house of worship, and also in the church of St. Francis Xavier, in Sixteenth street, the music was superb, and the crowd to listen to it very great.

In the Episcopal churches, also, there were many interesting exercises on Christmas eve.

We understand that for the first time in this city a sort of high mass was also said, at the same hour with the Catholic, in Trinity chapel, generally considered a Protestant Episcopal edifice. It was certainly announced as about to take place—that a large number of the clergy was to be present, and that the special services were to be intoned in the bist style of modern Puseyism. This is a pretty good step onwards in the Via Roma, and we accordingly wait to see what will be the next.

In Trinity church there was a pleasant time, it being the anniversary of the down town Mission schools. The clergy present and taking part in the exercises were the Rev. Dr. Berrian, rector; Rev. Dr. Haight; Rev. Messrs. Ogilby, Young, Dix, Pennell, assistant ministers, &c.; and the Rev. Dr. Van Kleck, agent of the Domestic Mission Board; Messrs. Cobbs and Scarborough, students of the General Theological Seminary, had the general arrangement of the schools, and Mr. Bill accompanied the singing of the children on a melodeon.

The children connected with the Church of the Incarnation also had an anniversary.

THE DAY IN THE CITY—MILITARY PARADES.

Service was held in a great number of our churches yesterday morning. The rest of the day was mostly occupied with roast beef and plum pudding, and turkey and mince pie.

In the evening the places of amusement of all kinds were filled with pleasure seekers, for "Christmas comes but once a year."

The only charitable society that observed the day was the "Home for the Friendless," whose friends gave it a donation visit at the institution, No. 52 East Thirteenth street, from which a handsome return was made, which will doubtless be most worthily bestowed.

The target companies as usual had a good time. Among them we observed the following companies:—

The New York Ledger Guard, Captain John Scott, turned out 100 muskets, and looked splendidly. Dodworth's full band of 44 pieces accompanied them. This guard shot for a number of magnificent prizes at the River House, Harlem, after which they returned to the city, highly elated with their day's sport. This is a fine corps, and are worthy the name they bear.

The McMahon Light Guard made their first annual parade to Hoboken, under the command of John A. Kavanagh.

The Amity Guards, Captain Haskett, paraded 30 muskets and locked well.

The David Williams Guard, Captain Roach, paraded 50 muskets, and shot for forty-two valuable prizes at Hunter's, Fly road.

CHRISTMAS IN BROOKLYN.

Christmas was observed in Brooklyn with about the usual spirit. The day being fine, large numbers took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded to perambulate the principal streets, visit friends and relatives, and participate in the festivities peculiar to the season. Many of the churches were handsomely decorated with evergreens, and services were held in a number. In Sands street Methodist Episcopal church the Sunday School and Juvenile Missionary Society observed their eighth anniversary festival. The school met in their room at nine o'clock A. M., when they proceeded to the church. After singing a number of Christmas hymns, the different classes were called for their contributions to the missionary cause, which was nobly responded to, and over $1 600 was realized. Addresses were made by Mr. Pardee, of New York, General Superintendent of the Sunday School Union, Rev. M. Thompson, of Staten Island. After the conclusion of the exercises in the church, the scholars were taken into the Sabbath School room, which was beautifully decorated with evergreens, flowers and appropriate mottoes. Mr. M. F. O'Neil, Superintendent of the school, presented each scholar with a Christmas present, consisting of a variety of confectioneries, and to each of the teachers and officers a large seed cake, which concluded the proceedings, and all went home satisfied. The exercises were witnessed by a large concourse of people.

A festival also took place at the Washington street Methodist Episcopal church, which was participated in by the congregation and children of the Sunday School. During the exercises a Christmas box containing $200 in twenty dollar gold pieces was presented to the pastor, who returned his thanks in appropriate terms, and the proceedings terminated.

The day, as a general thing, passed off in a quiet and orderly manner. Very few drunken persons were to be seen about the streets.

CHRISTMAS IN WILLIAMSBURG.

Christmas was very generally observed yesterday in the Eastern district. Business was suspended, and nearly all of the churches were opened for divine services, and were well attended.

The Sabbath school attached to the Dutch Reformed church, in Fourth street, assembled at 10½ o'clock, and were addressed by the pastor, Rev. Mr. Porter, Mr. Gray and Mr. Ferris.

The Mission school attached to this school, and located in Ninth street, near North First street, met at three o'clock, and after listening to several addresses were furnished with a sumptuous dinner.

The Sabbath school scholars attached to the Methodist Protestant Church, in Grand street, assembled last evening and listened to addresses by Richard Reid, the Sunday School lecturer, and George Copway, the Indian Chief.

CHRISTMAS IN NEW JERSEY.

There were services in St. Matthew's Episcopal and the Free Episcopal churches in Jersey City yesterday. Also in St. Peter's Catholic church mass was said at 6½, 8, 9 and 10½ o'clock, and vespers at 3 P. M. The churches were handsomely decorated. A large number of passengers passed through Jersey City on Wednesday night, on their way to country places, by railroad, and many returned last night.

In Hoboken there were services in most of the churches, and the city was alive with target companies.

Brooklyn City News.

A WOMAN FATALLY INJURED AT THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD DEPOT.—A woman, named Eliza Brown, and apparently about 35 years of age, was fatally injured in getting off the cars, at the foot of Atlantic street, yesterday. As near as can be ascertained, she slipped in consequence of the ice, while descending the platform. She became jammed between, and sustained a fracture of an ankle and injury to the spine. She appeared to be *en cceinte*. Mr. Walters, the conductor of the train, immediately procured a carriage, and, in company with officer Preston, proceeded to the City Hospital. Here those in charge refused to admit her, although the conductor offered to pay all charges for medical attendance. They were compelled to bring her back to the Third district station house, over a mile distant, where her injuries were bound up by Dr. M. McDonnell, and she was reconveyed to the hospital, the doctor having provided officer Kirby with the necessary certificate. They succeeded in gaining admission after the most urgent solicitations, when it was found, on laying the woman on a bed, that she was dead. The jolting back and forth over the rough pavements doubtless hastened her end. She got on the cars at the Bedford station, and after the occurrence of the accident told the conductor her name, beyond which nothing appears to be known. The Coroner has been notified.

MASONIC.—The following officers of Joppa Lodge No. 201 were regularly installed by G. P. M. Parker, at the communication on Wednesday night. C. Y. Marvin, W. M., Joseph Wright, S. W.; Wm. King, J. W.; Richard Sharp, secretary; M. A. Briggs, treasurer; George Mallory, John Blair, deacons; S. X. Clark, J. Davis, stewards; John Hackett, tiler.

FATAL RESULT OF AN ACCIDENT.—Thomas Costigan, the proprietor of the Union Hotel, No. 1 Atlantic street, who was thrown from a carriage in Fulton avenue on Monday evening, died of his injuries yesterday morning. His scull had been fractured. He was well known throughout the city. Mr. Wm. Morris, who was in company with Mr. Costigan, and was likewise severely injured, is said to be in a precarious condition. Mr Costigan was a native of Charlestown, Mass.

SUICIDE BY SHOOTING HIMSELF WITH A PISTOL.—Yesterday morning a young man named Claus Jacquer, who resided with his parents in Adelphi street, between Fulton and Atlantic avenues, committed suicide by blowing his brains out with a pistol. He was about 17 years of age, and had for a long time been afflicted with periodical fits of insanity. His brother was in the room at the time, but had no idea of his intention until he saw him hold the pistol to his head and discharge it. No other cause than insanity is attributed. The Coroner was notified to hold an inquest.

FROZEN TO DEATH.—An elderly woman in an ordinary dress, was found on Washington park yesterday morning, stiff in death. From appearances she was addicted to intemperance, and it is supposed was drunk and laid herself down to sleep, or fell down and was unable to rise. Officer Creighton, of the Fourth District Police, conveyed the body to the dead house, where it will remain a reasonable length of time for identification. No one appears to know who she was or where she belonged.

NO LEGAL RESTRAINT AGAINST DRUNKENNESS.—Justices Blatchley and Morehouse, of this city, have ceased to entertain complaints against persons for drunkenness. Those brought before them on this charge exclusively, are discharged, unless their demeanor should warrant the officer making the arrest in swearing that they had been guilty of disorderly conduct. This action is based upon legal advice, the provisions of the Maine law being considered a nullity from first to last, or at the least, of but doubtful legality. Justice Smith intends to adopt the same course two or three days hence, having obtained the advice of able counsel in regard to the matter. We may therefore expect to see a great increase of drunkenness in this city, there being no legal restraint whatever to prevent it.

ACCOMMODATED IN THE PENITENTIARY AT HIS OWN REQUEST.—Yesterday morning a man whose appearance indicated his poverty as well as his love of liquor, appeared before Justice Smith on the charge of intoxication. The Justice suspended sentence, and told him he might go; whereupon he begged as a favor, and in the most urgent terms, to be "sent up" during the winter, as he had no home and no means of gaining a livelihood. The Justice was moved by his appeals, and favored him with a commitment for two months imprisonment in the Penitentiary. The prisoner, in this double capacity of officer and prisoner, left the Court rejoicing, and took the road to the "institution" in order to spend the dreary winter months.

TRAVEL IMPEDED ON THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD.—The train which left South ferry for the East at 10 o'clock Wednesday morning, was stalled by the heavy drifts of snow when within ten miles of Yapank, about sixty miles distant from the city. The same train returned with the passengers, and arrived here at 10 o'clock the same evening. The snow is said to be from ten to twelve feet deep in the cuts. No trains have come in from Greenport since Tuesday.

City Intelligence.

THE CHURCH AND THE STAGE.—On last Thanksgiving day the Rev. Dr. Bellows delivered an address, at his church, Fourth avenue and Twentieth street, upon public amusements, taking the ground that the drama in proper hands was a valuable aid to the pulpit and the press in enlightening, cultivating and reforming the people. He also took strong ground in favor of the opera. Some of the managers and leading artists of the city have since tendered to the reverend gentleman a piece of plate as a mark of their recognition of his liberal views. He has written a letter declining the testimonial, and expressing a desire to address the theatrical profession especially. Arrangements are now being made for the delivery of the discourse.

STABBING AFFRAY IN A BOARDING HOUSE.—A disturbance took place yesterday afternoon amongst about a dozen negroes, at a boarding house for colored people kept by Ann Francis, in Park street, in which Stephen Saunders was dangerously stabbed in the back with a dirk knife, said to have been in the hands of John Galloway. The latter was promptly arrested by officer Bradley, of the Sixth ward police, and locked up by Justice Welsh. The keeper of the house, together with Ellen Thomas, Elizabeth Colwell, Jerry Harris, and some others, were locked up as witnesses. Saunders was taken to the New York Hospital.

SERIOUS FALL.—Wm. North, an ice workman, fell from his vehicle on Wednesday evening, at the corner of West Broadway and Liespenard street, and was very severely injured, having struck head foremost upon the pavement. He was conveyed by the police to the New York Hospital.

FIRE AT THE FOOT OF MURRAY STREET, PIER NO. 28 NORTH RIVER.—About eight o'clock on Thursday morning a fire broke out on board the sloop Reindeer, lying at pier 28 North river, foot of Murray street. The vessel is owned by A. Vantassel; the damage will be about $200, no insurance. The fire was caused by some lime on board getting wet.

FIRE IN VANDEWATER STREET.—The alarm of fire for the Seventh district, shortly after four o'clock yesterday afternoon, was caused by an intoxicated woman setting fire to her bedding in a tenement house, rear of No. 14 Vandewater street; damage trifling.

Police Intelligence.

FUGITIVE FROM BOSTON.—George Hill, alias Rivers, alias Florence, who of late has been keeping a house in the Fourteenth ward, was yesterday arrested by officer Slater, of the Fifth ward police, charged with being a fugitive from Boston, where he is wanted to answer a complaint for swindling a countryman out of $200 and a gold watch. He was detained preparatory to being sent to Boston.

STEALING A HORSE AND WAGON.—A horse and milk wagon, belonging to Bernard Rinn, of Eighty-sixth street, near Tenth avenue, were stolen on Wednesday, from the corner of Sixteenth street and Ninth avenue, and afterwards found in possession of a young fellow named Thomas Mallen, who had driven it to the corner of Fourth and Bleecker streets. Mallen was arrested by policeman Le Roy, of the Ninth ward, and held by Justice Davidson for examination.

ARREST OF AN ALLEGED PICKPOCKET.—David Jones, a young Welshman, was arrested on Wednesday, charged with picking the pocket of Mrs. Mary Hantong, residing at No. 168 West Twenty second street, of $30 and a diamond pin, while she was in Broadway, opposite Astor place. The accused was taken before Justice Flandreau, and committed for trial.

ROW IN A GROCERY.—A man, named Charles W. Colman, was arrested yesterday for having, with two others, amused himself on Christmas eve by breaking decanters, glasses, &c., in the groggery of Charles E. Cook, No. 449 Fourth avenue. He was taken before Justice Flandreau and fined $25, but, in default, was committed.

Our Albany Correspondence.

ALBANY, Dec. 22, 1856.

The Failure to Re-District the State—The Time has Passed—Will the next House of Assembly be Legal?—Various Bills to be Passed—Taken Before the Courts—Preston King's Credentials to be Scrutinized, &c., &c.

The readers of the HERALD are aware that the New York Legislature of 1856 adjourned in a row, and left a large amount of unfinished business. Nine-tenths of it, however, was that kind of legislation instituted by the voracious lobby managers—an onslaugh upon the treasury—which would be a saving to the State of millions, if the system could never be revived. The only feature of embarrassment occasioned by that adjournment was the neglect or refusal to comply with the express command of the constitution, in re-districting the Senate and Assembly districts under the census of 1855. Section fourth of article five of the constitution, declares thus:—

An enumeration of the inhabitants of the State shall be taken, under the direction of the Legislature, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty five, and at the end of every ten years thereafter; and the said districts shall be so altered by the Legislature, at the first session after the return of every enumeration that each Senate district shall contain, as nearly as may be, an equal number of inhabitants, excluding aliens and persons of color not taxable; and shall remain unaltered until the return of another enumeration, and shall at all times consist of contiguous territory, &c.

Section 5 says:—

The members of Assembly shall be apportioned from among the several counties of this State by the Legislature, as nearly as may be, according to the number of their respective inhabitants, excluding aliens and persons of color not taxable, and shall be chosen by single districts. * * * * The Legislature, at its first session, after the return of every enumeration, shall re-apportion the members of Assembly among the several counties of this State, in manner aforesaid; and the Board of Supervisors in such counties as may be entitled, under such re-apportionment, to more than one member, shall assemble at such time as the Legislature making such apportionment shall prescribe, and divide such counties into Assembly districts, &c.,

These injunctions and peremptory commands of the constitution of the State were violated by the last Legislature, every member of which took an oath to support that instrument in all its provisions. It will be clearly perceived by the above quotations that the duty of re-districting the State devolved upon the last Legislature at its "first session." The enumeration was taken and completed in 1855, and the constitution distinctly says that the Legislature of 1856 shall re organize the Senate and Assembly districts. This was not done. The constitution was deliberately and knowingly violated. What is the result? What will be the consequence? Can the Legislature of 1857 perform the work neglected or refused by their predecessors? The fundamental enactment of the people declares that the "Legislature, at its first session after the return of every enumeration," shall re-district the State. There is no provision for any postponement of that important duty. The framers of the constitution of 1846 made that duty imperative upon the first Legislature, and no other. No provision was incorporated giving any subsequent Legislature any power or authority whatever over the subject. It was for the first Legislature, at its first session, to have performed the work. The duty could not even have been done at an extra session, if the executive had called one. And now an important interrogatory arises: Can the apportionment be made before the session of 1866, being then the first Legislature after the next enumeration of the people of this State?

The counties of New York, Kings, Erie, and probably others, whose population has greatly increased since the present districts were established, will not be fairly represented in either branch of the Legislature until the constitution shall be complied with. Had the last Legislature performed its duty New York would have had four and Kings two more members than they now have of the House which assembles on Tuesday, the seventh day of January next.

The re-organization of the Legislature having thus failed at the proper and only time when it could have been legally done, the question arises whether the body of men who shall appear at the Capitol on the first Tuesday of the new year will be a Legislature under the constitution. The majority comprising those bodies are whetting their appetites for an abundance of palatable food during the hundred days. Will the election of Preston King to the United States Senate, by that body of men, be a legal and constitutional act? Will not the United States Senate be justifiable in examining into his qualifications, to ascertain whether the body of men who delegated him were thus authorized under the constitution of the State of New York? Most assuredly his title to the seat will be contested under this head. Then, again, will any law enacted by this body of men be constitutional and legal? The constitution commands that the House of Assembly of 1857 shall be constituted in accordance with the returns of the enumeration of inhabitants made in the year 1855. Will that body be, then, thus constituted? Most assuredly not. Well, we have another Maine law thrust upon the people, as hideous and obnoxious as the one declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeals. There will be a bill passed, declaring a registry law necessary for the large cities of the State. Bills innumerable are to run through, taking the government of the city of New York out of the hands of the Mayor and Common Council. Commissions of a party character are to be appointed to govern and control the police, and another act to take especial charge of the Central Park. The other parts of the State are also to be visited with special enactments, wherever any political advantage may be gained.

Now, it is well that these great matters receive early attention. There is no question that the subject will be brought before the courts. The first act which that body of men pretend to sanction as legislative authority, which conflicts with the rights of corporations or individuals, will justly be resisted and opposed until the courts shall adjudicate and decide whether the body of men calling themselves the House of Assembly are legally and constitutionally a branch of the New York Legislature.

Plan for Civilizing the Spanish Islands in the Gulf of Guinea, and Transporting their Inhabitants to Cuba.

[Translated from the Havana Prensa, Dec. 6.]

It has been ascertained that the statement made some days since by the public press that a plan has been laid before the Captain General of the island for civilizing the Spanish islands in the Gulf of Guinea, and for transporting to Cuba such of their inhabitants as would come voluntarily as colonists, is true. We have no knowledge of the grounds upon which this plan is based, nor can we yet state whether it is a formal proposition or merely a suggestion. But the subject is one of interest, not only because it is connected with the question of a supply of labor, but because of the philanthropic idea of elevating from its present miserable condition a savage land brutalized by despotism and sunk in the errors of the grossest idolatry. But what measures have been selected to enlighten a people who live in darkness? Is it intended to assist the labors of the missionaries who left Spain in July last to lay the foundations of the work of civilizing those ignorant natives? * * * According to the latest advices we have from the missions to the Spanish islands in the Gulf of Guinea, Annobon is the only one not infected by Protestantism, the reformed missionaries of England and the United States having obtained some fruit from their labors in the other islands. This fact had its weight in inducing the government of Spain to entertain seriously the idea of colonizing those possessions, so long since abandoned to their fate. The political vicissitudes lately experienced by the nation, it is believed, have prevented the carrying out of the proposed expedition; but it is to be supposed that as soon as the government is relieved from the embarrassments of the new situation, and from the exigency of consolidating public order, that it will turn its attention to an enterprise which, although not exempt from obstacles and difficulties, has become a necessity, if it wishes to retain possession of those islands. It will be seen, therefore, that the government will be disposed to entertain any proposition tending to the extension of civilization in Fernando Po and Corisco, in Annobon as in Venga, and in the other small islands of that archipelago.

It remains to be ascertained what system is adopted by the author of the project, to carry out the proposed enterprise, connected as it is with the transportation of the natives to this island as colonists. We may be mistaken, but we fear it is a second edition of the plan that was so unfavorable received lately, not only in this island, but in Spain, as we judge from the following paragraph in the *Epoca*, a Madrid paper, that is looked upon as the acknowledged organ of the dominant party there:—"If there is any project of soliciting from the government permission to colonize free Africans in Cuba, it has not passed beyond being a simple project; for it has not been officially brought before the government. * * Judging from the opinions of respectable persons, the idea of introducing free Africans into Cuba will not be favorably acted upon."

It is not our wish to open again this question, which has been debated, not only by us, but in the respectable corporations to whom it was submitted for consultation, while evidence was being taken by the authorities before extending the report on it sent to the supreme government. Considered in the light of expediency, it presents two widely different aspects. No one is ignorant of the want of laborers among us to give a useful stimulus to our agriculture; but to fill this want—which, though exigent is not imperious—should we jeopardize the immense interests we now possess?

Let it be shown by irrefutable arguments that these interests will not be jeopardized, as the contrary fact has been demonstrated, not only by us, but by persons and corporations whose influential opinions has been consulted in this important matter, and we will at once abandon the opinion we have maintained. But in discussing this new project of African immigration, limited, as it seems to be, to the population of the aforesaid islands, let us abandon the question of expediency to consider whether it is opportune in view of the ulterior designs which the press has attributed to the government in its views for colonizing those countries.

We repeat that we have no definite knowledge of the plan, and we should be glad to learn its particulars. But yet we believe that the civilizing measures to which it refers are results of the natural consequences of immigration; for no doubt if it were possible to organize labor here under that form, the colonists might return to their country, on the expiration of their contract, converted to Christianity, and with the necessary ideas for agriculture or the mechanic arts to which they might dedicate themselves. But it is not even probable that these islanders, accustomed to live in idleness and with their limited wants, should voluntarily agree to abandon their homes and families to come to an unknown land with no other object than to undertake the severe labors of our agriculture. Would it not, then, be necessary to seduce them by fraud? Even in that case few would agree to embark, and one of two things would occur—either coercion must be used or an insignificant number of emigrants or colonists would reach our shores. If it were proposed to recur to the African continent, where the population is not less than eighty millions, and where continual wars are kept up by despotic kinglets, who tyrannize over their subjects, we should deem it probable that large numbers, wishing to free themselves from the slavery imposed by their antagonists and to escape the pangs of hunger, would willingly agree to come here under contract as apprentices for a compensation which, however small, would seem large to them. But in the Spanish islands, in the Gulf of Guinea, these conditions do not exist.

Personal Intelligence.

It is rumored that George D. Prentice, of the Louisville *Journal*, is about to establish a paper in St. Louis.

The Philadelphia *Journal* says:—There is now living, a short distance from this city, the only surviving nephew of the illustrious patriot, Mad Anthony Wayne. He is likewise the only one left of the Dartmoor prisoners, who were captured by the British fleet in the war of 1814, and is now at the advanced age of 76 years.

ARRIVALS.

From Liverpool, per steamship Baltic—Cyrus W Field and lady, Miss Gracie Field, Miss Alice Field, Miss Isabella Field, Miss Fannie Field, Master Field and nurse, Master Stone and nurse, Capt Isaac N Knapp (late of ship Kentucky, of Boston), Mrs Knapp and infant, Capt Freeman (late of ship Isaac Wright), Capt Sullivan (late of ship Louisiana) W Delano, Mr and Mrs Burden and daughter, D J Ledyard and lady, C Pierson and lady, S M Giddings and lady, Dr Clarke and lady, R C Laughlin and lady, Mr Ayers and lady, R Struthers, lady, infant and servant, Mr Miller son, daughter and servant, Mrs D Lee, Miss S H C Smith, Augustus C Downing, Esq., H Seymour Lansing, Esq., J H Jones, Mr Todd, G H English, J B English, J O Bartholomew, L H Morris, F Henriquez, H Schendorff, H R Selden, D Lewis, J E Gosen, O P Dorman, E M Needles