NEW YORK HERALD

BROADWAY AND ANN STREET.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT,
PROPRIETOR.

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44TH YEAR.....NO. 333

AMUSEMENTS TO-DAY AND EVENING.

AQUARIUM—PERFORMING ANIMALS. Matinee.
AMERICAN INSTITUTE—EXHIBITION.
UNION SQUARE THEATRE—FRENCH FLATS. Matinee.
ACADEMY OF MUSIC—LINDA DI CHAMOUNI MATINEE.
WALLACK'S THEATRE—OUR GIRLS. Matinee.
NIBLO'S THEATRE—ENCHANTMENT. Matinee.
HAVERLY'S THEATRE—THE OCTOROON. Matinee.
GRAND OPERA HOUSE—OTHELLO. Matinee.
STEINWAY HALL—ELIJAH. Matinee.
STANDARD THEATRE—FATINITZA. Matinee.
DALY'S THEATRE—AN ARABIAN NIGHT. Matinee.
THALIA—EINER VON UNSERE LEUTE. Matinee.
LENT'S NEW YORK CIRCUS—Matinee.
BROADWAY OPERA HOUSE—PINAFORE. Matinee.
FIFTH AVENUE—DAME TROT. Matinee.
BOOTH'S THEATRE—LA BELLE HELENE. Matinee.
GERMANIA THEATRE—DONNA DIANA.
ABERLE'S THEATRE—THE FRENCH SPY. Matinee.
PARK THEATRE—FRITZ IN IRELAND. Matinee.
COMIQUE—MULLIGAN GUARDS' CHRISTMAS. Matinee.
SAN FRANCISCO MINSTRELS—Matinee.
TONY PASTOR'S THEATRE—VARIETY.
KOSTER & BIAL'S CONCERT HALL.
CHICKERING HALL—GRAND CONCERT.
TAMMANY HALL—BILLIARD TOURNAMENT.
SEVENTH REGIMENT FAIR—LADIES' DAY.
ATHENÆUM, BROOKLYN—BOHEMIAN GIRL. Matinee.

WITH SUPPLEMENT.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1879.

Advertisers are respectfully requested to hand in their advertisements previous to eight o'clock in the evening to insure proper classification.

The probabilities are that the weather in New York and its vicinity to-day will be partly cloudy and warm, with rains in the early portion, followed by clearing, and lower temperature. To-morrow it will be cold and clear.

WALL STREET YESTERDAY.—Stocks were active and generally buoyant. New York Central opened at 138½, sold at 139 and closed at 136½, after touching 135. The general list was buoyant, and Erie closed at an advance of 5 points from opening figures. Governments were unusually active and strong, especially the four per cents, which advanced under a second purchase of $8,000,000 by Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt. Foreign exchange was dull and stronger. Money ruled at 5 per cent for call loans. Railway bonds were active and generally buoyant.

BROADWAY, the best swept street of the city, was as slippery yesterday as if the contents of a mucilage factory had been turned into it. Imagine the condition of the side streets!

THE STORY about portable grain elevators for steamships seems to have had little or no foundation. Europe is our principal grain elevator—in price, at least, and Europe is extremely stationary.

ONE OF THOSE TORNADOES of which the West has of late years had almost a monopoly has been working its will in the neighborhood of Louisville, Ky. If it teaches Western builders to do their work more thoroughly it will not be an unmitigated disaster.

IN SPITE of what some despondent critics have claimed Italy is not too old to learn. A gang of Italian laborers on a railroad yesterday struck for higher pay, obstructed the track and in other ways behaved as unreasonably as any trade union could demand.

THE SOCIETY for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should congratulate itself on its losses yesterday by the woman who demolished its windows, for thereby it was enabled to send a drunken mother to the Island for six months and give her unhappy children an additional opportunity to be properly cared for.

NOW SPAIN will be angry in good earnest. Outside intermeddling with her selection of a king led to the Franco-Prussian war, American remonstrances concerning irregularities in Cuba have caused her to take refuge in dignified explanations, but the protest of several societies against the proposed bull fights in honor of the approaching royal marriage will enrage the Peninsular soul to its very depths.

MR. BERGH'S EFFORTS for the better protection of horses, as detailed in a conversation with a HERALD reporter, should commend themselves to the attention of large stable owners without being made compulsory by law. Whenever a fire occurs in a stable where the horses are housed on an upper floor there are horrible experiences and serious losses, like those occasioned by the Eighth avenue fire.

IN ANOTHER COLUMN Postmaster James explains the manner in which people who are anxious to obtain their letters on Sunday can do so without compelling a general delivery by carriers. The information will please the general public as well as religious people, for the occasional day of rest that everybody heartily appreciates, each in his own way, is particularly valuable to a body of six day walkers as industrious as our letter carriers.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of low barometer that was over the lake regions developed storm energy as it approached the St. Lawrence Valley districts. It is now passing over the New England States toward Nova Scotia. The barometer is high on the Middle and South Atlantic coasts. In the Northwest the pressure is increasing rapidly, causing steep gradients for northerly and westerly winds to develop. Rain fell in the lake regions, Middle Atlantic and New England States, while snow is reported in the North and West. The temperature fell in all the districts west of the Mississippi River. In the other sections of the country a decided rise occurred. The winds have been brisk in the lake regions, Middle Atlantic States and the Northwest, fresh in the central valley and light in the other districts. The weather in New York and its vicinity to-day will be partly cloudy and warm, with rains in the early portion, followed by clearing, and lower temperature. To-morrow it will be cold and clear.

Politics in France.

Convened in Paris on Thursday last for the first time in the life of the present Republic, the French Assembly seems to have taken for granted the statement of its President that its return gave the great city a new claim to the consideration of the world, and to have addressed itself thereupon without further waste of eloquence to its proper concerns as a representative body. How much "the legal title" of capital of France may add to the glory or splendor of the great city, which is the capital in virtue of the facts of the case, and will continue to be the capital whatever it may be called and without regard to the place where legislative or other assemblies may meet, is perhaps a point of comparatively little moment, and the representatives showed their practical wisdom in giving to that theme so small a share of their attention. The return to Paris is an event as to the advisability of which all sorts of opinions were expressed before the change was voted. Now that it is made it is well to assume that it is for the best, and all friends of France will sincerely hope there may be no disappointment in this particular; but if there is to be—if the putting of the national legislature within the reach of the mob of the great city is ever to make that mob again supreme over the destinies of the nation—the fact must come in its own time, as it is now too late to retreat upon any argument of its possibility.

Unfortunately, the return to Paris of the deliberative bodies finds the Republic, in so far as it is represented in these bodies, in an attitude not uncommon in the history of republican domination in France—divided in its councils upon the expediency of extreme measures and watched by an attentive circle of desperate enemies, waiting to take any possible advantage of its faults. Bonapartists, legitimists, Orleanists, as recognized elements of chronic enmity to the Republic, and ultramontanism and socialism, as widespread extravagances of opinion, stand ever ready to rend the common enemy of all their schemes if through its own blunders it is put within the reach of their hatred. It may, we believe, be said with entire confidence that the Republic in France is absolutely safe so long as it can fill the two conditions of securing popular liberty and public order; but, unfortunately, to say this is to state a mere abstraction. The vital point is in the application of this truth—in the satisfactory determination just what is the popular liberty that must be secured and what is the order that must be guaranteed. Republicans vary in their degrees of faith in the republican theory from those who take a fair view of the relations of liberty and order all the way out to those of an extremely red hue, whose notion of liberty is that it must be measured by their own will, and of order that any degree of it whatever is tyranny. Many men honestly republican, and not at all to be confounded with the communistic rogues and madmen, differ positively as to whether certain laws are oppressive or absolutely necessary for the preservation of public order, and the difference is greater or less as the republican is more or less of the conservative or radical type. Between these extremes—between the denunciation of a certain liberty as a wild license and of a certain act of authority as an outrageous tyranny—the government must guide the Republic, conscious that they are always in the presence of pretenders to empire and monarchy ready to rush in like jackals if the Republic only stumble in its path.

Many prophecies have been indulged within a short time past that the present Ministry would inevitably go to pieces upon its first appeal to the majority in the Deputies, and more moderate statements of an opinion of the same nature have represented that if the whole Ministry did not go out certain of its members certainly would. But a modification of the Ministry, which may be due to considerations altogether apart from the general attitude of the government, should not be confounded with defeat in the face of a majority, and unless it is we do not believe the prophecies to which we refer have any other foundation than the imagination of opponents. We have President Grévy's authority for the statement that the Ministry is in full accord on all the topics before it, and his opinion that on the most important of the issues before the country it can command a majority. His declaration, very distinctly made to our correspondent, will be found in another column. It is full and clear upon these two points, which are, in fact, the ones of immediate interest in the political concerns of France. He is firmly convinced that article 7 of M. Ferry's bill will pass, and believes that the project for "plenary amnesty" has been determined against in popular discussion. Our correspondent's report indicates how much importance public men in France now attach to withholding words that may possibly be misunderstood by the public, and consequently how extreme is their reserve.

Amnesty for the communists—the vote by the Chambers that the men now in exile for participation in the crimes of the anarchical orgy of 1871—is now rather an issue forced for the embarrassment of the government by republicans of advanced views than a real division of opinion. These men argue their case a great deal upon the example of the clemency shown in this country after our great civil war toward the men who had been in arms against the government. They hold our history up as presenting an example which France should magnanimously follow in extending full forgiveness and restoration to political rights to those who helped to make Paris a mere shambles with their fierce social passions while the public enemy was yet at its gates. The brave men of the Southern Confederacy who, in a spirit of heroic manhood, faced our armies in many hard and well fought battles, can scarcely feel proud of the comparison thus instituted between them and the vile, bloodthirsty and cowardly wretches of the Paris slums; nor could this comparison have ever been honestly made by any man who understood either our war or the Paris Commune. We did not punish as traitors prisoners of war, nor the civil officers of a government recognized by foreign Powers; but in every case in which Southern men in the pretended service of the Confederacy were found guilty of such common crimes as murder, incendiarism or piracy we hanged them. The cases of the communists are parallel to these if to any in our history.

Upon article 7 of the Ferry bill there is a real division of opinion between Frenchmen whose thoughts are worthy of the highest consideration on all sides; and upon this division the ancient quarrel of the Republic with the Church is involved—a quarrel that cannot be pushed far, as the clericals understand, without injury to the Republic, and which would not be pushed at all if the republicans were guided only by their cooler heads. This clause in the Ferry bill simply forbids that the functions of a teacher shall be exercised by a member of any body or corporation which exists in defiance of the law. M. Jules Simon holds that this restriction is contrary to that freedom republicans have always held up as their ideal. But we never understood that it was any part of a republican ideal to sustain such a defiance of the law as is here implied. The clause does not make war on religion or on the Church. It recognizes a restriction of the law made before the Republic came into existence, and proposes to apply it. But the parties will do well if they are governed in their discussion of this point rather by considerations of expediency than of logic.

How It Will Affect New York.

Mr. Vanderbilt's large sale of Central stock would attract universal notice by the mere magnitude of the transaction, even if it implied nothing beyond a change of ownership in so vast an amount of property. It is understood that the transferred shares are to be put upon the London market, and if they should be purchased there to any considerable amount they will increase the growing balance in favor of the United States and create a necessity for still larger shipments of gold to this country. This, however, is but a minor feature of the stupendous transaction, which is to be estimated not by its mere bulk, but by the importance of its expected consequences.

What chiefly deserves attention in this transaction is its tendency to strengthen the Western connections of our principal New York road and secure for it a greater amount of tributary business. There can be be no doubt that this is the controlling motive which has governed Mr. Vanderbilt's decision. He has sold so large a portion of his stock in the expectation of increasing the value of the remainder. It is the most gigantic stride which has ever been made by any trunk line for extending its connections in the West, which has been a leading object in the policy of all of them for the last twenty years. The Pennsylvania road, for example, is operating more than three thousand miles of tributary roads west of Pittsburg, and all the trunk lines have, in like manner, though not to so great an extent, reached forth grasping arms into the Western States to lay hold on traffic which would otherwise be diverted to their rivals. It was this motive which induced the late Commodore Vanderbilt to secure control of the Lake Shore road, that most valuable of all these channels of Western communication. The present Mr. Vanderbilt has taken a step which passes beyond everything of the kind which has ever been accomplished. Quite a proportion of the lines heretofore leased in the West have been weak and crippled roads, whose whole value consists in making them feeders to the trunk lines which have obtained control of them, and none of them extends beyond the Mississippi. But Mr. Vanderbilt has fastened his grapnel upon all the trans-Mississippi business and secured a connection which extends to the Pacific coast. The directors of the Union Pacific have acquired such an interest in the Wabash road as will make it the principal intermediate channel of the transcontinental trade, and the new arrangement binds the Wabash with the New York Central in the East, as it has already been bound with the Pacific roads in the distant West. This advantage, seized at this early day, will cause the main stream of Western traffic to flow in this connected channel, and, like a river, which deepens its bed with the increasing volume of water, an established line is likely to remain fixed. At any rate there is little chance of its changing until after the new Pacific roads are constructed.

The confidence felt by the public in this new Western connection rests on the estimate which has been formed of the business sagacity of Mr. Vanderbilt. Of course he has done nothing against his sense of interest, and his main interest, since this sale as before, lies in the prosperity of the great New York road. If he has not miscalculated the new arrangement will strengthen the hold of the New York Central on the tributary business of the West; and the traffic of that road debouches into New York harbor. All the freights which move on the New York trunk lines are destined for this city, and whatever strengthens and consolidates the Western connections of either of them tends to build up the prosperity of this metropolis. Most of the purchasers have large interests here and none in the seaboard cities which are fed by the rival trunk lines which lie outside of the State.

The Sligo Prisoners.

In the case of the Sligo prisoners additional details of the story of the queer legal proceedings are given in our cable despatches to-day; but for the credit of Irish genius we are sorry to say that the narrative does not sustain the expectations that were formed of the brilliant defiance of British justice that was to entertain the world. It absolutely threatens to become monotonous as a piquant revolutionary show, while the very attempt to utilize it in that way has already deprived it of that proper dramatic interest that is generally inherent in the spectacle of the pursuit of men by so-called justice because of their devotion to freedom and their country. Instead of a great process that might become the occasion for a trial in court and the determination there that England, with all her boasted freedom and confidence in her institutions, dare not permit men to speak their minds in her cities—instead of a process whose debates might turn on great points of political right, this defence of so-called patriots has already, at the very outset, degenerated into a farcical occasion for the posturing and attitudinizing of a loud-mouthed, shallow-pated Irish mountebank, whose advocacy simply covers with contempt the case he pretends to plead.

Heavy Expense of Criminal Trials.

The protracted trial at New Haven is adding another to the long catalogue of instances which have become so frequent of cases which are kept before a court for many weeks or months at great expense to the State and ruinous cost to the accused. Common sense rejects the idea that so vast a consumption of time is necessary for reaching a reasonable certainty as to the guilt or innocence of the person on trial. If the evidence is not sufficient to warrant a conviction in less than two months it must be too slender and circuitous to justify a very decided opinion at last. Trials are spun out by the quirks and subtleties of lawyers and the introduction of great masses of testimony which are mere chaff and husk enveloping the few kernels of proof on which the case really turns. As trials are now conducted they have a greater tendency to confuse and befog the jurors than to enlighten them. The testimony of experts, which often consumes so much time, has come to be regarded by the public very much in the light of a farce, first because the mental training of jurors does not qualify them to judge of such evidence, and secondly because a set of experts can always be produced by the defence to contradict the experts of the prosecution. Except as to the existence of poison in a corpse or the identity of a handwriting expert testimony seldom has any weight with a jury. It is to be hoped that some method may be discovered for shortening trials without detracting from their fairness and justice.

If a prisoner is acquitted after one of these foggy and bewildering trials he is presumed to be innocent; and yet the same law which declares his innocence has ruined him in property and denies him all redress. On the other hand, the taxpayers who defray the expenses of the State are burdened unnecessarily unless all this great consumption of time is really requisite for ascertaining the truth. A six or seven weeks' trial often results in a disagreement of the jury, when all the trouble and expense have to be repeated in a new trial. If only the strong points of evidence were presented a criminal trial would seldom last more than a week; and, after all, the judgment of a jury is determined at last by those strong points. Why cannot some method be devised for presenting them at once in their naked simplicity, winnowed from the heaps of chaff by which they are obscured? Verdicts would generally be just with a briefer procedure, and nobody will pretend that justice does not often fail in these lumbering and endless trials. Unless the trial by jury can be reformed and simplified we shall be driven at last to adopt something like the French system, in which the trial begins by an examination of the prisoner by the judge, who narrows the ground of inquiry by shutting out the subterfuges which criminals and their lawyers invent during the progress of the case before they have disclosed their line of defence. If the prisoner were compelled to make a full statement at the outset, by which he would be held bound afterward, trials would be shortened, without any real injury to a truthful prisoner.

Alfonso and Christine.

Yesterday King Alfonso of Spain celebrated his twenty-second birthday, and to-day the young widower monarch will be united in marriage to the Archduchess Christine, of the house of the Hapsburgs. Unfortunately for the gay folk of Madrid the marriage fêtes, which have been for weeks the all-absorbing subject of conversation at the Spanish capital, have had to be postponed until Tuesday next. The reason for this is, according to our special cable despatch from Madrid, the bad weather that has prevailed on the Madrid plateau for some time past. It must have been particularly provoking to the people of the city, who had already decked out their dwellings with flags and garlands and other emblems of loyalty and well-wishing, to see the sun peeping through the clouds almost at the very moment when the proclamation was issued from the Palace for the postponement of the fêtes. Anyway, the great events connected with the nuptials are to be carried out as originally planned. Queen Isabella and King Alfonso went to the castle of Pardo yesterday afternoon, where the Archduchess resides, in order to sign the marriage contracts, and to-day the King and the Archduchess will be united for life in the Saloon of Ambassadors in the Royal Palace of Madrid. There will be, however, less of the pomp and pageantry displayed than would have been in place if the ceremony were performed, as originally announced, in the Church of Atocha. Even we may feel somewhat disappointed at the royal couple getting married in such an ordinary fashion. The young King and the beautiful Archduchess have occupied of late a good share of public attention. Their wooing and cooing were duly chronicled, and scarcely a day has passed for weeks without the cable being made the vehicle of transmission for some interesting piece of gossip about the royal lovers. Alfonso himself has become the best known royal figure in Europe because of the strange vicissitudes of his life, and especially for his bereavements, first of the lovely Mercedes, then of her sister Christina, to whom he was pledged. The world caught many unexpected and pleasant glimpses of true human nature in the stories of the young Bourbon's grief. Thus he became to us a very popular and sympathetic figure among the crowned heads of Europe. To him and to the young Queen it is to be hoped the future may bring only happiness and security on the throne of Spain.

Archbishop Williams and the Schools.

The doubt we originally expressed of the accuracy of the Boston *Journal's* report of Archbishop Williams' conversations concerning the school question was fully justified by our Boston correspondent's interviews with three of the priests present on the occasion, which we printed on Wednesday. Another of the attending priests now contributes to the Boston *Advertiser* a fuller narrative of the Archbishop's remarks than has appeared elsewhere, and we print it in another column. In our original comments we said that if the *Journal's* report was accurate—which we doubted—we regretted that we could not ascribe prudent discretion to Archbishop Williams among his many virtues. It gives us pleasure now to say, after perusal of this authentic statement of his genuine expressions, that he deserves such an ascription in a very high measure. This entire controversy, which has set all the New England pulpits and journals into such commotion, is apparently due to the bigoted self-conceit of the solitary priest of a single parish, and the *Advertiser's* correspondent's remark is noteworthy that this obstreperous marplot "has earned the cordial and universal condemnation of every priest in the archdiocese of Boston." We hope to hear at an early day that he has been duly disciplined by his superiors. The spark of political strife which he has struck, and which it would have required very little indiscretion on the part of his superiors to fan into a destructive flame, we trust will be speedily and completely extinguished. There is no excuse for a political quarrel over the school question among reasonsable men, whatever may be their religious communion. The State is bound by the principles of its political democracy to maintain free public schools by general taxation, and to require all children to be educated up to the point of comprehension of their civic duties. An overwhelming majority of the citizens, including Catholics as well as other religionists, will firmly resist any departure from those principles. But every parent is at liberty to obtain for his children that sufficient education aside from the free public schools if he can and will, and that is all which we understand that Archbishop Williams commends and counsels.

The Redistribution of Political Power.

In the striking exhibit of the comparative area of American States and Territories contained in Thursday's HERALD it may have escaped notice that the eighteen largest of those political entities are, without exception, situated to the west of the Mississippi River. This is equivalent to saying that none of these States formed a part of the American Union at the beginning of the present century and had no share in the struggles and aspirations of our Revolutionary period. This fact suggests that the present Republic is not the same which was formed in 1776 and for which a constitution was provided in 1787. That instrument was framed without any reference to a region which now occupies upon the map four times the area of the original thirteen States. If, side by side with the table of comparative area, there had been presented a table of the comparative rate of increase of population, within the nineteen years since the census of 1860, it would be found that the same States and Territories, with few exceptions, exhibited a corresponding superiority, and the same would be the case if the table exhibited increase in wealth, agricultural production or lines of railway.

It is evident that the sceptre is rapidly passing from the seaboard States, and even from the central States between the great lakes and the Mississippi. The geographical centre of the Union long since crossed the Mississippi, and the centre of population is rapidly approaching it. Under these circumstances it behooves the citizens of the Eastern States seriously to meditate upon the probable consequences of the impending redistribution of political power. Of course the national growth in population and wealth is a matter for congratulation rather than apprehension, and if the present national institutions should prove to be too strait a garment for the young Western giant there is no fear that the wisdom of the present generation, trained in the practice of republican institutions, will not prove fully equal to that of their ancestors of 1787, who had been trained only in the restricted colonial forum.

PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE.

Alex. Stephens says that Ben Butler is no sneak.

Lotta heartily desires to rest. She always was loaf sugar.

Senator O. H. Platt, of Connecticut, is at the Hoffman House.

A Nevada tramp says that the true tramp scorns baggage of any kind.

A recent writer says that laughter springs from a sudden sense of superiority.

A trustworthy Southern journal says that nearly every cotton planter is in debt.

The President and Mrs. Hayes have returned to Washington from Philadelphia.

General Sheridan, at Chicago, has almost entirely recovered from his severe illness.

Says an English critic:—"In time of peace an English general is kept in leading strings."

The best way to cure men of sleep walking is to make them pay for a new suit of clothes.

The *Saturday Review* thinks that it is always unfortunate when politicians begin to scream.

It is said that anxious mothers and aunts think that all girls must pass through "the plain age."

A London paper believes that it is much more important to a girl to be pretty than to a boy to be clever.

While Mr. Lowe was recently speaking in the House of Commons he lost his notes and was compelled to "shut up."

Lord Rosebery's place, Dalmeny, nine miles from Edinburgh, is not large, but it is within a stone's throw of the Firth of Forth.

An English gentleman bought cheap American cheese, and, mixing it with corn meal, fed it to pigs, which it fattened immensely.

The White Star line steamer Britannic, which sailed from Liverpool for New York on Thursday, took as a passenger Mr. George M. Robeson.

At the Oneida and Wallingford communities sixteen marriages have taken place since their change from promiscuous marriage to having one husband and one wife.

The correspondent of the *Scotsman* at London contradicts the newspaper report that Sir Charles Wentworth Dilke is about to marry a member of the Rothschild family.

Senators George F. Hoar, of Massachusetts; Ambrose E. Burnside and Henry B. Anthony, of Rhode Island, and Francis Kernan, of New York, are at the Fifth Avenue Hotel.

Jefferson Davis, who is writing his contribution to the history of the late war, said a year ago, privately:—"I suppose our personal resentments all die as we grow old."

In the Institute for the Blind in Boston the pupils are taught how to tune pianos. In New York city one of the best tuners in a large piano manufactory is a gentleman who is blind.

During December the planet Mars will come to the meridian during the evening and precede the group of the Pleiades. A small telescope will show peculiar markings on the planet, but a very large telescope is required to distinguish the moons.

A Pennsylvanian threw himself into a river, intending to commit suicide. When he was hauled ashore a bottle of whiskey was found in his pocket. Being asked what he took it with him for, he replied that his rescuers might want something to revive him with.

London *Truth* thinks that English girls are too gushing and talkative or else have nothing to say for themselves, while American girls unite the tact and *savoir vivre* of French women with the solid qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race. They know how to set off their natural advantages with dress, are philosophically good tempered and are favorites with wife seeking Englishmen, says the same paper. Now, girls, do not all go rushing off to Europe.

FINE ARTS.

MANET'S "EXECUTION OF MAXIMILIAN."

Edouard Manet is the apostle of French naturalism in painting as Emile Zola is in literature. None of his work has, as far as we know, ever been exhibited in this country. Therefore the fact that his largest painting, "The Execution of Maximilian," is in this city and will be placed on public exhibition on Monday, is of unusual artistic interest. The private view will take place this evening at a room in Broadway. The large canvas was painted in 1867, just after the event it pictures had occurred, and was offered, with other of Manet's paintings, by the artist for display at the Universal Exhibition, in Paris, of that year, but was refused. He, like Courbet, established in a separate building an exhibition of his works, the display of the present one, however, being interdicted by the imperial government. In France the picture has never been publicly seen. M. Gaston de Beauplan, a friend of Manet, under an arrangement with the latter, brought it with him to this country and will now place it on exhibition. Its faults as a work of art are many and it is wofully inaccurate, but it has many qualities of excellence which will, however, appeal more to the artist and amateur than to the general public. As the work of so unconventional, powerful and original a man it should, however, be interesting to all.

On a large canvas, eight feet eleven inches in length by eight feet four inches in height, are the life-size figures of the Mexican Emperor, his two generals and their executors. To the left, facing the spectator, is Maximilian, clasping the hands of Mejia, who is on his left, and of Miramon to his right. Standing in a semicircle, with their backs to us, at only some eight feet away from the three, are the firing squad. The officer in charge is behind them, and at their back, on the right, stands the sergeant, cocking his musket for the *coup de grace*, if it is necessary. The squad of six are in the act of firing, evidently at Mejia, and the flame and smoke partly obscure the faces of the fated three. Maximilian, with a Mexican sombrero on his head, but clad otherwise in European civil dress, looks boldly at the soldiers. Of the two others, in their shirt sleeves, Mejia has his head thrown back and extends his right arm, with hand clinched in agony, as if just shot, while Miramon, like him, with feet planted wide apart, clasps with energetic action the hand of the Emperor and turns a calm, disdainful face to the soldiers. The poses and actions of these three figures are highly dramatic. The locale is represented as close to the wall of a cemetery, some of the monuments of which are seen among the trees, on a hillside to the right. Over the wall lean a group of curious Mexican children, girls and boys; while in the middle distance are groups of spectators indistinctly defined. The painting is as coarse as the work on a piece of theatrical scenery, and is in broad, flat masses, accentuated here and there by a few shades and shadows. The extreme naturalness of the poses of the condemned, to which we have alluded, of the very soldier-like executioners and of the group of gamins on the wall is artistically excellent. The sergeant to the right is especially well given. Of detail there is none on near examination. Confused splashes of paint, which at close quarters look like a mass of frozen beef, at a distance assume the form and action of hands clasped or in other positions. The whole work seems a huge *ébauche*. The faithfulness of the silhouettes of the figures and the impression of the action conveyed is almost photographic in its correctness. The shadows cast on the ground by them are curiously inexact in their portrayal. We are constantly reminded of the Spanish master, Goya, and in nothing more than in the little group of children, daubed in, we might say, but in a most effective manner. The little girl, leaning her head on her bare arms, as she looks with curious cold eyes at the dying men, is very charmingly indicated. The color key is low, grays, dark blues and greens being the predominant tints. Figures and all take their place wonderfully well. At the proper distance all the detail is there. It is *la vérité crû*. Historically considered the whole scene is incorrect; for the three men were over two paces apart, and were shot standing on a hillside with their executioners below them and inside a hollow square of 4,000 men. Mejia, besides, who is represented as of about the same height as his companions, was a very short man. Maximilian had also changed his place from the centre to the left of the line. The costumes and accoutrements of the soldiers, too, might be criticised on the score of inaccuracy. Again, where are the rest of the firing party?

Of this picture Emile Zola has written:—"I assert that this canvas is truly the flesh and blood of the painter. It is he entirely and nothing but he. It will remain the most characteristic example of his talent, as well as the highest type of his power. * * * Manet has admirably succeeded in producing a work of a painter, of a great painter, I mean in translating a page of history into a personal idiom, with truth of light and shade, with the truth of objects and personages."

As M. Manet is so little known here it will be well to give some details of his career. Born in 1833, he, at the age of seventeen, showed a great taste for painting. His parents wished to make a sailor of him, so he made a voyage to Rio Janeiro and saw a good deal of South America. On his return to France he had his own way and entered the studio of Courbet. From the first he declared himself a revolutionist against the usual methods and conventionalities of the French school of the day, and has therefore had many difficulties to encounter and has been rewarded by no medals. His first picture, in 1860, was "The Absinthe Drinker." From the time of the exhibition of this work each of his canvases has created somewhat of a sensation. Among them are "The Breakfast on the Grass," "The Smoker," "A Monk Praying," "The Lady at the Window," "The Philosopher," "The Combat of the Kearsarge and the Alabama," "Le Bon Bock" (1873), "Little Girl Watching the Train Pass" (1874), "Argenteuil" (1875), "Portrait of Faure in Hamlet" (1877), "The Opera Ball" (1878), "Dans la Serre" and "En Bateau" (1879). He has several times had his works refused at the Salon. The celebrated baritone Faure, the sale of whose pictures in Paris created some sensation a couple of years ago, had bought during ten years about twenty-five of Manet's pictures, for which he paid high prices. His profits on these at his sale are stated to have been great. The painter is said to be a charming and a witty man; his studio is one of the most elegant in Paris, and the following phrase, which he once wrote, is characteristic of him:—"I have always thought that the first places are not given; that they are taken."

VICE PRESIDENT WHEELER.

Vice President Wheeler and his private secretary are at the Windsor. It is the Vice President's intention to remain in the city for a few days only. On being questioned as to his views on the political situation he said that the recent elections were most gratifying to the republicans throughout the country; that he believed in the Presidential campaign of 1880 the republicans would be successful; that if the democrats pursued the policy they did during the extra session General Grant would receive the nomination, but that if they pursued a pacific policy some other man would receive the honors. He was not prepared to say that in such an event General Sherman would be nominated.

THE LECTURE PLATFORM.

Rev. Dr. J. C. Eccleston delivered yesterday afternoon at Chickering Hall the last matinée lecture of his course on the romance of English history. His subject was "The Tower of London." He gave a succinct historical sketch of everything connected with this monumental record from its erection to the present day. His descriptions of the scenes connected with the history of the Tower were life-like and interesting. A series of stereopticon views was used to illustrate the lecture.

Mr. George R. Wendling, of Illinois, delivered his lecture, "Ingersoll from a Secular Standpoint," in Association Hall, last evening, before a large audience. The speaker said that if Ingersollism be right every man may have his own God, Christ was at best an individual only, the Bible a sham and religion a curse. "This," he said, "is the most advanced phase of modern infidelity, and this is Ingersollism stripped of its rhetoric."