The Call
San Francisco

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THE CALL SPEAKS FOR ALL.

The political lamb is generally obedient to the crook.

Even the bicycle has its victims as well as its votaries.

It is a cold world, and lo the poor pugilist has nowhere to warm his fists.

We have had everything but a National convention and we must have that.

This week cheers us with the hope of bringing the Durrant case to a finish.

At this season the biggest field of university work is marked out like a gridiron.

There are very few men who can wear a chrysanthemum without having to carry a cane.

The Monroe doctrine fits the condition in Venezuela exactly as if it were made for it.

If you wish to know why you are to be gay this winter read Mr. Greenway's paper on another page.

What kind of noise was it in the Democratic ranks that led Buckley to believe he heard an encore?

A short time ago David Bennett Hill was big enough to stand against Cleveland, and now where is he?

It is better to put up now for the National Convention than to put up with the loss of it later on.

With the Sacramento city election to the front, it cannot be truly said this is an off year for politics in California.

Our culture may not be altogether better than that of New York, but we do not have to cross a river to-day to get beer.

Marlborough may be a very small sort of a man, but it is much easier to make fun of him than to imitate his example.

Chicago Democrats expressed sympathy with the Cubans, but really they are in hard need of sympathy themselves.

Cuba has a population of about 1,600,000, and Spain can never hold down that many people long enough to count them out.

There are several nations in Europe that would willingly protect Armenia if the other nations would get out of the way.

Corbett and Fitzsimmons might as well agree to turn their affair into a debate on the silver question and take the chances.

There are some Spaniards who propose to whip Cuba first and then wallop the United States for sympathizing with her.

The latest development in our language is the use by a New York newspaper of the word "laymen" to signify people who do not ride bicycles.

Sadly the country is being forced to the conclusion that the talk of Olney's vigorous foreign policy was only another emanation of the silly season.

It is said American publishers have in press over 2000 new novels which will be issued before the holidays, and what will become of them is another story.

As the war in Cuba has caused our trade with the island to fall off over $1,000,000 it would seem that putting a stop to it would be attending to our own business.

Carnival towns should arrange their dates so as to make a procession of festivals and not a set of conflicting fiestas, all going on at once like three shows in a circus.

It is noted that never before in recent years have church conventions received so much attention as during the present fall, and the prediction is made that a great increase in the prestige of churches is at hand.

The recently completed State census in Iowa shows a population of 2,035,000, or 123,000 more than in 1890. The gain is not so large as was expected, and the next time a census is taken some Minneapolis men will get the job.

It is said that on the state railroads of France aluminum will be used hereafter in all the metallic work of car construction except the wheels and axles, and it is estimated the reduction in weight of an average train will be about thirty tons.

It may be noted as an evidence of the way Chicago has degenerated from the hardihood of pioneer days that when it was desired to have rattlesnakes served at an old-settlers' banquet there was not a chef in the city who would cook them.

According to a writer in the *Westminster Gazette*, "Charley's Aunt" has been played over 7000 times and yielded the author over $150,000, while the "Private Secretary" yielded $500,000. It is evident "the play's the thing," provided it is a farce.

The returns from the recent school elections in Connecticut show that only 1906 votes were cast by women, as against 3241 votes cast by them last year. The decline in the vote is probably due to the fact that suffrage has ceased to be a novelty and hasn't become a fad.

There is a report going the rounds of the Eastern press that every man, woman and child living at Point San Pedro in this State is a bleached blonde owing to the infusion in the air of chemicals used in the powder factory; and if there are any blondes over there who are not bleached they had better speak up.

ASHWORTH'S PREDICAMENT.

It must have been an overwhelming surprise to Street Superintendent Ashworth to learn that any body of citizens, whether organized as a Grand Jury or not, had dared to bring proceedings against him for corrupt and willful misconduct and for his removal from office, and it must be immeasurably humiliating to him to realize that he cannot exercise the functions of his office during the pendency of the proceedings. He is now placed in a far worse role than that of a common criminal, and that is probably beyond his power of comprehension.

For although he had been repeatedly warned by THE CALL that he must mend the ways of his department or take the consequences, and had been clearly informed by this paper that San Francisco was beginning to emerge from the disgraceful political condition which has brought it so mnch harm in the past, he carried his position with a high hand, denounced those who would have been glad to see him spared this terrible disgrace, assumed the attitude of towering superiority over the combined moral forces of the City, and acted generally in a manner which indicated his belief that his power was unassailable.

It would not be proper at this time to discuss the merits of the case against him in their legal aspect. Public policy requires that this silence be maintained even in the face of the notorious circumstances which have given rise to the proceedings. It is more profitable to turn to the agencies which have brought about the action.

Mr. Ashworth has already explained that much of the crooked work with which his administration is charged was done by his predecessor in office. This makes the case none the better for him. It was his duty, if he knew of such things, to protect the City against them instead of carrying them to completion. But what about the former members of the City government? Mr. Ashworth's explanation is an attack on their intelligence, vigilance or fidelity, and it seems incumbent on them to step out into the light and defend themselves.

In very sharp contrast to the former order of things is the record made by the present Street Committee of the Board of Supervisors. It was not content to take the Street Superintendent's word for the manner in which the contractors were doing their work. It employed an expert, paid his salary from private sources and set him to work. With no trouble at all he ran down a long list of scandalous contract operations. His services were so conspicuously valuable that he was engaged by the whole board and his salary paid from the public funds. His known integrity was an element of his selection, and that is something that is too often overlooked in the selection of public functionaries.

The splendid work of the Street Committee would not have had so highly valuable results had it not been for the high character of the Grand Jury. Such forces working together are competent at any time to uproot corruption and check the evils of incompetency in the conduct of municipal affairs. It should be as gratifying to the people to realize that we have such men to guard the public interests as it should be a warning to corrupt politicians that their days of prosperous rascality have come to an end.

MUNICIPAL POLITICS.

If age is a guarantee of respectability the belief that politics should not be a factor in the direction of municipal affairs is respectable. This view has recently been expressed, according to a published interview, by J. Richard Freud, secretary of the Merchants' Association. He is reported to have said that the association will work for a new charter, that it will adopt a platform, that it is already able to influence 1000 votes and that it will extend its membership so as to be able to influence 5000 or 10,000 votes.

He is reported to have added: "It is not implied by this that any intention exists to hold political conventions. Our members belong to both political parties, but the merchants generally believe that in municipal affairs there should be no politics. With 10,000 voters interested in our platform and standing back of it no public official would resist our requests."

If politics is what it purports to be its aim is to assure, through organization and effort, the security and prosperity of the people. Differences in political parties express the difference in views which men entertain for accomplishing the desired end. In its proper sense politics is the concrete expression of patriotism. The organization of a party would rationally and properly extend from a National body down through the various subdivisions of the Government, fitted exactly to them and stopping only at the smallest, which is a city ward. If such organization stops anywhere such stoppage is a confession of the unwisdom of the whole idea of political organization and effort, and in addition to that weakens the whole organized structure.

If organized politics is good for one division of the Government it must be good for all, and if it is not good for one it is an evil for all. The security and prosperity of the smallest ward in the smallest city is as important a consideration as the security and prosperity of the Nation, and the strength of the whole is best assured by securing the strength of the parts.

When worthy citizens, having at heart the proper government of the people, withdraw from affiliation with established political parties in municipal affairs and act independently of them, they cannot consistently affiliate with such parties in National affairs, because their withdrawal is a proclamation that they have discovered inefficiency at the very groundwork of such parties, and the necessary conclusion is that such inefficiency must extend throughout the whole organization. There is no principle upon which political organization can be defended in its applicability to one subdivision of the Government that is not applicable to each and all.

It seems not to have occurred to those who oppose politics in municipal affairs that it would be just as easy and far better for them to achieve their praiseworthy purposes by exercising their good influence within the established parties than by seeking to weaken those organizations and invite corruption and inefficiency to them by withdrawing the good influence which alone makes them worthy, efficient and responsible. They seem to have overlooked the fact that established parties, being responsible to the people, and generally suffering punishment for persistent wrongdoing, are in a better position than transient organizations to hold their elected public officers accountable for their conduct, to punish with neglect those who have proved unworthy and to reward with higher honors those who have proved worthy. It does not seem to have occurred to these gentlemen that any organization which they may effect for influencing elections is itself just as much a political organization as that of any established political party; that the ends which they seek to accomplish must be reached by political methods; that the principle expressed by their organization and efforts is identical with that represented by the organization and efforts of established parties; that when so organized and working they are as much a political party as any other, with this difference, that their political party is transient and lacks the useful elements of accountability to the public and of holding their elected officers accountable to them.

A PECULIAR OFFICER.

After the exhibition of his temperament which United States Marshal Baldwin made at the hanging of St. Clair and Hansen last Friday it is difficult to see how he can conscientiously retain his office or how President Cleveland can keep him there. Mr. Baldwin deserted his post of duty at the most critical moment, and had it not been for the superior efficiency of the State officers in the San Quentin prison the probabilities are that an inconceivably disgraceful scene would have been witnessed. It is believed Mr. Baldwin excluded reporters because he feared that his courage would fail and that the press would put him in a disgraceful light. He did exactly as he feared he would do, but the papers published the fact nevertheless, and he has suffered the humiliatfon of which he feared.

It is nothing whatever to his discredit that he has a temperament which makes the execution of the death sentence unspeakably repulsive to him. On the contrary, it is evidence of a fine, sensitive and sympathetic nature, and that is a credit to any one. Nor is it a discredit to other men that they lack such extreme sensitiveness if they have good qualities to compensate for the lack. It was highly creditable to the San Quentin officers, for instance, that they had the courage to avert a shocking scene by performing a duty which rested upon Mr. Baldwin alone.

But Mr. Baldwin's official aspect is another matter. He likely knew his own temperament before he accepted the office; he knew that it was possible he should be called on to execute the death sentence; his whole conduct immediately before the hanging showed that he knew himself to be incompetent for the task. It was clearly his duty then to resign his office. As he did not then exhibit that high sense of duty which we should expect from a man of his high-strung and sensitive temperament, it is not likely that he will now perform his urgent duty in resigning. That, however, should not prevent the President from meeting the contingency. As Mr. Baldwin has doubly disgraced his office by neglecting to resign before attempting the performance of a duty which he was sure he could not properly discharge, if at all, and by failing to perform it at last, the President cannot avoid removing him.

THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

While it is the part of wisdom on the part of the City Board of Education to abolish the Normal School, the reason which it gives for the decision—a necessity to economize—is unfortunate. The State has a large, satisfactory and highly developed scheme for the education of teachers, and no city can enter into the plan of educating pupils to teach without interfering with the State scheme and, by implication, casting a reflection on its efficiency.

If there were no State normal schools it would be wise for San Francisco to have one. Whatever the efficiency of the San Francisco Normal School, its existence has been an impertinence, an intrusion and an unnecessary expense. The proper function of municipal and other local schools in the public-school system is to occupy their assigned place in the general scheme created by the Legislature. This is to have grammar and high schools, which lead up to the university. There manifestly should be but one system of training teachers, and it should be under one management. Any other plan leads to a variety of standards and a confusion of results.

RANDOM NOTES.

By JOHN MCNAUGHT.

The clear voice of Mr. Greer Harrison's condemnation of New York assumptions has penetrated to that far land, and the air over there is filled with the reverberations of a multitude of fools howling forth discordant replies. To some extent this is not unexpected. We knew, of course, that when the heel of California culture was set upon the worm of Eastern rudeness the worm would turn, but it was not expected the worm would come back roaring like the bull of Bashan and disturbing the whole country with a noise laid to our account. The turning was all right, but the roaring is an impertinence which it is the duty of every Californian to rebuke gently as befits our Pacific climate, but resolutely in accordance with our Western style.

Western cities by an immemorial custom have an established right to criticise all cities to the east of them. New York exercises this right with great vigor and persistence at the expense of London and Paris, and has therefore no right to complain when we indulge ourselves in a similar treat at her cost. It would be a revolution in the course of civilization if the East should seriously revolt against the educating voice of the West. The star of empire would turn backward. It would be as if Spain should seek release from Cuba. The voice of the West should ever be regarded in the East as the voice of conscience, and while it is permitted unto the East to turn, it should always be a turning to repentance.

The culture of a community like the wit of an individual is pleasing only when it is original, fresh and freely fluent in all of its phases. When it becomes old, stale and formal it assumes the rough uncouthness of a chestnut burr; it even grows woolly in body and has whiskers on it. Now, the culture of New York is much older than that of San Francisco, and consequently is much more of a chestnut, not to say more woolly. We, therefore, having the vigor and the excellence of a fresher, more original and more Western culture, have a threefold right to use the shears of criticism in clipping the wool off New York, even to the taking of the hair also, and possibly some of the skin as a scalp for our wigwam's adornment. Nor should New York be allowed to make too much fuss about it. Does she not live in a world where the Lord tempers the wind to a shorn lamb?

The culture of a community can be fairly estimated by the homes the people build for themselves. If the rich folks of San Francisco had ignored the commanding views of the bay and the Golden Gate, and had erected their mansions on Morton street, what visitor to the City would not have said: "Behold a community where there are many kinds of fools, but all of one degree." Yet the rich of New York have done just about that kind of thing. With avenues commanding fine views of the Hudson River and the lofty Palisades beyond, they have built themselves houses and even palaces on a narrow thoroughfare commanding no views at all and running, as they themselves express it, only "from hell to Harlem." What culture can be expected of such a community when at the very extreme it can be only of the hell or Harlem kind?

When the New York millionaires turn away from the noble boulevard by the riverside to build their houses on so narrow and commonplace a street as Fifth avenue simply because it is nearer to the shops and give up the prospect of the Palisades for the prospect of getting five minutes sooner downtown they disclose a lack of some of the best elements of culture; but even more disgraceful to the community than the mistreatment of Riverside avenue is the abuse of the Bowery. No community is morally responsible for its millionaires, since they are never an outgrowth of public morals, but it is responsible for its bohemians; and in making the beautiful, bright Bowery a jest and a byword instead of a toast and a classic the New Yorkers prove themselves to be the veriest Philistine pigs that ever turned away from jewels to root in the muck heaps of life.

In a city where the kings of Philistia build palaces on the midtown thoroughfare of traffic instead of on superb heights far removed from trade, and where the princes of Bohemia turn away from the freedom of one of the broadest and bravest streets in all the big, wide world, there may be taste in poetry, music and art, but if so the taste is imported. It is not wine only that New Yorkers judge by the label and give preference to European brands. Their tongues are too woolly for tasting home sweets, their ears are too hairy for hearing home music, and they consider nothing elevated unless the cost is high.

Out of the talk and the writing caused by Trilby there has been made public an odd bit of information from the history of music that is interesting. We are told that the old French song "Malbrouc s'en va-t-en guerre," which runs through the story, is sung to the tune of "We Won't Go Home Till Morning," and moreover, that the tune is of great age. It can be traced as far back as the middle ages, when it served as a war chant of the Crusaders. It would be interesting to know exactly how far the tune has changed and through what transformations it has passed in coming down the centuries and descending from the dignity of a holy battle-song on the plains of Palestine to be a howling drinking chorus in American barrooms. Music itself, it seems, can lose its high estate, and perhaps if primeval man had started out dowered with the music of the spheres the sublime harmony would by this time have dwindled down to a jingle, fit only to set the pace of boys and girls doing a round dance.

Trilby herself has attained the dignity of being the subject of a scientific discussion. She has been considered under that aspect by the Social Culture Society of New York, for it seems they have a society, even if they haven't got a culture, and a learned scientist read a paper there which proved that Trilby never could have been as Du Maurier pictured her, because such a Trilby could not have had her throat filled with music by the most potent and most expert Svengali that ever lived. That settles it. Science has spoken; let art be dumb.

The only defect in California culture is a lack of a community consciousness of it. Individually we may feel the confidence of a perfect poise on all things elevated, and be calm in the assurance of a well-balanced equilibrium amid the oscillations of taste, but we have not as yet a sufficient common understanding and mutual agreement to be sure that our neighbors are right. Consequently when some fellow citizen pronounces judgment we hesitate to indorse him. In the present instance for example, not a few well-meaning, but uncertain people have been inclined to look askance at Mr. Harrison and doubt whether New York may not have some culture after all. It is time this defect should be remedied, and the occasion is propitious for beginning the remedial task. The issue is simple. Is not our culture sufficiently higher than that of New York to permit us to look down upon those who dwell there? Is not California Hill more elevated than Murray Hill? Has not a city on the shore of the Pacific a broader outlook than one on Spuyten Duyvel Creek? Is it too late to seek to avoid the conflict? The East is blowing her trumpets and we must take our trumpets and blow also. San Francisco has a right to expect that all her critics will come forward with brave words to justify their trade. "He that doubts is damned, and he that dallies is a dastard."

If there be any truth in the universe higher and broader than that which lies low and confined at the bottom of a well, then the culture of San Francisco is as much superior to that of New York as the view from California Hill is superior to that from the corner of Fifth avenue and some other brownstone street. The New Yorker sees nothing bigger than a hotel, nothing brighter than a gaslamp, nothing sweeter than a candy-store. But from our hilltops all the infinite is ours. Mountains, waves and fogs; sunshine and starlight above, and around about us or beneath us the glow of innumerable lights, the coming and going of ships, the bloom of sempiternal flowers, the vigor of ocean winds, the sweetness of the odors of roses and lilies, the influences of men gathered from all quarters of the globe, the mighty impulses that throb forever in the great heart of the West—from these sources we draw fair passions, bountiful pities and loves without stain, deriving therefrom a culture so fine, free and fluent and full that we could go on higher and higher in elevated joys unwearyingly if it were not that we are occasionally rendered conscious of the existence of New York in our beloved country and are thus made tired.

It is not often that musical recitals are made interesting to non-musical people, but the task, though difficult, can be accomplished, and that without putting too much of a strain on the non-musical audience. An excellent instance of the successful accomplishment of the feat was given at a recent musical evening provided by the California College of Oratory for the entertainment of its friends. The musician of the evening, Professor Blumann, prefaced each of his selections with a brief description explaining the meaning of the different movements of the music, their relations to one another and the sentiment which pervaded and unified the whole. This was a literal "untwisting all the chords that tie the hidden soul of harmony," and made the significance as well as the sweetness of the music clear. It would be well for our culture if we could have a series of explained recitals of this kind on a large scale. They would undoubtedly prove popular as soon as they were understood, for they would enable people who know nothing of music to find as much enjoyment in listening to it and discussing it as an impecunious citizen finds in the ceaseless agitation of the silver question.

DIGGING UP NEWS.

Los Angeles Porcupine.

The San Francisco CALL publishes more Los Angeles News than all of the other San Francisco dailies put together. J. M. Shawhan "digs up" his own news, while the Chronicle and Examiner are dependent upon the Times and Herald. No wonder that by its push THE CALL is building up a tremendous circulation in this city and county.

THE DEGENERACY OF AMBROSE BIERCE.

By WILLIAM GREER HARRISON.

The decay of a brilliant mind is under all circumstances a pitiable sight, even where the decay has been self-wrought.

Twenty years ago Ambrose Bierce held our small world at his feet. Then his satire had the keenness of the stiletto. Then San Francisco laughed with him. Occasionally since then our people have tittered over periodic suggestions of a brilliant past. To-day the world laughs at Ambrose Bierce as they would laugh at any other man who uses a bludgeon believing he is playing with the foil.

Once he was epigrammatic and his terse, sharp-pointed humor told its own story without elaboration. Now he employs a column of matter to enable him to say of a man that he is an ass.

Has age dulled his intellect? No, he is relatively a young man, and his work should be stronger and richer for the long practice of a once cunning hand.

Once Mr. Bierce was original, now he is content to plagiarize from himself, and quotes Ambrose Bierce as his sole authority. It does not require any very large amount of brains to enable one man to call another a fool or a donkey or an ass. That is a form of Billingsgate easily acquired. In his later days Mr. Bierce stands upon a monument whose base is his undying self-conceit, wildly waving a ponderous beam, killing unfortunate insects foolishly venturing within his reach.

Mr. Bierce's case offers a study to the analyist. What has produced this strange degeneracy? Is it degeneracy, or is it that the glamour has gone and that the monotony of his wit has dispelled a belief in its potency, or is it that men no longer fear a sting, the too constant use of which has destroyed its point? Or is it that Ambrose Bierce, weary of his mask, has uncovered the real Bierce, and, glorying in his own shame, reveals himself as he really is? What is Ambrose Bierce? A critic who cannot criticize, an author who cannot write. Why? Because he abandoned the field of criticism, in its true sense, to take up the work of a mere compiler of his own fugitive sketches. His published efforts were failures. A kindly merchant subject to his entreaty had unwisely become an amateur publisher, and Mr. Bierce's works were given to the public. The public pitilessly refused them. Mr. Bierce had spent the worst part of his life in abusing almost every man and woman who dared to enter the literary lists, and when his own works were presented this fact was not forgotten. He was not abused—he was simply damned by the negative method—no one cared to read him. And yet his works have great merit and deserved a better fate. It may be a mere conceit or it may be the truth that while all other human qualities have disappeared from Mr. Bierce's nature, memory may have rebelled and refused to be silent, and that Mr. Bierce was made to see the long line of unfortunates whom he had mercilessly destroyed, and that the sight instead of humanizing him had the reverse effect.

For years he poisoned his darts. At last he poisoned himself with his own venom. Once he could dissect, now he can merely scold.

It would be easy to say of Mr. Bierce that he is a stuttering ape, a shambling idiot, an ill-visaged 'maphrodite, a literary monstrosity; but to say so would not be to afford evidence that he is all of these, though he may be said to be each of them in part. But that would be merely following Mr. Bierce's later and most objectionable methods.

Mr. Bierce once had the skill and disposition to attack a man's work; he still has the disposition, but he lacks the skill. Now he is content to resort to mere personalities, abusing the individual without even the slightest knowledge of his work. He cannot fire, so he burns saltpeter to remind himself that he still lives. It would be easy to assert that Ambrose Bierce is a man without manliness, a being without feeling, an existence without purpose; but that method is too Biercine to be legitimately used. It may be briefly said that he is without any moral sense, and that he has not the slightest conception of what constitutes a gentleman. This is illustrated by his sacrilegious attack upon the Lord's Prayer and his brutal assault upon one of the most charming and brilliant women of our country.

But his personal qualities are not worth considering. What is subject to inquiry is his egotistical assumption of the office of censor. Is his authority to be found in the only evidence before us—the work of his pen? We cannot look into his life—it is a blank. We must find the man in his Prattle. As there is absolutely not one particle of the man in his weekly scold, no indication of genius, not even a suggestion of the past beyond the tiresome repetition of things uttered long ago, there is but one conclusion left—Bierce is undoubtedly insane. Would even a novice tell his readers that the object of his attack was utterly insignificant, and then proceed to waste a column of matter in mere personal abuse? No. The old Bierce would not have been compelled to resort to a postscript to advise his readers as to what his elaborate foolishness was intended to convey.

A too vast admiration of himself has undone poor Bierce. He has knelt to himself, taken off his hat to himself so long that the refusal of the world—of anybody—to imitate him is gall and bitterness to his morbid nature and his self-love and self-homage, like unwholesome secretions, are telling upon his blood and softening his brain. Regarded from a literary standpoint he is a poor, shapeless, toothless wreck who deserves no pity, yet is a piteous sight.

Mr. Bierce might have won any prize he desired in the literary world had he been human. He has failed because, in attempting to destroy others, he has destroyed his own powers. He is now a wasp without its sting—an ill-natured, uncharitable, heartless being, who finds his sole delight in the effort to pain others. He has the quality of mind which justifies a belief in the demoniacal obsession; he is, however, Dante's devil—cold, brutal and repulsive—not the insidious, witty and courtly creature of Milton.

There is no hope for or in such a nature. Mr. Bierce knows this—knows that he is doomed to a contemptuous obscurity; knows that when he lards the green earth there is an end of him. If there be any memory of him, he knows that it will be a painful one and have in it a sense of thankfulness that his dull mumbling is at an end, and knowing this he will fight fate until paralysis puts a stop to his morbid drivel and unwholesome diatribes.

Ambrose Bierce is the most complete literary failure of the century. He entered the lists splendidly armored. He had brains, he had education, he had wit, humor, and knew their most dexterous use, but he prostituted them all to a malicious desire to stab, to an insane and abnormal passion for the infliction of pain on those who were powerless to resent his blows. Now he is merely inane, retaining only the desire to be wicked, but, like other impotent things, incapable and incurable.

A few months ago Mr. Bierce had the temerity to attack a distinguished journalist. The lash was taken from his hand and applied to himself. He was thoroughly flagellated. The baseness of his nature, the prostitution of his genius, the degeneracy of his mental qualities and the utter insignificance of his life were fully portrayed. Mr. Bierce felt the lash and retired without a word, and has not dared to bray in that direction again. Ambrose Bierce has only been powerful because his victims ware powerless. But his supremacy is gone, and he is only a signpost, marking the wreck of an utterly wasted life, and the grave of a literary bully. To-day Ambrose Bierce is merely a literary eunuch, his utterances the windy spasms of an uneasy frog, and his criticisms the sour output of a disgruntled mule.

Once Bierce dared to say "poor old God." Let us paraphrase and say, "poor old Bierce, poor old Dodo."

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE.

THE BIRTH DATE OF CHRIST.

To the Editor of the San Francisco Call—SIR: Apropos of the controversy as to the various dates given for the birth of Christ, which appeared in an article in last Sunday's issue of your valuable journal, permit me to add here a few remarks.

Mr. Sutro in his correspondence with the Vatican says: "And according to this calculation Christ's birth was fifty-three years before 3671, which is 3618; the difference between the first date (3761), the accepted date, and the last (3618) would be 143 years." Undoubtedly Mr. Sutro arrived at this conclusion from the quotation of "Zemach David," to wit: "In the year 3724 the Christ was captured, and according to this calculation was his birth fifty-three years yet earlier than the year 3671, as they formerly said in Sanhedrin." It is, however, very obvious that this passage, found in an old MS., as quoted above, has reference only to the capture and crucifixion and not the birth of Christ. The remainder of said passage should therefore read: "And according to this calculation was his death fifty-three years later than the year 3671, etc.," as by adding 53 to 3671 we ha ve the given date 3724.

That some ancient manuscripts are subject to revision cannot be disputed. Many an error might have crept in in copying and translating, hence the quotation above given might not have been an exception.

In a chronological work called "Seder Hadaroth," by Rabbi Jechiel, who flourished in the last century, the passage from "Zemach David" is given in an entirely different version, of which the following is a literal translation:

"The Nazarene was born in the year 3724, and lived until the year 532, in cycle 532, for in 532 years the lunar or solar cycles meet; 19 times 28 being 532 and 7 times 532 is 3724, and 3724 ends in 532, thus was found written in an old book. Z. D., part 2."

This quotation, no doubt, is also somewhat erratic, and should read thus: "The Nazarene was born in the year 3724 (and lived until the year 3760), at the close of cycle 532, for in 532 years, etc."

Assuming that the nativity took place in the year 3724 the accepted Christian era must needs be calculated from the crucifixion and not from the birth of Christ, i. e., from the year next succeeding the crucifixion and the two dates 3724 and 3761 are thus harmonized.

The "Seder Hadaroth" being also our authority placing the birth of Christ at 3560, a difference of 201 years. Yours respectfully,

H. KRAMER.

San Francisco, October 18, 1895.

THAT RUNAWAY BOY.

To the Editor of the San Francisco Call—SIR: In your paper of Friday morning I see an article under the head "He Would Rather Die," and in justice to myself I believe it but proper that I say a few words in that matter, as the boy mentioned is my son. He is a boy who will sit down and read the newspapers like a man, only with this difference, he would read only sensational stories. I must confess I never thought of what bad effect it might have on him, but beyond all reasonable doubt that is what caused him to run away. As to my cruel treatment of him, that of course is but an excuse for running away. While it is true that I have occasionally chastised him for running with other boys on the street when he ought to have been at work, or at least at home or in my store, it has not been with a whipstock, but with a leather strap attached to the small end of it, and always on that part of the body that is not supposed to suffer particular harm from such an appliance. From his standpoint it seems reasonable enough that it was unjust of me to punish him for what other boys were allowed to do at their own sweet will. I believe his appearance will disclose the fact that he was not intended to be a street arab. It is unfortunate that his tender years will not enable him to see the disgrace he has heaped upon his parents. But I feel amazed to learn from my wife that the officer who brought her the news of having found him should have requested her to give him $20 for his trouble. Luckily she did not have that much with her, but she handed him $5. The police deserve no credit at all for finding the boy, as they have had the case in hand for five or six weeks and never found any trace of him until a newspaper reporter got wind of it, and much against my wish got the whole affair from a brother-in-law of mine. Hoping you will publish this, I am very respectfully yours,

P. RASMUSSEN.

Selma, Cal., Oct. 19, 1895.

MR. WRIGHT'S STRONG WORDS.

To the Editor of the San Francisco Call—SIR: I notice that in your editorial entitled "The Miners in Earnest," in your issue of Friday morning, you characterize my remarks of last Wednesday, before the Miners' Association, as "a fierce arraignment of the farmers, merchants and producers of the State." What I am reported to have said was:

I call your attention, Mr. president, to the fact that the gold-miners of the State of California are the only independent people in the State. They are the ones who can best make the contest for the people. Every other industry is under the control of the transportation interests of the State. Why should the gold-miner be under their control? He alone is independent, and for reasons that you all know and which need not be stated.

I am quite sure I would be very far from attempting to convey the idea that all other classes are willingly subservient. The meaning I intended, and which I should have defined to any audience other than an audience of miners, can best be made clear by an illustration. Nearly all farm products are bulky and proportionately expensive to transport, while the expense of carrying the gold-miner's product is at the most but an infinitesimal portion of its value.

The subject might be further illustrated, but that is unnecessary in order to show that the gold-miner in a practical sense is more independent of the transportation companies than others are.

Perhaps my meaning would have been better conveyed by saying that every other industry is at the mercy of the transportation interests.

October 19, 1895. JOHN M. WRIGHT.

FROM WESTERN SANCTUMS.

To Go With Napoleon's Throne-Chair.

Portland Oregonian.

The Queen of Italy is continually adding to her large collection of gloves, boots and shoes worn at different periods at Italian courts, including, for example, "Nero's" sandals. "Rienzi's" throne shoes, a pair of white slippers which belonged to Mary, Queen of Scots, slippers worn by Queen Anne, by Marie Antoinette, the Empress Josephine, etc. What excellent bargains in shopworn goods De Young may yet secure from the Queen.

Home-Born Glory.

Los Angeles Times.

The love of home is the spirit out of which true patriotism is born, and there is no nation on the face of the globe in which this spirit should be so strong, so full enkindled, as in America—the land of homes, where more poor men own their homes than in any other country, and possess a heritage in the soil that exceeds that possessed by the masses in other lands.

The Prospect Not Discouraging.

San Jose Mercury.

Prize-fighters are now tabooed, and even dog-fighters are heavily fined, so moral has the public become. All of which leads to the fond hope that after awhile some way will be found for punishing a murderer.

The Men Who Are in Demand.

Virginia (Nev.) Enterprise.

It is the man who has confidence in himself who succeeds in this world, and when men of this stamp are aggregated into communities you can't stop them.

Publicity Checks Vice.

Albuquerque (N. M.) Citizen.

Publicity is allied to light and favors virtue. This is, perhaps, what brings the newspaper so close to the hearts of the American people.

Thanksgiving Anticipations.

Seattle (Wash.) Post-Intelligencer.

Just now we are thinking of Americans in Turkey. Six weeks from now we will be thinking of turkey in Americans.

PERSONAL.

A. G. Boggs of Napa is at the Baldwin.

Mayor H. N. Baggs of Stockton is at the Lick.

Jacob Klein, a banker of Carson City, is in San Francisco.

Dr. J. L. Ord and wife of Pacific Grove are at the Occidental.

Assemblyman G. W. Morgan of Duncans Mills is in the City.

G. C. Coker and family, Supervisor of Placer County, is at the Russ.

R. G. Fothergill, a well-known capitalist of Guatemala, is at the Occidental.

Councilman Collins and ex-Mayor J. P. Stanley came down from Santa Rosa yesterday.

J. W. Linscott, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Santa Cruz, is at the Occidental.

Colonel Ed Hardin, attorney and noted cattleman, came down from Nevada City yesterday.

Captain O. C. Berryman, United States Marine Corps of Mare Island, is at the Occidental.

Commander E. W. Watson of the United States steamer Ranger is registered at the Occidental.

Dr. G. Tucker Smith, S. E. Gisone and C. Churchill of the United States navy are at the Occidental.

Rev. T. Graham of Chico, Andrew Brown, a merchant from Kernville, and J. F. Hink of Woodland are at the Grand.

Harvey C. Somers, the well-known Produce Exchange merchant, leaves to-morrow for a fortnight's visit to Los Angeles and Riverside.

Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Hart and Miss Hart of Connecticut, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Ackerman, Mrs. J. Ackerman and Miss Lydia Ackerman of Plainville, N. J., and Mr. and Mrs. W. Camp of New Haven, Conn., are at the Palace. They are making a tour of the world and will leave on the next steamer for the Orient.

CALIFORNIANS IN WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 19.—Among the arrivals to-day were: W. L. Beard, San Francisco; H. Bond, Oakland; Theodore L. Storey, Los Angeles.

CALIFORNIA glace fruits, 50c lb. Townsend's.*

E. H. BLACK, painter, 120 Eddy street. *

STRONG hoarhound candy, 15c. Townsend's.*

BACON Printing Company, 508 Clay street. *

PLAIN mixed and broken candy reduced to 10c lb. Townsend's, 627 Market street. *

SPECIAL information daily to manufacturers, business houses and public men by the Press Clipping Bureau (Allen's), 510 Montgomery.*

St. Dominic's Fair.

The few remaining articles not yet called for will soon be sent to their owners. Although returns are not entirely in, the ladies in charge and the Dominican Fathers have ample reason to thank all who contributed toward the fair's success. *

The World's Fair now dragging along at Antwerp is declared a total failure.

"I'M so nervous" means "my blood is impure." Hood's Sarsaparilla purifies the blood and makes strong, steady nerves. It is just the remedy for all who are weak and worn out.

LADIES take Dr. Siegert's Angostura Bitters generally when they feel low spirited. It brightens them up immediately.

IF afflicted with sore eyes use Dr. Isaac Thompson's Eye Water. Druggists sell it at 25 cents.

Southey is said to have written "Thalaba, the Destroyer," in six months.

NEW TO-DAY.

SPECIAL SAVING SALE!

FINE CHINA

The following articles are all in the finest thin transparent china, elegantly hand-decorated in colors and gold. The prices given are one-third less than the regular prices—and Wednesday night ends it. Ninety sets Teapots, Sugars and Creams go at $1 10 and $1 35 per set of 3 pieces; 175 pairs Sugars and Creams go at 45c, 60c and 75c per pair; 85 Chocolate or Coffee Pots go at 95c and $1 10 each; 50 Cracker Jars go at 65c each. See them in the window.

Warm to-day, cold to-morrow. That's just why you should have a

B. & H. Oil Heater,

The best constructed and finest finished heater made. We sell it for $6. It costs you no more than the flimsy, "just as good" kind. Come and see it in operation or write for a circular.

THAT BIG CHINA STORE—
A Quarter of a Block Below Shreve's.
WANGENHEIM, STERNHEIM & CO.,
528 and 530 Market St.
27 and 29 Sutter St.,
BELOW MONTGOMERY

FURNITURE
FOR
4 ROOMS
$85.

Parlor—Silk Brocatelle, 5-piece suit, plush trimmed.
Bedroom—7-piece ELEGANT SUIT, bed, bureau, washstand, two chairs, rocker and table; pillows, woven-wire and top mattress.
Dining-Room—6-foot Extension Table, four Solid Oak Chairs.
Kitchen—No. 7 Range, Patent Kitchen Table and two chairs.

EASY PAYMENTS.

Houses furnished complete, city or country, anywhere on the coast. Open evenings.

M. FRIEDMAN & CO.,
224 to 230 and 306 Stockton
and 237 Post Street.
Free packing and delivery across the bay.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

The most certain and safe Pain Remedy. In water cures Summer Complaints, Diarrhœa, Heartburp, Sour Stomach, Flatulence, Colic, Nausea.