

BROADWAY AND ANN STREET.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, PROPRIETOR.

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RELIGIOUS SERVICES TO-DAY.

ANTHONY MEMORIAL CHURCH.—Rev. Messrs. JOHN COTTON SMITH and B. E. LEACOCK. Evening.

CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION.—Rev. ARBUST BROWN. Morning and afternoon.

CHURCH OF THE STRANGERS, Hall of the University, Washington square.—Rev. DR. DEARNS. Morning and evening.

CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH.—EVANGELIST PREACHING ON "THE COMING OF THE LORD." Evening.

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION, Rutgers College.—Dr. E. O. FLAGG. Morning.

CANAL STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Morning, afternoon and evening.

CHURCH OF THE PURITANS.—Rev. MATTHEW HALL SMITH. Evening.

DODWORTH HALL.—SPIRITUALISTIC SOCIETY. Mrs. MARRIE C. MAYNARD. Evening.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE MEDIATOR.—Rev. JAMES E. HORNACK. Morning and afternoon.

MASONIC HALL.—THE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS. Morning and evening.

NORTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Rev. THOMAS BRUCE, on "THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITY LIFE." Evening.

SEVENTEENTH STREET METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—Rev. W. F. COBBET. Morning and evening.

ST. ANN'S FREE CHURCH.—Rev. BISHOP ATKINSON. Evening.

ST. JAMES CHURCH.—Lectures by Rev. FATHER YOUNG. Evening.

STANTON STREET BAPTIST CHURCH.—H. O. WELTON, before the "YOUNG MEN'S MISSION SOCIETY." Morning.

THIRTY-FOURTH STREET CHURCH.—Rev. DR. FLETCHER. MEMORIAL DISCOURSE ON "THE LATE MR. DR. CHRISTOPHER HUNT." Evening.

UNIVERSITY, Washington square.—BISHOP SNOW ON "JOSHUA AND HIS FELLOWS." Afternoon.

TRIPLE SHEET.

New York, Sunday, December 15, 1867.

THE NEWS.

EUROPE.

The news report by the Atlantic cable is dated yesterday evening, December 14. The London press was unanimous in a call for vigorous and severe measures on the part of the government against the Fenians. The police reported three persons killed and forty wounded by the Clerkenwell explosion. The Fenian Kelly, who was rescued in Manchester, is said to be in London, and to have directed the gunpowder plot. The prisoner Colonel Burke was up for further examination of his case at the Bow street police office. He voluntarily denied any knowledge of the explosion. The two men with the woman arrested at the time of the explosion were examined before the magistrates. No actual fact was proven against them, and they were remanded.

The inquest on the bodies of the deceased was in progress. The new constitution of Austria has been voted in the Legislature.

The English captives in Abyssinia were in good health. Four thousand Egyptian soldiers had joined the English army, and active preparations were going on.

Consols were at 92 1/2, for money, in London in the afternoon. Five-twentieths were at 7 1/2 in London and 7 1/2 in Frankfurt.

In the Liverpool cotton market middling uplands was at 6 1/2 a 7 1/2 per cent. Breadstuffs firmer. Provisions without marked change.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Our special telegrams from Cuba state that it had been authentically reported from Madrid that the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico had been offered to the American government by the Spanish authorities for \$150,000,000 in gold.

Our special telegrams by the Cuba cable contain news from Mexico, St. Thomas, Porto Rico, Hayti, the French Antilles and the Virgin Isles. The Mexican news is to the 4th inst. It is reported that Romero will probably succeed De Tejada in the Ministry. The Danish proclamation at St. Thomas concedes two years' time to the inhabitants to change their nationalities. General Montes, imprisoned by Salavie, President of Hayti, had been killed by the jailer. Montes' brother was compelled to look on while the murder was committed. The town of Bameterre, in Guadeloupe, is reported to have been burned down.

Commander Russell has officially notified the Navy Department of the loss of the steamer Monongahela. She was lifted by the waves over the warehouses in the town of Fredericksstadt, St. Croix, during the late terrific earthquake, and landed in the street.

In the Constitutional Convention yesterday, the report of the Committee on Salt Works, favoring the removal of the prohibition against the sale of salt, was received. A resolution providing for a recess on the 23d instant until the 2d proximo, and a final adjournment on the 7th, was tabled. The convention then adjourned to Monday evening.

Statistics relative to the live-stock system show the total number conferred since the commencement of the war to be three thousand five hundred and twenty-seven, for various reasons. Among the recipients are included commissaries, ordnance officers, quartermasters, chaplains and surgeons, few of whom ever looked into the muzzle of an enemy's gun.

In the columns of the Herald this morning will be found a series of articles on trade and the finances of the country, profession and dry goods markets, and the manner in which revenue seizures are made in the Metropolitan district. Curious statistics and useful data relative to trade and the finances will be found of interest to our merchants, and it may be interesting to householders to know that provisions are plenty, although the sale is not active, because wholesale dealers are holding back for a favorable change, and that there is almost a certainty of a reduction in rents by the next moving day.

The democrats in the California Legislature are still balloting in caucus for a Senator. The republican members have agreed upon Judge Brown. They endorse Grant for President.

A store was levied upon and closed by the Sheriff in Atlanta, Ga., yesterday, although an ordinance had just passed the Convention suspending all such proceedings. When General Pope was appealed to be deemed to interfere, on the ground that the ordinance merely suspended such levies and did not forbid their being made.

A reservoir in Douglas, Mass., broke on Friday night, and washed away one hundred yards of roadway. A man was struck by falling his house about and alarmed the neighborhood, thereby preventing an accident to the train which was due at five o'clock yesterday morning.

Charles B. Fuller, the alleged bank defaulter in Hartford, was yesterday sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

In the Virginia Convention yesterday numerous resolutions of inquiry were adopted relative to educational matters, the franchise and the test oath. The question of the intimidation of voters was referred to a committee.

A fight between negro and white people occurred in Albion, N. Y., recently, in which a sheriff was killed. Terrible distress, amounting to starvation in some cases, prevails in Louisiana.

Bethany College, West Virginia, was burned down yesterday.

The United States frigate Pintaquito, destined to re-berth the flag ship Hartford, of the Asiatic squadron, proceeded down to the lower bay yesterday and anchored.

A suit was commenced yesterday in the United States Circuit Court, by the filing of a bill in equity on behalf of Horace R. Tibbatts, against Cyrus W. Field, Peter Cooper, Moses Taylor and others, directors of the New York, Newfoundland and London Telegraph Company, to recover stock originally owned by plaintiff in the company. The case, so far as developed, will be found in the law reports of the Herald this morning, and promises to be very interesting.

The stock market was dull but firm yesterday. Government securities were heavy. Gold closed at 134.

Extremes quietude was the chief characteristic of the markets yesterday, the transactions in almost all articles being confined to the pressing wants of buyers. Cotton was depressed by the cable advices; prices were no lower, however. Coffee was dull and nominal. On "Change flour was exceedingly quiet, but firm; wheat was dull, but more firmly held; while corn advanced 2c a 3c, under a good demand and a scarcity. Oats were firm and in better demand. Pork was a trifle more active, but closed weak. Beef and lard were quiet and heavy. Freight was dull and rates were quiet nominal. Naval stores were less active, but prices were steady. Petroleum was quiet at former quotations.

Highly Important from Havana.—The Spanish Offer of Cuba and Porto Rico.—The Pressure of Manifest Destiny.

The intelligence which we publish this morning from Havana is of the highest significance and importance. Thus it runs:—Spain offers the magnificent island of Cuba and the pretty island of Porto Rico to the United States for the sum of one hundred and fifty millions of dollars, in three equal payments—one cash down, one next year and the third at the end of six years. The news has, naturally enough, created a great excitement in the "ever faithful island," the extinguishment of slavery being one of the consequences involved in the annexation. It seems, however, to be regarded as certain that the bargain will be completed forthwith, considering the enormous value of the islands in possession of the United States.

It is not a difficult matter, we think, to understand the why and the wherefore of such an offer from Spain at this crisis. Profitable as these islands are to her Most Catholic Majesty's government, her hold upon them is precarious and uncertain. With any little breeze of war, involving the balance of power in the Gulf of Mexico, they may slip through her fingers. Moreover, the cession of St. Thomas to the United States has the appearance of a strategic movement, which, in the event of a rupture with Spain, will enable us on a call at sunset, with a heavy squadron from St. Thomas on the one side and from Key West on the other, to seize both Porto Rico and Cuba by sunrise the next morning. Manifest destiny, or the laws of gravitation, point to the annexation of Cuba eventually to the United States. Peace or war, in the course of events the island must be ours. The American people are as firmly possessed of this idea as are the Italians of the manifest destiny of Rome. Spain, looking thoughtfully into the subject, has probably concluded that now is her appointed time, and that there is danger in delay. Again, her extravagances, resulting from her American discoveries and colonies and the enormous amounts of gold, silver and other materials of wealth derived therefrom in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had left her, like the Roman empire in its time, so enfeebled from her debaucheries that when in the sixteenth century her American colonies struck for independence she lost them, from Mexico to Peru, and all their vast contributions to her treasury.

Thus, nearly fifty years ago her American colonies were cut down to Cuba and Porto Rico, and from these during all this time she has largely depended for her supplies of ready cash. The luxurious, extravagant and idle habits of Spain, government and people, we say, contracted from the abounding wealth poured into her coffers from her American possessions in the days of her power and glory, have reduced her from the splendors of Philip the Second and his invincible armada, to the pride, the gallantry and the rags of Don Cesar de Bazan. Industry in Spain itself has relapsed into general idleness; the people are poor, the government is bankrupt, and has so far exhausted all means of raising the wind that the slightest increase of taxation develops a revolutionary conspiracy. In this extremity can we wonder that she offers to sell the goose that lays her golden eggs. Don Cesar must have his dinner, with his bottle of wine, though it may cost him the sword at his side.

Well, if her Most Catholic Majesty has authorized this offer for the cession of her last remaining American colonies to the United States, for so much gold, what are we to do? The islands are worth the money; but where is the money to come from? With a hard winter setting in they are at Washington dismissing scores of poor female clerks in order to save their pitiful salaries to the Treasury, while millions upon millions are lost in whiskey frauds upon the revenue. We are to pay seven millions two hundred thousand dollars in gold for Alaska, that polar bear region, where it rains or snows three hundred days in the year, and where over a large portion of that immense country they have a wintry night of three months' duration. We are to pay the same sum of money, or more, for St. Thomas and two or three other neighboring little islands, which may be turned inside out by a volcanic eruption, or swept off clean any day by a tornado; and we are burdened with twenty-five hundred millions of debt on account of our late Southern rebellion, and taxed to the utter most to make both ends meet. Where, then, are we to get these one hundred and fifty millions for Cuba and Porto Rico, if we can get those lovely islands at that figure?

We venture to say that a considerable portion may be derived by the Treasury from the undeveloped mines and forests, and the unappropriated lands of the islands themselves, deducting our losses from the loss of the tariff on Havana cigars and other articles. We suppose, however, that our negro worshipping radicals in Congress will consider the emancipation of the slaves of Cuba and Porto Rico and the complete extinction of the African slave trade cheap at a hundred and fifty millions, and that, with an eye to trade, our merchants would raise the first fifty millions as a loan at a good interest. In any event, if the offer has been made as reported, we have no time to lose in striking a bargain; for when England and France hear of this matter there will be some diplomatic hedging with Spain which may cut off our opportunity.

The Fine Arts in America.

The low prices which have been brought at certain recent picture sales are due, we think, to other causes than an alleged lack of interest in art. However prejudicial to art these causes may be, at least temporarily, we hope that they will cease with the immediate effects of our recent civil war. This is too great a country, and its people are endowed with too great a recuperative power, to remain much longer under the influence of these causes; and as soon as they shall be removed by the energy of our citizens and by the "sober second thoughts" of their representatives in Congress, we may expect to see art share in the general revival of all the forces which constitute our national life.

The war itself has opened a fresh and wide field for the American artist. Its kaleidoscopic aspects offer innumerable subjects for the pencil. At present, indeed, we must for the most part content ourselves with what may be termed the pictorial annals of the war. But if each of the many artists who accompanied either the federal or the Confederate armies were to reproduce with fidelity the scenes which he has himself witnessed in camp, in the bivouac, on the march or in battle, we should soon accumulate abundant materials for the future historians of the war on canvas. "Give us no more battle pictures," once cried Charles Sumner, in the antebellum days, when he was an apostle of peace. But hundreds of battles have since been fought on American soil, and it is not unfitting that due records of these stirring scenes should be made by the artist.

The war, moreover, occasioned greater familiarity with the boundless variety of American landscape than had previously been possessed. The eyes of our landscape artists have been opened to the fact that richer themes for their skill exist than can be found in their wonted haunts near Lake George, or in the White Mountains, or even along the shores of the lordly Hudson and in the picturesque valley of the Connecticut. They have discovered new points of view for pictures throughout the South and the Southwest—from Harper's Ferry, the valley of the Shenandoah, the Falls of James river, the twice historical Peninsula, and the Wilderness, to the rice lands of South Carolina, the swamps and "pine orchards" of North Carolina, the cotton and corn fields of Alabama and Mississippi, the mountains and valleys of Virginia, Georgia and Tennessee, to the sugar plantations of Louisiana and its bayous, where one sees the beautiful live oak, the waving cypress, the yellow hickory, the fan-leaved palmetto, the broad-leaved magnolia and the slender cane, together with the sweet gum and common oak smothered in creepers and Spanish moss, to the "fair Opelousas," with

Prairies and forests of fruit trees—Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the blossoms of budding above;

and, still further, to prairies "stretching far into Texas, even to the wild country of the Comanches," Eastern Tennessee, the Switzerland of America, would alone supply a landscape artist with materials for a lifetime of study. The Rocky Mountains and the partially explored regions of the Pacific slope open yet wider prospects for American art.

American life, moreover, must no longer seem so prosaic to the eye of an artist as it used to seem. The features of the heroes produced by the war must be preserved by portraiture for future generations. From the palatial dwelling on Fifth avenue to the distant hut of the Western pioneer as interesting interiors can be found as Dutch skill ever minutely depicted. Our public meetings and the gatherings at the polls on election days, to say nothing of the lively scenes of the present sleighing carnival, might keep a dozen Hogarths busy. And nature has lavished beauty enough on American children and young girls to give immortal fame to any artist who succeeds in doing justice to it. In fine, the American artist cannot lack for subjects, and notwithstanding the temporary financial depression there is ample wealth in the United States, and we may hope there will be ample culture, to insure him an abundant reward for greater efforts than he has hitherto made in his chosen field of labor. The painter, the sculptor and the architect must each find exercise for the highest talent in supplying the growing demands of society in our great republic.

The Late Street Fracas—His Society No Rights?

The inquest upon the body of Thomas Sharpe, killed in the late fracas on Broadway, elucidated testimony which entirely substantiated the history of the case already laid before the public through the columns of the Herald, even to the minutest detail. The verdict might have been anticipated, because there were literally "a cloud of witnesses" to the transaction; but a new question arises as to the disposition of the parties concerned. Two of the parties have been dismissed—one upon his own recognition, and another without claim upon him as all to answer for his part of the responsibility. In an ordinary street fight, resulting in death, all the principals concerned are generally held to satisfy the law; but there appears to be an exception in this case. Mr. Sharpe declines to make any charge against Mr. Leon, and Mr. Kelly declines to make any charge against Mr. Sharpe, although Leon was unquestionably engaged in an assault, and Kelly had a bullet lodged in his head by the pistol of Sharpe. These are facts admitted by the delinquents and proven by the sworn testimony of many witnesses; yet the District Attorney directs the magistrate to discharge both Leon and Sharpe. This may be very well as a friendly arrangement between the combatants; but has society no rights in the matter? Is indiscriminate pistol shooting in a crowded thoroughfare to be permitted because the persons engaged in it do not choose to prefer charges against each other, but rather elect to make a friendly compromise? We should think that the law and public safety ought to be consulted in the business and that the representatives of the law ought to interpose. This shocking scene of violence and bloodshed, in which many lives were exposed, was witnessed by a number of citizens. Surely some of them, acting in the public interest, might be found to institute a prosecution that may at least bring the question to a solution, whether hot tempered individuals can trifle with human life in one of the most public highways of the metropolis to satisfy their private quarrels, and be dismissed without rebuke, because they are willing to compound the affair between themselves. In other words, has society

no rights in a case like this? Can it not protect itself whether the delinquents are disposed to hush the matter up or not?

Earthquakes and Volcanoes.

We published on Tuesday special telegrams to the Herald reporting the continuance of the earthquakes at Porto Rico, one hundred and fourteen shocks having been experienced there within eight days; and also a rumor, which, however, is contradicted, that an earthquake look place at Caracas, in Venezuela, at daybreak on the 14th ult. The letter of our special correspondent at Panama, published by us on Tuesday, fully describes this eruption, which, as our correspondent remarks, was "undoubtedly connected with the series of similar phenomena witnessed all through the West Indies." Nothing is more striking in the history of great natural convulsions than the constancy with which volcanoes and earthquakes attend each other. This is the best proof that they are due to a similar origin—the energy of elastic vapors struggling to find a vent from beneath the surface of the earth." On the same night that Lima was destroyed by an earthquake four new volcanic vents were opened in the Andes. The earthquake at Lisbon in 1755 was speedily followed by the most violent eruptions that ever afflicted the world. Within one short month after the destruction of the city of Caracas the volcano of St. Vincent burst into activity, and at the moment it broke forth we are told that the earth was shaken to the extent of nearly twenty thousand square miles. It would seem that these examples of the widely extended sympathy between earthquakes and volcanoes are about to be paralleled in the West Indies, Central America and South America.

Elsewhere we have adverted to the simultaneous explosion of wars, revolutions, earthquakes and volcanoes, as indicating an inexplicable sympathy between matter and mind, and the subjection of both to influences no less mighty than mysterious. The researches of modern science, especially those relating to electricity, may yet lead to the discovery of the grand law which regulates all these strange perturbations of nature. The fact that hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions have either accompanied or followed the recent meteoric shower is suggestive of outside astronomical influences at work upon our globe, as well as of inside fires. A private correspondent who has been deeply interested in our special telegrams from the West Indies, and who says that the Herald editorials on our planetary convulsions "have thrown a flood of light upon the subject," urges us to invite to it the special attention of all savans throughout the world. He calls upon us "to pull all the electric wires around the globe for the purpose of arousing the attention of all the observatories." He thinks that our frequently proposed "storm bureau" might render essential service to the scientific inquirers whom he wishes us to stimulate to redoubled vigilance and study, and he proposes to "the astronomers, the meteorologists, the geologists, and all the other philosophical 'ists,'" the following questions—"What causes, at present, the pressure and feverish vibration in the atmosphere around the globe, as exhibited in hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes and cyclones, in their various tempestuous classifications? And what causes the agitation within the centre of our globe as indicated by the general eruption of volcanoes and earthquakes?" Our correspondent alludes to our statement of the theory in which Professor Loomis and Mrs. Somerville concur. "They commit us all conjointly," he says, "to a gigantic boiler explosion of our comparatively small planet, when we all, individually and collectively, are to be suddenly precipitated, like a wholesale meteoric shower through vast space, to be ignited and consumed through velocity in motion, like so many meteors disappearing like so much vapor." So far as the explosive theory of Professor Loomis and Mrs. Somerville is concerned, it explodes itself in consequence of the fact that volcanic eruptions are provided for by the laws of gravitation. Volcanic eruptions are so many safety valves against disturbances of the equilibrium.

Our correspondent is reminded by our special telegrams concerning the continued disturbances at Porto Rico of the fact that at the southern extremity of Italy, in Calabria and in Sicily, without less than four years, from 1783 to 1786, thousands of earthquake shocks were experienced, compared with which the recent disturbances in the West Indies dwindle into comparative insignificance. At any rate, he is evidently not frightened into believing that these are signs of a speedy end of the world. Hugh Miller, in his "Lectures on Geology," somewhere expresses his belief that our planet was in the earlier ages greatly more plastic and yielding than in these later times, and that the molten abyss from which all the Plutonic rocks were derived—that abyss to whose existence the earthquakes of the historic period and the recent volcanoes so significantly testify—was enveloped by a crust comparatively thin. Like the thin ice of the earlier winter frosts that yields under the too adventurous skater, it would not support great weights, &c. We might infer, however, from the recent displays of volcanic action towards the equator that the earth's crust is still alarmingly and especially thin in that direction, if it were not a fact that equally startling volcanic displays occur at different points all the way "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand." Iceland, for instance, forms a volcanic region by itself. Although it may not boast of any volcano which, like Stromboli in the Mediterranean, has been uninterruptedly active from the dawn of authentic history, "constituting a permanent fiery beacon to sailors on the adjoining seas," yet, according to Fitch, there is clear evidence that from the beginning of the twelfth century there has never been an interval of more than forty and very rarely of twenty years without either an eruption or a great earthquake. Some eruptions of Hecla have lasted six years without ceasing; and the greatest eruption on record proceeded from Skaptar Jukul, in 1783, when the lava flowed in two nearly opposite streams, fifty miles in one direction and forty in the other. This eruption did not cease entirely until the end of two years. Twenty villages and more than nine thousand lives were destroyed by it. On the 29th of August last, one of the most extraordinary volcanic eruptions ever witnessed in Iceland, took place on the north side of the Skaptar Jukul. Perhaps Mr. Beard would not have purchased Walrus if, as well as the West India islands, it

could not boast of volcanoes which, although covered for two-thirds of their height downward with perpetual snow, have been seen in eruption.

Our correspondent calls attention to a curious astronomical vision of Frederick Schlegel, the first hint for which Humboldt claims that he gave to Schlegel in a conversation with him on the certainty that the Southern cross would reappear in Germany, where it had already been visible, rising ten degrees above the horizon. "The cross," says Humboldt, in one of his letters to Varnhagen von Ense, "began to disappear in Northern Germany two thousand nine hundred years before our era." On his death-bed Schlegel revealed to Ludwig Tieck his astronomical vision predicting that all the stars of the first magnitude would very soon leave their places, and, moving towards each other, "would form a formidable cross." Now, Humboldt asserts "that he told Schlegel so" in a conversation with him at Vienna. And we naturally ask, "Is this all a myth?" Or, if not, then we must call upon astronomical calculation to settle an affair of such tremendous importance. Will the savans please answer this question:—"Is there on the astronomical maps the slightest perceptible change in the constellation of the heavenly bodies?" And this other question:—"Are the unusual and general atmospheric vibrations and violent symptoms terminating or not?" Our special telegrams attest that they are more active and more widespread than when they were first announced. Nicaragua alone has eighteen volcanoes of its own, and if they all break forth one after another it can do its full share either in the general explosion or in preventing it "by letting off steam" and "preserving the equilibrium." This, our correspondent believes, is the object of volcanic eruptions, "which are," he says, "so many safety valves against disturbances of the equilibrium." With him we await with interest the report of M. Delisle (who predicted the convulsions in the Virgin Islands) to the French Academy of Sciences. And we call upon the astronomers of the H. Rachel and Arago school, who are "constantly peeping, through improved and strengthened instruments," to favor us with the results of their observations. The United States have as yet shown no indications of volcanoes within their borders. Nevertheless we have had violent earthquakes like that which, in 1812, convulsed, at New Madrid, the Valley of the Mississippi; and our late civil war was an explosion of forces that partake of the volcanic and destructive nature of the material forces that occasion eruptions and earthquakes.

The Oratorio Season.

The very highest form of music and the drama is oratorio. "If you doubt, go listen to the 'Creation,'" says an inspired writer, "or any other sublime oratorio, and mark the potency of many impassioned scenes upon a people who as yet are but in the first chapter of what may become to them a noble volume. Listen to the heavenly sounds, and acknowledge that it is in moments like these that the heart expands in its sympathies, that men grow gentler and better, determine upon goodness and build up hopeful resolves." It is a species of holy opera, elevating and refining, without the exaggerated passion, sensuous ideas and artificial life of the stage opera. In its construction and rendering all the powers of musical genius and resources of poetry, religion and undefiled drama are employed. The greatest composers, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, &c., contribute their noblest energies to give musical expression to the sublime poetry of the Scriptures, and chorus, orchestra, organ, piano, in fine, every means that music can employ, unite in the rendering of oratorio. For the solo parts none but articles of the very highest order of talent should be selected, and the rehearsals of an oratorio should be far more exacting and thorough than those of a half dozen operas. England has been particularly fortunate in becoming the first home of oratorio, and since Handel produced his "Messiah" there in 1741 this sublime work has made its influence felt in every part of that country. They have their cathedral festivals every year, and in London the season of oratorio is looked forward to with as much interest as the operatic or dramatic season. Oratorio has hitherto been neglected in this country, and last season Mr. Harrison, of Steinway Hall, made the first organized attempt to render it a permanent feature in the metropolis. Before that time we have had, to be sure, the "Messiah" given every Christmas by the Harmonic Society, but no further effort was made to establish in our midst the highest form of music and the drama. The success of last season, however, was encouraging. "The Messiah," "Creation," "Elijah," "Judas Macabeus," "Samson," "Forty-sixth Psalm," and "The Season," have been already heard under favorable, or, at least, promising circumstances, and on one night of the "Messiah" thirty-five hundred people were crowded in and around the hall. The oratorio nights have always attracted in this city a larger number of people than the opera or naked drama, which is an encouraging sign of the true spirit of the public. People will go to see ballet and hear broken down vocalists because they have nothing better furnished to them by our theatrical managers; but let oratorios be once firmly established in the midst of us, and the reign of spectacles and trashy opera will be soon at an end. What can be more sublime than the Hallelujah chorus, or "The Heavens are telling," or the exulting hymn of the Israelites when the long drought ends in a deluge of rain at the prayers of Elijah? Hundreds of voices and instruments, with the thunder tones of the organ, peal forth those sublime utterances of thanksgiving to the Most High, more sublime, more heart touching and more truly religious than all the sermons of preachers and enthusiasts. Let all, then, interested in music, let all who have a spark of religious feeling in their souls, let all who desire the refinement and advancement of the public mind, see that oratorio be not neglected and suffered to die through lack of patronage in this city. It is something more than mere amusement—it is ennobling, civilizing and harmonizing. The angriest feelings melt before its softening influence, and the veriest cynic is thawed into humanity at its voice. It is the echo of the millions of archangels that send celestial harmony through the vast halls of the Eternal, the echo of the sleepless lyre of the universe, and the highest expression of man's acknowledgment of a Supreme Being. Let it not die, then, in this city.

Women Suffrage at Home and Abroad.

Women appear to be making rapid strides towards manhood suffrage, and something that seems very ridiculous in womanhood at the same time, both in this country and in England. At all events, the few pioneers in petitions are doing their best to that end, but they very decidedly object to the interference of their male champions in the crusade which they have undertaken in their own behalf. For instance, we find that at a meeting held yesterday at the headquarters of the "American Equal Rights Association," a resolution was adopted by the Executive Committee to the effect that they disclaim all responsibility for or endorsement of meetings like the one held at Cooper Institute by George Francis Train, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. This fulmination against the famous trio who have been stamping on the woman's rights platform from Kansas to the Atlantic coast is signed with the evocative name of Lucy Stone, and of course demolishes the claims of Mr. George F. Train to be regarded as the properly authorized advocate of equal rights for American citizens, and excommunicates poor Mrs. Stanton and S. B. Anthony.

There has been a co-operative, although furtive, woman's rights movement going on on the other side of the ocean also. In the recent election in England Mrs. Lily Maxwell, citizen of Manchester, presented herself as a voter, and the vote of the good woman was received by the officers. "Here's richness!" Here is a magnificent point, a wonderful precedent for Cady Stanton and that square of dimes and Merry Andrew, George Francis Train. Here is an undoubted evidence that the notion of our being a progressive and go-ahead people is all gammon; for slow John Bull is at least half a century in advance. Mrs. Maxwell's vote was received by the officers because her name was on the register. England is the land of red tape, and the officers could not go behind the registered list of voters. This is a land of some red tape, too. Therefore, all that the Cady Stantons have got to do is to get their names on the registers. How did Mrs. Maxwell get her name on that sacred list? That is the mystery. Could not the registering officers discriminate, or is this a preconcerted arrangement, a game concocted in that radical centre to agitate the suffrage in a new light? If any one shall move the invalidity of the election, or on any other point introduce the case of Mrs. Maxwell to the attention of the House of Commons, woman suffrage will no doubt be ventilated extensively, and there may be those who will require the lawyers to show that the women of England are not already legally voters.

With all these conflicts of authority at home and abroad it is very likely that the woman suffrage question will fall between two stools and get hurt.

Our City Theatres.

If, as Shakespeare believed, the end and object of the stage is to hold the mirror up to nature, the fraternity under whose control our city theatres flourish have done much and are doing more to pervert this instrument of moral culture from its original and laudable purpose and to transform it into a vehicle for the gratification of a morbid prurency. We have already expressed our opinion on the drama of the "Black Crook," and have wondered at the generality of a sentiment that could keep such a piece in undisputed possession of Niblo's stage for sixteen months; but as we have no desire to harp forever on one string, we will leave the matter to the effect of time and returning reason. We cannot blame our theatrical managers for yielding to the force of *argumentum ad crumenam*, which they doubtless feel as strongly as the rest of our busy community; but we do complain, and complain with reason, of those managers who, while they escape the contagion of that spectacular disease which is now raging in the theatrical world, fail to see that something more is needed to preserve the purity of the drama than merely resisting the temptations of ballet and blue fire. We have theatres in America that challenge comparison with any in the world, and at one (Wallack's) a company that, with the exception of that of Drury Lane, in London, has no superior in any theatre where the English language is used; and it appears somewhat incomprehensible that the attractions of the "Black Crook" and "The Devil's Auction" are rivaled only with roccoco comedies and trashy, sensational dramas. We do not mean by this to disparage those standard works of art whose intrinsic merit has placed them in the foremost ranks of stage literature for nigh a century, and elevated them almost beyond the reach of criticism; but as caviare is a delicacy of which even a Russian may sicken, so a series of comedies treating of the customs, inclinations and foibles of the last century are apt, when unrelieved by talent of a later date, to disagree with the taste of an American audience in 1867.

It is somewhat strange that our stage literature should be almost exclusively the work of English writers, and that in America, American authors should be conspicuous only for their absence. We have an indifferent adaptation of Beecher's "Norwood," it is true, together with one or two pieces treating of New York life in its shady aspect, and we would point to even these as the commencement of a new era in the dramatic world, did we imagine that they would be followed by others representing American scenes and people of a different order; but we have every reason to believe that the principal attractions of the present winter will be found to be English pieces and English adaptations. Our managers seem incapable of moving from the groove in which they started, and appear so persistently to seek their inspirations from across the Atlantic that one gentleman has made it his business to take down, in shorthand, the various pieces, as they are performed in London, for the express benefit of New York managers. To this channel we are indebted for several pieces that have been brought out in New York; and though some of our *empresarii* would properly decline to profit by such a questionable proceeding, it is consistent neither with our pride nor our ability, that the need or the fact of such a practice should exist. English dramatists of the present day are a very worthy, energetic and hard working body of gentlemen—some of whom have carried to great perfection the art of picking the brains of their French neighbors—and we are quite ready to acknowledge our indebtedness to them for their many works, but at the