NEW YEAR'S DAY.

How It Was Celebrated in the City and Suburbs.

Installation of Mayor William H. Wickham.

SCENES AT THE CITY HALL.

Reception by the Sheriff and County Clerk.

Immense Throng of Skaters at the Central Park.

Observances at the Public and Charitable Institutions.

New Year's Day is one of the principal red letter days of civilization. Like Christmas, it bids all humanity above savagedom to be joyous and hopeful. Ever since the Romans dedicated January to Janus it has been deemed to be in harmony with the eternal fitness of things that its earliest days should be the season of good omens and friendliness, and that these should take the form of visits between neighbors, of wishing happiness and of New Year's gifts. In nearly all the cities of the world, with the exception of Paris and New York, the day obtains only a careless observance; it has a recognition, it is true, but it is the recognition of accident and not that of universal custom, whereas with us men leave all meaner things to welcome the dawn of another well-marked period in the calendar of their lives.

In Paris they celebrate the birth of a new year by a generous distribution of gifts to husbands, wives, children, more distant relations, and to friends who are near and dear. It is a day of bonbons and light hearts and a night of pleasure, gayety and intense enjoyment, at the opera, the theatre and the café. In New York the Parisian spirit is toned and sobered by the Knickerbocker influence. The celebration takes a social turn and is less demonstrative. Formalism and friendliness for once meet on a common ground and embrace each other. It is a day for formal calls; but the season, with its significance, and the generous hospitality lift the formalism into friendliness, and if those who call do not see each other again until the next New Year, all down the sunshine and shadow of the twelve months the visit is one of the pleasant memories of life. It was observed yesterday in New York and Brooklyn after the same old fashion. The day was bright, fine, clear and cold—pleasant for those who made their calls either in carriages or on foot; for the first braced the nerves and gave a lightness to the step that was almost equal to a sixth sense.

BEST SOCIETY VISITATION.

Fifth avenue, Murray Hill, Madison avenue, the neighborhood of Central Park, and, indeed, all the fashionable region of both cities, was a prolonged pageant yesterday. On all the sidewalks was the assembled flower of manhood, and in the parlors were groups of budding and full blown womanhood, in all the loveliness of nature and art. The majority of the callers were young men; some were of a *blasé* kind, affecting an elegance of costume that would indicate that the noblest study of mankind was dress. They had seen enough of the world, evidently, to acquire the air and manner of a luxurious and enervating indolence. One wonders if life ever was to these men real and earnest; whether they were animated in their earlier days to heroic ambitions and to noble aims, whether they had ever tried to give this purpose to the years of their earlier manhood, and, failing in this, had given up the determination to possess a gentle remembrance in some tender heart and to acquire a dazzling fame among their fellow men, and lived now content only to eat, drink and sleep well. These representatives of the youthful manhood of "Vanity Fair" found ready admission to the brown stone palaces of the rich, the great and the good. Fair women, arrayed in toilets of surpassing richness and with a natural beauty of feature that in some cases had been largely assisted by art, received these men in their parlors with all the tact and grace that is woman's natural dowry. The good old Knickerbocker custom has established the necessity that to the pleasant greetings which the occasion naturally suggests there should be the distribution of a large hospitality, so the pretty women in the exquisite toilets offer refreshment, which, thanks to modern wisdom, is generally toothsome and exhilarating, but not fiercely stimulating. Few men are equal to the drinking of a glass of wine at every call without being unpleasantly compelled to encounter demoralizing consequences, and so Fashion and Beauty have decreed, of late years, that "the lunch counter of the drinking saloon" shall no longer desecrate their drawing rooms. There is discretion as well as morality in this.

NEW YEAR'S NIGHT.

The "calls" are generally supplemented by the evening party and the dance. An abstinence from wine in the day enables the gentlemen to put in an appearance at these parties with all their virtues thick upon them. This is greatly promotive of harmony and a good time. What an assemblage there is, generally, at these New Year's parties and balls! It should be a congress of the wit, the beauty and the fame of the city, or of the best people in our own set. Instead of this it is a grand display of dancing, dressing, smirking, feigning and leasting. Ladies in silks and satins are criticising ladies in gauze and gossamer. They are all watching with eagle eyes their marriageable companions of both sexes. There is more calculation than love in their glances, and a great deal of jealousy if a favored friend seems to obtain a monopoly of the attention of a gay cavalier. Then there are the non-dancing dowagers and the non-dancing men. What an effort it is for them to be amiable and kill time at one operation! How the elderly gentlemen twist single gloves in a very wretched manner when they bow to the dowagers, and then clutch their hands behind them and walk away, looking very miserable! Then the dowagers get off their little jokes on the old men as they shuffle away. But, thank God, all these littlenesses of humanity cannot spoil the music! The airs of Verdi, Mozart, Wagner that the stringed band is pouring forth in all their divine melody no hollow laughter, no unmeaning compliments can rob us of. They will live until the day comes when there are no more new years to rise and set.

NEW YEAR'S FOR THE MILLION.

Yesterday was a day of rest for the weary. The laboring, the toiling poor obtained a rest yesterday, which, upon the whole, they wisely used. How soon the poor forget their wretchedness! Being only used to live for the present, they make a gain of every pleasure as soon as it offers itself. The surfeited rich are much more difficult to satisfy; they require time and everything to suit before they can be happy. If it were not for the clothes that will wear out, the appetites that grow larger, and the winter, when sunshine cannot be got for nothing, the poor might banish dull care away. But this social pressure, this enigma of life comes to all of us, more or less; to the poor with unrelenting emphasis, and makes yesterday too often only the prelude to a lie that has much sorrow and little sunshine.

AT THE CITY HALL.

The inauguration of Mayor William H. Wickham was the event of the day in this city. Officially his presence at the City Hall commanded the respect of the numerous heads of departments; personally his popularity attracted a host of friends. These elements being combined it may readily be inferred that the occasion was as cheerful and auspicious as the most devoted and hopeful admirers of the new incumbent could have looked for. In the "old country," as naturalized fortune seekers are wont to style affectionately some sections of the Eastern Hemisphere, the incoming Lord Mayor is generally treated to a procession immediately after he has donned the robes of office and taxpayers standing on the tiptoe of expectation are permitted to gaze upon his benign countenance from house tops, windows and the street, but as the European plan in that respect has not yet been adopted on this side of the Atlantic there remains but little to chronicle so far as Mayor Wickham's installation is concerned. The process was simple, for the reception of a bunch of keys went a long ways to give the new Mayor nine points of the law.

Let it be recorded, then, that the new Mayor of New York, in whom so many hopes are centred and from whom so much is expected in the way of sound government as the chief executive officer of the metropolis, was yesterday vested with authority which he is destined henceforth to sway for the good or evil of the city. And it may not be inopportune in this connection to recite, briefly, a few facts relative to

THE CAREER OF THE NEW MAYOR.

Although Mr. Wickham has never held any public position or been a candidate for any office, he has always been identified with the democratic party. In 1863-4 he was a member of Tammany Hall General Committee, but being somewhat independent in his views he left that organization and relinquished politics altogether. When the universal cry of reform was raised he promptly came to the front and became a leader of the Apollo Hall organization, being at the same time a very active member of the famous Committee of Seventy. It is generally admitted that the complete rout of the corrupt ring was in a great measure attributable to the judgment and ability he exhibited in the carrying out of that never to be forgotten campaign against fraud. When the Committee of Seventy nominated the late Mr. Havemeyer Mr. Wickham dissented, but was strong in his opposition to the nomination of Mr. O'Brien by Apollo. When both seemed inevitable he again retired. Meanwhile Tammany had been purged of its unwholesome elements, and on invitation he became a member on the General Committee and Committee on Organization. So far his career has been characterized by integrity and an earnest desire to benefit the community. He received his reward in November last, when, by the voice of the people, he was elected to fill the office of Chief Magistrate of New York. It may be added that Mr. Wickham has always been engaged in active business; that after having graduated at a classical academy in Vermont he became connected with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company during its early organization, and that from 1859 to 1861 was its agent in New York. In 1850 Mr. Wickham joined the old Volunteer Fire Department and for two years officiated as its President. He was also an active member of the Mercantile Library Association and for five years was one of its prominent officers. Mr. Wickham's grandfather came to this city from Long Island in 1796 and became one of the original founders of the New York Stock Exchange. Of late Mr. Wickham has been engaged in business in Maiden lane with his father, an esteemed and well known merchant. The Mayor is forty-two years old.

THE MAYOR'S RECEPTION.

In view of the Mayor's arrival at the City Hall a dense throng assembled in the vicinity of that classic building. The comments of the crowd were suggestive; for, with that disinterestedness which some aspiring mortals display when speaking of the powers that be, showers of commendation fell upon the unconscious shoulders of the coming man. It was about ten minutes to twelve o'clock when Mayor Vance ascended with alacrity the steps of the City Hall. He awaited with pleasurable anxiety the last stroke of the old clock, proclaiming that his brief but brilliant reign had ceased, and hurried to the civic chair to welcome the people's choice and say,

Le Maire est mort; Vive le Maire.

He had not long been cogitating on the cares of office or the dangers of the stormy sea upon which for a time he had been cast, and, indeed, could hardly have had time to congratulate himself upon the skilful way in which he had guided the municipal ship when the new helmsman, fresh and full of confidence, appeared upon deck. There was no formality. Immediately upon the arrival of Mr. Wickham he was most courteously received by Mayor Vance. The two gentlemen retired to the Mayor's office, when Mr. Wickham was installed as the Chief Magistrate of the city. This done, Mayor Wickham, accompanied by Mr. Vance, proceeded to the Governor's room to hold the reception.

A large assemblage was in attendance to pay tribute of respect to the new Mayor. Indeed, the throng was denser than on many a previous inauguration day, and so, when Mayor Wickham and Mr. Vance, accompanied by City Marshal Joel O. Stevens, ascended the steps leading to the Governor's room Captain Leary and his force from the City Hall had enough to do to make the passage clear. But there was no confusion. Mayor Wickham, Mr. Vance and the City Marshal promptly took a position at the head of the antiquated chamber, and Captain Leary, having arranged that all should pass in Indian file, the reception commenced. As each visitor appeared he was presented to the Mayor and Mr. Vance by City Marshal Stevens, and then went down and out. Thousands thus paid hurried compliments to the new Chief Magistrate, who in turn was genial and modest, yet dignified and graceful. At half-past twelve o'clock the stream poured swiftly in. All classes were represented, from the princely merchant to the toiling workman, and all were welcomed with true earnestness and friendly feeling.

The heads of departments were earliest in attendance, including Sheriff Conner, Commissioner Van Nort, Commissioner Green, County Clerk Walsh, the Commissioners of Police and the Commissioners of Excise. Then the old and new Aldermen put in an appearance, among them being Aldermen Lysaght, Morris, Flanagan, Van Schaick and others. Then came many members of Assembly, including Messrs. Daly, Costigan, Nicholas Muller, and, in fact, nearly all the representatives from the city. The Tax Commission was represented by Mr. Wheeler. There were also present Postmaster James, Professor Glaubensklee, Judge C. M. Clancy, Colonel Dunlap, Mr. C. U. O'Connell, Augustus Schell and a host of private citizens. But it would be idle to endeavor to give at length one tithe of the names which rang upon the ears of the Mayor. The Bench, the Bar, and, indeed, all the professions, as well as the mercantile interest of the city, were largely and prominently represented, while politics seemed to have little to do with the character of the reception. It was altogether one of the most harmonious social events, blending, as it did, every element that could contribute to its success, that ever marked the inaugural of a chief executive officer of New York. And if Mayor Wickham and his able marshal underwent a trying ordeal the reward must be found in the thousand hopeful expressions which the occasion gave rise to. After all, it was a gratifying spectacle—the democrat and the republican standing side by side and alike receiving the friendly greetings of their fellow citizens. The reception closed at one o'clock, when Mayor Wickham proceeded to his office, where he remained closeted with ex-Mayor Vance for some time, being afterward visited by several prominent officials. Mayor Wickham did not transact any public business yesterday, but will formally enter on his duties to-day.

THE HAPPY PAIR.

BOUND TO BE ALDERMEN ANYHOW.

There was to have been a meeting of the defunct Board of Assistant Aldermen yesterday afternoon for the purpose of reorganizing, resolutions having been previously passed to the effect that the law legislating them out of office was unconstitutional, but for some reason few of them put in an appearance at the appointed time. Assistant Alderman Healy, who had been selected as the presiding officer, promptly took the chair, which he occupied for a considerable time in patient expectation. Assistant Alderman Cumisky and one or two other members of the Board were present, but there was not a sufficient number to make up a quorum, so an adjournment was declared in order. But there were others in the world who take an interest in the affairs of the city besides the gentlemen referred to, for it will be remembered that Messrs. Toner and Demorest, thoroughly believing that the abolition of the Board was an illegal act, ran for office some time ago, and there being no formidable opposition to either of them, they themselves being the only candidates, both were apparently elected, so they insisted upon being sworn in. The happy brace of statesmen organized themselves yesterday into a body of the whole, as it were, and their subsequent operations are best explained in the following epistle:—

NEW YORK, Jan. 1, 1875.

TO HIS HONOR THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK:—

SIR—The undersigned, Assistant Aldermen elected at the late election for the Fifteenth and Twentieth Assembly districts and Assistant Aldermanic districts, having, pursuant to law, duly qualified and filed their oaths of office, set forth that, on the 1st day of January, 1875, at twelve o'clock, they assembled in the hall of the Board of Assistant Aldermen; that the electors of the other nineteen districts have apparently failed or neglected to elect Assistant Aldermen from their respective districts, and, there being no quorum present, were unable to organize the said Board. Therefore we, the undersigned, members of said Board of Assistant Aldermen, in order that there shall not be interrupted government and that this city shall not be without a legally constituted Common Council, most respectfully demand that you, as the executive head of the city government, officially notify the proper officers of the facts herein set forth, in order that a special election may be held in the said Assistant Aldermanic districts to fill the vacancies therein.

WM. A. DEMOREST,
Assistant Alderman, Fifteenth district.
PATRICK TONER,
Assistant Alderman, Twentieth district.

Mayor Wickham has not yet decided upon his action in the premises. Messrs. Demorest and Toner say they are in earnest.

THE NEW REGISTER.

General Patrick H. Jones, elected in November last to the Registership as the republican candidate, took formal possession of his office yesterday at eleven o'clock. The new appointments will probably be made to-day. There was no formal reception of friends by the new Register.

LEVEE AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE.

Sheriff Conner, in conjunction with County Clerk Walsh, held a reception yesterday in the offices of the former and enjoyed the satisfaction of meeting a larger number of friends than ever attended any similar reception of the kind. As early as ten o'clock the ground floor of the building was densely thronged, and people commenced to file past the two hosts, both of whom were the recipients of the heartiest congratulations. Of late the health of the County Clerk has not been as good as many would wish; but the numerous cheering and hopeful expressions which fell upon his ear could not but have their encouraging effect upon so popular and efficient an official. Nearly all the heads of departments visited the Sheriff's office, and throughout the day a constant stream kept pouring in, the attendance including most of the city officials and a host of merchants and private citizens. The Sheriff and the County Clerk welcomed their friends with characteristic hospitality. The visitors were presented by Major Quincy, who also did the honors of the banquet table. During the day Comptroller Green put in an appearance. He was of course invited to partake of the sumptuous fare and sparkling beverages that made the table groan. "Ah," said the Comptroller, "the more I drink the 'tighter' I get." The Sheriff took the hint, and doubtless appreciating the tight-fisted policy of the city financier, replied, "that being the case I will offer you only one glass"—a remark that made the room ring with peals of laughter. The reception terminated at two o'clock.

AT THE CHURCHES.

Yesterday the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord was duly celebrated in the Catholic and Protestant Episcopal churches of the city. No special feature marked the celebration in the Catholic churches, low mass being read in most instances. The day was a "fast" one and churchgoers were reminded of the fact, while the Godless took heed of it to the letter and not the spirit.

In St. Peter's, in Barclay street, mass was celebrated without any great pomp.

At St. Alban's Ritualistic church mass was sung and the Feast of the Circumcision was observed.

SKATING ON CENTRAL PARK.

In the grim, gray light of the early dawn yesterday the Central Park wore anything but a cheerful aspect. The walks and bypaths were deserted, the shrubbery barren and robbed of its verdure, and the trees, with their leafless branches, stood out against a sky of ashen hue, mere skeletons of their former glory. The north wind sobbed and moaned as it hurried along as though mourning for something it had lost; the Mall, which in the golden summer time is the chief pride and beauty of the Park, was wrapped in the snow which yet remains from the last snow storm, and it seemed as if the old year, upon its deathbed and before being hurried "into the infinite azure of the past," had dropped its shroud upon that erewhile emerald carpet.

But there is a brighter side to the picture than this, for when the sun was high up in the heavens, and when on the cars which run along the various avenues was put out the signal which indicated that the ball was up and there was skating in the Park, all was changed.

At first they came by twos and threes, but by noon an apparently never-ending stream of humanity thronged the paths leading to the Lake, and so it continued all day. The youthful portion of the community were in a large majority, with a fair representation of men, boys of a larger growth and a sprinkling of the fair sex to relieve the monotony.

The ice was in excellent condition, only one or two of the "danger" signs being deemed necessary, and during the day at least 20,000 people availed themselves of the opportunity of cutting figures on the ice. Sorry enough figures many of them cut, too, for the white patches on their backs told plainly enough that in an attempt to "grind the bar backward" or to "spread the eagle" their feet had flown from under them, and instead of spreading the eagle they had spread themselves—on the ice. The people in charge of the loaning of skates could scarcely supply the sudden and unprecedented demand made upon them, and a long line of impatient and ardent lovers of the sport, anxious to be on the ice, were constantly in waiting. An army of would-be public servants besieged and importuned each fresh arrival with "Have your skates put on Only five cents," and even at this moderate fee the youngsters reaped a rich harvest.

At the refreshment booths, at which "hot lemonade" and "hot sherry" anything but hot were ladled out, a lively business was done, and, judging from the number of times which many of the visitors repeated, it is fortunate nothing stronger was sold.

The day abounded in those scenes and incidents which invariably occur on a crowded skating pond. A troop of merry children are hauling papa or mamma in a chair on runners. An exquisite swell, with skating cap and sealskin gloves, a natty cane in his hand, comes sailing along. The eyes of his dulcinea, who is standing on the bank, are upon him, and he is anxious to make an impression. He has not seen the party, or else has miscalculated the distance, for suddenly a collision occurs. His feet fly up and his head goes down, and he is instantly aware that something has dropped. He inwardly curses the fates which placed him in such a ridiculous position and at such an inopportune moment; therefore he takes a solemn oath never to get caught in such a scrape again.

The new beginner was there, confident before his skates were on that he would create a sensation as soon as he got on the ice, and he succeeded, for he experienced several very peculiar sensations as well.

As the sun went down many of the skaters went home, but they were not missed, for their places were quickly filled by the new arrivals. The pond was brilliantly lighted up after dark, the immense reflectors making it light enough to see well, even to the nooks and windings which abound on the remote edges. It was a scene of animation and merriment seldom witnessed on the pond in the skating season. The lights were extinguished shortly after eleven o'clock, but it was midnight before the sounds of mirth and laughter which rung out in the cold, clear air were hushed. The ponds were to have been swept and scraped last night and those portions which needed it flooded, so as to have new ice formed for to-day.

AT THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY.

At No. 27 St. Mark's place yesterday there were no particular festivities, except plum pudding and roast beef, which may be considered as "extras;" but the general air of quiet satisfaction among the inmates must have been a source of gratification to the benevolent patrons of the charity. Last month seventy-nine young girls were provided with places in respectable families, all of whom have reason to bless the beneficence of the Children's Aid Society. The managers have to report their work for the year as follows:—

Number of lodgers	1,507
Number of lodgings furnished	12,750
Number of lodgings paid for	6,768
Number of meals provided	29,262
Number of meals paid for	13,542
Number of girls sent to situations	683
Number of girls found employment	32
Number of girls sent to friends	80
Number of girls sent to other institutions	41
Number of girls sent West	38
Number of girls sent to hospital	19
Number of girls sent to Europe	4
Number of girls learning to operate sewing machines	735
Number of girls found employment on sewing machines	268
Number of lodgers, average per night	35
Expenses	$4,704
Less amount of receipts	1,805
Net cost to the society for the year	$2,899

The new year of 1875 may be unpropitious, but if it adds to the above record of active charity it will not be without its noblest reward, the words of the Master "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

ROMAN CATHOLIC ORPHAN ASYLUM.

At the above home yesterday there was nothing of peculiar interest. The children were marshalled early and the infant band were drilled in their exercises. A good dinner was provided by the almoners of this institution, and, amid singing and religious exercises, the new year was ushered in. The Sisters marched with their charges at twelve o'clock M. to the Institute, and in a sedate and orderly manner the exercises were performed.

WOMEN'S LYING-IN HOSPITAL.

As no provision had been made for any extra festivity at the above asylum for the patients, the managers deemed it best to observe the day in a quiet manner, and, therefore, quiet reigned in the neighborhood of Fifty-first street and Lexington avenue. The New Year's chimes were ringing merrily, and it was to be hoped that the cheer of their merry echoes carried joy to many a lonely heart.

SHELTER FOR RESPECTABLE GIRLS.

The home for convalescents and shelter for respectable girls at No. 332 Sixth avenue presented a quiet appearance yesterday. There was an addition to the *cuisine* in the establishment, roast beef and plum pudding adding to the attractions of the *menu*, but, as Thanksgiving and Christmas had added to the larder, New Year's had little more to afford. It was a pleasant sight to see the old ladies and children united, and if bright-eyed 1875 had nothing more of cheer to add than Hope—that avant courier of the future and better days—it was an earnest of the improving time.

HOME FOR FRIENDLESS GIRLS.

At No. 41 Seventh avenue there is a home for friendless young girls, and the opening of the new year here, without being characterized by any ostentatious festivities, was withal full of interest for those who bestow their charities in this direction. There were no contributions warranting any New Year's festivities in this home, consequently there were no unusual preparations, but the general air of content and happiness would have convinced any of the patrons that their work of charity was going bravely on. The new year of 1875 is full of promise and cheer, and the beneficiaries are receiving the full award of New York hospitality.

AT THE DOWNTOWN INSTITUTIONS.

At the downtown institutions the day passed off very quietly. Indoors there was very little to make the children feel that the day was one for festivity. With the exception of the Five Points House of Industry there was no especial feature at any of the houses to distinguish New Year's from any other day. At the House of Industry about forty of the older boys and girls made merry all the afternoon, playing games and indulging in various innocent enjoyments. The hall in which the little festival was held was still bright with the decorations which had been used at Christmas. Late in the evening the children partook of an excellent supper. At the Newsboys' Lodging House, in New Chambers street, a substantial dinner was served by Mr. O'Connor, the Superintendent; but beyond this there was no festivity. At the Five Points Mission House, the Howard Mission and the St. Vincent Home for Boys there was nothing unusual.

ON THE ISLANDS AND AT THE HOSPITALS.

The inmates of the penal and charity institutions on the islands had no extra dinner yesterday, and the celebration of the new year was limited to the religious services, which were held in the various chapels. The only material enjoyment of the occasion was supplied in the shape of New Year's cake, of which the Commissioners of Charities had furnished abundant quantities. Messrs. Donnelly and Cox, two of the new Commissioners, visited the paupers and the criminals, and Mr. Donnelly, who is a good-hearted public officer, had a kind word to say to every one he spoke with. At the Lunatic Asylum there were some festivities, the inmates enjoying a dance in the evening. At the hospitals the day was observed by religious services and the eating of cake. At Bellevue Warden Brennan inaugurated the new year by the presentation of a valuable picture to Sister Helen, who has charge of the training school. Although the day was void of its most pleasing feature—an extra dinner—the inmates of the penal institutions had some reason to remember it for the grateful suspension of labor which it brought, while those of the Almshouse and hospitals were gladdened by the sight of their relations and friends. The little boys and girls on Randall's Island, who retain much of the gayety of children, despite their surroundings, indulged in every possible frolic.

IN BROOKLYN.

The old year passed away, and a new leaf in the annals of time was turned in the City of Churches amid the report of firearms and the ringing of the chimes of St. Ann's, on the Heights. In many of the Methodist, Episcopal and Baptist churches the parishoners and pastor assembled at the watch meetings, and with music and psalm singing saw the year 1874 pass away. Before daylight, and while the first quarter moon and the morning star were shining brightly in the heavens, the bells of the Catholic churches rung forth the summons to early devotions, it being the Feast of the Epiphany, a holiday of obligation. A ready response was given by the people, who even at that early hour of the day thronged the edifices, and many approached the communion rails and received the sacrament of the Eucharist. Masses were celebrated the same as on Sundays. As the forenoon wore on gayly attired groups of young men were to be seen hastening along the streets, bent upon carrying out the time-honored custom of making calls. Door bells were rung, bright faced ladies ushered in the callers and the compliments of the season were exchanged. Carriages rattled over the frosty pavements and livery stable keepers chuckled over their profits, $25 being the price for a day's use of a coach and team. His Honor Mayor Hunter received calls at the City Hall. He kept a strictly temperance table. Among those who called upon the Mayor were Alderman Ripley Ropes, President Jacob I. Bergen, of the Board of Aldermen; John F. Henry, Comptroller Samuel S. Powell, Assessor Hennessey, John F. Farrington, J. Brinkerhoff, Deputy Comptroller James Terry, Commissioners of Police Briggs, Jourdan and Jensen; P. Keady, Engineer Dale, Coroners Nolan and Sims, Commissioners of Charities Cuningham, Norris and Rater; Commissioners of City Works Palmer and Whiting, Dr. Holly, of the Health Board, and many other prominent citizens and officials. The pressure for admission to the presence of the Mayor was not great, however.

District Attorney Winchester Britton also entertained his friends at his house in Carroll street, South Brooklyn, during the day and evening. Chief Engineer Nevins, of the Fire Department, and lady, were made happy in receiving their friends at their residence in Carroll street, near Hicks. Indeed, upon all sides the custom of paying respect to friends was never more generally observed in Brooklyn than was the case yesterday. There was very little dissipation apparent in the streets.

On the Prospect Park lake skating was enjoyed by upward of 2,000 men and boys, who preferred sliding on the ice to the other attractions afforded upon the occasion. At the Capitoline the ball was also up, and the proprietors reaped a harvest of greenbacks. Matinée and evening performances were given at the Brooklyn, Park and Olympic theatres, and they were well attended.

AT STS. PETER AND PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The services yesterday in Sts. Peter and Paul's church in Williamsburg were most impressive. At the principal service the pastor, Rev. S. Malone, delivered a sermon. In his remarks he said:—Duty is the most important feature in man's life. It must be loved, pondered over and faithfully fulfilled. Then there is nothing like the love of justice and truth. It will sanctify and ennoble us; it will impart happiness to our minds and justify us before God. Oh, how splendid is the knowledge of truth! We should endeavor to communicate it to all men. In this respect, said the reverand gentleman, Catholics enjoy especial advantages in the infallibility of the Pope.

Yesterday we celebrated the feast of a great Pope, who, though he lived in the days of blood and persecution, has left his name firmly stamped on the pages of history. It was the great St. Sylvester, who in his *Legate Hosius Cordubensis* proclaimed in the first council at Nice the dogma of the divinity of Christ, A. D. 325. He was infallible like Pius IX. Under his pontificate the Church emerged from the Catacombs. What a splendid sight to see the spouse of Christ under the cherishing influence of St. Sylvester shedding the light of Christianity on the crown of Constantine. Like Pius IX., in our time, he in his days confirmed his brethren. I glory in hearing his name because it is associated with the emancipation of the Church, with the promulgation of Christ's divinity, with the exaltation of his representative, with the commencement of the triumph of His kingdom on earth. He was a glorious predecessor of Pius IX. Let us imitate his virtues, and with the armor of truth and justice we shall conquer the world, assure the triumph of the Church and reign forever with Jesus Christ. That truth, justice and charity toward all men may reign in your hearts to-day and every day of the year is the sincere wish of my heart.

MR. BEECHER'S NEW YEAR'S.

The number of callers on Henry Ward Beecher, yesterday, was between 1,000 and 1,100, an excess over last year of about a third. There were several interesting incidents in connection with these calls. A teacher from "the Bethel" introduced to Mr. Beecher a class of 135 young men, and as they would not be satisfied with one "handshake," Mr. Beecher had to go through the hand grip 275 times with this party only. Many prominent citizens called to wish Mr. Beecher a happy New Year, and among these were many who until this year had not made a New Year's call upon him.

IN WESTCHESTER.

Throughout Westchester county the day was spent very quietly, the citizens generally preferring to inaugurate the new year by partaking of good cheer at home than to incur the biting cold without, while endeavoring to keep up the custom of "making calls." Divine services were held in nearly all of the churches during the early portion of the day, although for the most part the worshippers were unusually few, for which circumstance, doubtless, the clerk of the weather was mainly responsible. At all of the public institutions—embracing the Catholic Protectory, the Poorhouse and County Jail—the inmates were regaled with generous fare, besides being afforded unusual opportunities for recreation and enjoyment.

IN SING SING PRISON

the male convicts were allowed to participate in a vocal and instrumental concert, given in the spacious chapel by a corps of their fellow prisoners, who proved themselves fully adequate to the task of entertaining a large if not very distinguished audience. At the conclusion of the musical exercises the men were marched back to their cells, each one taking with him to his solitude a substantial dinner as an additional reminder of the festive occasion.

ON STATEN ISLAND.

New Year's Day was observed more generally than usual on Staten Island. The festivities were commenced on New Year's Eve, there being a number of surprise parties and other sociable events in the different villages. The Independent Social Club had a grand dress ball at the Pavilion Hotel, New Brighton, at which over 200 couples sat down to supper. Many of the public saloons were kept open until the beginning of the new year, when cannon and guns were fired, bells were rung, steam whistles were sounded and horns were blown, the din being kept up until daylight. Calls were quite general, and there was much drinking throughout the day. Early masses were celebrated in the Roman Catholic churches. The boys had excellent skating, and everybody who could afford it had a turkey dinner. The public institutions were all supplied with New Year's necessities, and the children at the County Poorhouse and the Child's Nursery, at Four Corners, were well provided for by the superintendents. The Seamen's Retreat and the Sailors' Snug Harbor were also well provided.

IN NEW JERSEY.

The chief features of the celebration of the day were the religious services held in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Episcopal churches. In St. Mary's Roman Catholic church, Hoboken, and in most of the Catholic edifices low masses were offered at six and eight o'clock in the morning and high masses at nine. The musical selections seemed to be special and the efforts of the choristers fully equal to those that characterize the ceremonies on more solemn festivals. The custom of making calls was not much observed yesterday.

OPERA IN MUNICH.

A New German Opera—"The Heir of Morley."

A Musical Romance a la Miss Braddon or Tichborne.

Sketch of the Life of Franz von Holstein.

MUNICH, Dec. 3, 1874.

The appearance of a new opera in Germany upon any of the great court stages is sure to cause considerable excitement and interest. Operatic life in Germany has of late years become a sort of musical warfare, especially since Ricnard Wagner came in with his grand revolutionary ideas and gave a new direction to German operatic art. Though Wagner has founded no true school of disciples, his influence is undoubtedly paramount in Germany; but those modern composers who have so far endeavored to follow the path he cut out have proved to be simply imitators—that is, they have copied his method without understanding his principles. Very recently Wendelin Weissheimer, Kapellmeister in Cassel, made an attempt in his "Theodore Koerner" to produce an opera in the Wagnerian manner, but thereby he deprived himself of all originality, and Wagner stands, so far, with his style, alone and unapproachable. Nevertheless, his grand harmonic structures have an influence upon modern German composers as far reaching as had the music of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Weber upon their contemporaries.

A NEW GERMAN OPERA COMPOSER.

We see this influence very plainly in the works of a German composer, whose two operas, "The Haideschacht" and "The Heir of Morley," have, within a few months, gained considerable reputation in Germany. Not that Franz von Holstein can compete with Wagner in the slightest degree, but he has produced operas which have a thoroughly German character, and, like the Wagnerian creations, are set to music throughout, and are carried along smoothly without the aid of the annoying dialogue by which nearly all pre-Wagnerian and French operatic composers have usually helped themselves out. Holstein's first opera, the "Hideschacht," is immensely popular in some of the provincial towns. In Frankfort it has been kept in the *répertoire* for several weeks in succession, while in Munich it was withdrawn after a few performances. The composer, who writes his own texts, found a very attractive subject for his opera, taken from an old Northern legend—a subject which has attracted such poets as Hoffmann, Oehlenschläger, Rückert and others. I need not enter into a description of this opera, since it has been before the public now for some years. Holstein shows himself in this first work as possessing thorough technical knowledge of music, but still lacking originality, wavering between the hyper-progressive direction of Wagner and the more conservative tendency of Spohr and his epigones. "The Heir of Morley" is generally admitted to be an improvement on "the Haideschacht," still showing the same lack of originality, but deserving the esteem of musicians and opera goers. Holstein's life and musical development is exceedingly interesting, the story of which may serve as an encouragement to young composers.

A MUSICAL SOLDIER.

Franz von Holstein is a disciple of Moritz Hauptmann, whose instruction he enjoyed from the year 1853 on. He was born in Brunswick on the 16th of February, 1826. His father was an officer in the ducal army, and intended that his son should follow the military profession. Young Franz was born with a love of music; he visited the theatre and opera of his native city; played the piano a little; and at the age of fourteen began to concoct an opera. When fifteen years old he entered the cadet corps at Brunswick. In 1845 he became an officer. During his cadetship he had written a small opera entitled "Two Nights in Venice," which was performed by his friends at family gatherings. Then he removed to Leipsic, when he determined to take instruction in piano and in musical composition. But the 1848 trouble and the Schleswig-Holstein campaign took him away from his studies, though during his military experiences at that time he was working on a large five act opera, the text of which he had got from Walter Scott's "Waverley." In 1852, then adjutant of a battalion of landwehr, he was sent to Leesen, in the Hartz Mountains, where he found sufficient leisure to work on his opera, and came to the determination of devoting his life entirely to music. He asked permission from his father to renounce the military career, which was promised on the condition that he should first have the judgment of some good musical composer as to his talent, and if he were justified in taking the step proposed. So a selection was made. Moritz Hauptmann was to decide upon the young officer's musical abilities. Holstein took his big partitur to Hauptmann, who promised to give it careful study and to give impartial judgment. Hauptmann's opinion was favorable to the young man's wishes. In 1853 Holstein received an honorable discharge from the military and went to Leipsic, where, at Hauptmann's suggestion he was received in the Conservatory of Music. Besides his theoretical and technical studies he composed while there some quartets, a concert overture, &c. In the following year he returned to his native city; in 1856 he took up his residence at Leipsic. In the following years he suffered greatly from ill health, writing nothing except concert music; and it was only after he had reached his fortieth year, when his health was restored, that he interested himself again for dramatic music. The first fruit of this renewed activity was the opera "Haideschacht," which was first performed at Dresden in 1868. This work belongs now to sixteen German theatres. His second opera, "The Heir of Morley," was first performed at Leipsic on the 23d of January, 1872, then at Weimar in April, 1874, and at Munich first a few weeks ago.

THE NEW OPERA.

"The Heir of Morley" promises to become popular in Germany, although the subject of the opera is poorly chosen and the music composed almost entirely of reminiscences. The action of the drama takes place a few years after the taking of Gibraltar by the English. The persons of the opera are:—Lady Sarah Morley, Eveline, her granddaughter (respectively mother and daughter of the late Lord Morley); Viscount Godolphin, cousin of the deceased lord; Lydia Thompson, a young widow; William Seyton, advocate; Charles, a marine officer; Allan, an old servant of Lady Sarah; Blackstone, judge; then servants, hunting party, constables, farmers and laborers. Morley House is supposed to be an estate in the North of England. Viscount Godolphin is to come in possession of the Morley family estates on a certain day, unless the eldest son of Lord Morley, Charles, who has not been heard of since the battle of Gibraltar, should return. In the first act we find ourselves in front of an old English hall. The servants are clamoring for payment, and old Allan, the family butler, who belongs as much to the estate as the house cat, tries to pacify them, and tells them that at noon of the following day Sir Godolphin will be their new master, which they refuse to believe. Eveline and her grandmother, Lady Sarah, occupy the next scene; then comes Sir Godolphin, who appears to act as if already in full possession. Then we are made acquainted with Lydia Thompson, a beautiful young widow, and a young advocate named William Seyton, though what business the couple has to do with the opera I cannot say. William has the interest of the dispossessed family intrusted to him; he makes love to Lydia and accomplishes nothing in a legal way, though he sings well, and endeavors to make some fun. William is sent away by Lydia to fetch her toilet apparatus. Then Lydia and Eveline sing together awhile, when, suddenly, the form of a handsome young naval officer (clad in a red coat) appears outside the park railings. He sees the two young ladies, falls in love and jumps over the railings, to find the ladies gone and himself in the presence of Sir Godolphin, who, believing the young man to be the lost Sir Charlie, entices him into the hall and locks him up in an unused suit of apartments in one wing of the mansion. In the second act Sir Godolphin comes to the hall with a hunting party, and during the revelry old Allan comes in and asks Sir Godolphin if he has not seen Sir Charlie. He had seen him climb over the park railings; he was sure the young lord had returned home. So the story goes on. All the family meet the supposed Sir Charlie; the mother recognizes him as her son, the sister as her brother, old Allan as his young lord, and even the farmers of the estate come with bagpipes to greet the lost young laird.

THE OPERATIC TICHBORNE.

Though the young marine officer's name is Charlie too, still he is not the real Sir Charlie, but the son of a daughter of Lady Sarah, who made a mesalliance in early life and was not acknowledged by the family. He had taken part in the taking of Trafalgar; he had been Sir Charlie's constant companion, and had seen him mortally wounded, and had received from him a pocketbook with the request to take the news of his death to Morley Hall. After permitting himself to be greeted as the lost Sir Charlie he finally extricates himself from the dilemma and tells who he is and all about the true Sir Charlie's fate. During this time Sir Godol