SCENES IN THE SESSIONS.

The Family of Solomon Lack Wisdom.

A Divorced Father Refuses to Maintain His Family.

A Police Officer Clubs a "Canny Scott"—Scotty Comes Off Triumphant.

Charge of Klopemania Against a Millionnaire's Wife.

"Give me money."

Thus spoke the son of a German Hebrew at Niblo's theatre a few evenings ago, when seeking to obtain from a close-fisted gentleman the means of support for himself and a sister; and its recitation in the Court of Special Sessions yesterday, before Judge Dowling, presiding, created a great sensation. Some nine years ago Joseph Solomon, the complainant, was divorced from his wife in one of the superior courts, but was not compelled to allow anything in the shape of alimony to his former spouse, although several children had to be provided for. But the Israelite did not seem to study that matter. He probably trusted that she might be provided for in some such miraculous manner as is recorded in holy writ in connection with some of his ancestors. But Ruth has not been so fortunate. Her troubles seem to have increased each year, and her cares have multiplied in proportion as her poverty became more apparent. Ascertaining that her faithless better half was carrying on the trade of a jeweller and sold jewels to

ACTORS AND ACTRESSES AT NIBLO'S,

it appears that she sent her son Theodore Solomon to the theatre, with the hope of getting something for the maintenance of her children. The young Hebrew accordingly approached his father with much fear and trembling during a rehearsal, and sitting in the gate that is called "Broadway entrance," he solicited alms from his hard-hearted parent. Now, it happened that Solomon the elder had at the time a quantity of valuable property, including diamonds, in his possession, and as the eyes of the youth fell upon the glittering baubles the spirit of his race came upon him and he coveted—at least so said his father. After a grand discharge from his vocabulary of abuse, it appears that Solomon, Senior, was determined

TO OFFER NO SACRIFICE,

to give no bread, from the result of his hard earnings for the support of his family. Finding that his venerable papa was determined to tighten his grasp upon his reputed wealth and shut up his bowels of compassion, refusing the means of existence in terms well defined and apparently irrevocable, the young "gent" thought he would strike the hard rock, in imitation of an ancestor, with the hope that the desired stamps would flow when all other efforts and entreaties had failed. But this caused a great disturbance at Niblo's, and Solomon, Senior, requested the people at the theatre to put Solomons, Jr., into the street, and, as soon as this was done, caused the arrest of his offspring for assault and violence.

Judge—How long have you been divorced?

Solomon—About nine years, since 1861; but, your Honor, if dies feller would say, "Gif me money" politely, I gif it him; but if he come like a blackguard I will gif him not a cent; when he come he was blackguard, and I say you are young and you can work; I gif you no money.

"But surely the divorce did not separate you from your children?" Here the patriarch prattled on so fast, talking of his son's worthlessness and otherwise avoiding the question at issue, that Judge Dowling positively had to remind

SOLOMON HE LACKED WISDOM,

and advised him to answer only such questions as might be put to him.

"But my son is a bad feller and I would not let him have my money," said Solomon, and he looked daggers at the object of his wrath. "When he come he say, 'You get diamonds and I must have money,' and I will not gif dat—no, never!" The defendant, a beardless lad, was placed upon the stand, apparently as destitute as his persuasion usually picture themselves under all circumstances—a picture of misery and clothed in tattered garments—here sackcloth, but devoid of ashes. He represented himself and his mother and sisters as being poorer than Lazarus, while his father was as rich as Abraham and meaner than Ahab. He was without food or raiment and he sought a pittance from his father's abundance, and when he told the old boy he was sick, "Well, what is that to me?" said he. "Go to the hospital."

"No, no," interrupted the old one, "he come, he abuse me bad, and I say to the people at Niblo's, turn him out," and the complainant stamped and raved in an extraordinary manner. At length the Judge addressed the young Solomon and reminded him of the

FOOLISHNESS OF HIS WISDOM

in using violence and abusive language; and on receiving a promise that he would allow his parent to pass unmolested through the wilderness in the future, he was permitted to leave the court.

"But my mother and sisters," said young hopeful, "what of them?"

"They must apply to a superior court," said the Judge.

A POLICE OFFICER IN DIFFICULTY.

Michael Brady, a police officer of the Nineteenth precinct, came very near being the subject of one of the warders in the city prison. Evidence was adduced to show that Brady had been ordered to a shanty in Fifty-eighth street, between Fifth and Sixth avenues, on the 19th inst., to quell a disturbance that had arisen between Michael Kearnan and his wife, away up on the rocks. But Mrs. Kearnan, on a second consideration, would not cause her husband to be arrested, as he had only broken her nose and otherwise disfigured her, but promised, like

A BONNIE WIFE

(they were both Scotch), to "forgie him if he did nae do it agen." Mike, however, on the following night was destined to pay a penalty for his offence on the previous day. His wife had that day been removed to Bellevue Hospital with smallpox, and also one child. Sitting, therefore, at home on the evening in question, and talking with his little "garl" about what they should buy for "mather" on Christmas Day, the officer in question entered the shanty, and, under the pretence that a disturbance had been created,

CLUBBED THE UNFORTUNATE "SCOT,"

until the "skin was all off his head and his nase cracked," the scars being plainly visible yesterday. In vain Brady tried to fasten the guilt upon Kearnan, stating that when he entered the latter came at him with a hatchet and threatened "to go for him," &c.; but it was tolerably clear that Brady, in clubbing the "Scot," had gone a long way beyond his duty.

Judge Dowling—Officer, what business had you to go to this man's house, and after assaulting him, out of mere pettiness, turn round and arrest him on the charge of assault and battery?

"I didn't go into the house," said the officer.

"If you were here on trial," said the Judge, "and your conduct was as flagrant as it now is proved to be, notwithstanding the uniform you wear, I should not hesitate to send you to the Penitentiary. Let the prisoner go."

THE WRONG MAN.

Some little amusement was now created by the fact that the wrong prisoner was sent up by the warden to answer to a charge for stealing a watch. It appears the prisoner had what is called "changed names" with another, and consequently when the complainant was asked to identify the thief he could not point him out. This was a palpable error on the part of the warden, which ought not to occur.

AN ACCUSED MILLIONNAIRE.

After a number of small cases had been disposed of the case of the "People vs. Mrs. Phelps" came on for hearing. This is one of the most remarkable cases that probably ever came up before this Court. On Tuesday afternoon last Mrs. Elizabeth Phelps, of 49 East Twenty-third street, the wife of one of the richest residents in New York, and who has been reputed for her wealth as well as for her benevolence, and charitable inclinations, entered Macy's store, in Fourteenth street and Sixth avenue. At this time the store appears to have been crowded almost to excess. While in here she was charged by Margaret Grotty with

STEALING A QUANTITY OF CANDY

of the value of about thirty cents. Mrs. Phelps, as the wife of a millionnaire, as might naturally be supposed, repudiated the calumnious charge, but despite this she was compelled to appear before Justice Cox, at the Jefferson Market Police Court, before she could obtain a release from custody, as already stated in these columns.

Mr. David Dudley Field and his son attended on behalf of Mrs. Phelps more as friends than in the capacity of her legal advisers, Mr. Macy being represented by Mr. Knox.

The first witness sworn was Margaret Grotty, a handsome, intelligent looking brunette, who stated that Mrs. Phelps came into the store in the department in which she was engaged and took up a quantity—two packets—of candy, and after first placing it on the counter before her she covered it up with another parcel and her muff. Subsequently, continued the witness, Mrs. Phelps took two bonbon boxes and asked the price of them after they were filled, and while she was putting up the bonbons into the boxes she saw Mrs. Phelps stoop down, pick up a piece of white paper and wrap the candy in it; she next came to Mrs. Phelps and told her that she had taken the candy in question; but this the other denied; after a short time, she maintained, she saw Mrs. Phelps drop the package of candy from her person, where she had secreted it; it dropped three feet from the counter; she went to the superintendent and told her that a lady had stolen some candy and requested her to see to the matter. Mr. Field now put this witness through a most severe cross-examination, eliciting from her the position and length of the counter, the time the transaction occupied, the distance of the counters from each other, and numerous other details.

Mr. Field—Is it true that you receive a recompense if any one is convicted through your vigilance?

Witness—No, sir; such occurrences as arrests are frequent, perhaps, but not in my presence; I do not get any increase of salary for such things; my salary is seven dollars a week.

Mr. Field—How do you know Mrs. Phelps took the candy?

Witness—Because I saw it up at the end of the counter first and then immediately afterwards missed it; I did not see in what part of her person she had secreted it, but I saw it drop from her person; after I accused her of taking it she said, "There is some mistake about this, my child."

Mrs. Laforge, of No. 200 Sixth avenue, stated that she was superintendent for Mr. Macy. She said that on Tuesday last she was in her office in the building, when a messenger from Miss Grotty informed her that a lady had taken something; presently Miss Grotty came down with Mrs. Phelps, and told the detective, or shopwalker, of what had occurred. Mrs. Phelps said there was some gross mistake somewhere and desired to see Mr. Macy. The witness told her that Mr. Macy would not be in until after six o'clock in the evening. She said

MRS. PHELPS WAS VERY INDIGNANT,

and told her who she was and where she lived; on consulting the Directory she found that this information was correct. Witness suggested to send for some one, and Mrs. Phelps mentioned several names, but afterwards said she would prefer to go before a police justice, which she did. In cross-examination this witness admitted that a great many ladies were sent to the police station on charges of theft, and that it was the practice in Mr. Macy's business to arrest any one found stealing goods; she had a certain interest in the business, was not a partner, but had a commission from the firm. She would not swear that the store was not crowded at the time or that the carriages were not three deep outside the store. On the whole, considering the extent of the examination conducted by Mr. Field, Sr., for nearly half an hour, Mrs. Laforge maintained her self-possession and made but few mistakes.

MRS. PHELPS' TESTIMONY.

Mrs. Phelps was next placed upon the stand and gave her evidence with coolness and determination. I went out, she said, on the day mentioned, with the intention of purchasing a few pieces of box edging, or "box," as it is generally termed, and for this purpose I visited a Mr. Wilson, a florist in Fourteenth street. After seeing several sorts I took a few sprigs, which he wrapped up in paper for me. Leaving there I passed near Macy's, and wishing to purchase a little toy for one of my grandchildren I went in. Seeing this young person, whom I thought very intelligent looking (pointing to the witness Grotty), and seeing some pretty little boxes, filled with bonbons, I asked her the price, and she replied, stating their cost. At this time I broke the paper in which the sprigs of box were packed, and, seeing a piece of nice white paper on the floor, I stooped to pick it up, and re-wrapped the evergreen in it. Holding my muff in one hand, and trying to hold this parcel also, I took out my pocketbook to pay her for the bonbons, when this package dropped; and before I knew anything about the matter in question she

ACCUSED ME OF STEALING

a package of candy. I was very indignant, and asked for Mr. Macy. She took me to an office and told another person that she had seen me take it off the counter. After this Mrs. Phelps stated that for the time being she was so thoroughly taken by surprise that she could not remember to whom he send for the moment. She was told that if she did not send for some one she would have to accompany an officer to Jefferson Market, and that if there bail was not forthcoming

SHE WOULD BE LOCKED UP.

Judge—Mrs. Phelps, did you take the candy?

Mrs. Phelps—If I am in my right senses I never saw it nor touched it. I have no doubt that this witness Grotty believes what she has said, but it was doubtless owing to the falling of the package of sprigs that the whole mistake had arisen.

Judge Dowling said that from the evidence adduced before him there was no doubt that the matter was a mistake, but that in the disposition he was about to make of the case he wished it to be clearly understood that it ought in no way to reflect upon the character of the witnesses. It was a case in which the principal witness believed in her mistake, and as her reputation was her capital he would rather, if there should be a loss, that it fell upon Mrs. Phelps, who could afford it better than the others. In his opinion the witnesses, though mistaken, believed they were in the right; but from the evidence taken, coupling it with the high character of Mrs. Phelps and her charitable and benevolent tendencies—and character always spoke in favor of a person in court—the only conclusion he could arrive at was a full dismissal of the case.

Mrs. Phelps, who was splendidly attired in a deep velvet costume and wearing heavy furs, then left the court, accompanied by her friends.

THE NICK WALL HORROR.

Perils of the Mississippi—Snagging of the Steamer Nick Wall—Over One Hundred Lives Lost—Graphic Account of the Disaster.

[Memphis (Dec. 22) despatch to the Boston Evening Times.]

Passengers who arrived here to-night from below, among whom is one of the passengers of the Nick Wall, give the following details of the accident to that boat on Sunday night, which resulted in the death of over one hundred passengers. The Wall struck the snag at half-past ten on the night named and sunk in less than ten minutes in forty feet of water. Her hurricane roof falling in from the immense weight thereon made prisoners of the cabin passengers, thereby preventing their escape. Mr. Montehutcher, the passenger mentioned, states that at the time named eight or ten passengers were sitting about the stove when they felt the shock. He then ran out of the door of the cabin, and was about to return when the cabin roof caved in, dashing barrels, wagons, ploughs and other articles into the cabin, where everybody had rushed who could get out of their staterooms. Mr. Montenutcher's further statement is as follows:—I was thrown against the smokestack on starboard, as the steamer was then falling on her larboard side. I was twice pulled back by the hair, and, in the third attempt made, some one caught me by the feet, in the struggle to save himself, and pulled my shoes off. I finally managed to gain the hurricane deck, and then saw no earthly chance for escape, as the roof was by this time crowded, and every one was seeking for something on which to float. The boat was by this time under the water; nothing remained out but the hurricane roof and the pilot house. The wreck was still floating down the river, and we did not know what moment she would sink. Women were screaming for husbands and children, and children for parents. Just as we thought all hopes were gone we saw the lights of a boat coming up the river, and every one that could shouted for assistance. James Vandervorst, assistant pilot, lighted a piece of paper in the pilot house, showing it as a signal of distress. In about fifteen minutes the friendly boat floated alongside and made fast to the wreck, when a staging was thrown out and all that were able got on board the Seminole. After she came alongside Vandervorst and Richard Dill, the porter of the ill-fated steamer, cut through the hurricane roof and found Mrs. Roe, the captain's wife, wedged in among a lot of barrels, boxes, &c. She was brought into the cabin of the Seminole, and after great exertions showed signs of life and is now doing well. The dead were then brought in. The scene beggars description. There were about twenty-five killed, but I cannot tell how many were wounded. Mr. Taylor, from some part of Missouri, who was rooming with me, is among the dead. He had retired about five minutes before the accident happened. A gentleman, with his daughter and son-in-law, the last two just married, are among the dead. They intended to get off about one mile below the wreck. The Nick Wall lies aground about four miles below Worthon Point, where she struck. The number of lives lost by the accident cannot be ascertained. Sixty or more deck passengers went on board at this place. Several of these, in the midst of the terror of the scene, leaped overboard and were drowned. Many were taken from the water by life boats. The Seminole passengers say that Captain Montgomery came up to the wreck and touched it so lightly and gently that there was not the slightest perceptible shock. Then the lifeboats almost immediately surrounded the Nick Wall. Captain Montgomery not only exhibited coolness and skill, but his kindness was unbounded. The steamer Paragon passed the wreck of the Nick Wall about two hours after the accident occurred, and the captain, officers and crew tendered the unfortunate people taken from the wreck every possible kindness. Those going down the river were taken by the Paragon to their destination. The names of those saved are as follows:—

Thomas J. Robertson, Georgia; W. L. Springberry, Georgia; Samuel W. Scott, Arkansas; Hugh Thompson, St. Louis; Wm. V. Evans, Kansas City; L. F. M. Martin, Alabama; M. Joss, Emile Joss, Chicago; E. W. Feasal, St. Charles, Mo.; R. G. Baldwin, St. Louis; Wm. Boyd, St. Louis; J. R. Bowers, G. H. Bowers, T. J. Bowers, Mrs. N. S. Bowers, Mississippi; H. E. Bowers, R. D. Bowers, Cherokee county, Ala.; M. Smith, Georgia; Wm. B. Smith, Georgia; E. M. Ralater, T. S. Ralater, M. J. Roberts, Alabama; Peter Whisenant, Mary Whisenant, Amanda Whisenant, Littleton Whisenant, Nancy Whisenant, Wm. Whisenant, Rodo Whisenant, O. Whisenant and A. Whisenant, of Alabama; W. A. Bowers, L. Bowers, Alabama; A. Harris, Emma Harris, Newton Harris, J. L. Sprayberry, Cherokee county, Ala.; J. T. Johnson, Titus county, Texas; Samuel L[illegible], engineer; George T. Anshutz, engineer; John W. Rocclock, Georgetown, Pa.; James McHaffey, steward, do.; P. H. Langton, cabin boy, Iowa; F. Fearson, Chicago; C. Kramer, do.; A. J. McDennis and Robert Beaton, deck passengers; Ed. Floot, cook; Dennis Mack, wife and child, Milwaukee; Charles West, Martin Ready, William M. Destea and James Bates, firemen; Elihu Woldrop, passenger, and others.

In extricating Mrs. Roe an axe had to be used to cut through the hurricane roof. She was struck with the axe, but not seriously wounded. Seventy emigrants and twenty cabin passengers boarded the Nick Wall here. She had on board 150 souls, all of whom were lost, except those named above. The disaster is the most appalling one that has occurred since the explosion of the Sultana in 1865. Among the lost was a bridal party that got on here.

Michael Cavanagh, of New Hampshire, had an excellent chance to attend church on Sunday, but preferred the attractions of a quail hunt. Missing a fair shot he was so exasperated that he struck his dog over the head with the butt of his gun, discharging the weapon, and shooting himself dead.

"BOSS" TWEED.

A Princely Christmas Gift to the Poor of the Seventh Ward—He Hangs the Holly by the Hearths of Hundreds of Impoverished Families.

Yet another and still grander demonstration of the munificence of the great leader of the Tammany democracy, Senator Tweed, was developed last evening at a meeting of prominent citizens of the Seventh ward held in the parlors of the Oriental Club, 235 East Broadway, and called at the instance of Mr. Michael J. Shandley. The commodious and elegant rooms of this famous and select east side resort were crowded with citizens principally interested in the object of the invitation issued by Mr. Shandley, while many were there developing the scheme, as trustees, to erect a bronze

STATUE OF SENATOR TWEED,

on Tweed plaza, at the junction of East Broadway, New Canal and Rutgers streets. During the proceedings of the meetings of both parties could be heard the sweet voices of visiting ladies in another part of the building, appropriately

WARBLING A "CHRISTMAS CAROL."

At the hour mentioned in his call Mr. Michael J. Shandley took a position in the centre of the front parlor, and asked the attention of the gentlemen present to the reading of a letter he had received from Senator Tweed, which he knew would arouse all the better emotions of their hearts and endear its writer still more to the people of the old Seventh ward. The communication came in so appropriate a time, in cold December, whose biting winds the poor so keenly felt, and on the eve of the Birthday of Him who was born in the lowly manger and declared the greatest of virtues was

SWEET CHARITY.

Mr. Shandley then read the following letter:—

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS,
237 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, Dec. 23, 1870.

DEAR SIR—Be pleased to call together a few willing citizens of the Seventh ward, men who would be earnest and patient in the labor and exercise judgment, and be systematic in the distribution of the fund, and ask them to accept from me, as trustees of the poor of the precinct, the amount indicated on the enclosed check. Have them to organize as soon as possible for the immediate relief of the needy. Your friend, WM. M. TWEED.

MICHAEL J. SHANDLEY, Oriental Club.

Mr. Shandley stated that the amount of money the check called for was

FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS,

which announcement created a sensation which culminated in a general clapping of hands and finally an outburst of enthusiastic cheering. Mr. Shandley then suggested the propriety of an immediate organization, when Mr. Jeremiah Quinlan proposed for chairman of the meeting Judge Edward J. Shandley, and John Galvin, President of the Board of Assistant Aldermen, for Secretary. A committee was next appointed to select a title for the organization and select permanent officers. During their retiracy Judge Shandley addressed those present in terms highly laudatory of Mr. Tweed. The committee reported as appropriate for the name "The Tweed Poor Relief Association of the Seventh Ward," and nominated the following list of officers, which was adopted:—

Board of Trustees—President, Judge Edward J. Shandley; Treasurer, Jeremiah Quinlan; Coroner Patrick H. Keenan, Alderman Bryan Reilly, Alderman John Galvin, Assemblyman John J. Blair.

On motion of Coroner KEENAN, Mr. William M. Tweed was chosen honorary president.

The ward was then divided into three relief districts, and committees on fuel, provisions, clothing, &c., were appointed. The association will be in full operation, it is thought, by Tuesday evening, but public announcement of the day of distribution will be duly made.

OUT OF A KANUCK JAIL.

Captain Joseph Murphy Thanks the Herald for His Release—Story of His Capture and Confinement—Eating a Feninn Commission—The Jailer Weeps at Losing a "Boarder."

The native born American who owns the above name, and whose case was brought before the country through the instrumentality of the HERALD, was released from his prison "boarding house" on the 16th inst., and, after making certain stoppages on his road home, arrived in this city the day before yesterday. Among his first visits here was a call at the HERALD office to show his gratitude for the great service it had done in effecting his jail delivery in time to

EAT HIS CHRISTMAS DINNER

with his good old mother. He gave the following details of his arrest and durance vile:—On the 24th of May last he left the city with some three hundred Fenians. On arriving at Burlington he was informed that the Fenians had crossed the border the day before and occupied the forever famous Pigeon Hill. A special locomotive was placed at their service and took them to St. Albans, where they arrived late at night. There the story of the advance was repeated and the martial Murphy procured a wagon, owned and driven by another Murphy. In this chariot he started for the front. The night was very dark and a thick mist prevailed. On the road to the border they met a body of men who halted the wagon and asked them their business. They were Fenians and on Murphy showing his commission as

PROVOST MARSHAL AND CHIEF OF STAFF,

the wagon was allowed to proceed. They had only proceeded a couple of hundred yards when the wagon was again halted. Captain Murphy inquired for "General" O'Neill, and, after a strange hesitation, he was told he would be conducted to the General's house. He could not make out their uniforms, but they formed on each side of the wagon and started forward. He soon learned from fragments of conversation,

TO HIS UTTER AMAZEMENT,

that he was in the hands of the Philistines, and that his escort was a squad of Canadian volunteers. His whole desire now was to destroy his commission.

EATING A COMMISSION.

Accordingly, with the greatest stealth, he drew it from his inner vest pocket, tore it in two pieces, gave the larger piece to his comrade to eat, and ate the other himself. He breathed more freely then, and his next attention was turned to his pistol, which, however, on account of two men who had got into the wagon, he was unable to throw away until the next day. He was carelessly searched at Cook's Corners by a blustering officer of the party on the same night, but the

PISTOL WAS NOT DISCOVERED.

To this fact Murphy believes he owes his life. A receipt for $100 paid by him into the Fenian headquarters was found, which he believed he had left in New York. On the following day he and his driver, Murphy, were lodged

IN SWEETSBURG JAIL,

which is just eighteen miles from the border. Here he remained until his release.

LIFE IN A CANADIAN JAIL.

At half-past seven A. M. he was roused up in his cell by the warder, and, after his ablution, proceeded to breakfast in a room common to all the prisoners. Here breakfast was served, consisting of a pint of oatmeal porridge and a chunk of bread. At this point in his fate he learned a refreshing fact, which showed him how

CANADA GOT SQUARE WITH THE FENIANS:

namely, that for thirty-seven and a half cents a day he could get a sufficiency of decent "prog." He closed with this offer and became the boarder of his jailer. This was so satisfactory all round that the Captain's lot grew to be almost enviable, money being a scarcity down there, and any change from porridge three times a day very desirable. He found the forced companions of his magnificent misery very dull company, consisting generally of French Canadian burglars and horse thieves. A gentleman named Foster, in on a charge of assault and battery, was a godsend, but he only came ten days before the Captain's release. At twelve o'clock each day dinner was served, and at half-past four P. M. he was locked up for the night in his damp cell without heat or light until half-past seven the following morning, thus giving him fifteen hours'

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

each day. There was no outdoor exercise, because there was no wall to the prison yard, and until the mural surrounding was completed he did not breathe the fresh air. This was some twenty days before getting out. The pleasure of a walk round was somewhat heightened by about two feet of snow then on the ground. The other Murphy was let out on the 3d of August, there being no evidence against him. Captain Murphy several times applied for a trial, but was steadily pooh-poohed until the HERALD took up his case, when, "presto!" the doors opened, and with the trifling delay to give personal security in $2,000 for his appearance at Ottawa on the 16th of February, 1871.

HE THINKS HE'LL LET IT SLIDE,

and leave the Kanucks to whistle for their estreated bail.

He thinks they were glad to be rid of him—that is the government. All indeed around him shared his exultation, except the jailer,

WHO WEPT COPIOUSLY

at losing so steady a boarder.

Captain Murphy feels very grateful to the administration and to his friends, but his highest feelings in this regard are lavishly bestowed on the HERALD.

RUTHERFURD PARK HOTEL BURNED DOWN.

Early yesterday morning, somewhere about one o'clock, the extensive summer boarding house known as the Rutherfurd Park Hotel, at that place, up the Passaic river six miles or so above Newark, caught or was set fire to and burned to the ground. The proprietors valued it at about $125,000, it having recently been rebuilt from the ruins of a previous fire and thoroughly refitted. There are insurances on it to the extent of about $60,000. Knapp & Mecherson were the proprietors. There is some suspicion of incendiarism.

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

Commander William G. Temple is ordered to the command of the Tennessee, now fitting out at New York; Paymaster Thomas G. Caswell, Second Assistant Engineers Edward J. Allen and Francis M. Ashton, Gunner Thomas P. Venable and Sailmaker Francis Boom, to the Tennessee; Master Arthur A. Boyd to the Michigan; Lieutenant Commander George W. Hayward and G. B. D. Glidden have been detached from the Naval Academy and ordered to the Tennessee.

BRAZIL.

Difficulty With the Peruvians on the Amazon—Financial Affairs—The Executive—Judicial System—From Entre Rios.

RIO JANEIRO, Nov. 25, 1870.

The hostile demonstration which has really been made by the Peruvians on the Amazon has, upon more correct reports, dwindled down from the capture of the Brazilian gunboat Mage to the mere act of firing at her, for what reason is not known, as the government declines giving the least information, and the semi-official papers also preserve a significant silence. In the province where the act occurred there is now no opposition press to let us know anything that the government does not want known, as the President of Amazonas—a gentleman of the Napoleonic stripe—has effectually squashed the only opposition paper published there, by the simple process of threatening to arrest and deport as a dangerous character the only printing house proprietor who could print the paper, should he not break his contract with the editor. Thus the people of Amazonas are saved the annoyance of reading how badly governed they are, and they live, therefore, in the purest enjoyment of Arcadian bliss; but at the same time we, who do not enjoy the honor of living under the paternal watchfulness of the Amazonian President, think it hard that his care for the morality and contentment of his happy subjects should keep the news from us. In the absence, therefore, of anything official or semi-official regarding the Peruviano-Brazilian difficulty all I can say is that from a diplomatic quarter concerned I hear that the Brazilian gunboat was fired into, and that I see work going on briskly on the little iron-clads and monitors which were laid up in ordinary after their return from the Paraguay.

Touching on Paraguay, I learn from good authority that General McMahon has handed over to Madame Lynch the whole of the large sum of money, stated to be some $100,000, which she had confided to him for safe keeping when he left Paraguay. This was to be expected from a man of his character; but after the manner in which Dr. Stewart repudiated the payment of sums for which Madame Lynch held receipts that lady must have appreciated the different procedure of the American Minister highly.

The currency has felt considerable effect from a report current in the city that the government was negotiating in London a loan of £8,000,000, to pay off the remainder of the floating debt in interest notes and other unfunded liabilities. Bank exchange rose to 24 pence the milreis, and gold fell to 114. After some days the government unofficially declared that the report was not correct; but people have got so accustomed to the government denials of things it does not care to admit that there remains a half belief that the government is really feeling its way in regard to one in London, especially as an examination of the law of estimates for 1871-72 shows that the clause authorizing loans for the purpose of funding the floating debt was so changed in the edition of the act as to authorize a foreign loan.

A revision of the warehouse charges of the Custom House Dock Company has been promised us, with a view to silencing some of the clamor made by importers against the heavy charges. The new scale is to discriminate between the rent payable for goods of little bulk but great value, and that chargeable on heavy goods of little value, such as salt and iron. By the scale still in vigor no distinction whatever was made.

Some time ago I noticed that the Legislature of Piauhy had instituted a prosecution in the Supreme Court of Brazil of a president of that province, for having acted as a despot, suspending laws in execution and holding on to the presidency after he had been dismissed by the Minister of the empire. The Court has found him guilty on the first charge, but has acquitted him of the latter, because a kind of conditional authority was given to him in a confidential letter from the Minister to hold the office after the official dismissal. It is to be hoped that other provinces will follow the example of Piauhy, so as to keep a little check on those viceroys, who seem to regard nothing but their own will as the law of the unfortunate provinces. One of them—the President of Goyaz—has even had the impudence to declare in one of the papers to-day, in answer to a charge that he had forced his brother on the province as a representative, that he could elect there whom he pleased and keep out whom he pleased. And the worst of the matter is that his boast is probably true, for there are several other provinces where one family in each can dispose of it, and in many of the rest two or three families are dominant in each, one or other gaining the ascendancy according as the ministry at the head of the administration of the nation leans to it or the other.

The Brazilian executive has a simple way of dealing with persons who make themselves disagreeable to "authority"—that is, to any person with influence. Supposing, for instance, that an agreeable young fellow with unpleasantly empty pockets takes to tinkling serenades or sending billets-doux to sympathetic young ladies and exchanging finger telegrams from distant windows, the stern parent makes interest with the "authority," and the enterprising troubadour is caught some night, sent off to the capital, and presented with a complete suit of clothes and a musket to boot. Again, if any one of the boys gets to playing the wolf among the susceptible lambkins of the district, and is out of favor with some friend of the "authority," he is apt to find his ardor turned to account as patriotism exercised in defence of his country. Thus both morality and authority are vindicated without troubling a judge and jury, and if occasionally the authority makes a mistake and favors a voter on the other side with clothing and honorable service for life, the chances are that if the fellow had not offended then he would trespass some time or other, and prevention is better than cure. Now and then, however, his friends do not agree with the authority, and we have just heard that two of such favored individuals were rescued in Ceara from a party in charge of them at a cost of bloodshed and loss of life. But pressing and savage conflicts to rescue sons, brothers or dear friends from the living death of the army of Brazil are so common, especially in the northern provinces, that the affair I have alluded to would hardly have got a notice had not the young fellows been seized for alleged inconvenient amatory propensities, which, perhaps, excited sympathetic feeling in the local chronicler. Probably, if such a blessing as an independent press could exist in Brazil, which it seems it cannot do, the notoriety given to such oppressive acts of the nearly irresponsible and really despotic "authorities" to whom the country is allotted in districts would prove a check to their recommittal; but at present there seems practically no remedy, and the people are too divided, ignorant and spiritless to react against oppression.

Among the curiosities of the Brazilian judicial system is that which gives the judges of rights the power of convicting and sentencing, without trial by jury, in cases of homicide occurring within forty-one miles of the frontier. Whatever the reasons which induced the legislators to deny this to those accused of homicide that guarantee of trial by jury which they did not withdraw from persons accused of less serious crimes, it cannot be said that the results are always favorable to the views of those who extol the civil law maxims and process over those of the common law. In Rio Grande do Sul a case has been taken on appeal from the judge at Bagé, who proffered the following sentence against a woman accused of having instigated a slave of hers to murder her second husband, from whom she was seeking a divorce.

As to the accused Belisaria, considering—first, her thoroughly bad disposition; second, the fact of her having been seriously suspected of the violent death of her first husband, for which she was imprisoned and prosecuted in the next county by justice; third, the fact of her having been repulsed by her own father, who could merely find strength enough to tell her that his silence was the only defence he could make in her favor and aid; fourth, the solemn weight of public opinion, which has declared against her and which was so significantly expressed by the last unanimous replies of all the witnesses; fifth, the certainty of her hatred against her husband; sixth, the hurried conviction which she must have acquired of the criminal need to get rid of him, in order to avoid further expenditure for the maintenance of her divorce suit against him, and to obtain possession of the marriage property—all these facts and circumstances are most vehement indications, to which are added the very grave presumptions resulting from the crushing accusations of the other accused, who, with obstinate, constant and uniform persistence, has always affirmed that he committed the horrible murder in combination and agreement with the said Belisaria; and seventh, adding also the depositions of the witnesses Isabel Victoria and Jose Martins, they furnish the degree of judicial proof requisite to establish that the said Belisaria was the instigatrix of the said homicide.

In regard, therefore, to the accused Belisaria Borges Medina, qualifying her crime as that of article 193 of the said code, and recognizing that she had been impelled to the offence by a bad motive, and that she had proceeded with cool and cruel premeditation, I sentence her to imprisonment for life, with labor, the highest degree of the penalties of that article combined with article forty-five of the code.

A sentence of this kind must be a sufficient curiosity to common law jurists; but its beauties are further relieved by the facts, that in the testimony (all written down) referred to in the original of the sentence, in support of the conclusions, there was no evidence whatever as to the alleged bad disposition of the accused woman; that the accusation of making away with her first husband was made by an interested nephew, and she was released before committal, it being proved that her husband had died of typhus fever a few days after he returned sick from the war; and that the allegation of her father having abandoned her was made without evidence and against the assertions of the interrogated woman. But the fact appears to be that the judge—it might almost be said, as usual—was a partizan, who was doing the work of enemies of her father. In like manner, the public prosecuter in the case of the accusation in regard to her first husband's death was proved to have taken $1,500 to go against her, and was convicted of receiving the bribe. Whether guilty or not, she was to be found guilty, to suit the purposes of private enmities; and it would not be for the first time—nay, the hundredth time—that Brazilian judges have prostituted their high mission, through influence, hatred or corruption.

But if country life in Brazil has its tragical and hateful side it is not without its farcical features. For example, staying at a plantation one hears sometimes a coming sound of agonizing inharmonies, which soon resolves itself into a furious discord as a cavalcade of instrumentalists approaches. At the head of the nearing procession of bareheaded men one sees an individual carrying a long staff profusely decorated, its top a fluttering mass of ribbons, which seemingly have stolen all the hues of the chromoscope. Behind, a cavalier is beating a diabolical tattoo on a cracked drum of country manufacture, another works his arm with piston-red regularity in the unsuccessful effort to scratch sweet sounds from a tuneless and untuned fiddle, and a third is puffing out his cheeks like Æolus in an equally vain endeavor to extort melody from a shrieking fife. The cavalcade stops at the house, the riders carefully dismount themselves and their implements for harrowing, and are courteously received by the planter and his family and household, all reverently kneeling before the mysterious pole. The procession marches into the chapel, or oratory, always attached to plantation houses, and there before the altar they commence a maddening mixture of instrumental discord, with a species of howling which passes for singing in the country districts. After these ceremonial discords have been dutifully performed the top of the mysterious pole is lowered to the lips of all those present, and is unctuously kissed by every mouth, from the delicate lips of the planter's daughters to the blubbery osculatory organs of the Brazilian representative of Old Uncle Ned, who, ulcered and leprotic, perhaps, has toittered, with all the rest of the slaves within hearing, to the chapel to kiss the sanctified representative of the "Espirito Santo." In fact, almost hidden in the mass of fluttering ribbons, may be noticed a silver dove, the emblem of the Holy Ghost, and to it the adoration of the worshipping throng has been directed.

These curious excursions are usually due to the leader of the harmonious troupe having vowed to collect enough cash to get up a festival of the Espirito Santo, a certain amount of good works being involved in the labor of fiddling, chanting and begging round the country. Occasionally a rich planter makes such a vow, and then he hires all the musicians of the country round and gets a band or two belonging to the national guard. The thing is thus got up in style, the whole district rings with the news and every one is as excited as a preacher at camp meeting time. It is hard to say whether the planter believes in the virtue of the ceremony, for he only shrugs his shoulders if pressed on the point and says the blacks like it. However, he shells out freely, knees and kisses like the rest, and seems to enjoy the diversification about as much as the really devout females of his family and the demonstrative, fervorous blacks. In the dreary life of a Brazilian plantation such an affair is almost a blessing, and, as the planter says, it has a great effect on the slaves.

A fetish sect has been found to exist here, and the police have arrested the originator and high priest, a black man. His devotees were all females, mostly black, but many mulattoes, and even a few whites. All of them had to pay him sums of money according to their means, from one hundred dollars down to five, and were bound to render him unlimited and unscrupulous obedience. On these conditions he promised them the full enjoyment of their desires of fortune, and he held various *séances*, in which, after a number of ceremonies—some of them Fetish and others of them drawn from the rites of the Catholic Church—he uttered oracles as though inspired. It appears from the evidence acquired that the devotees were used by him as a seraglio, and that, in the orgies of himself and chosen associates, young and innocent girls were prostituted to their use by their parents and relations, so utter was the command he had acquired over their superstitious minds by his ceremonies and promises. In his house were found rich and costly ceremonial robes, and numbers of articles, as hair, portraits, &c., used by him in his incantations.

In Entre Rios the two corps of the government forces had concentrated at the headquarters of General Gelly y Obes, General Rivas having given over the pursuit, or what he called such, of Lopes Jordan. Of this latter person and his forces the accounts continue contradictory, some still asserting his force was nearly all dispersed, while others say that, finding by the results of the engagements at Santa Rosa that without more cannon he could make only temporary impression on the government armies, he had determined to withdraw to La Paz to receive cannon, which his friends had succeeded in getting up the river despite the watchfulness of the central government. But, in fact, all is conjecture in regard to Lopes Jordan's forces, for, being all cavalry and splendidly mounted, their movements are too rapid and the whole country is too depopulated to allow of satisfactory information being gained. Thus, though the government troops outnumber them by one-half or two-thirds, Jordan manages always to be the assailant and to carry off the spoils, if not the honors, of a victory. As for the President's offer of amnesty, it received no attention.

CHRISTMAS COLD.

The Frost King Comes with Santa Claus—The Department of Public Parks on Ice.

All over the town one meets immense bundles of clothes promenading in uncouth style, and containing somewhere within the mystery of their swathing beings of the *genus homo*. From thick mufflers and tightly drawn furs a Prussian blue nose protrudes, and occasionally a half-smothered wheezy voice suggests to the passer by that the weather is uncommonly cold, and

THE WIND IS V