NEW YORK HERALD.

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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC, Irving Place.—ITALIAN OPERA—FAUST.

NIBLO'S GARDEN, Broadway.—POSTILLON DE LONJUMEAU.

WALLACK'S THEATRE, Broadway.—PURE GOLD.

WINTER GARDEN, Broadway.—TICKET OF LEAVE MAN.

OLYMPIC THEATRE, Broadway.—TAMING A BUTTERFLY.

NEW BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—TICKET OF LEAVE MAN—FIEND OF EDDYSTONE—PADDY CAREY.

BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT—GREY MAN—KISS IN THE DARK.

BARNUM'S MUSEUM, Broadway.—FOUR GIANTS, TWO DWARFS, ALBINOS, WHAT IS IT, &c., at all hours. TICKET OF LEAVE MAN—At 3 and 7½ P. M.

BRYANTS' MINSTRELS, Mechanics' Hall, 472 Broadway.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, BURLESQUES, &c.—TAMING A BUTTERFLY.

WOOD'S MINSTREL HALL, 514 Broadway.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, &c.—AMERICAN OPERA, BIRD HUNTERS.

AMERICAN THEATRE, No. 444 Broadway.—BALLETS, PANTOMIMES, BURLESQUES, &c.—MAZULME.

BROADWAY AMPHITHEATRE, 485 Broadway.—GYMNASTIC AND EQUESTRIAN PERFORMANCES. Afternoon and Evening.

HIPPOTHEATRON, Fourteenth street.—PERFORMING DOGS AND MONKEYS. Afternoon and Evening.

HOPE CHAPEL, 718 Broadway.—THE STEREOSCOPTICON OR MIRROR OF THE UNIVERSE.

PERHAM'S, 585 Broadway.—STEREOSCOPTICON AND MIRROR OF THE REBELLION.

NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ANATOMY, 618 Broadway.—CURIOSITIES AND LECTURES, from 9 A. M. till 10 P. M.

HOOLEY'S OPERA HOUSE, Brooklyn.—ETHIOPIAN SONGS, DANCES, BURLESQUES, &c.

New York, Tuesday, March 1, 1864.

THE SITUATION.

The Army of the Potomac has made a movement, and we can say, without any breach of confidence or good faith, or any violation of those obligations by which, as honest journalists, we are bound not to embarrass the policy of the government, that it is not a backward movement. The course pursued by contemporary journals, which are supposed to be the friends of the administration, shall not tempt us to divulge facts which may be of service to the enemy, and can do no possible good to the Union cause in the present juncture. It is enough to say that General Meade is reported to have advanced in the direction of Richmond, with a force far superior to any which the enemy can at present bring against him, and that intelligence of a severe fight may reach us at any moment.

Our correspondent at Camp Finegan, Florida, furnishes an elaborate account of the late defeat of our forces at Olustee, in which five of our guns and a large number of our dead and wounded were left in the hands of the enemy. Our forces, though opposed by immensely superior numbers, fought gallantly. General Finegan's force occupied Baldwin on the 26th February; the Union troops then being in retreat on Jacksonville.

The reported appointment of General Sigel to the command of the army in West Virginia, in General Kelley's place, continues to excite a great deal of indignation in the camps.

Colonel Streight, Major McDonald, Captain Searce and Lieutenant Sterling, who escaped from the Libby prison, arrived at Washington yesterday. They reached the Potomac after many tedious wanderings, and were taken on board the gunboat Ella.

The rank of major general in the regular army was confirmed in the Senate yesterday in the case of General Grant, and that of brigadiers in the regular army upon Generals Meade, Thomas, Fergurson, Sherman, McPherson, Pleasanton and Warren. Pleasanton and Warren being made major generals of volunteers.

The Richmond papers of the 26th, contain late news from Charleston. One hundred and forty six shots from our batteries were fired on the city within twenty-four hours. Our troops were said to be erecting a battery on Dixon's Island.

Despatches from Starksville, Miss., to the 22d, report that heavy firing was going on at Pantotoc, and that forty of our troops were killed and one hundred captured. The battle is said to have closed by a charge from the Union cavalry, which was repulsed.

Despatches from Dalton to the same date say that our troops were retreating towards Chattanooga, and that General Longstreet has withdrawn his forces to a point "not prudent to mention."

The Raleigh (N. C.) *Standard* of the 9th of February says "that meetings in opposition to the rebel government have been held in that State, in Rutherford, Rockingham, Moore, Transylvania and Wake counties during the month of January; that they were all largely attended; and that resolutions hostile to the military despotism of the Confederate administration were adopted at each meeting."

CONGRESS.

In the Senate yesterday a bill for the protection of overland emigrants to the Pacific was introduced and referred to the Military Committee. Like reference was given to a resolution of the Michigan Legislature, asking for some change in the Enrolment act. A bill to empower State guardians of lunatics to act in that capacity in the District of Columbia was introduced and referred to the Judiciary Committee. Resolutions of the Kansas Legislature, making inquiries relative to the Kansas school lands, were presented. The bill making Parkersburg, Virginia, a port of entry, was passed. Mr. Sumner, from the Committee on Slavery and Freedmen, presented a report on the Fugitive Slave law, accompanied by a bill to repeal all laws for the rendition of slaves. The report and bill were laid over, and ordered to be printed. A bill to continue the payment of the present volunteer bounties to April 1 was reported, but after, considerable discussion, was laid over, in order to obtain the opinion of the President and Secretary of War on its expediency. The bill for the equalization of the pay of white and colored soldiers and for the equality of colored men with white men in the national courts were both considered for some time, the former being recommitted to the Military Committee, and the later being ordered to be printed. The Conference Committee on the whiskey tax reported a disagreement of the joint committee of the two houses. Mr. Sherman, in making the report, said that if the Senate would instruct its committee to allow a tax of twenty cents per gallon on liquors on hand on the 1st of July the bill would not fail. The subject was made the special order for to-day, at one o'clock. An executive session was then held, and, on the opening of the doors, the Senate adjourned.

In the House of Representatives a bill to secure to persons in the military and naval service homesteads out of the confiscated estates of rebels was introduced and referred to the Public Lands Committee. A resolution was offered in favor of a thirty-three per cent increase of the pay of soldiers and naval seamen. Bills were introduced to permit the payment of one-tenth of the amount of import duties up to July 1, 1865, in legal tender notes, and to authorise a suspension until April 1, 1867, of the direct tax of twenty millions of dollars provided for in the act of August, 1861, both of which bills were referred to the Ways and Means Committee. Leave was asked, but not granted, to offer a resolution directing the Military Committee to inquire into the expediency of setting rebel prisoners to work. The Committee on the Conduct of the War were instructed to make a report upon the practical working of the regulations for trade with the insurrectionary districts. The House passed the bill providing for the issue of bonds to the amount of two hundred millions of dollars, redeemable in not less than five nor more than forty years. A resolution was adopted calling on the Secretary of the Navy for a report of the operations of the fleet in Charleston harbor. A resolution for the appointment of a commission to treat with the rebel leaders was offered, but received only twenty two votes in its favor, to ninety-six against it. Resolutions were unanimously adopted that, in order to effectually put down the rebellion, the cause of it must be removed, and that anything short of a hearty support of the government in its efforts to subdue the rebels is a crime, where the question is between loyalty and treason. In the vote on these resolutions, however, the opposition members took occasion to express their dissent in opinion from the republicans as to what was the cause of the rebellion. A resolution condemning the arrest and banishment of Vallandigham was offered, and received forty-seven votes in its favor to seventy-six against it. Without transacting any other business, the House adjourned.

THE LEGISLATURE.

The two houses of our State Legislature reassembled yesterday, after their nine days' recess. Very little business, however, was transacted, there being little more than a quorum present in either branch. A favorable report was made in the Senate on the bill authorizing the Erie Railway Company to increase their capital stock so as to enable them to complete their double track. A bill for the incorporation of a Metropolitan Market Company in this city was given notice of in the Assembly.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS.

There was another crowded house at the Brooklyn Academy of Music last evening, being the seventh of the Brooklyn and Long Island Sanitary Fair. The receipts already amount to the handsome sum of $230,000.

The public reception of Mr. George Thompson, the great English abolitionist, took place last evening at the Cooper Institute. Major General Fremont presided, and, in introducing Mr. Thompson, made extended remarks, which, with a condensed report of the address of the distinguished guest, will be found in another part of to-day's paper.

The Councilmen met at one o'clock yesterday, President Hayes in the chair. The resolution granting the use of their Chamber during the month of March for a special term of the Supreme Court was, on motion of Mr. Gross, taken from the table and adopted. On motion of Mr. Brandon a resolution was adopted granting permission to the managers of the Metropolitan Sanitary Fair to erect a temporary wooden structure on the sidewalk in front of their premises in Fourteenth street, near Sixth avenue, and directing them to place a wooden sidewalk around it for the use of pedestrians. The Committee on Finance recommended that the Comptroller be authorized to issue an additional $300,000 of the Central Park Improvement Fund stock. Adopted. On motion of Mr. Webster the hour for the regular meeting of the Board was changed from one P. M. to four P. M. A number of bills for expenses incurred by the Committee on National Affairs of the last Board were authorized to be paid. Mr. Brandon offered a resolution directing the Croton Aqueduct Department to place a number of fire hydrants in the building to be occupied by the managers of the Metropolitan Sanitary Fair. Adopted. The Board adjourned until Thursday next at four o'clock.

We publish in to-day's paper the report of the Commissioners of Public Charities and Correction for 1863. It gives a full and interesting history of the operations of our penal and reformatory institutions. Among the list of places of evil doers may be found no less than eleven thousand grogshops, which, in their various ramifications, furnish the Commissioners with their thousands of subjects upon which to bestow their charity, and to protect them from falling still deeper into the abyss of crime. The statement in relation to the commitment of vagrants shows that 10,753 persons have been sent to Blackwell's Island, of whom 2,328 were males and 8,425 were females. Of this number 700 have been "sent up" for the one hundredth time and 5,775 for the first time. The aggregate number of times committed is 139,057, or twelve times for each person.

Judge Barnard decided yesterday to suspend all proceedings in the Husted habeas corpus case until the trial of the divorce suit, now pending between the parties, in which the father and mother both claim the custody of the child, is concluded.

A motion was made for a reference yesterday in the case of Charles Devlin vs. the Mayor, and Judge Barnard appointed John B. Haskin as referee. The plaintiff sues to recover $128,673 on contracts for grading and regulating Fifty-second and Fifty-seventh streets and New Bowery, together with filling up sunken lots in Seventy-ninth and Eightieth streets, under Street Commissioners Taylor and Furey. The defence set up is that there was fraud in the contracts, and that the claim is void by the statute of limitation.

The Mariposa Mining Company vs. Cornelius R. Garrison was on again yesterday in the Supreme Court, Chambers. The controversy grew out of a motion on the part of the defendant to compel the plaintiff to choose which of the two suits should be tried first. The argument was adjourned over until Thursday.

The New York Typographical Society had a magnificent banquet at the St. Nicholas Hotel last evening, which was conducted in a very brilliant fashion. Mr. Charles A. Alvord presided. Ex-Almshouse Governor Oliver, Mr. Bright, of Boston, and other gentlemen responded to the several toasts. The employing printers of the city were the principal agents in organizing the affair.

The London *Post* of the 13th of February publishes the following in a letter dated at Overseo, in the Danish Duchies:—Four Prussian vessels are known to have been placed under embargo at Copenhagen, and two vessels at Aalborg, one of which is a passenger ship from Hamburg. The Danish iron-clad steamer Ebern Soare has taken a Prussian schooner into Sonderburg as a prize.

The higher price of gold had a tendency to strengthen the markets; but the influence was counteracted by the inclemency of the weather, which rendered the markets dull, and the business was remarkably light in nearly all articles of foreign and domestic production. The dulness was pretty general, and but few articles were in any wise active. On 'Change the volume of trade was comparatively small. Flour was without decided change in prices; but the market was heavy, and to effect large sales some concession would have been necessary. Wheat was one cent lower, while corn, under a continued speculative movement, and light stock, advanced 2c. a 3c., old Western mixed selling as high as $1 38, delivered. Rye, barley and oats were unchanged. Whiskey continued dull. Provisions generally were quiet and subject to but little fluctuation. Freights were firmer, but not active. Groceries quiet. Petroleum dull and lower.

The Military Situation—The Army of the Potomac in Motion.

The Army of the Potomac is in motion, and in the direction of Richmond. The movement commenced last Saturday, and, as a single day's march would bring our troops to the winter encampment of General Lee, we may anticipate, at any moment, the intelligence of a desperate battle on his part, or a precipitate retreat, to save himself and to cover the city of Richmond. In announcing this advance of General Meade we conclude that we shall not incur the charge of "giving aid and comfort to the enemy," inasmuch as two of our city contemporaries—the special guardians of the administration and its war secrets—published the news, by or without authority, yesterday morning.

Entertaining the opinion that this movement is well timed; that General Meade is a careful and prudent officer; that his forces are decidedly superior in numbers to those of the enemy, and in excellent fighting condition, we are confident of good tidings within the next twenty-four or forty-eight hours. Lee's army of sixty thousand men last summer has been reduced to less than forty-five thousand, the transfer westward of Longstreet's column alone being equal to the loss of twenty-five thousand men. Next, on account of the scarcity of forage in Northeastern Virginia, Stuart's cavalry forces have been scattered about over a wide extent of country in order to recruit or to exchange their worn out horses for their expected active work of the spring campaign. Under these circumstances the advantages of a forward movement by General Meade are apparent, and especially when we consider his great superiority over his enemy in the matter of cavalry. General Lee, however, we suspect, has been seasonably informed of his danger to enable him to make some preparations to avert it; for doubtless the hurried retreat of Longstreet from East Tennessee, not for Georgia, but towards Virginia, has been in consequence of a requisition from Richmond.

We have urged upon the administration again and again the advantages offered in a movement upon Richmond by way of the peninsula. We never could understand that peculiar strategy of the War Office which recalled the army of McClellan from a secure base of operations and a strong position within thirty miles of Richmond all the way back to Washington to take a fresh start; nor have we ever been able to comprehend that profound fundamental error of the government that it is absolutely necessary that the army moving against Richmond must move between the rebel army and Washington; nor can we realize the necessity of persisting in the effort to overcome obstructions in a certain road when by taking another road we may turn them. It is well known that Richmond is now in a comparatively defenceless condition. It is believed by intelligent refugees that a force of twenty thousand men, by way of the peninsula, could take the city without difficulty; but we fear that this route, which was rejected with McClellan's recall, and which on several occasions since has vainly offered an easy passage into the rebel capital, will still be discarded, because it was the route of McClellan. We shall be satisfied, nevertheless, if the Army of the Potomac, while keeping guard over Washington, shall accomplish the great object of the dislodgment of the enemy from Richmond, or the cooping up of Lee's army behind its intrenchments.

The advance of our army from Chattanooga has been arrested for the present. The cavalry columns of Generals Smith and Grierson, we regret to say, have been driven back from Northern Mississippi into Tennessee, and this repulse creates some anxiety as to the safety of General Sherman, either at Selma, in Alabama, or advancing in that direction from Central Mississippi. President Lincoln's political Florida expedition has resulted in a disastrous and shocking failure, and Admiral Farragut has a tough piece of work before him at Mobile. But a great success by the Army of the Potomac, from the general demoralization of the enemy, will speedily open the way to a succession of victories around the whole line of the rebellion. This is the success which we anticipate from General Meade's present advance, and we know that the Army of the Potomac is competent in every respect and resolved at any sacrifice to win it.

THE BARBARISM OF THE WAR.—That the country is fast running into a state of barbarism we have every day evidence in the work of retaliation as practised by the different commanders. The latest case has occurred in North Carolina. The rebel General Pickett hangs a negro for shooting a rebel colonel. The Union General Peck awaits confirmation of the report before he proceeds to hang in retaliation a white rebel prisoner. The rebel general responds by declaring that he shall hang every negro he can catch shooting his officers or men, and for every rebel Peck hangs Pickett will hang ten Yankees. Pickett commenced the business by hanging some twenty or thirty loyal North Carolinians, charged with desertion from the rebel ranks; and now, we suppose, the work of hanging will be commenced in earnest by the two commanders. In old times the war cry was, "Hang out your banners;" but in these modern days, in this horrible modern rebellion, the cry is, "Hang up your men;" and it seems that one section of the country is likely to grow as much hemp as the other. This is a most sad and shocking spectacle. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of lives have been immolated upon this bloody altar of retaliation, and no good has been gained for either side. Is there no way for humanity to step in and stop these useless, brutal and revolting butcheries?

OLD ABE'S LAST CAMPAIGN—THE FLORIDA DISASTER.—As the facts of the recent battle at Olustee, in Florida, become better known, we see no reason why we should be any better satisfied with its result. Five thousand men, it appears, were marched fifty miles into a country occupied by the enemy, and were precipitated upon a force of double their numbers, whom they fought for three hours, and until compelled to retreat by heavy losses. At first all this was made to appear a blunder of that class of which we had so many at the commencement of the war. Somebody had run against a battery, as Schenck did, we were told. Our men had fallen into an ambuscade. But there was no ambuscade at all, and no surprise, in the ordinary sense. So far was it from an ambuscade that our men drove the enemy's skirmishers for miles, and the general in command must have known from every appearance that there was a force of the enemy in his front; for General Seymour, a soldier of the Mexican war, and promoted for gallantry at Gaines' Mill, must be sufficiently familiar with the appearances that indicate the presence of an enemy. His only surprise was, perhaps, to find that the enemy had ten or fifteen thousand men present, when he had been assured that their number was much less. Nor is it probable that there is any more truth in the story that Gen. Seymour acted without orders than there was in the ambuscade story. This last invention of the administration journals—that General Seymour went out to hunt up a fight on his own account—is evidently put forward to screen the President and his private secretary, who are the recognized originators and managers of this whole movement. But this ill-judged attempt to screen Old Abe at the expense of a gallant soldier only deepens the popular conviction that the President and his secretary are the only ones to blame in the business. They started the expedition and furnished the information upon which the arrangements for it were made, and we do not doubt that they gave for this fatal march orders so positive as to preclude the exercise of a soldier's discretion.

Old Abe's latest joke is that he is "well built for getting out through small places;" but this attempted sacrifice of Seymour will, we fancy, be found too small a loophole even for him.

OUR WAR BURDENS.—The keepers of first class hotels in this city have announced that after the 1st of March their prices will be increased to three dollars and fifty cents per day. Time was when two dollars per day was considered a round price for board at such houses as the Astor. But it is not with hotels alone that prices are advancing. Everything is going up, everything is inflated by the enormous expansion of the currency, and, while the rich become richer by their vast speculations in such times, the poor become poorer by the distressing advance in all the articles they are obliged to consume. So much for the mismanagement of the war by the President and the financial blundering of his Secretary of the Treasury.

THE WHISKEY TAX.—There is some hope after all that the whiskey jobbers in and out of Congress will not have it all their own way in regard to the tax on whiskey in store. The Conference Committee has voted to ask the Senate and House to instruct them to recommend a tax of twenty-five cents per gallon on whiskey on hand, and to raise the sliding scale to eighty cents on whiskey made after July 1, and one hundred cents after January 1, 1865. This will bring the tax something near the recommendations of the Convention of United States Assessors, held in Cleveland last December. Congress might go still further, and adopt another suggestion of the same Convention—this is, to make it a penal offence to adulterate liquors with poisonous substances. But this twenty-five cent tax on the article on hand is better than nothing; and it is not improbable that that would not have been obtained had it not been for the fear of Old Abe's veto on the whole bill.

The Gay Season in the Metropolis.

New York is grandly vindicating her claim to being the metropolis of the New World. Never before was this city so gay, so animated, so crowded, so prosperous. Lent, with its sombre hue, has failed to dim the bright lustre of our fashionable circles. If our *elite* must not dance during the interval which the Church claims as a period for sober thought and abnegation, they can and do crowd our Opera House, concert rooms and theatres. Receptions are now all the rage, and each day may be seen crowds of carriages in the fashionable avenues and streets, filled with ladies in most elegant *toilettes*. At the Academy of Music the display of satins, laces and jewels seems but to have increased. When Maretzek chooses to give way to popular prejudice, and allows his artists to sing Faust or Ione, the crowds which fill the house are resplendent. New York never before witnessed so much fashion, such rich displays of dress and beauty. Then our concert rooms are liberally patronized. The claims of eminent artists are now recognized by society with a fervor which proves that the public taste for art is on the increase.

We are now in the enjoyment of an additional source of amusement. The Ritchings English Opera troupe have commenced a series of their popular performances at Niblo's Garden and, to judge from the crowded state of the house on their opening night, will have their share of the public patronage. Our managers are bewildered by their extraordinary success. Mr. Wallack has actually retreated to Philadelphia, that in that suburban place he may be reminded of old times; that he may enjoy a rest and tranquillity such as was once to be met with in New York. As things are at present, the veteran feels how useless it is for him to plot and plan for the public amusement. All he has to do is to open his doors, play anything—Rosedale, for instance—and turn away crowds every night. Just so at the Winter Garden, where the Florences have grown gray playing the Ticket of Leave Man. We might go on citing twenty other places of amusement equally prosperous.

The hotels in all parts of the city benefit by the universal prosperity, and are overcrowded. Boarding houses are filled to repletion, while hosts of families are upon the verge of desperation from fear that on the 1st of May they will be turned homeless into the streets. There are no houses for rent and but few for sale. Our great restaurants are nightly filled with guests. Grand dinners are the order of the day. Delmonico's magnificent rooms are redolent with flowers and the fumes of rich wines. The Maison Doree has its share of patronage. A stranger must wonder where all the money that is needed to defray this immense expenditure for pleasure comes from. We are not prepared to answer *au juste;* but Chase knows.

In this whirlpool of dissipation and pleasure the masses are carried along unresistingly. The more wise shake their heads and hoard their greenbacks, or rather change them into something more substantial; but their dismay or fears cannot stem the popular current. "*Apres nous le deluge*" is the almost universal thought. A crash may, doubtless must, come ere long; but until it does New York will continue to be the gayest, most brilliant of cities, attracting vast crowds from the smaller and more insignificant places, such as Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, &c. One beautiful and prosperous city—we refer to Portland—seems to have been deserted by her most eminent citizens. We see them all here. We merely cite this as an instance of what New York is becoming in the estimation of the people of the North.

THE PURSUIT OF THE ALABAMA.—Two English mercantile houses, that have lost largely by the depredations of the Alabama, are, it is said, about to send out a fast and powerful ship to assist in her capture. Naturally enough, it has been suspected that this is only another rebel dodge intended to increase the number of the rebel cruisers now afloat. Since the Emperor of China and the Bey of Tunis have proved to be fellows of no account, it is not improbable that the Southern agents in England may be ready to avail themselves of the virtuous indignation that John Bull now begins to feel against that awful Alabama, and thus carry a cruiser to sea on that tide of popular sentiment which is now rising in our favor. Once before a ship was fitted out in England, under the most favorable auspices, to cruise against pirates. Her commander was a New Yorker, named Captain Kidd, and when he got to sea he proved to be the worst pirate of all. Probably we may have a repetition of that history in the present case. But we suppose our interests are quite safe; for it can hardly be possible that Mr. Adams will fail to scrutinize very closely the whole history of this ship. If she is not all right he can stop her, as he has stopped others; if she is all right he will merely sit still, and we suppose there will be no affidavits. The British government, as we all know, has no power in the absence of affidavits. Affidavits are the power behind the throne, and in front of the throne, and all around the throne. Without affidavits the custom house officers will be as lifeless as lampposts, the cannon on the British men-of-war will be the merest Quakers, and the cruiser will go to sea and catch the Alabama—of course.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.—While the Legislature has been engaged for so long a period in settling the matter of the Police Commissioners, the two Boards here decided an important question in a conciliatory way, and without much loss of time, by the appointment of some four hundred and fifty poll clerks for the election on the 8th instant, to decide whether soldiers shall have the right to vote. This saves the appointment of two sets of clerks, and the indescribable confusion consequent thereupon. Messrs. Acton and Bergen, of the old Board, and Messrs. McMurray, Bosworth and Lewis, of the new Board, took counsel together, and, agreeing upon a list satisfactory to both Boards, they have each issued commissions to the same parties. This is all right, and the Assembly would do well to settle the question by adopting the list of Commissioners as it stood at the time of taking their recess, which contains the names of four of those above mentioned; for, notwithstanding the prudence and forbearance shown by both Boards, the police force is becoming terribly demoralized, so much so that the interests of all concerned will compel a speedy appeal to the courts in the absence of legislative action. As it stands now, with the two Boards, one claiming authority *de facto* and the other *de jure*, the force is virtually without a head; and rogues and villains of all kinds take this condition of things to be an immunity for crime, and the criminal calendar is consequently enormously extended.

THE WAY TO ASSIST DISABLED SOLDIERS.—We have received several communications suggesting that disabled discharged soldiers who are not competent for re-enlistment, and are therefore out of employment, should be engaged, as far as possible, on our city railroad lines, as conductors or car drivers, and on the ferries, whenever vacancies occur. It would be but just and fair to afford them this opportunity of obtaining a living; and in gratitude for the services they have rendered the country they are entitled to this consideration from corporations like our city railroads and ferry companies, which draw their income from the people, upon whom the maintenance of these disabled soldiers must ultimately fall.

NEWS FROM THE STATE CAPITAL.

Reassembling of the Legislature After the Recess—The Excitement Over the Recent Withdrawal of Tammany from the State Convention—Revival of the Steamboat Catalina Imbroglio—Mr. Hackett in Albany, &c.

ALBANY, Feb. 29, 1864.

There was barely a quorum in either House of the Legislature this evening, and but short sessions were held. The bill authorizing the Erie Railroad to increase its stock, for the purpose of completing a double track, was reported favorably by the committee. The New York county tax levy was introduced in the Assembly, and several other bills of no great importance were introduced and noticed.

The action of Tammany, by withdrawing from the recent Democratic State Convention, has caused considerable excitement among the politicians. The most encouraging statements are received from different parts of the State. The Union democracy in all parts of the State appear to be ripe for another convention, and urge that Tammany shall raise the war banner and sail forth; also, that they are ready to rally to its support.

It seems that the Catalina steamboat affair is not dead yet. Gilbert C. Davidson, one of the partners in the purchase of that steamer with Weed, Matteson & Co., claims that, although the vessel was chartered for ten thousand dollars per month during the war, which was paid for two months, and although the insurance for upwards of twenty thousand has been collected, he has received no portion of it, and has taken the preliminary step to bring the matter into the courts for an account and adjudication. The complaint is being drawn up, and will to-morrow be filed, as the first step in bringing a settlement. The complaint sets forth the price that the vessel was purchased for eighteen thousand dollars; who were the parties to the transaction, and the interests of each; also the conditions of the charter insurance, as well as all other matters connected with that singular and mysterious affair. Thus it is that murder will out.

Hackett, President Lincoln's favorite, appeared in this city to-night as Falstaff.

Arrival of Colonel Streight and Other Escaped Officers in Washington.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29, 1864.

Colonel A. D. Streight, Fifty-first Indiana; Major B. B. McDonald, One Hundred and First Ohio; Captain W. W. Scearce, Fifty-first Indiana, and Lieutenant John Sterling, Thirteenth Indiana, who were among the prisoners escaped from Richmond on the 9th inst., are at Willard's, having arrived to day from the Lower Potomac, where they were picked up by our gunboats.

This party has travelled together ever since leaving Richmond, hiding in the daytime and stealing through forests and swamps at night. They remained concealed in Richmond several days after their escape from Castle Thunder, and finally started out in a northeasterly direction. Boats were found in some of the rivers, and in others rafts were constructed, upon which the passage across was effected. They were closely pursued by cavalry, militia, negroes and dogs, but owing to the marshy character of the region through which they passed the dogs were unable to trail them. Upon several occasions they narrowly escaped capture. A negro was the only one who ever gave information concerning their hiding place.

Upon arriving at the Potomac they found a number of rebel soldiers picketing the river. These were avoided for a few days, and, making their way up through the country, the refugees were taken up by the gunboat Ella yesterday.

The more interesting details of their experience is withheld for the benefit of those who have not reached our lines. The statements recently made, to the effect that Colonel Streight had arrived at Fortress Monroe, were invented for the purpose of inducing the rebels to relax their exertions for his recapture. The party was twelve days in making the trip, and, with the exception of fatigue incident to such an undertaking, are in remarkably good health.

DESPATCH FROM COMMANDER FOXHALL A. PARKER.

The Navy Department has received the following report:—

UNITED STATES STEAMSHIP ELLA, WASHINGTON, Feb. 29, 1864.

SIR—I have the honor to inform the Department that I arrived here to day with Colonel A. D. Streight, First Indiana Volunteers; Major B. B. McDonald, One Hundred and First Ohio Volunteers; Captain W. W. Scearce, Fifty-first Indiana Volunteers, and First Lieutenant John Sterling, Thirtieth Indiana Volunteers, who made their escape from Libby prison, Richmond, on the 9th instant, and reached Blacleston's Island, on the Potomac river, where I found them yesterday. I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant, FOXHALL A. PARKER, Commander commanding the Potomac flotilla.

Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.

SAFETY OF LIEUTENANT SCUDAMORE.

A letter from the Army of the Potomac informs us that First Lieutenant Scudamore, one of the officers who escaped from Libby prison with Colonel Streight and party, came into our lines last night, having been on the way nineteen days. He had intended to proceed by way of Gordonsville towards the Ohio river, thinking his chances of getting away in that direction better than by the peninsula, as he felt certain of being captured had he gone the latter way. After travelling twenty-five miles his knees failed him, and he was forced to lie in a mud-hole, as he terms it, for nine days. A negro took care of him and became his companion, and he resumed his journey. At another time he was obliged to lie concealed for three days. He finally reached the Rapidan on Saturday night, and crossed, passing within a few paces of the rebel pickets.

Lieutenant Scudamore says he saw no troops near Richmond, nor did he find any adult white male inhabitants on his route through the country. He met only women, children and negroes. He represents Lee's army as pretty strong; but no signs of activity were visible. He was captured near Rome, Ga., and had been ten months in the Libby prison.

Musical.

ITALIAN OPERA.

Verdi's Trovatore proves attractive at all times when sung by such artists as the Maretzek troupe. Although the public seem to have gone Faust mad, still a large and most fashionable audience filled the Academy of Music last evening to hear Mme. Medori, Mlle. Sulzer, Mazzoleni and Bellini in Verdi's masterpiece. From the commencement of the performance until the fall of the curtain on the last act the greatest success attended the efforts of these artists, who were most deservedly applauded. They were all in fine voice, and we noticed that an unusual number of encores were demanded by the well pleased audience.

To-night Faust will be repeated. The house will of course be jammed.

ENGLISH OPERA.

The Richings Opera troupe made their first appearance this season at Niblo's Garden last evening in the Postillion of Lonjumeau. The house was filled by a most appreciative audience and the performance was moderately successful. Miss Caroline Richings sang and acted the *role* of Madeleine with her usual spirit. We were not favorably impressed with Mr. Hill, the tenor of this troupe. His voice is by no means powerful or sympathetic. Mr. Seguin did not appear musically to great advantage in the secondary *role* of Bijou. He acted nicely, however, and will doubtless be more successful in some more important part. The music of this most pleasant of comic operas must ever please; but we would really recommend to the management more *ensemble* in the choruses.

GRAND CONCERT AT IRVING HALL.

On Saturday evening next a grand testimonial concert will take place at Irving Hall. This interesting event is gotten up by the friends of Mr. L. F. Harrison as a token of their recognition of his liberal and generous encouragement of native artists, who ever find in him a friend. A crowded audience will be present at this concert, which includes the best talent among our artistic circles.

Mr. Gottschalk gives a grand concert at Niblo's Saloon on Wednesday evening, assisted by Mmes. D'Angri, Varesi, Bouetoha and Mr. Carlo Patti.

NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

Report in the Senate of the Conference Committee on the Whiskey Tax.

The Committee on the Conduct of the War to Report on Trade with the Insurrectionary Districts.

Passage by the House of the Amendatory $200,000,000 Loan Bill.

Call on the Secretary of the Navy for a Report of Operations in Charleston Harbor, &c., &c., &c.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29, 1864.

PASSAGE OF THE LOAN BILL.

The Loan bill passed without much opposition to-day, it having been reported back by Mr. Davis, from the Committee of Ways and Means, with two unimportant amendments. This bill authorises only eleven millions of dollars of the new loan, the two hundred millions of five forties provided for being only a transfer of a portion of the ten-forty loan authorised by the last Congress.

THE GOLD BILL.

The Gold bill was not called up to-day in the House, as was expected, the call of States for resolutions not having been completed when the House adjourned. It can now be taken up out of its regular order this week only by unanimous consent. It may, however, be reached on the calendar if the Emancipation Bureau bill should be disposed of to-morrow or next day.

PLAN FOR REDUCING THE GOLD SURPLUS.

Mr. Wilson, of Iowa, introduced a bill to reduce the surplus of gold in the Treasury, by providing that one-tenth of the revenue now required to be paid in coin may be paid in legal tender notes. This was referred to the Committee of Ways and Means. It is important that this matter should be disposed of at an early day, as its pendency unsettles and disturbs business operations.

THE WHISKEY TAX.

The Conference Committee on the Internal Revenue bill did not report their disagreement to the House to-day, but will do so to-morrow morning. The report was, however, made in the Senate, and the Committee asked for instructions to report a bill taxing stocks of whiskey on hand twenty cents per gallon, and making the tax eighty cents per gallon after July 1, 1864, and one dollar after January 1, 1865. It was made the special order for Tuesday, and will no doubt occupy the attention of both houses for some time during to-morrow. The whiskey men do not appear to gain much strength by the agitation and delay of the question.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE DEPARTMENT ADVERTISING.

It is said that the President has notified the War and Navy Departments not to give out advertising except to such papers as he shall indicate. If this should be true, it is a new use of Executive patronage to control a nomination.

THE REGULATIONS REGARDING TRADE WITH THE SECEDED STATES.

Mr. Stevens having failed to obtain a suspension of the rules to enable him to introduce a resolution directing the Committee on the Conduct of the War to inquire into the practical operation of trade regulations in regard to trade with the seceded States, issued by the Secretary of the Treasury, and approved by the President, and into the conduct of the military and other officers charged with executing them, and whether any favoritism or partiality had been shown by such officers, it was subsequently renewed by General Garfield, of Ohio, under the call of States for resolutions, and, after considerable opposition, was adopted by a majority of thirty-three. The opposition was not from any objection to the investigation being had, but from a desire that a special committee should be raised for that purpose, with Frank Blair, or some one else not in the interest of Mr. Chase, as its chairman. It was put through, however, under the previous question.

THE ATTACK OF THE IRON-CLADS ON FORT SUMTER.

The entire official history of the attack of the iron-clads upon Fort Sumter last April is at length to be given to the public, the House having to-day, upon motion of F. P. Blair, Jr., called for the entire correspondence between the Navy Department and Admiral Dupont, the orders, reports, &c., previous and subsequent to that affair. This was demanded as an act of justice to the department, the House having previously called for Admiral Dupont's letters and reports. Mr. Blair stated that the department had no objection, but, in fact, was anxious that the complete correspondence should be published, as Dupont's friends had made violent and persistent attacks upon the department for inaction with reference to him. This correspondence will, it is claimed, not only exonerate the department from blame, but show that it was only after long waiting and repeated remonstrance against the inactivity which the fleet under his command was subjected to that it was decided to supersede him in the command and adopt a new line of operations.

THE DRAFT.

We have authority for saying that there is no truth in the statement telegraphed to the Philadelphia papers to the effect that Provost Marshal General Fry would to day issue an order postponing the draft until the 1st of April.

PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT OF GENERAL GRANT'S APPOINTMENT AS LIEUTENANT GENERAL.

The bill reviving the grade of lieutenant general was signed by the presiding officer of each house of Congress to-day. It has yet to be presented to the President for his approval before it becomes a law. Therefore the announcement that Grant had been appointed to that office was premature.

FULL LENGTH PORTRAIT OF GENERAL GRANT.

The full length portrait of Gen. Grant, painted by John Antrobius, of Chicago, now on exhibition at the Capitol, has elicited much commendation, particularly from those who are familiar with the General. The likeness is said to be perfect, and the picture challenges the admiration of artists. It represents the hero General standing upon a prominence, with a broken cannon by his side, Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge in the background, and preparing with a field glass to observe the operations of the army. It is a splendid picture.

IMPORTANT ARMY NOMINATIONS CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE.

The Senate to-day in executive session confirmed the nomination of Major General Ulysses S. Grant, of the volunteers, as major general in the regular army, with his commission dating from July 4, 1863, to fill an original vacancy.

The following were confirmed as brigadier generals in the regular army:—

Major General George G. Meade, of volunteers; commission dating from July 3, 1863, vice Sumner, deceased.

Major General William T. Sherman, of volunteers, dating from July 4, 1863, to fill an original vacancy.

Major General James B. McPherson, of volunteers, dating from August, 1863, vice Harney, retired.

Major General George H. Thomas, of the Volunteers, dating from October, 1863, vice Anderson, retired.

Brigadier General Alfred Pleasanton and Brigadier General Gouverneur K. Warren have been confirmed as major generals of volunteers, the former from June 22, 1863, and the latter from May 3, 1863.

The Senate also confirmed the following additional nominations to-day:—

Cyrus Riell, Eugene W. Watson and Josiah Pierson, to be third lieutenants; and Edward B. Furlong, to be second lieutenant in the revenue-cutter service.

Francis H. Ruggles, of Kentucky, Consul at Kingston, Jamaica.