THE NEW ANTHEM.

Its Enthusiastic Reception at the Academy of Music.

A BRILLIANT AUDIENCE.

Three Thousand Voices Join in the Chorus.

At half-past three o'clock yesterday afternoon people were pouring into the Academy of Music by hundreds, all anxious to secure seats and to enjoy the first performance of Mr. P. S. Gilmore's national anthem "Columbia." It required but a little time to fill every available position from the auditorium to the gallery. When the curtain arose it was upon a mass of faces that must surely have indicated the intense interest that has been created through the HERALD in the new work of the composer. As the ladies and gentlemen passed the officials who received the tickets they were supplied with a printed copy of the words and melody, and were thus enabled to follow every movement in the programme. It was evident from the outset that the audience were in thorough sympathy with the occasion, and prepared to receive in a good natured way, whatever might be presented, for nobody knew whether the affair would be a success or a failure. After a trifling delay some sixty-five or seventy instrumentalists filed in from the side doors of the stage and took their places. Most of them had not seen the music they were required to perform. Among the artists who had thus volunteered were Levy, the famous soloist on the cornet, and a score of other gentlemen who are well known in musical circles. This fact of itself indicates not only the strength of the sympathy that exists between Mr. Gilmore and other member of his profession, but it shows the warmth of interest they feel in his composition and his endeavor to give it the largest publicity. Their appearance upon the stage in large numbers was therefore regarded by the audience as an earnest tribute to the work of the composer. In a minute or two after they were seated the curtain rose and revealed a chorus of about four hundred ladies and gentlemen who represent our several Metropolitan choral societies. They were arranged with picturesque effect, the sopranos in front, the altos behind, the tenors slightly in the rear and the bassos high up on the back of the stage. It was like the base of a pyramid of vocal possibilities. When the curtain was fairly up and the applause that greeted the *ensemble* ceased Mr. Algernon Sydney Sullivan, who had been selected to deliver the address explanatory of the poem and the occasion, advanced to the front of the stage and spoke as follows:—

MR. SULLIVAN'S ADDRESS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—Deep and intelligent love of country is a passion that must ever create poetry and music, and an offering to the patriotism of the country of a national song founded on history is by no means an insignificant fact.

Your sympathy with such an offering, your desire to witness and unite in it, attest a creditable appreciation by you of the worth of such a high and honorble endeavor. It is in its poetry that a nation discloses its highest aims and enthusiasm. Thence you learn what the nation thinks of law, of freedom, of excellence in character, of the true standard of greatness, and of God. If it be degraded by low and material influences, a nation never will sing lofty spiritual songs. Let us then keep in mind that the service of this Christmas afternoon—which is not to introduce an elegant ode, with florid brilliancy, or a classic lyric, but in simple phrase and measure to embody the sentiment of the American patriotism in a "people's song"—will be tested by the inquiry "With what images does it fill the mind, and what feelings does it stimulate?"

When we speak of a "song founded on history" we recall a great truth. The poet is, in fact, the true historian. He alone sees truth beneath its veil. History, ordinarily so termed, describes the vesture, but the vivified agent beyond, and the soul that warms and colors it, are discernible only by the aid of the Muses. The heart, just as all men carry it about with them, over the whole earth, and through all time, warmed by passions, moved by sympathies—the necessities of its nature, and alive to all truths that are general and not local and incidental—flashes out its own knowledge, feelings, sufferings and designs; and that gleam is poetry—that comprehends the history of man. It shows what he is in all the varying circumstances wherein he lives; it shows what he is doing to change the circumstances. Such poetry is a mirror which not only reflects a faithful image, but which itself takes on beauties from the image in its bosom, and bestows its refulgence as a new enrichment upon the object before it. It is the Oriental crystal of the fable; you look into it, and all that ever glanced upon it looks out upon you.

With it there is no such thing as a never returning past. To it all events are discernible in each event; nothing is isolated, nothing is transitory. The laws of birth of all that is fine in human nature are known to the poet. He can describe it: he can summon it, and make its embryo wings flutter in the bosom of his fellow man.

Of course a sentiment so elevated and akin to piety as patriotism has made poetry its handmaid. Patriotic melodies, at times, have the power of a sanctuary song. Their effect is illustrated in the history of every nation, ancient and modern.

Who can read the famous Scolium of Callistratus and not be transported to the Panathenean festival, when the myrtle wreathed sword killed the tyrant and gave equal laws to Athens?

Methinks I can hear her people, at all their festive meetings, chant to their beloved Harmodious, in the Islands of the Blest, immortal with

——the glorious dead,
Achilles, fleet of foot, and Diomed.

Mr. Sullivan then spoke of the more prominent patriotic songs of modern nations, of their origin and the effect they have had upon the growth and power of the peoples adopting them, and proceeding, said:—

"COLUMBIA" INTERPRETED.

To-day it is our good fortune to christen at one font both the words and the music in which, it is hoped, patriotic feeling may find inspiration and expression. As I understand, the vision which informs this new song of "Columbia in History," it turns my sight three centuries back. It is sunset. Upon the deck of a little vessel sailing western seas, where Europeans had never before ventured, I hear the mariners sing, "Salve Regina," the vesper hymn to the Virgin. I hear Columbus addressing them, and pointing out the goodness of God in leading them across tranquil oceans and guiding them to a promised land. The next morning, I see that Admiral landing on one of the islands of the new continent, upon his knees thanking God, with tears of joy, ending his voyage, as he had recorded the beginning in his journal, "In nomine D. N. Jesu Christi." The banners carried ashore were emblazoned with the cross, and that must ever remain the first fact in an American history, whether written in poetry or in prose. The island which the rising sun revealed to view was overspendored with a brighter glory—the living light of the Cross.

In the spirit of this song I look a century later. I see another small vessel, in a northern latitude, at midwinter, approach the icy shore of the same continent. It is the Mayflower, and from her decks a few pilgrim immigrants land. They plant for posterity a State, the end of which was religion, the rule of which was equal laws, the object the common good, the glory of which was to be freedom. Before landing they formed a body politic—"In the name and presence of God." Borne onward again by this historic song, for a century and a half, we are brought into the majestic presence of Washington, amid the scenes which marked the achievment of American independence. Again, with nearly a century's flight, the vision is all o'ercast with the night of "a frowning Providence," only that the day star shall soon arise to see civil war ended and man's slavery extinguished. Borne on further by the tide of this song review, which of the millions of loving hearts that shall chant this song of "Columbia" will fail "to guard her peace and liberty?"

And more than that, who will remain unimpressed by the spirit which springs out of this song, that

——man to man shall e'er be just.

Why shall it not inspire us all with a new devotion "to advocate the rights of the feeble and plead for the sufferings of the poor?"

For myself, I believe that the duty, the strength and the glory of our country will be found in that path. I feel it, and I mean it, that that duty, in one immediate practical shape, is for the whole people with mighty energy to care for the education of the lately emancipated slaves, now fellow citizens with us.

It now only remains for us to recognize the propriety with which the "Columbia" song concludes in ascription of praise to Him, "the King of Glory on His throne," and in invocation of His blessing.

GILMORE.

Mr. Gilmore now came to the front and was awarded a most enthusiastic ovation. Bowing again and again to the audience in recognition of the same he turned to his orchestra, and in a moment afterward a dozen or more of the stringed instruments were giving in the softest and gentlest manner the opening measures of his melody. At a stroke of his baton the wood instruments, the flutes, oboes and bassoons took up the strain, and then came the grand outburst of the entire orchestra with an effect that elicited the wildest enthusiasm. A repetition was demanded, and the audience almost rose to its feet in the desire to applaud. The welcome of the composition was at once established.

At this juncture Mr. George Vandenhoff advanced to the footlights and with a clear, ringing elocution read the poem in a manner that was well calculated to impress its meaning upon every person present. Audience, orchestra and chorus alike joined in the recognition of the purpose and plan of the new national anthem, which his method of recital had evidently enforced. The orchestra now repeated the melody, and Mr. Gilmore meanwhile led to the front Miss Emma Thursby, who had kindly volunteered as a representative American artist to appear as the soloist of the day. She was received and welcomed with round upon round of applause. Tenors and bassos began the aria, then followed the solo, and quickly came the rich unison of the sopranos and altos of the chorus, ending with the full effect of the great band and the four hundred voices in full volume. The reception of the performance was of a nature the warmth of which can scarcely be described. The enthusiasm was contagious. After an encore Mr. Sullivan again came forward and suggested that the last verse, "the prayer," should be sung by the entire audience. The thought took instantly, and three thousand persons spontaneously rose to their feet and, joining with the orchestra and chorus, rolled out with magnificent effect the stirring strain.

Mr. Gilmore was called upon for some remarks after the performance, but gracefully avoided the infliction by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have already made my little speech. You have heard it and blessed it kindly. I can only add my wish of a 'Merry Christmas' to each and all of you."

OPERA SINGERS AT THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE.

Her Majesty's opera troupe gave a concert last evening at the Brooklyn Tabernacle, of which Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage is pastor. The vast building was well filled with an audience who manifested their appreciation of the entertainment by frequent applause. Rossini's "Stabat Mater" was admirably rendered by the entire company. The following was the programme:—Part 1—Rossini's "Stabat Mater," "Stabat Mater Dolorosa," chorus; air, "Cujus Animam," Signor Campanini; duet, "Quis est homo," Mlle. Alwina Valleria and Miss Annie L. Cary; air, "Pro Peccatis," Signor Galassi; air, "Eia! Mater," Herr Behrens and chorus; quartet, "Sancta Mater," Mlle. Alwina Valleria and Miss Annie L. Cary, Signori Campanini and Galassi; air, "Fac ut Portem," Miss Annie L. Cary; air, "Inflammatus," Miss Alwina Valleria and chorus; quartet, "Quando Corpus," Mlle. Alwina Valleria and Miss Annie L. Cary, Signor Campanini and Herr Behrens; "Amen," chorus finale, Mlle. Alwina Valleria, Miss Annie L. Cary, Signori Campanini and Galassi and chorus; a short interval. Part 2—Morceau à la gavotte, "L'Ingenue," Arditi, by the orchestra; "Ave Marie," Gounod, Mme. Emilie Ambre; chorus, "O Signore" ("Lombardi"), Verdi, by the chorus; airs, (a), "Still ist die Nacht," Abt, (b), "Svinaherde," Swedish national; "Wedding March," Mendelssohn, by the orchestra.

MLLE. MARIMON'S MARIA.

DECEMBER 25, 1879.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

There was one point in Mlle. Marimon's charming performance last night to which your musical critic might, I think, have fairly taken exception. I suppose I have no business to pass criticisms on matters musical, but I made such a journey to hear "La Figlia" last night that I feel almost justified in so doing (for this occasion only). Let me describe my heroic struggle. I lectured at Cortland Tuesday evening; yesterday I got up at half-past three A. M. and from four to a quarter past four might have been seen, if it had not been pitch dark, sliding, stumbling and occasionally falling over the sloppy surface of trodden snow which covered the road to the depot.

[Mem.—After trying several varieties, I incline to think that, with one exception, the slipperiest kind of walking is over snow which has been trodden into ice and has then been "washed, well washed in a shower." The exception is what the French call *verglas*. Let the rain be falling heavily at the time, the traveller carrying luggage and an umbrella, the time a perfectly dark night, the roadway unknown, and I think his happiness is likely to be complete though brief. Another scientific observation I made—viz., that a fall or two, under such conditions, chills about as effectually as a fall into an ice-cold river. You speak of me as descending to earth now and then. You would have been sure of it had your editorial eye seen me yesterday morning. This, however, is a digression]. The New York train was an hour and a quarter late at Syracuse, but, as it reached New York at a quarter to eight, I managed, thanks to a really business-like hackman, to get to the Academy of Music some five or six minutes only after the opera had begun—leaving dinner till "after the opera was over." If I venture, then, to criticise one little point, it must be remembered that I had paid the great songstress a very practical compliment in the first instance, especially as I shall go West again to Ilion, not very far from Cortland, to-morrow. The point is simply this. The song "Chi nacque al rimbombo" is, I think, one of the most soul-stirring in existence. Now, it seemed to me that Mlle. Marimon sang it as if she did not consider it was meant to be soul-stirring. She sang it lightly, brightly and—so far as execution was concerned—brilliantly, but with so little fire that I did not greatly mind what otherwise would have been torture to me, the brilliant runs (from A flat to C, &c.) which she introduced into the opening phrases, so far more effective when sung as Donizetti wrote them. By the way, I am wrong; the runs were introduced where (in my opinion) they were even more completely out of place—viz., in what (when given with due fire) is the most stirring part of the aria (if not of the whole opera, as in my judgment it certainly is), the repetition of the opening phrases, after the *stringendo* passage (on the two words only, "cor" and "ah!") to the noble burst of life and fire in the words, "Ah viva la gloria, che vince il valor!" It has always seemed to me that Tennyson must have had this splendid passage in his mind when he pictured Maud in her garden "singing alone, of death, and of honor that never dies." If, however, I was disappointed so far as this song was concerned, I must say I was on the whole most amply repaid for my journey.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

HIS LAST CHRISTMAS.

SHOCKING DEATH OF AN ECCENTRIC CHARACTER—HE REFUSES HIS DAUGHTER'S INVITATION TO DINNER AND IS BURNED TO DEATH IN HIS ROOM.

A miserable attic room in the dilapidated rear tenement house No. 301 Mulberry street, owned by Deputy Comptroller Storrs, has for years been the abode of an eccentric old man named Patrick J. Houston. He was quite a character, and was known to the gamins of the neighborhood by the nickname of "Pat Rooney." The old man led a secluded life and supported himself by peddling picture frames. Of his history but little was known. Once he told a neighbor that he had wealthy friends living in Bridgeport, Conn. It was said that he was a miser and had hid away among his rickety furniture a large sum of money. This was, however, believed to be idle gossip. He was frequently visited by a well dressed young lady. It was his daughter, who lived with a married sister in Mulberry street. She called yesterday and entreated her father to leave his attic chamber and take dinner with herself and his grandchildren. He refused, and the girl left with tears in her eyes. Houston remained in his room all day, and last evening the landlady, Miss Sarah Foley, discovered smoke issuing from the room in which the hermit dwelt. The police and firemen were summoned, and upon breaking open the door they found the hovel filled with smoke. For some time they were unable to enter, but when it was stated that Houston was inside they worked vigorously and soon succeeded in extinguishing the flames. The room was searched, and on a heap of old papers in one corner Houston was found lying unconscious. Beside him was discerned the dead body of a cat. The old man was carried down to the court yard, and there the firemen succeeded in resuscitating him before the arrival of the ambulance. He was conveyed to the Chambers Street Hospital, where he expired shortly after. His daughter, when informed of her father's sad fate, burst into tears and said, "I asked him to come and spend Christmas with me, but he refused; if he had come he would have been living now."

A STRANGE PROCEEDING.

Houston was born in Ireland sixty-five years ago. He came to this country when young, and went to live at Bridgeport, Conn. There he married. Some years ago he disappeared from his home, and was traced by his friends to the Mulberry street garret where he was last night suffocated. He refused to return to his wife and family, and has since lived alone in the attic above described. His body will be claimed by his daughter and taken to Bridgeport for interment.

Alexander Eakins, driver of engine No. 33, while hitching up the horses to the apparatus in front of the burning building was kicked in the breast by one of the animals and severely injured. The police, upon investigating the fire, are inclined to think that it originated from sparks from a pipe which the old man had been smoking. The damage done will not exceed $30.

COLONEL M'DANIEL RECOVERING.

Colonel McDaniel, the veteran turfman, whose illness at his farm near Princeton, N. J., has been reported in the HERALD, has passed the crisis of his disease and is now reported to be out of danger.

COCKFIGHTING.

LIVELY MAIN BETWEEN BIRDS OF HUDSON, N. Y., AND STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.—THE HUDSONITES THE WINNERS.

HUDSON, N. Y., Dec. 25, 1879.

A rattling cocking main closed near this place at half-past four o'clock this morning. It had been on the tapis for some time and the birds had been carefully trained for the contest. It was between Stockbridge, Mass., and Hudson, N. Y., the agreement providing that each should show fifteen cocks, the battles to be for $50 a side, and the odd fight for $200. The best handlers that could be found had charge of the birds and the affair was kept as quiet as possible, only about fifty persons being invited, and the betting was heavy. When the owners got together it was agreed that there should be nine battles. A handsome tanbark pit had been arranged, and at ten o'clock last night time was called for the first contest. Both cocks weighed 5 lbs. 12 oz. each, and the betting was lively. For five minutes the blows were terrific, when the Massachusetts bird received a cut that knocked it out, giving Hudson the first battle. In the second battle Hudson showed a black-red, weighing 5 lbs. 8 oz., Massachusetts coming forward with a bird of the same color weighing 5 lbs. 13 oz. There were only three strikes, the third one being a brain blow on the Hudson bird, when he "turned tail," refused to fight longer and flew from the pit. He was brought back two or three times, but he declined to again confront his antagonist, when the battle was given to Stockbridge, the Massachusetts backers yelling with delight.

In the third battle Massachusetts showed a brassback weighing 5 lbs. 8 oz. and Hudson a brown-red weighing 5 lbs. 4 oz. At the start Hudson forced the fighting, never letting up for a moment, being a terrific hitter, but the brassback was game and the cry of the Hudson men, "$100 to $50" on the brown-red, met with accepting responses. It was a rattling fight and lasted seven minutes, when Hudson dealt Stockbridge a blow that killed it, and the fight was given to Hudson. In the fourth battle Massachusetts showed a black-red weighing 5 lbs. 2 oz. and Hudson a black-red—a great favorite in the Sleepy City—that weighed 5 lbs. 3 oz. He was a slow but hard hitter, and Massachusetts, after receiving four or five cutting prods, laid low and gave up the ghost, one more battle being scored for Hudson.

The Stockbridge backers were much disconcerted, and almost entirely ceased betting. In the fifth fight they sent a black-red to the front, weighing 5 lbs., Hudson meeting him with a similar weight spangle bird. Hudson knocked his antagonist crazy at the start and punished him fearfully, and he died in four minutes.

After luncheon the Massachusetts handlers sent in a red pyle weighing 4 lbs. 14 oz., Hudson a red, weighing 4 lbs. 14 oz. It was the best fight of the night. The pyle showed great game, but the blows of the Hudson bird were terrific, and in three minutes the pyle was brained, and Hudson was declared the winner of the main. In the seventh battle Massachusetts showed a red pyle and Hudson a gray cut-comb, each weighing 4 lbs. 13 oz. This fight was also easily won by Hudson. In the eighth battle Massachusetts showed a black-red, 4 lbs. 13 oz., and Hudson a cut-comb, 4 lbs. 10 oz. Again Hudson forced the fighting at the start, but Massachusetts showed great pluck, for the fight lasted twelve minutes, during which heavy blows were given and taken, when Hudson cut the Stockbridge bird over the eye and he turned tail.

This gave Hudson seven battles out of eight, when the Massachusetts men wisely determined to withdraw.

THE PEDESTRIANS' CHRISTMAS.

Fourteen contestants retired yesterday from the six days' pedestrian match now going on at the Madison Square Garden, leaving twenty-four who continue the struggle. The three who now aspire to the leadership are Hart, Faber and Krohne, with the colored man leading at ten o'clock last night. There was some enthusiasm as the latter passed Faber at eight o'clock in the evening. The attendance was meagre during the morning, but as the day wore on occasional visitors strolled in, until the Garden filled at seven o'clock. Among those who are still on the track are Hughes and Campana, but both look considerably worn out. McKee was among those who did not appear on the track yesterday. The following was the score at half-past ten o'clock in the evening:—

	Miles.		Miles.
Hart	372	Pegram	342
Faber	371	Fitzgerald	336
Krohne	370	Geldert	333
Hughes	349	Campana	332
Briody	344	Williams	325
O'Brien	344	E. Davis	321

RACING NOTES.

The Monmouth Park Association has opened the following stake, to name and close on or before April 1, 1880:—The Breeders' Stake, for foals of 1879, of $50 each for starters, with $2,500 added; of which $1,000 to the winner, $500 to the second, $750 to the breeder of the winner, and $250 to the breeder of the second; those got by stallions or out of mares which have never produced a winner allowed 3 lbs. (one breeding allowance only), if claimed at the time of naming; maidens at starting allowed 3 lbs.; allowances cumulative; the engagement to follow the ownership of the horse without written transfer; entrance, $10 each (the only liability of the nominator), to go to the racing fund, and to be paid at the time of naming. Three-quarters of a mile. Entries to be addressed to George L. Lorillard, President Monmouth Park Association, Madison avenue and Twenty-seventh street, New York.

There will be a five days' running meeting at Augusta, Ga., commencing January 6, when $2,500 in purses for open races, at different distances, will be distributed. The meeting will be conducted under the rules of the Savannah Jockey Club, and stables from North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Maryland and Kentucky are in training on the club grounds.

Mr. M. H. Sanford, Preakness Stud, North Elkhorn Farm, Lexington, Ky., lost recently by death the chestnut weanling filly (sister to Aristocrat, now in England), by Monarchist, dam imp. Lady Molesworth, by Moulsey, out of Delilah, by Thormanby.

Mr. Oden Bowie, of the Fairview Stud, Maryland, lost recently by death the imp. bay mare Silver Star, foaled 1859, by Kingston, dam Altitude, by Cotherstone; second dam Latitude (sister to Ellis), by Langer. Silver Star was imported in 1860 by the Kentucky Importing Company, and became the property of Major J. R. Viley, of Fayette county, Ky., who also bred and raced the best of her produce—viz., Viley and Twinkle, both sired by Uncle Vic.

HORSE NOTES.

The San Francisco *Chronicle* of the 17th inst. says that the young trotting horse Steinway, recently sold by Colonel Stoner, of Paris, Ky., arrived on the night of the 15th, in charge of Samuel Gamble, of San Francisco. Steinway is a half brother to the California trotter Santa Claus. He is by Strathmore, son of Hambletonian, dam by imported Albion. Steinway trotted the second and third heats in 2:32½ and 2:31¾ as a two-year-old, in Lexington. He also won the Three-year-old Stakes last year at the Kentucky Agricultural and Mechanical Association Fair at Lexington, making three heats in 2:25¾, 2:31½ and 2:31½. Mr. Gamble also brought with him a trotter called Prince Medin.

A new horse disease, says the *Turf, Field and Farm*, has broken out in Kentucky. Cynthiana and its vicinity is just now much exercised over a disease which has broken out among the horses in that neighborhood. The early symptoms resemble distemper, and soon after being attacked the kidneys and bowels become involved, and the disease then assumes a fatal form. Many prominent farmers in Harrison county have lost valuable animals from the effects of this new malady, and the rapidity with which it is spreading is exciting considerable alarm. So far the vets. are at fault in arresting it before it assumes its variable phases. From a letter just received from Cynthiana we gather the fact that the disease is a similar type of influenza to that which was so fatal in 1873 throughout the country.

The first fall meeting of the National Fair Association, held at Washington, D. C., was not only a brilliant popular success, but wound up with a handsome balance over all expenses. The total receipts were $18,515 96; net profits, $17,603 57. At a late meeting of the association the managers were so elated at the success of their initial effort that they passed a resolution calling for a running meeting in May and a trotting meeting in June next.

GLASS BALL SHOOTING.

This evening, at the old Tivoli Theatre (now Bogardus' Shooting School), in Eighth street, there will be glass ball shooting with rifle for a gold medal, presented by the Winchester Rifle Company, under Bogardus' revised rules; and on Saturday evening a "youths' glass ball rifle match," by young men seventeen years of age and under, also for a gold medal.

SPORTING NOTES.

Sweepstakes were also shot at Oceanville, N. J., yesterday. Messrs. Price and Hendrickson won first prizes.

Glass ball and pigeon shooting took place at Bayonne, N. J., yesterday. Messrs. Ferris and Compton were winners.

Several pigeon sweepstakes were shot at Elizabethport, N. J., yesterday afternoon. Messrs. Gregory and Putney were the principal winners.

The Middlesex Pigeon Club shot for the Thomson badge at Tremley, N. J., yesterday. The conditions were 7 birds each, 25 yards rise and Long Island rules to govern. Thirteen members competed, and last year's champion, Dr. Mott, retained the prize.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

Various Methods of Tempering Justice with Mercy.

GASES, GUILLOTINE AND GARROTE.

Imprisonment for Life Recommended as a Substitute for Execution.

Very few among the fraternity of physicians favor the abolition of capital punishment, and some of them are strong and stern believers in its efficacy as a deterrent from crime. Dr. James R. Wood, the well known surgeon, on being asked what he thought the best substitute for hanging, replied:—"Imprisonment for life. Not because I am opposed to capital punishment, but for the reason that capital punishment is not carried out. More than fifty per cent of those who deserve to be hanged escape, and the law is not fulfilled. Let the law then be amended, and substitute imprisonment for life, without the hope of pardon, and the prospect of such a sentence will, on contemplation by any person bent on murder, be as effectual a check as the gallows. Owing to the nature of the criminal law, which permits a jury only the option of bringing in a verdict of guilty or not guilty, and owing to the sentimentality of the age, many murderers go scot free where the least error or excuse can be made to justify a verdict of not guilty. Where the penalty would be imprisonment for life juries would show none of the hesitation they now exhibit in bringing in a verdict of guilty in the first degree. There is reason to think that a majority of murderers would prefer hanging to lifelong incarceration, especially if they had the certain knowledge that the Governor in such cases had no power to pardon."

"But as executions are apt to go on for some time, what would you suggest to take the place of hanging as a means of death?"

"A needle to be inserted at the back of the neck to divide the medulla oblongata, as this would make a speedy and merciful end of a criminal. It would be a cheap and simple method, the victim being pinioned in a chair, and the whole operation need not occupy ten minutes. When for purposes of vivisection animals are required this is the plan used, as being the most humane possible, death being almost instantaneous. There are other modes, by certain poisons and gases; but, unlike the one I have suggested, they involve more or less of uncertainty."

"How do you think electricity would work?"

"I don't know much about it, but I have an idea it would be less reliable than the mode I propose."

"On principle you are not opposed to capital punishment?"

"Well, my ancestors were Quakers and did not believe in the death penalty, and I have some tendency in the same direction."

TOTALLY OPPOSED TO THE DEATH PENALTY.

Dr. Jacobi, of Thirty-fourth street, was the first physician the reporter met who was totally opposed to capital punishment.

"Why ask me," said he, "to contrive means other than hanging for the death of criminals when I am opposed to all capital punishments whatever? I think the medical fraternity could better employ its time and ingenuity in devising means for saving in place of destroying life. It is a gratifying thing, however, to see that a discussion is going on to do away with hanging and substitute some less revolting means of slaughter. It is significant of an awakened sense of civilization and humanity, and must lead to the abolition of capital punishment altogether. The more barbarous the means of death the louder will the public outcry be against it. Hanging is a disgrace to the nineteenth century. It does no good, and is only a brutal relic of less civilized times. All the ends of justice and punishment can be reached by imprisonment for life, which is in consonance with the spirit of the age and has all the requisite terror for the criminally disposed."

"They abolished hanging in Michigan some years ago but have returned to it again."

"That is because you elect Governors now and then who for political purposes pardon all kinds of criminals after a year or two, and the community gets alarmed and talks of hanging. But let no Governor be allowed to pardon any man who is sentenced for life for murder and see if the system don't work well."

Dr. Alfred L. Loomis, of Thirty-fourth street, said:—"I don't know of any better method of capital punishment than the present one. It has the sanction of time and usage, and when properly performed, as it ought to be, it is as quick and effective as any that could be devised. It is certainly an ignominious mode of death, and in that lies one of its chief merits. For the man who commits murder there should be no ignominy too great. Death by opium or chloroform would be painless and even pleasant, and would have none of the dread accessories of the gallows. But would it deter from murder as hanging does? Would it not rather incite the homicidal instinct in place of holding it in repression? True, there are bungling executions from time to time; but the remedy for that would be the appointment of State executioners, who should hold office for life or while capable of performing its duties, as in England. The man would thus become an expert and none of those scenes would occur that shock the public sensibility. There is a way of placing the noose around the neck and directing the fall of the body which insure the breaking of the vertebral column and the extinction of life almost instantaneously, but it is one Sheriff in twenty who knows how to do this, and hence the bungling executions."

"What would you say to electricity?"

"That might be effectual and would certainly be very quick in its operation—quick as a stroke of lightning. The guillotine is another rapid method, but rather too revolting. The rope, I think, answers the purpose best of all."

REACHING THE SEAT OF LIFE.

It may appear strange that any physician would decline to have his name identified with such views as he might express on the question of capital punishment, but there are physicians in this city extremely sensitive as to anything that looks like advertising themselves. A HERALD reporter called on several of this class to inquire what they thought the best substitute for the present method of capital punishment, but they either declined to say anything or, having delivered opinions, requested their names to be suppressed. Among these was an eminent practitioner and former president of the County Medical Society, who was asked by the reporter what he considered a better plan of capital punishment than the prevailing one.

"I think," said he, "chloroform is the most easily managed and the most merciful. It could be absorbed in a sponge, which might be placed in a bag and drawn over the head and face the same as the cap usually used at executions. Next to that I look upon Dr. Hammond's suggested improvement on the garrote as the best plan. The Spanish garrote, consisting of a simple iron collar, which squeezes the criminal to death is cruel and primitive. Dr. Hammond's idea of attaching a blade to the collar and when the latter is in position of driving the blade into the neck so as to sever the medulla oblongata meets the case perfectly, making death invariably certain and speedy. It is a wonder that this idea never entered the Spanish mind. They know how to reach the seat of life in a bull and give him an instantaneous death and relief, as the matador does with his sword, but they have less consideration for humanity."

"What other means would you suggest?"

"Carbonic acid gas, or carbonic oxide, which is much more powerful. This would answer for large cities, as it would be much more expensive than chloroform or the garrote. Dr. Packard, of Philadelphia, is the particular advocate of this method. His plan would be to fit up in a jail a small room made air tight. By means of a simple arrangement carbonic oxide can be substituted for the air of the room, and a person confined in it would thus die the easiest and quickest death known to science. He would simply cease to exist. A jury should be appointed to identify the convicted person. In their presence he should be conducted to the room and placed in it, entering by a sliding door of plate glass, which may be protected by a netting of iron wire. The process of making the air irrespirable should then be begun and would be very soon completed. In less than ten minutes fresh air might be introduced by opening the sliding door and reversing the former process, and the same jury again identifying the body could certify to the fact of the execution having been duly carried out. Dogs killed in this way manifest scarcely any evidence of suffering. The death would necessarily be private. Probably there would be little if any struggling to be witnessed. As to the certainty of the extinction of life there can be no question, for reasons known to any one acquainted with physiology."

THE CRUEL ROPE.

"What objection have you to the present mode of execution?"

"Death by the rope is cruel in most cases. If the knot could be so arranged as to bear on the great blood vessels and nerves of the neck and to dislocate the vertebræ so that the spinal marrow might be pressed upon, death would be instantaneous. The mode of execution in England, where the criminal is allowed to drop a certain number of feet, is more cruel than the style practised here where he is jerked upward. It is possible, of course, to make hanging less revolting than it is, but how are we to get an expert executioner? The Sheriff is in office only for a limited time, and his experience can never be large. In England and other countries they have one man who makes it his special business, and finally becomes an artist at the work."

"Do you believe in capital punishment?"

"In the present state of society and under the present system of management of prisons I believe in the necessity of capital punishment. Until we shall have prisons where the moral amelioration of criminals is made sure of capital punishment will be needed. Criminals come out of prison nowadays worse than they went in; for there is no attempt made to classify them and bring the proper influences to bear on them for their entire reformation. It may be set down as true that more murders would be committed if the death penalty were abolished, as imprisonment for life would be no great deterrent. The monks of old used to lock themselves in cells and remain for years away from the gaze and society of men, and they were able to bear it. If our prisons were more reformatory I should be opposed to capital punishment; but there are in our midst criminals so hardened and brutal that the common instinct of self-preservation would require that they should be put entirely out of the way as being past the pale of redemption."

SHIPPING NEWS

OCEAN STEAMERS.

DATES OF DEPARTURE FROM NEW YORK FOR THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY.

Steamers.	Sails.	Destination.	Office.
Victoria	Dec 27	London	7 Bowling Green
Germanic	Dec 27	Liverpool	37 Broadway
Ethiopia	Dec 27	Glasgow	7 Bowling Green
Neckar	Dec 27	Bremen	2 Bowling Green
Vaderland	Dec 29	Antwerp	52 Broadway
Algeria	Dec 31	Liverpool	4 Bowling Green
The Queen	Dec 31	Liverpool	69 Broadway
State of Pennsylv'ia	Jan 1	Glasgow	72 Broadway
Baltic	Jan 1	Liverpool	37 Broadway
Herder	Jan 1	Hamburg	61 Broadway
Republic	Jan 3	Liverpool	31-33 Broadway
Helvetia	Jan 3	Liverpool	69 Broadway
Utopia	Jan 3	London	7 Bowling Green
Main	Jan 3	Bremen	2 Bowling Green
Circassia	Jan 3	Glasgow	7 Bowling Green
P Caland	Jan 3	Rotterdam	50 Broadway
Wyoming	Jan 6	Liverpool	29 Broadway
Scythia	Jan 7	Liverpool	4 Bowling Green
France	Jan 7	Liverpool	69 Broadway
Erin	Jan 7	London	69 Broadway
Celtic	Jan 8	Liverpool	37 Broadway
Westphalia	Jan 8	Hamburg	61 Broadway
City of New York	Jan 10	Liverpool	31-33 Broadway
Devonia	Jan 10	Glasgow	7 Bowling Green
Weser	Jan 10	Bremen	2 Bowling Green
Batavia	Jan 14	Liverpool	4 Bowling Green
Greece	Jan 14	London	69 Broadway
City of Brussels	Jan 15	Liverpool	31-33 Broadway
Gellert	Jan 15	Hamburg	61 Broadway
Bolivia	Jan 17	Glasgow	7 Bowling Green
Gen Werder	Jan 17	Bremen	2 Bowling Green
Nevada	Jan 20	Liverpool	29 Broadway
Canada	Jan 21	London	69 Broadway
Labrador	Jan 21	Havre	55 Broadway
Rotterdam	Jan 24	Rotterdam	50 Broadway
Wisconsin	Jan 27	Liverpool	29 Broadway

ALMANAC FOR NEW YORK THIS DAY.

SUN AND MOON.			HIGH WATER.		
Sun rises		7 23	Sandy Hook	morn	5 47
Sun sets		4 39	Gov. Island	morn	6 32
Moon sets	morn	5 47	Hell Gate	morn	8 17

HERALD YACHT WEATHER OBSERVATIONS.

Dec. 25.	Hour.	Bar. Inch.	Ther. Deg.	Wind.	State of Weather.
Staten Island	Noon.	30.15	40	N	Raining.
Bar	4 PM	30.08	36	NNE	Cloudy.
Lightship	8 PM	30.08	34	N	Snowing.
Staten Island	12 PM	30.14	30	N	Cloudy.

PORT OF NEW YORK, DEC. 25, 1879.

ARRIVALS.

REPORTED BY THE HERALD STEAM YACHTS AND HERALD WHITESTONE TELEGRAPH LINE.

Steamer Viola (Br), Stevens, Shields 20 days, with mdse to G A & E Meyers; vessel to J C Seager. Had strong south and westerly gales all the passage.

Steamer Acapulco, Shackford, Aspinwall Dec 17, with mdse and passengers to the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. Dec 24, lat 36 12, lon 74 19, passed steamer Colon, from New York for Aspinwall.

Steamer City of Dallas, Risk, Jacksonville Dec 19, Fernandina 20th, Brunswick 21st and Port Royal 22d, with mdse and passengers to C H Mallory & Co.

Steamer Old Dominion, Walker, Richmond, City Point and Norfolk, with mdse and passengers to Old Dominion Steamship Company.

Steamer Hatteras, Millett, West Point, Va, with mdse to Old Dominion Steamship Company.

Steamer Pioneer, Mimford, Philadelphia. Towed to this port schr Breeze, before reported dismasted at Philadelphia.

Ship Trimountain, Osborne, London 29 days, with old rails, &c, to order; vessel to Jonas Smith & Co.

Ship Andrew Johnson (of Thomaston, Me), Crawford, Bremerhaven 29 days, with iron, &c, to order; vessel to Snow & Burgess. Passed the Lizard Nov 25; had continued strong NE and ENE winds until Dec 5, lon 38 42, lat 46 24, when wind suddenly hauled to SW, increasing to a violent gale, which on morning of 6th hauled to WNW, with very heavy sea running, ship labouring heavily; 6 PM, sudden shift to NW, increasing in violence to 10 PM, very heavy cross sea running, ship laboring very heavily; found cargo working adrift; was compelled to run ship before the wind to secure it; Dec 9, lat 45 08, lon 42 40, had heavy gale from NNW, lasting 36 hours; 14th, lat 41 43, lon 57 43, took a violent gale from SE, which hauled to SW, lasting till 16th, 4 AM, when the wind shifted suddenly to W, and continued until midnight thence to port variable winds and weather; Dec 20, lat 39 53, lon 64 15, had a terrific squall from WNW, which lasted 30 minutes; Dec 15, Frank Nettleson, native of Connecticut, while furling lower mainsail fell from aloft striking on deck receiving injuries from which he died and was buried at sea 16th; Dec 14, no lat, &c, spoke brig Emily Raymond (Br), Roberts, from St John, NB, for Glasgow; 17th, lat 40 02, lon 59 30, ship Strathearn