

NEW YORK HERALD

BROADWAY AND ANN STREET.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, PROPRIETOR.

THE DAILY HERALD. Published every day except on Sundays and public holidays. Price five cents per copy, one dollar per month, in advance.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.—Remit in drafts on New York or Post Office money orders, and where neither of these can be procured send the money in a registered letter.

PHILADELPHIA OFFICE—NO. 112 SOUTH SIXTH STREET. LONDON OFFICE OF THE NEW YORK HERALD—NO. 45 FLEET STREET.

44TH YEAR. NO. 359

AMUSEMENTS TO-DAY AND EVENING.

- ACADEMY OF MUSIC—GILMORE'S COLOMBIA MATINEE. ABERLIE'S—TINA, THE MILK VENUE. MATINEE. NIBLO'S GARDEN—HEARTS OF STEEL. MATINEE.

WITH SUPPLEMENT.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1879.

The probabilities are that the weather in New York and its vicinity to-day will be cold and partly cloudy, possibly with snow in the early portion, followed by clearing and colder weather.

WALL STREET YESTERDAY.—Stocks were very dull, but business was done at a marked advance in prices. Money on call closed at 5 per cent.

THAT SNOWFALL of forty-eight hours ago was most viciously moist. Two men walked on railroad tracks yesterday; but leave families to mourn their loss.

NOW WILL THEY STOP singing "Pinafore" at other people? A man was shot yesterday for this offence.

HOLDERS OF GAS STOCK refuse to be frightened by Edison's discoveries. So long as meters are used the business is safe.

A FIGHT for money, between a dog and a man, is reported from St. Louis, and still worse, that the dog instead of the man was killed.

THE TOWNSHIP RAILROAD in which the Aldermen take such tender interest is apparently to be shelved by itself until a similar Board can be obtained.

THE DEADLOCK between the Mayor's office and the Aldermanic chamber is partly explained in another column, and not in a way creditable to republicans.

THE GRACEFUL BEARS and hilarious bulls made merry at the Stock Exchange yesterday, and they could afford it, for they have not known a better season in years.

THE COMMISSIONERS of Charities and Correction, warned, perhaps, by the results of the Bellevue Hospital fire, ask facilities for promptly getting fire engines to any of the institutions on the islands, should they be needed.

THE BEHOLDER who assaulted General Hendrickson's servants wants to know what else he could have done. Why, kept out of other people's houses, of course. Nobody sympathizes with a man who commits one wrong to hide another.

ANOTHER COLLISION between steamboat and sailing craft, and each side says the other is to blame. The next statute of "Innocence" should be modelled after a skipper from New York, although ferryboat pilots might be eligible as hints concerning the proper thing.

IF THE SOUTH really feels pleasantly disposed toward the North, let South Carolina tell New York how she managed to get off with a thirty-days session of her Legislature. It is true that we are told that much unwise legislation took place, but the same thing invariably happens at Albany, no matter how long the session may be.

AS THE COUNSEL of an owner of a James street den declares that a robbery, such as a soldier was the victim of on Wednesday night, might occur in any saloon, it is time for the authorities to suppress such places. There is no need or excuse for the existence of saloons where vile women and bullies menace life and property.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

THE WEATHER.—The centre of disturbance that was over the central valleys, as stated in yesterday's HERALD, developed energy as it approached the lower lake regions. The gradients for northerly and northwesterly winds became very steep throughout the Northwest, owing to the rapid advance of the area of high barometer from that region.

Christmas and How the Nations Keep It.

As a season of peace and good will Christmas can scarcely be looked upon as a great success this year by those who notice how the various nations are keeping it. The Christian spirit of confidence and concession does not prevail in the councils of many nations. The opinion that it is preferable to endure the evils that overwhelm the victims of oppression and injustice rather than to contaminate our souls with the fierce passions, the cruelties, the disregard of right, that distinguish the oppressor—this opinion, not generally a dominant one in the world—seems this year to affect mankind as little as if the world were utterly unregenerate and had never heard a syllable of that "Sweet story of old when Jesus was here among men." It is clearly not a time of peace on earth and good will to men. It is rather a year for the other translation—"Peace on earth to men of good will," with the open implication of war to all the others.

Seven Powers in Europe keep on foot permanently, and for a time of peace, three millions of men in their armies only, and maintain an organization and enforce laws which contemplate the sudden addition in an emergency of two million more; so that five million soldiers represent practically the confidence felt by Europe at large—each State respectively in the good will of its neighbors. It costs the taxpayers of Europe annually one thousand millions of dollars (\$1,000,000,000) to keep up the military organizations and military expenditures of peace, which is certainly a very liberal insurance against the possible will or the ambitious designs of the sovereigns beyond the frontier. Everybody remembers how Europe, and our dear friends in England particularly, poured out very rivers of crocodile tears over the awful waste of our war, and over the bad political system which could not put down a rebellion without leaving the nation burdened with an enormous debt. Well, our war lasted four years, and the round outline of the debt at the end of the war was about four thousand million dollars. Europe spends just that amount in every four years of its existence. We spent our taxes and pledged our credit; but in eight years of peace—if Europe shall ever again have eight years of peace—she will spend, on the basis of present estimates, as much to be provided against danger as we spent to go through it. Financially, therefore, the good will in the world that gives nations a respect from the support of armies is the best.

But Europe's thousand millions is only for armies. It does not include the enormous expenditure for navies. England, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Russia, Austria—all these are deep in the trial of the great problems of the iron-clad game, the torpedo service, and the structure of gigantic cannons to be floated on the armored floating batteries that are now called ships. For every iron-clad that England builds five or ten schoolhouses could be put up, even on the system that distinguishes our own local school authorities. England has two hundred and forty-nine ships in commission, and she pays every year for the mere item of wages to seamen and marines as much as she paid to the United States to satisfy the American people for the damage done by the Alabama. Fifty-five million dollars is the annual expenditure of England for the operation of her navy; not to put in a cent for the original cost of the fabulously expensive war ships, or for interest on that cost. If that proportion were maintained in all the countries the navies would cost about half as much as the armies; but no other nation of those counted has so large a navy nor so small an army as England. But we may safely add for navies twenty-five per cent of what is spent for armies. Twelve hundred and fifty million dollars annually is the price that the people of Europe pay for their want of confidence in the Christian theory of life. And yet they pay to have that theory systematically taught. France, for instance, gives eleven million dollars yearly to the churches. She trusts in God to the amount of \$11,000,000; she keeps her powder dry to the amount of \$100,000,000.

England, the most ostentatiously Christian of the nations, has the smallest army of all, but does not on that account come substantially nearer to the practice in her relations with other peoples of that self-denial and regard for the rights of those with whom she deals which sometimes enables nations to live without armies. Her campaign in Zululand and her advance into Afghanistan are the types of her wars, for in those modern times she does not trust her troops on any battle field opposite to those of any one of the great military States; but in pure greed of land, in absolute worship of the mammon of trade, she strikes in to conquer any country she wants, provided only it is inhabited by a people feeble than her armies and whom she may butcher with present impunity. That is the actual practice of the State that has deluged the world with cant about Christian charity. But while the nations of Europe stand toward one another, not in the remotest degree animated by any Christian spirit, but in the attitude of armed combatants who jealously watch each other's slightest motion, the attitude of the governments toward their people and the people toward the government, and the classes of the people toward one another, has scarcely more confidence or good will in it in any one nation. In Russia a great, energetic, intelligent people, appalled by the spectacle of the hopelessness of their position, and the absolute failure of recognized systems of administration to give the peace and justice that every State is constructed to guarantee, aspire to a kind of national suicide, want to plunge all into that state of oblivion which is comparable rather to the Nirvana of the Buddhists than to any ideal presented by Christianity.

In Germany socialism, in France, Spain and Italy the communistic fury, and in Britain the cry of rage that now rises from Ireland, are the equivalents of the nihilistic revolt, though each is a trifle less mad and less justifiable than that. Is there no charity anywhere? Oceans of it. In the city

of Paris alone one hundred and fifty thousand persons are fed by charity every day. In the city of London the average number is never below that, and in this, as an extremely bad year, it is likely that the number there will be doubled before the winter runs out. If we take the several capitals of Europe together, excluding Constantinople, they contain at least a million people who could not at this season live on from day to day but for the pittance of food that is doled out to them from public institutions or from the open hand of private benevolence. There is charity enough. But who is responsible for the state of all these wretched people who live upon it? Through what vice or fault or ill-contrivance in the machinery of society is it that all these widows and orphans and decrepit ones are made dependent for life upon the sympathy of others? It is well that there is such charity, and in its existence the Christian spirit shines. But a more practical Christianity would go behind the returns, would apply its remedies at the source of the evil and correct that gross spirit of greed—that hard battle of life in which these feeble ones are trampled down; stay those tremendous currents of national extravagance in armies which make the struggle for mere existence so severe and the starvation of hundreds of thousands of poor inevitable.

Can Christianity do that? Can the Christian churches change the mood or spirit of nations or affect the ideas of those upon whom it falls to direct the destinies of nations? Has not that Church, on the contrary, lost what influence it ever had of that large kind that could change the temper of nations and sway the policy of governments, and is it not rather the ally of those who prey upon the people than the advocate and comforter of the people? Christ tried to set the religious spirit above the religious machinery; love and good will above the tithes and the temple and the grand paraphernalia of worship; but in the struggle between these two the religious machinery is dominant as the world stands to-day, and is a gorgeous but empty shell.

The Great Commotion in Maine. It is said that violent storms purify the atmosphere. The meteorology (if such an application of the word is pardonable) of the moral and the political world conveys a similar truth. Every person who has spent much time in reading the lives of eminent saints can recall numerous instances in which they have owed their conversion to their sense of shame, alarm and horror on finding that their passions had hurried them into sins of which they had not deemed themselves capable. This strong recoil does not, indeed, take place in natures which have become steeped in iniquity, but only in those which have not become hardened. The same principle operates on a larger scale than isolated individual experience. The wonderful spread of Christianity in the first centuries is attributed by historians to a strong moral revolt against the hideous corruption which permeated Roman society. It was like establishing sanitary regulations: in cities decimated by pestilence when physical salvation is felt to depend upon them. It is to the plagues by which Europe was scourged in the Middle Ages that modern cities are indebted for the drainage and cleanliness which make wholesome visitations of that kind so infrequent. It seems to be in the order of Providence that men's vices and imprudences should thus become their instructors.

There is a political cancer which has been for the last two or three decades eating out the core of our free popular institutions, and if the general heart of the people is yet sound what is now taking place in Maine may be productive of a wholesome reaction. But the case of Maine cannot be considered alone. The ulcer which breaks out upon one part of the body is the symptom of a bad state of the blood. It is of little use to cauterize that particular ulcer unless the corrupt humors from which it proceeds are purged out of the system. There were similar political ulcers in Louisiana and other Southern States just after the Presidential election. We hope these ugly and recurring symptoms may serve a useful purpose by proving the necessity of a radical cure of the disease.

The case of Louisiana in 1876 and that of Maine in 1879 are parallel. There has not, indeed, been in Maine wholesale fraud and perjury such as were practised in Louisiana, but in both cases the will of the people has been overborne by the officials intrusted with the duty of counting the votes. Although the offence is less aggravated in Maine it happens to have been committed by the other political party. "The boot is on the other leg," which makes a great difference in the republican sense of the enormity of the manoeuvre. When the republican bull gored the democratic ox it was thought a trivial matter and was rather enjoyed as a clever piece of political strategy. But now, when it is the democratic bull that gores the republican ox, the republican party flames up with a burning sense of outrage, and even ministers of the Gospel stand up in their pulpits and advise a resort to force. "Offences must needs come," says a high authority; and if there was destined to be a new trouble of this kind we are not sorry that republicans are the sufferers. They have now an opportunity to "know how it is themselves."

It is alleged that for every instance of the rejection of republican votes by Governor Garcelon and his Council there are precedents by the republican Governor and Council in 1877. We do not know whether this is true to the extent alleged, but, so far as it is true, it proves that both parties in Maine have put the same construction on the election laws of the State. But sharp practice on one side is no justification of sharp practice on the other. The fact that both parties have operated in this way, not only in different parts of the country, but in Maine itself, shows how pervading is the disease, and demonstrates the necessity for a thorough remedy. Honorable men of both parties should be aroused to the

enormity of such practices. Any amount of inflammatory agitation in Maine which stops short of actual violence will have a good effect in fixing public attention upon a grave evil. Honest and fair elections lie at the foundation of our institutions. When the voice of the people, as expressed through the ballot box, ceases to control the choice of public officers the American Republic will have been subverted. Let us hope that the evils now so loudly complained of will work their own cure by inspiring the country with a sense of the perils which attend the pollution of political power in its sources.

Professor Proctor Descends to Earth.

Studying the stars is a very frigid occupation. Jupiter and all the rest of the heathen deities used to descend to earth to warm themselves. Professor Proctor also gets into a heat now and then about terrestrial concerns. This morning he takes a turn at the New York hack system in a letter which we print in another column. He thinks he understands the planetary system and the cometary system, but the New York hack system passes his comprehension. So it does ours. He asks for information on the subject and we cannot give it. We hope he will continue his researches into this interesting topic and if he ascertains any principle which governs the New York hack system let us know what it is. There is a great mass of city ordinances to which this system theoretically should conform, but somehow it does not. On paper it is perfect, but in practice it is as irregular as a shower of shooting stars. Phaeton in the sun's chariot was quite as safe as a passenger in an ordinary New York hack, and the vehicle probably was cleaner. We congratulate Professor Proctor that he got off with sound limbs and an unimpaired pocketbook from the clutches of the touts and hack drivers to whom he incautiously intrusted himself last Saturday evening. He inquires how they manage to escape kicking by passengers aggrieved like himself. We can answer that question. In the first place it would be unlawful, and another reason is because, with a few respectable exceptions, they constitute one of the most robust and ruffianly bodies of men in this community, and kicking them would be a dangerous practice for anybody except a professional pugilist. For further information we respectfully refer Professor Proctor to His Honor, Mayor Cooper, the chief executive officer of the city of New York, who is sworn to the duty of enforcing all the municipal ordinances, those regulating hacks included, to the best of his ability, though we should regret to measure the ability of any of our Mayors for thirty years past by their success in this branch of business.

National Hymns.

Mr. P. S. Gilmore, the well known musical conductor, will to-day give the first public performance of his new anthem, "Columbia," and as he announces that the music and words are the results of direct inspiration a public that has seen or heard little of inspired origin in late years will probably crowd curiously to the Academy. With the respect that is due to inspiration Mr. Gilmore has taken care that the music shall be rendered by a composite orchestra that may safely be called the finest that New York has ever known, while eminent vocalists will sing the words; the anthem will therefore have every opportunity that its composer—or human medium—can desire, and it is not impossible that it may achieve Mr. Gilmore's darling hope and become America's national anthem. Certainly it has no strong competitors. "Hail, Columbia" has never been able by its words and music to enter the hearts of the people; the words of the "Star-Spangled Banner" commemorate a special occasion instead of embodying a national sentiment, while "Yankee Doodle," although fully naturalized and a great favorite, is a foreigner—even a Britisher. Twenty years ago all of these airs were suddenly displaced by the old camp meeting air to which the song "John Brown's Body" was fitted, but the air that stirred millions of hearts so powerfully for several years has practically retired to the depths of individual memories. Mr. Gilmore, therefore, has, if not a clear field, at least a better chance than any of his predecessors who have made similar attempts, and he could not ask for fairer judges than he will find in this most cosmopolitan yet most patriotic city of America.

The Scannells on Third Avenue.

The third brother of the notorious Scannell family shot his man yesterday in a Third Avenue barroom. We do not know how many more brothers remain to distinguish themselves, but shooting or being shot with pistols in disreputable haunts on Third Avenue appears to be a family propensity, with all the Scannells. Our report is not clear whether the place where this last tragedy occurred was a "hotel" within the construction of the Excise Commissioners. There are few street crossings along Third Avenue free from just such nuisances on one or more of the corners, where dangerous characters resort who would quite as soon think of venturing abroad without shoes and stockings as without a slungshot or a pistol. The police say that these places cause them much "solitude." We beg to assure the police that their own negligence to suppress them causes still more solitude in the neighborhoods where they terrify orderly inhabitants and depreciate the value of property for blocks around.

Forefathers and Evolution.

Mr. Curtis was quite right when he said at the New England Society's dinner that were the early colonists now alive they would be just such men as their descendants are. He might have truthfully reversed the terms of his statement and said that had we lived two and a half centuries ago we would have been exactly such men as our ancestors, whether these were New England Puritans, Southern cavaliers or New Amsterdam burghers. Were any of us, even at this late day, persecuted for our religion's sake, we would probably become as narrow and bigoted as

the Puritans. But were the old New Englanders now alive they would have no excuse for self-seclusion; they would be unable to have their own way about everything, and therefore would escape the arrogance that the sense of power seems to breed in every man; their quick wits would be brightened by that attrition of other and different wits which was impossible in their day, but is compulsory in ours. Like all of their descendants, and every other American's, they would want to know about everything that is going on, so they would have no time for officious intermeddling with their neighbor's affairs. Were any of the original Puritans alive they would probably hurry to New York, as so many of their descendants have done, with an eye on the main chance. They would make a great deal of money, throw some of it away in Wall street, dress according to the latest fashions, go to the opera in winter and to Coney Island in summer, listen respectfully to good sermons and swear inwardly at poor ones, regard Quakers and Baptists and their other one-time abominations as first rate fellows, and never think of witchcraft except when they fell in love. In short, they would be exactly what we are, and for precisely the same reasons.

Was Sodom Destroyed by Meteors?

The progressive stages of historical criticism are among the curiosities of the age. It may be broadly stated that the older historians believed and the later doubted. What had been stated as fact was sharply divided into myth and probable fact. To the former were relegated those legendary tales where the grandiose, fantastic and superhuman predominated. If the story did not square with the knowledge of the period it was called myth. But as knowledge widens the reconstructive historian takes his place. He peers into the misty recesses of the past with earnest gaze, not satisfied that its legends and traditions are all mere romances, invented by the idle for pastime or by cunning priests and kings for selfish ends. They delve with the spade like Layard and Schliemann; they search through forgotten records of human speech like Rawlinson and Müller; they measure far distant dates by elaborate astronomical calculations, and so they reconstruct. While the voyages of Jason, the stories of Homer, the lost Atlantis of Plato are given more solid form, the superhuman elements in them are presented in a different light. They are no longer supernatural. The glamour of compelling gods and interceding goddesses gives place to the glow of the great forces of nature, or the glare of heroic but simply human deeds. The events themselves recede under this scientific scrutiny to ages still more remote. What the first historians agglomerated in the dramatic legend of an epoch of uncertainty but not great remoteness, and which the doubting historians rejected for its over-completeness of detail and arrangement, the reconstructive historian discerns as the brooded or corrupted narrative of events perhaps ages apart, and all reaching back into the cycles of time before man had made a single written sign.

Of course the Bible has been the study of the two orders of critics of history. In the last century "progressive" thought rejected in scorn the cosmogony of the Old Testament along with its inspiration. Then what a child's story they thought the Deluge, how they laughed at the builders of Babel and scoffed at the fire from heaven which destroyed the cities of the plain! But the story of a great Asian cataclysm in far off ages, borne out by writings not at all inspired, becomes more and more of a certainty, thanks to the Assyriologists, and in the confusion of tongues is traced the story of the parentage and lingual differentiation of a great, world-conquering race.

Professor Proctor's letter on death-dealing meteorites in Tuesday's HERALD suggests that science may "naturalize" the destruction of Sodom. If either his computation that one person in every four hundred years may be, or the statement that nine persons in the last nine centuries have been killed by meteorites is demonstrable the natural basis for such a calamity is established. And what has happened once may happen again. Remember how the atmosphere as the earth speeds through space at over eleven hundred miles to the minute would heat any dense bodies passing through it. Says Genesis:—

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. Tradition would not soon lose sight of such a terrible story as is here indicated. Would not piety at length give the legend of a natural catastrophe like this a great personal impulse from on high, and make it point to the distant after ages, when writing began, a moral of wickedness punished?

The Interoceanic Railroad Plan.

Captain James B. Eads narrates to-day the details of his scheme for an interoceanic ship railroad with eight or ten parallel rails and with a lock at each end of the route. It appears to be substantially the plan which has long been advocated by Dr. William F. Channing, of Providence, the son of the celebrated Unitarian divine. Just before the meeting of the Paris Congress last summer Dr. Channing wrote an exposition of his design, which had an extensive circulation in the press. The chief difference between it and Captain Eads' consisted in its proposal of stationary engines to hoist the trucks laden with the ships up steep inclines. The respectable authority of Mr. Edward J. Reid, formerly chief constructor of the British navy and designer since of iron-clad ships of war for the German, Turkish and some other governments, is cited by Captain Eads in favor of the railroad project. Mr. Reid passed through the United States some months ago in a journey to Japan, where he was invited by the Mikado for consultation on matters pertaining to the navy.

PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE.

General Sherman returned to Washington yesterday. The London Examiner says that a German is no more a "Dutchman" than he is a Dane, though vul-

garity so called by the non-ethnological people of the United States. Senator Roscoe Conkling is at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Secretary Sherman returns to Washington this morning.

Spurgeon is at Mentone, very depressed in spirits, and his condition is supposed to have got chilled on the day she attended the funeral of her late head keeper, Grant.

Colonel J. B. Eads, who built the jetties, has arrived from Europe, and left last evening for his home in St. Louis. It is said by some physicians that the best milk for children is from cows of the Island of Jersey; but it ought to be watered about one-third, and a good authority says that lime water, prescribed by a competent physician should be added.

London World.—"Adolphe Patti is now free to sing in Paris or anywhere else he likes. She paid the Marquis de Caux 1,000,000 francs, and is now advertised to appear at the Gaiety, in Paris, on the 14th of February next. The performance begins with 'La Traviata.'"

In appointing Mr. Ebenzer D. Bassett, who was United States Minister to the Republic of Hayti for nine years, Consul at this port, with a salary of \$6,000 a year, President Salomon writes:—"In embracing you and separating myself from you upon the wharf at Port au Prince I took within myself the engagement to call you to the post of Consul of Hayti at New York if some day I should come to be the chief magistrate of my country. It is, then, with happiness that to-day I fulfill this engagement, and I thank God for it."

We find from the correspondence recently published respecting the Edinburgh Review that Henry Brougham and Thomas B. Macaulay were at deadly issue. Each regarded, or pretended to regard, the other as a hero of the largest calibre. The conversation of great talkers, such as they, may fairly be likened to the anecdote that were bones of the order bo constrictor) maintaining its life by crushing out the life from others; but there are those who, without the powers of a Macaulay or a Brougham, seek equally to absorb all conversation. The talk of such men is compared more suitably to the octopus, which, by absorbing life from others, maintains existence, but an existence so valueless that it can scarcely be called life. There is scarcely a club in the world which has not its octopus, but not every social gathering has its ascendants.

The moon has given astronomers so much information about the earth, telling them the earth's true size (though Newton did not believe her until Ptolemy's measurements showed he was right), her true shape, and so forth, that we must not be surprised to find astronomers trying to learn something about Mars from his small attendants, Deimos and Phobos. The great mathematician, John Couch Adams, has taken this subject in hand. The compression of the globe of Mars is as yet unknown. The best observers have obtained results differing very widely inter se. Now, the moons of Mars, if only they are carefully observed for a sufficiently long time, will enable astronomers to ascertain the true shape of the planet and even (marvellous to relate) to determine some points respecting the planet's internal structure. We can easily determine what should be the change produced in the position of the planes in which the moons travel if the sun's disturbing force were alone at work. But the compression of the planet's globe would modify this result, and peculiarities affecting the internal structure of the planet would also have their effect. Unfortunately it seems unlikely that within the next century or so the moons of Mars will supply definite information on these and kindred subjects for the changes themselves are exceedingly small and take place very slowly, while the observations by which they are to be determined are exceedingly difficult. In common fairness to the Martian moons it should be mentioned that within a very short time of their discovery they had been but unsatisfactorily determined by noting the disturbances he produces on other planets, a comet or two, and so forth. There is only one telescope, by the way, on the other side of the Atlantic which has shown both Phobos and Deimos this year—namely, Mr. Common's fine three-foot reflector, described by Mr. Nelson, in an article quoted in the Popular Science Monthly, as the most powerful telescope in the world. The twelve and three-quarter inch reflector at Greenwich has shown Deimos, the outer satellite, which passes within the orbit of the moon, but it is so difficult an object as had been supposed.

A RELIC OF SLAVERY.

SUIT BY AN EX-SLAVE WOMAN AGAINST THE ESTATE OF HER OWNER AND FATHER FOR SERVICES—INTERESTING POINTS OF LAW.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, 1879. A case involving some novel points of law has just been submitted in brief in the Supreme Court. It comes as a writ of error from the Circuit Court of the Eastern District of Arkansas. In November, 1878, there died in Chicago county, in that State, one Eliza Worthington, who had been before the war a rich slaveholding planter, whose wealth was estimated at \$500,000. A short time after her death suit was brought by Martha W. Mason, a colored woman, to recover the sum of \$100,000 from the administrators of Worthington's estate for services alleged to have been rendered said Worthington for managing his household affairs for thirteen years.

The plaintiff in her charge set forth that she was the natural daughter of Worthington, her mother having been a slave on one of his plantations; that her father, having no family of his own, treated her as if she had been his lawful child, and intrusted her almost exclusively with the charge of his business matters; that in 1858 he placed her at Oberlin College, Ohio, to be educated; that after remaining there several years she returned voluntarily to said Worthington, with which she continued to reside until his death; that for all this service Worthington had on many occasions promised to reward her handsomely in his will, even to the extent of leaving her two entire plantations, valued at that time as high as \$250,000, but he died suddenly before carrying out his plans, and consequently she was brought through her counsel, General Albert Pike, to recover the amount named from the estate.

When the case came on for trial the Judge charged the jury that when Colonel Worthington voluntarily took the plaintiff into the State of Ohio and placed her under his parental protection, and the laws of that State immediately dissolved the relation of master and slave previously existing between Colonel Worthington and the plaintiff, and the plaintiff became a free woman, and the defendant, after he claimed or held by Colonel Worthington as his slave in virtue of his previous ownership of her. The defendant's answer set forth that the plaintiff from Ohio to Arkansas after her rights as a free woman acquired under the laws of Ohio.

The jury brought in a verdict of \$120,000 for the plaintiff. Senator Garland, of Arkansas, who defended the suit and now appears as counsel for plaintiff in this case, excepted to the jury charge. In his brief he denies all material allegations of Martha Mason as to any contract or agreement or obligation of said Worthington to pay her any sum of money for so-called services, and contends that her manumission could only date from the repeal or abrogation of the law of the State recognizing slavery therein, and that any subsequent manumission of emancipation under any law could not confer upon any slave any such right. The Senator says, in concluding his brief:— "Giving a slave a complete and thorough education, embracing music and drawing and dancing, did not free the slave, under the Arkansas law, and that the law of emancipation could not be passed. The case is likely to provoke much comment and discussion."

POLICY HOLDERS "PROTECTED."

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 24, 1879. In the United States District Court this morning Judge Budgett dismissed the petition of Cook, assignee in bankruptcy of the Protective Life Insurance Company, for an assessment upon about sixteen thousand policy holders to pay some sixty death losses, amounting to over \$224,000, which had never been assessed by the company. He held that the instant contribution plan proposed by the company was an attempt to impose upon the policy holders outside of the beaten paths of life insurance; and those beneficiaries in whose behalf the assessment was made might well have anticipated the contingency which has arisen. The Court could not assume to make the assessments, which the company ought to have made, since to do so would be inequitable, and would impose upon the policy holders burdens for which they could not derive an equivalent, the company being dead. This decision applies to the following policies:—No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and the Commercial League Branch of the company.