NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

GLIMPSES OF MEN, THINGS, AND PLACES—No. 15.

NEW YORK, JULY 30, 1851.

COMMENCEMENT OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE.

The annual festival of this time-honored institution has been celebrated to-day with the usual commencement exercises. This is the oldest college in the State, and one of the oldest in the country. I have not the date of her age before me, but I think it reaches back more than a century. Her ancient name of "King's College" was changed after the American Revolution to her present republican title. And now, without change of name, she has again become King's College, the Hon. CHARLES KING, a distinguished son of the late distinguished RUFUS KING, having been called to preside over the institution. It is very questionable whether the heart of a large, bustling, commercial city, always full of objects of attraction and excitement, is a favorable location for a college or a high literary institution. It is better, perhaps, for the institution itself, that the college should be the principal object of attraction in the place where it is located. In the midst of the large city, with the ever-varying change of objects to attract and distract the public attention, the sober college becomes an old every-day story, and loses somewhat of that commanding interest with the public which it would be likely to retain in a more quiet location. This, perhaps, may be the chief reason why Columbia College does not hold rank with Harvard and Yale. Still, however, she holds an honorable rank among the colleges of the land, and has given to the country many able men and ripe scholars. And it is said the present popular President, Mr. KING, is infusing new life into the institution, and bids fair to increase its popularity and usefulness.

Having been at the commencement of old Harvard two weeks ago, I felt the more interest to witness the annual ceremonies to-day, that I might see how Columbia would compare with her elder sister. In one thing at least she had the advantage—the *locus in quo* of her exhibition. The exercises at Harvard were held in a moderate-sized chapel or church, which would accommodate perhaps a thousand people. The ceremonies of Columbia College to-day were exhibited in the magnificent and capacious Tripler Hall, which will accommodate about four thousand persons. Probably two thousand were present at the exercises to-day. Three-fourths of the audience were females, and a considerable portion youth and children. But, while the audience was more than twice as large as the one at Cambridge, the alumni and literati seemed to be very few compared with those at Cambridge. In the busy world of New York they are too much engrossed with other business and other objects to go to commencement, so they send their wives and children. There were, however, forty or fifty on the platform, including professors, trustees, and others, to keep the President in countenance before such a display of ladies, and the exercises were all carried through in a very appropriate and interesting manner. Mr. KING makes a capital presiding officer, sufficiently dignified, and yet preserving an easy familiarity of manner, with much readiness, energy, and happy extemporaneous ability.

The ceremonies at Cambridge were more stiff and stately; here they were more easy and democratic. President SPARKS could utter no word but in Latin; President KING could talk English, especially in those parts of the ceremonies intended to be heard by the audience. With the former, in announcing an exercise, it would be, "*Expectatur oratio, in lingua Latina, a Johannes Smith*;" with the latter it would be, "An oration in Latin, by John Smith." President Sparks sat, Napoleon-like, immovable in his chair of state during the long exercises. President King, sitting on a sofa, upon a level with those around him, moved about at his ease; and often, when he had a remark or an announcement to make, rose to his feet and advanced a few steps toward the audience. It would not have been allowable, I suppose, for President Sparks, on any consideration whatever, to address a side remark to the audience, even should they undertake to kick up a riot or break windows. But President King, observing some ladies in the gallery opposite the stage standing and looking a long time in quite a wrong direction, did not hesitate to rise and call to those ladies and inform them "that it was more desirable to see their faces than their backs."

At Cambridge there were nearly thirty exercises by the graduating class, and music from the band generally at the close of each third performance. Here there were but ten exercises, and music from the band at the close of each. The music at both commencements was very fine and admirably performed. The young gentlemen who were graduated to-day acquitted themselves well, and their performances would compare well with those of Cambridge. One part of the ceremonies (not on the catalogue) differed from any thing I have seen at any other commencement. At the close of each performance beautiful bouquets of fresh flowers were thrown upon the stage to the speaker by ladies of the audience. These were gathered up by the young gentlemen and borne off as gratifying triumphs. Some obtained three or four, and some half a dozen, or an armful, according as the ladies were pleased with their performances. An oration upon "the education and influence of woman" brought down quite a shower of these tokens of applause.

A diploma is awarded at the annual examination to the student of the best general standing in each of the four classes, and then diplomas to the students who excel in the different departments of study in each class. Each student to whom a testimonial of this kind had been awarded was called upon the stage by name, and received it from the hand of the President, who made appropriate addresses to the members of each class. After the ceremony of conferring the degrees on the graduating class, the exercises of the day were closed, as they had been opened, with prayer. BIRD'S-EYE.

NEW HAVEN, (CONN.) THURSDAY EVE, JULY 31, 1851.

After a three years' absence, I am once more in the beautiful "City of Elms," and have spent a couple of hours in walking through its shady streets. The trees seem larger, and more of them, than when I last saw them. There is evidently much care taken to preserve them and keep them in order. They have become, and have long been, the great pride of the place. No town in the country probably, in proportion to its population, has a larger amount of fine shade trees than New Haven, and most of them are the graceful wide-spreading elm. In some instances maples and other trees have been introduced, but the public sentiment and the public press cry out against it, and say, cherish the elms. It is a very pleasing sight to look from the cupola of the New Haven hotel upon the surrounding city, and catch ten thousand glimpses of white painted buildings, interspersed occasionally with the red of the brick and the brown of the sandstone, all perfectly embowered in the forest of dark green elms. The College Green, with its numerous college buildings and three churches, is directly in front of this hotel, and presents a beautiful landscape. This College Green, for the number, size, and beauty of its elms, can only be compared with Boston Common.

But all this is not what I sat down now to write a few words about. My present object was to say a few words about the annual *commencement* of old "Yale," which has been celebrated to-day. Having yesterday attended the commencement of Columbia college, in New York, and compared it closely with the late commencement of Harvard, at Cambridge, I thought I would like to see to-day how the commencement of Yale would compare with both. So I took the cars in the morning, and arrived here in time to help to eat commencement dinner, and witness all the afternoon performances. At Harvard and at Columbia college the commencement exercises are performed at a single sitting, occupying the time generally from eleven till about four o'clock. But at industrious Yale they are in the habit of doing a greater day's work; and in the good old Yankee spirit they do half a day's work in the forenoon, then knock off for dinner, and go at it again in the afternoon, and make a day of it. When I arrived it was intermission—dinner time—and, though there were large crowds around the doors of the church waiting for admission, on reaching there I found the "regular hands" had all "quit work," gone to dinner, and the church was closed. Repairing to the plain, back of the line of college buildings and in front of the library, I discovered the "regular army" entering their big tent. Commencement dinner here is served up under a large pavilion, sufficient to accommodate seven or eight hundred people.

All graduates of the college are entitled to dine under the tent. After the faculty and officials have passed in, the rest enter by classes, according to seniority, and are called over by the marshal for this purpose, beginning half a century back. As I came up he was calling "class of 1848," who marched in two and two; then class 1849, class 1850, and finally class of 1551, the present graduating class. I now turned to the library, thinking to spend the dinner hour there in feasting the mind; but meeting the polite librarian, he took me back to the tent, and seated me at the table to partake of the excellent feast prepared for the body. There were between five and six hundred at dinner, and all seemed to "perform their parts" well and without "prompting." When half or three quarters of an hour had been given to the exercise, a blessing was pronounced by the venerable ex-President DAY, and the parties gradually left the tent. Going directly to the church, I obtained a favorable seat for seeing and hearing, and waited the return of the procession, which shortly arrived, led by a most excellent band of music. The galleries had already been given up to the ladies, and were packed perfectly full. The grand array of light dresses, fair faces, and waving fans presented a gay and beautiful appearance. Presently the regular army marched in and nearly filled the body of the church, and then the people, the outsiders, were allowed to wedge themselves in wherever they could. The police arrangements were excellent, and every thing was conducted with order and quietness. After the house was filled, there were hundreds outside who could find no room within. If they could have had a Tripler Hall for the exhibition, what an audience would have been assembled! It seemed to me that old Yale must bear the palm for keeping up the ancient spirit of commencement, and for making her annual festival a day of interest both to her alumni and the public.

The exercises in the afternoon consisted of ten performances by members of the graduating class, four or five excellently performed pieces of music by the band, the ceremony of conferring degrees, &c. The exercises of the class were good and well performed. I will refer only to one, on account of its subject. It was an oration on "The Old Federal Party." It was a bold and manly performance, and it struck me as an evidence of boldness on the part of the faculty in sanctioning the theme on the occasion. The orator gave a clear historical view of the old Federal party, and bore strong testimony to its purity and patriotism. But, for all that, there was not a single Democrat who left the house from indignation, nor a democratic lady who fainted with horror. The whole audience seemed to listen to the performance with unusual interest. And probably at this day there will not be found many who would seriously object to the sentiments advanced by the speaker.

Nothing, perhaps, in the course of the day is calculated to make a stronger impression of the great amount of work performed by this college, than to see nearly a hundred young men of the graduating class march up in platoons of eight or ten, one after the other, upon the stage, and receive their diplomas from the hand of the President, each platoon filing off in turn from the stage and making room for their successors. The whole number in the four classes of under-graduates the past year was 432, and the theological, law, and medical students increased the number under instruction in college to 555, a larger number probably than in any other college in the country.

With regard to the fashions of Yale, compared with Harvard and Columbia, President SPARKS and President KING wore the Oxford cap during the ceremonies of their commencements; but President WOOLSEY did not wear it at all, but sat with uncovered head through the day. All three wore the black silk gown. The students at Cambridge and New York went upon the stage to perform their exercises dressed in black silk gowns. At New Haven the gown seems to have been discarded, and the young gentlemen went on to the stage and declaimed in the common dress coat.

President WOOLSEY presided with his accustomed ease, and closed the exercises of the day with prayer. There are some other things which I designed to say, but shall be obliged to defer till to-morrow. BIRD'S-EYE.

DUELLING.—[COMMUNICATED.]

A Neapolitan nobleman fought fourteen Duels to prove that DANTE was a greater poet than ARIOSTO. At his death-bed, a confessor, who was a great admirer of Ariosto, desired him to acknowledge the superiority of this poet. "Father," answered the dying nobleman, "to tell you the truth, I never *read* either Dante or Ariosto."

Were the causes of many of our modern Duels examined, it would appear that those engaged in them could assign no better reason for risking their own lives than this Neapolitan nobleman.

THE SELKIRK SETTLEMENT.

This settlement is about six hundred miles northwest from the Falls of St. Anthony, in the British possessions, on the Red River of the north. The distance from Selkirk to York Factory, on Hudson's bay, is about seven hundred miles. This is their seaport.

The annual caravans from the settlement arrived at St. Paul, Minnesota, about the 20th of July, consisting of 102 carts, for the most part drawn each by one ox, and laden with buffalo skins, moccasins, buffalo tongues, pemmican, &c., which they exchange for merchandise suited to their wants. The train left Selkirk on the 4th of June, and usually occupies about three months in the entire trip.

A monthly mail has been established between St. Paul and Pembina, which is on this side, and near the boundary line between the United States and the British possessions. A Deputy Collector of Customs has also been appointed for Pembina.

The Minnesota Democrat is informed by the Selkirkens than the exaction of the duty—20 per cent. on their buffalo robes and 30 per cent. on their moccasins—will compel them to abandon the trade with us, and to depend on the Hudson Bay company for supplies in exchange for their robes, &c. They pay a duty of 4 per cent. to the British authorities for all the goods they take from this side.

The Democrat states that the population of Selkirk settlement is about seven thousand, including Indians. They raise large crops of barley, oats, spring wheat, potatoes, and all kinds of garden vegetables that grow in temperate latitudes. They plant early in May. They usually have frost till the 1st of June, and again in September. The corn crop is not relied upon; it is a precarious crop, though raised in every garden for table use.

A SCENE NOT IN THE BILLS.—Saturday week last, in Fall river, was "one of the days" for a thunder storm. Barnum's mammoth menagerie tent was crowded with visiters, when just as Mr. Nellis, the man without arms, ascended the rostrum to exhibit his infirmity, a terrific thunder-burst broke over the spot, accompanied by a violent whirlwind and a perfect deluge of rain. The gale struck the tent from the westward, stripping the canvass in a twinkling, and the immense pavilion at once began to settle down upon the heads of the terror-stricken multitude. A "grand rush" was immediately made for the outside. The scene at this particular moment, like many others, can be better imagined than described. Amidst the howlings of the tempest, the flashings of the lightning, and the terrific peals of thunder, there arose from the dense mass of humanity buried beneath the falling canvass, the shoutings of men, the shriekings of women, and the squalling of something less than a thousand babies. On, every side were to be seen the affrighted multitude—men women, and children—white, black, and brown, of all sort and conditions, crawling out from under the canvass *on all fours*, and in the most exquisite confusion, with their hats and bonnets knocked into every conceivable shape—some with three corners, some all corners, and some with no corners at all! Stupefied and bewildered, the victims ran about in all directions for shelter from the tempest. However, nobody was seriously hurt, and all finally reached their homes thankful that matters were no worse, and convinced that, although they had not seen Barnum's ten elephants, they had seen enough to give them a more enlarged idea of some of the "constituent parts" of the animal.

A BAND OF GIPSIES lately landed at New York, among the immigrants brought from Europe by an emigrant ship. They are now encamped, with their covered wagons, in the neighborhood of Hoboken, and report themselves from the vicinity of Durham and Newcastle, England. The women and children are said to possess the peculiar physical features of their strange race, having slender figures and an abundance of black hair. The men pursue the business of tinkers, and the females cook their meals by fires made in the open air. It is probable that we are indebted for this odd importation of humanity to the increased facilities for emigration afforded by steam navigation; and, should this small nucleus of a new race of people which we have acquired in these Gipsy immigrants be enlarged by accessions hereafter, it may be reserved to the United States to solve the problem whether it is possible, under any form of social and political institutions, to amalgamate with other races a strange order of cosmopolites, who have, immemorially, been nomadic in habit, and intolerant of any admixture with a different people.

[*North American.*

THE TIMES.

FROM THE NEW YORK "EXPRESS" OF JULY 28.

Nothing at present is calculated so much to challenge the reflection of the observing and contemplative, as the profound but wholesome calm our country seems to be just now enjoying; a calm to which it is ordinarily a stranger. Not only are the stormy waters of political strife settling down into comparative sluggishness, but the great world of business, with all those mighty interests which cling around the trade and commerce of a universe, which may be said to have their radius here, seems equally solicitous, equally anxious, for respite and recreation. It is well that it is so; for nations as well as individuals have their seasons of *delirium*, their *fever* and *panic*, which, but for an occasional interval of healthy repose, must prostrate, debilitate, and dispirit the patient.

A repose of this character, however, is foredoomed to a very brief duration. There are doubtless great enterprises now slumbering in the lassitudinous embraces of the summer solstice, which are anon to seek a realization as soon as the relaxations of the season are at an end. The capitalist, the manufacturer, the merchant, the agriculturist, now dreaming pleasant dreams and building his airy castles at the several summer haunts of fashion, will anon be back again at the bourse, the ware-room, and the counting-house. The great thoroughfares of trade that wear so inanimate an aspect for two or three square miles around Wall street, where we write, will soon be all life and energy again; for fleeting and transient are the vacations of those whose business is the business of a nation and a people like ours.

Is there to be a like revival in the political world? Are the elements of party and sectional strife, lately so tumultuous and terrible, to lie forever at rest? Are the waters of the torrent all over the precipice? Or, with a new infusion of activity into the spirit of traffic and commerce, is it not more probable will come a renewed energy among those whose peculiar province it is to keep the whirlpool of sectionalism roaring and boiling, little caring who or what is to be engulphed so that themselves keep on the surface? We confess there is no want of indications in that direction. There are signs in the summer sky as there are signs in the wintry horizon. The oracles of destructivism are not dumb. Secession is roaring aloud at one end of the Union, and black Disunionism, in the form of abolitionism, is working might and main at the other. Southern secession is making the greater noise just at this present time, because in some of the States there it is about to try its strength at the ballot-box; but Northern disunionism, it is quite certain, will be equally as uproarious when it comes to fight in turn its battle at the polls. At present, we have intimated, it is comparatively quiescent, but we fear it is only sleeping, to gather fresh strength to work if possible greater mischief than it has yet been able to accomplish, thanks to the watchful and untiring exertions of those who do not believe that the compulsory emancipation of some two and a half or three millions of negroes is a fair price for the disruption of the Union.

The nation has just passed through a tremendous struggle, one in which the strength of these two ill-favored factions has been demonstrated to be sufficiently formidable to induce Union men every where to league against it. The issue has been most felicitous for the cause of National Unity and National Peace. But, from the intimate knowledge we all have now of the character and composition of Negropholism and Southern disaffection, it is presumed there is no friend of the Union so heedless or unwise as to be found sleeping at his post while the enemy is wide awake. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," is an aphorism always to be remembered and acted upon. Disarm the demagogue. Thrust into disrepute and disgrace whatever schemes he may be found employing as a means wherewith to ride into power, looking in the remotest degree to weaken the social and political bonds which make the thirty-one States of this Confederacy one and indivisible. Be watchful, be vigilant, be jealous, and all will be well.

Reflections and considerations like these, never untimely nor out of place, are peculiarly becoming a period like the present, when, as we started in saying, there is all around seen that general tranquillity which is so favorable to an impartial survey of the field and the forces about us. In the excitements and contentions of the field, when the battle is raging, contemplation or calculation has but little opportunity to make itself felt. Reflection and meditation are attributes of peace, and, when wisely employed in a truce, often go great lengths in making renewed appeals to arms unnecessary.

There is another phase of the almost universal tranquillity which at present pervades this country, which will attract the attention of the observer quite as readily as that which refers only to the domestic relations of this Union, and with a feeling naturally of more uneasiness, apprehension, and anxiety. We have reference to the temporary abstinence of individual aggression upon foreign States whose territories are adjacent to ours. It is never the "manifest destiny" of a certain class of cosmopolitan patriots among us to attach themselves very ardently to the principle of "masterly inactivity." If their own country is about as happy, and as free, and as contented as it is possible for any system of human government to make it, this class of persons, having no field large enough for their genius at home, will be found wandering abroad, invariably solicitous for the welfare of other nations. They are actuated always with an ineradicable idea that every Government on the face of the earth, save only our own, is necessarily a "grinding despotism," and one which it is a religious duty to help to overthrow. It is of but little consequence whether the people so governed are satisfied or dissatisfied with their rulers; nothing will satisfy our revolution-mongers but an insurrection, or a demonstration of some sort against the existing "despotism," (it is always a despotism,) no matter where located. Like the illustrious Don Quixote, who may be considered the founder of this sect, "they think it expedient and necessary, as well for 'the advancement of their own reputation as for the public 'good, that they should commence knight-errant, and wan'der through the world with horse and arms in quest of ad'ventures; redressing all kinds of grievances, and, by ex'posing themselves to danger on all occasions, accomplish 'such enterprises as would acquire eternal fame and re'nown." These chivalrous gentlemen are historically famous for getting us into trouble with our foreign relations. Their first exploits were in Texas, some years since, and what the cost of their adventures was, the blood and treasure subsequently thrown away in the Mexican war will help us to an estimate. Cuba was the next "despotism" that stood in need of regeneration, and to Cuba therefore did they hie, such of them as contrived to elude the grip of the Government at Washington. The ridiculous result of the first "invasion" was a fitting counterpart to the unfortunate adventure the hero of Cervantes had with the Cordova Yanguesians. But recent events—events that are even now transpiring—demonstrate that this sort of knight-errantry is by no means at an end. It is to be persevered in, no matter at what cost to Spain, to Mexico, or the United States. The "gem of the Antilles" once gotten, Sonora and other of the Mexican States will fall into our lap (that is the term) with a rapidity that is one day to astonish the incredulous conservative. It is well to habituate the mind to a contemplation of these contingencies, that they may not come upon us unawares; that there may be no diversity of opinion as to the expediency of counteractive measures by the Government, should occasion in the course of events happen to demand them. Want of forethought is the besetting sin of a safe and intelligent conservatism. It allows itself too often to be surprised, and to be hemmed in by circumstances which in the end compel it to be an involuntary party to whatever scheme of foreign conquest the soaring aspirations of ambitious men call upon it to confront. This is a historical truth, abundantly evident in our earlier dealings with Texas and Mexico, for example; but it is one, nevertheless, that seems to have been profitably studied by those to whose hands the administration of this Government is at present most fortunately confided. It is always an encouragement for the servants of the people to know that what is done in great national emergencies is popular as well as right. Hence the constant necessity there is for the people of this country—the masses, we mean, who do not believe in "leaving their own to stand on foreign ground"—to set their faces against the dangerous schemes of foreign aggression that the restless spirits among us are ever organizing under the specious plea of extending republican institutions and giving freedom to the enslaved. The surest way to encourage the growth of republicanism and democracy abroad is *not* to play the part of the brigand or land-stealer at home. A strong public sentiment in opposition to a spirit of this kind cannot be too assiduously cultivated and encouraged. It will serve as a wholesome check upon men of loose latitudinous ideas of the "destiny" of this country, to whom the vacillations of party may chance hereafter to give control of the Government.

THE RAILROAD WEST OF CUMBERLAND.

FROM THE BALTIMORE AMERICAN.

Every step that is made by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in its progress towards the West cannot but be a matter of interest to this community. It is our great work—the great work of Baltimore and of Maryland. We look forward to its completion as to a consummation that shall put a crowning seal upon the prosperity of our city, and place beyond all contingencies the future fortunes of Baltimore. Through many trials, through many vicissitudes of delay and vexation, the work has gone on, slowly yet steadily, earning for itself as it went the good wishes of all, and vindicating for itself at every step its just and proper claim to public consideration. It has now penetrated into the gorges of the Alleghanies; the whistling of the locomotive has been heard in those silent recesses heretofore undisturbed by such novel sounds. Soon it will reach the shores of the Ohio; and then to meet it, as a harbinger of commercial fraternity and intercourse, other roads from the great bosom of the West will come to join with it, and we shall have an unbroken line of communication to connect Baltimore with that vast internal region beyond the mountain which will find here its natural outlet to the Atlantic seaboard. The following description of the route of the road beyond Cumberland is taken from the Patriot:

Departing in a northerly direction from the Cumberland station, which stands near the eastern edge of the town, the line soon curves to the westward, crossing several streets and lots with their accompanying buildings, and afterwards Will's creek, upon a viaduct of fourteen elliptical arches of brick, resting on piers and abutments of stone. The total length of the bridge is about 880 feet, part of which is upon a curved line. The elevation of the road above the street is eighteen and above the creek twenty-eight feet. The viaduct, though plain in its finish, has a fine effect when seen from a proper point of view. It is built with a view not only to strength and durability, but also to its situation in the midst of numerous houses, subjecting it to destruction by fire if constructed of combustible materials. At the east end of the bridge the track is joined by the Mount Savage Railroad, and at the west end it is crossed by the Eckhart Railroad on its way to the Canal Basin. The bridge being crossed, a heavy cut of upwards of forty feet in depth carries the road through Academy Hill, after which it passes under two streets by bridges, and over two or three more upon its own level, and reaches the bank of the Potomac river at the "Rose Hill Cliff," where it makes its exit from the town and commences the ascent of the river valley.

A mile above another bluff is passed, and we reach the first water station at the celebrated Buck Lodge Spring, from which it was thought at one time of supplying the town with water, when its population was considerably less than at present. The road now runs for a couple of miles over flat grounds, and then comes to rocky narrows of some extent and difficulty, after passing which it shoots in a straight line over the fine bottom lands of the "Bank Farm" to Brady's Mills, opposite the small village of Cresaptown, six miles from Cumberland, and where Will's Mountain ends and Dan's opens to view. Soon after, a long, high, and precipitous slate bluff is encountered, out of which the road is cut, with bold excavation and embankment, part of the latter lying out into the river. A quarry of stone of a singular deep purple hue is seen here, and has been used in building an arched bridge of twenty feet span to pass a roadway and small run at the same time. Beyond these bluffs the line emerges upon the "Sugar Bottom," opposite to which are some lofty and picturesque precipices upon the side of the Knobly Mountain. The road sweeps around the base of the hill bounding this bottom, and immediately meets a formidable line of limestone cliffs, the strata standing vertically upon their edges, and presenting alternately prominent ribs and deep grooves. In this calcareous formation caves of considerable extent are said to exist. The cliff being left behind, a stretch of bottom land of some four miles in length is rapidly coursed over by long straight lines and gentle curvatures.

Near the upper end is the second water station, supplied by a fine stream flowing from the flank of Dan's Mountain on the west. At this point we are thirteen miles from Cumberland, and in another mile we reach the northern end of Fort Hill, an insulated mountain of about four miles long, so called either from its regular mound-like aspect or from its connexion with legends of Indian warfare. A rugged and lofty bluff of limestone rocks is here passed by deep and expensive side cutting, and the line leaving this sweeps first to the left and then to the right, around a narrow bottom bounded by Fort Hill on one side and on the other by the river, which runs for half a mile at the foot of one of the most remarkable mural precipices to be found in the country. This beautiful cliff rises gradually from the river margin on the Virginia shore, until it is lost in the steep crest of the high ridge, of which it forms the northern termination.

Another limestone bluff is presently encountered by the railroad, which, to avoid cutting too deeply in it, is laid in embankment across an arm of the river, leaving exposed to view the cavernous rocks under which the river ran with a fierce current before its channel was thus forced away. After leaving this difficult pass, the route for the next two miles skirts the famous Black Oak Bottom, bounded by Fort Hill on the west, and the river running at the foot of another high hill on the east. This celebrated track of some five hundred acres of fertile and level alluvial soil was, until the roilroad gave it an outlet, so shut in by mountains that it was accessible only by a road leading over the top of Fort Hill at a slight depression in the latter.

These flats end in another steep slope called "Cedar Cliff," a short distance beyond which the sharp ledge of rocks called the "Chimney Hole," projecting boldly into the river, is slightly cut into by the railroad, which immediately crosses the stream to an island, where it soon recrosses again to the main land. The main channel was thus cut off and the river diverted into a subordinate one, widened for the purpose. The old channel, now closed, but which still receives several mountain streams, is drained through a tunnel cut through the "Chimney Hole rock;" thus answering the purpose of a bridge, and at less cost. This remarkable rock forms the southern termination of Fort Hill, and is eighteen miles from Cumberland. Opposite, in Virginia, is a peak called "Larges rock," of great height. For the next two miles the route passes over flat ground, although touching the point of a sharp rocky spur at the end of the first mile. The line in the succeeding mile crosses a slate ridge with a cut of nearly seventy feet in depth, and, after emerging from it, reaches the viaduct by which it crosses the Potomac river, twenty-one miles from Cumberland. Up to this point the Maryland shore has been pursued, and here the route passes over to that of Virginia by a bridge of two spans of 156 feet each, consisting of timber frames and iron suspension chains, the whole resting on stone abutments and a pier. The bridge is of great strength and stiffness, and has a light and graceful appearance when viewed from the side. The upper timbers repose on stone pillars on the abutments and over the pier, and form, with the cornice at the ends, a simple, effective finish in the Egyptian style. The bridge is after the design of Mr. Latrobe, the Chief Engineer, and is a most substantial and beautiful structure.

Without following the narrative further in its local descriptions, we come to a point upon which we are free to confess we were not without misgiving; we allude to the high grades to be overcome in the western portion of the route. One hundred and sixteen feet to the mile! This was well calculated to stagger the uninitiated. It will be seen, however, that Mr. WINANS makes small work of it. The facility of obtaining coal on the spot where these high grades prevail, so that any required quantity of fuel may be commanded if there should be any need of extra power, gives an ample guaranty of the ease with which the heaviest trains may be conducted over this road. We quote the following as an accurate and a scientific account of the passage of the high grades:

It remains to notice the manner in which the road was passed over, and especially the high grade of one hundred and sixteen feet per mile, about which so much interest has been felt.

The train containing the visiters consisted of five passenger cars, well filled. These were drawn by engine No. 71, built by Mr. Ross Winans, to the Piedmont station at a moderate speed, to permit a view of the road; and after a short delay at that point, during which one of the passenger cars was detached, and five gondola cars, loaded with iron, were attached, the locomotive proceeded with this train, weighing about 117 tons. Over the successive grades 39, 40, 50, and 70 feet per mile, extending for 1⅜ miles, the engine ran in four minutes, or at the rate of 20 miles per hour, and then, entering upon the grade of 116 feet per mile, she ascended it in eight minutes, to near the point at which the track terminates, a distance of 2⅓ miles from the beginning of the grade. The speed on the grade of 116 feet, therefore, averaged 17½ miles per hour. The steam pressure during the run was 110 pounds per square inch, and the cut-off or expansion valve was used for about two-thirds of the distance, when it was changed to the full stroke; the shifting of the valve motion causing a little loss of headway, which was, however, immediately regained. The steam was blowing off all the time, though not freely. There was no slipping of the wheels, and no necessity for sanding the track.

Immediately after the passenger train, the Locomotive No. 72, built in the shops of the Company at Mount Clare, came up the grade with a train of 18 gondola cars loaded with iron rails, and weighing in all 224 tons gross. Her speed upon the grade was about seven and a half miles per hour, and she performed the run, working her valves at full stroke, with abundance of steam, and without stopping her wheels. The rail was dry and clean, and in the most favorable condition for adhesion.

The weight of Engine 71 is 24 tons of 2240 lbs., and of Engine 72 is 25½ tons. The former has cylinders of 19 inches, and the latter of 20 inches diameter—the length of stroke in each case being 22 inches. On the previous day both engines had been tried, No. 71 with sixteen, and No. 72 with eighteen cars, or 208 and 234 tons respectively, and each drew its load up the grade without halting or slipping its wheels, and at speeds of from six to eight miles per hour.

The power of traction of the two engines, with equal pressures of steam, should be as nine for No. 71 to ten for No. 72—which numbers show the proportional areas of their cylinders, which have the same stroke—their wheels being also of the same diameter of forty-three inches. For every nine cars that No. 71 would draw, there should then be ten cars drawn by No. 72. The adhesion, however, of the engines is in a different ratio, that of No. 71 being represented by the number 9; that of No. 72 will be by the number 9 66-100. Engine No. 71 has, therefore, the most adhesion in proportion to its tractive power; and if both are using all their adhesion, engine No. 72 will do it with a slightly less pressure of steam.

The resistance upon the grade was equivalent to 62 lbs. per ton of 2240 lbs., of which 49 3-10 is due to gravity, 9 lbs. to friction, and 3 7-10 lbs. to a curvature of 1,000 feet radius—the shortest which occurs upon the grade of 116 feet per mile. This is the maximum resistance met with any where on this grade. Where curves of 600 feet radius occur, the grade is reduced correspondingly. Engine 71 weighing 24 tons, its tender about 16 tons, and its load 208 tons—making 248 tons in all—the tractive power required was 15,160 lbs., exclusive of that necessary to overcome the resistance of the engine within itself. The weight of the engine being 53,760 lbs., the part of its weight expressing the adhesion of its wheels to the rails was therefore 1 3-55. By the same principles of calculation we make the tractive power of engine 72, 16,660 lbs., its own weight being 25½ tons, its tender say 16½ tons, and its load 234 tons—the whole equal to 276 tons. The weight of the engine being 57,680 lbs., the part expressing its adhesion would be 1 3-42.

These ratios show high degrees of adhesion, but they are such as may be expected to prevail when the rails are in their best condition; although, in the daily work of the engines, they would not be required to work up so nearly to the limit of their power.

In the calculations by which the performance on these grades was estimated, a power and adhesion was assumed but little exceeding one-half of those exhibited on this occasion.

Inasmuch as by the use of sand upon the rail when it is slippery from frost or other cause, an adhesion of 1-5, or even more, can be commanded, it will be concluded that in working this grade no practical difficulty will be found at any season. With an adhesion of 1-6 only, engine 71 would draw 109, and engine 72 118 tons behind the tender.

These loads would be 10 and 11, loaded double cars, of the ordinary weight of about 11 tons, and with them a speed of at least 10 miles per hour could easily be maintained.

It is observed that the speed of engine 71, with the passenger train, was 17½ miles per hour on the grade. This was with a load of 117 tons, equivalent in weight to about twice that of ordinary trains of that description, which do not often exceed 60 tons.

There can be no doubt, then, that engines of that class which will probably be used for passengers upon this grade, will ascend them, without assistance, with such trains.

It is deemed unnecessary to say more respecting the performance of the engines, than that they and their trains *descended* the grade at a speed of 10 to 15 miles per hour under the control of the brakes, and might safely have run down considerably faster had it been desired.

THE JEW QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT.

The interest felt in London in the decision of the House of Lords upon the question of the admission of Jews to Parliament was not allowed to subside before the matter was brought before the public again, in the House of Commons, by the attempt of Mr. SALOMONS to take his seat under the existing law, and without taking the oath of abjuration in the prescribed form. A London paper gives the following report of proceedings on the subject:

In the House of Commons on the 21st instant the adjourned debate was resumed on the question "that Mr. Alderman Salomons take his seat as member for the borough of Greenwich." Mr. Salomons, amidst the greatest confusion, entered the House, and seated himself between Mr. Anstey and Mr. Baring Wall. The Speaker repeated the order to the honorable gentleman to withdraw, which, it appears, he refused to do.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL, in order to support the Chair, moved that Mr. Alderman Salomons be ordered to withdraw from the house. [Cheers.]

Mr. OSBORNE moved, by way of amendment, "that David Salomons, Esq., having been returned as a member for the borough of Greenwich, and having taken the oaths required by law in the manner most binding upon his conscience, is entitled to take his seat in this House." (Cheers.)

On a division the majority against the amendment was 148.

Mr. ANSTEY then moved an adjournment of the debate, which Lord John Russell opposed, declaring that the House must decide whether Mr. Salomons should withdraw.

Mr. HOBHOUSE called on Alderman Salomons to state the course he meant to pursue.

Mr. Alderman SALOMONS again entered the House, and said he had adopted the course he had, not from disrespect to the House, but in defence of his own rights and privileges, and of those of his constituents who had elected him. Having said this,[he added, "whatever the decision of this House may be, I shall willingly abide by it, provided there be just sufficient force used to make me feel that I am acting under coercion. With these sentiments, I shall not further intrude myself upon this house, except to say this, that I trust, and I do hope, on the doubtful state of the law, such as it has been described to you by the eminent lawyers who have addressed you, no severe measures will be adopted against me and my constituents without giving me the fairest opportunity of addressing this house, and of stating to this house and the country what I believe to be my rights and those of my constituents; what I believe to be the duty of this house, and what I believe this house will never refuse; what no court refuses to the meanest subject of the realm—that of hearing him before their final decision." [Hear, hear.]

Lord J. RUSSELL, whilst praising the temper with which the honorable gentleman had spoken, regretted that he could not comply with his request for a full hearing. The authority of the House must be supported. He was willing, however, to postpone the consideration of the question till to-morrow.

After an energetic speech from Mr. OSBORNE, the House divided on the motion for adjournment—

For the adjournment	73
Against it	237
Majority	—162

The House then divided on the original motion, that Alderman Salomons do withdraw.

For the motion	231
Against it	81
Majority	—150

The SPEAKER then called upon Mr. Alderman Salomons, pursuant to the resolution of the House, to withdraw.

Mr. ALDERMAN SALOMONS still retained his seat.

The SPEAKER directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to move Mr. Alderman Salomons below the bar.

The Sergeant-at-Arms having approached the honorable member for the purpose of carrying the Speaker's orders into effect—

The honorable gentleman retired below the bar.

Mr. B. OSBORNE asked if Lord John Russell would direct Mr. Salomons to be prosecuted?

Lord J. RUSSELL said that, if Mr. Salomons was very anxious to be prosecuted, he might perhaps find some one who would gratify him. The noble lord stated he would move to-morrow (this day) a resolution exactly similar to the resolution to which the House agreed last year in the case of Baron Rothschild—namely, that Mr. Salomons is not entitled to sit or vote in the House until he has taken the oath of abjuration in the form appointed by the House. If Mr. Salomons wished to be heard, he should move that he be heard in the same way that Mr. O'Connell was heard.

On the 22d, Mr. ANSTEY again brought forward the case of Mr. Salomons, by inquiring of the Speaker whether the insertion upon the minutes of the House of the letter from the gentleman, stating his reasons for refusing to use the words, "On the true faith of a Christian," was sufficient to place that reason regularly on record?

The SPEAKER replied in the affirmative.

Lord J. RUSSELL said he thought it was but fair to give any gentleman who was of opinion that Mr. Salomons had a right to sit and vote in the House an opportunity of expressing that opinion. The noble lord accordingly moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Salomons, not having taken the oath of abjuration in the form prescribed by law, was not entitled to a seat in that House.

Mr. BETHELL moved as an amendment that Baron Rothschild and Mr. Salomons, having taken the oaths in the manner in which the House is bound by law to administer, that they are entitled to take their seats in the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL argued that the words which had been omitted by Mr. Salomons formed an essential part of the oath, and could not be dispensed with except by the authority of an act of Parliament.

Mr. EVANS supported the amendment, and Mr. NAPIER the original motion.

Mr. AGLIONBY was of opinion that the oaths had been legally taken.

The House divided. For Mr. Bethell's amendment, 71; against it, 118—majority, 47.

Cyrus F. Ballard was lately shot by Conrad Decker, in the town of Ellery, in Chautauque county, New York, and dangerously wounded. Decker had sold his wife to Ballard for two shillings, and, becoming dissatisfied with the bargain, undertook to kill him.

SANTA ANNA PASSING THE BLOCKADING SQUADRON.

Lieut. SEMMES, in his "Service Afloat and Ashore," gives the following interesting account of the passage of Santa Anna through the American blockading squadron at Vera Cruz. It will be recollected that the commander of the squadron was specially instructed by the President to allow the wily chieftain to pass freely:

"Early in August, while the squadron was lying at anchor under Green Island, keeping watch and ward over the enemy's city and castle of Vera Cruz, the seaman on the look-out at the mast-head of the St. Mary's, then cruising on the blockade, descried the smoke of a steamer. As this was not the regular day for the appearance of any of the English mail steamers—which had been permitted to pass in and out of the beleaguered port without question, the English Government pledging itself for their faithful conduct as neutrals—the smoke of a steamer was a novelty in this now lonely and deserted part of the Mexican Gulf. The St. Mary's in due time placed herself in a position to intercept the stranger in her approach to the city; and as the latter came up within hailing distance, she ordered her to 'heave to,' while a boat was being sent on board of her. The boat being in readiness in a few minutes, a lieutenant jumped into her, and with a few strokes of the oars from the sinewy arms of his seamen placed himself alongside the steamer.

"The steamer being evidently a merchant vessel, the lieutenant was surprised to find himself received with much ceremony and courtesy at the gangway. Making his way on deck and explaining the object of his visit to the captain, he was conducted into the cabin, where he was ushered into the society of a circle of gentlemen, evidently Spaniards or Mexicans, from their olive complexions, black hair and eyes, and pointed and curled mustachios. It was obvious also, at the first glance, that most, if not all these gentlemen, although dressed in plain or citizen's clothes, were military men, and persons of bearing and distinction. After a moment's pause, the captain, as though he had purposely prepared a surprise for the boarding officer, turned towards him and making a graceful motion with his right hand at the same time in the direction of one of the gentlemen, who, though of the ordinary height and figure, seemed by his commanding air and manner to be the chief of the party, said, 'Allow me to present you, sir, to *General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna*.' The officer started back at first in a little surprise, but soon recovering himself, advanced cordially towards the General, and extending his hand, a mutual interchange of civilities took place.

"In a few moments Senora Santa Anna, (a second wife,) a handsome blonde, with deep blue eyes and auburn hair, and still in the bloom of early womanhood, joined the party, and was presented to the officer, who saluted her in turn with becoming gallantry and respect. General Almonte, late Minister of the United States, was also present as one of the General's suite, and, speaking our language well, acted as interpreter on the occasion. General Santa Anna having explained briefly who he was—although such explanation was entirely unnecessary—and that he purposed going into Vera Cruz, with the permission of the Commodore, the boarding officer, after sitting as long as courtesy required, and perhaps a little longer than strict regard to duty permitted, in homage to the lady's charms—a petticoat being quite an unusual sight to us rough blockaders about this time—withdrew to report 'progress' to his commanding officer, and to ask for orders in the novel case which had occurred.

"The commander, who had been prepared by the Commodore for the contingency, forthwith dispatched the boat back again, and directed the officer, at the same time that he should present his compliments to General Santa Anna, to say to him, on the part of the Commodore, that 'he could proceed to Vera Cruz with his suite as he desired;' whereupon the steamer Arab shot boldly out from under the lee of the blockading vessel, and in an hour or two more landed her distinguished passenger, 'big with the fate' of Mexico, safely in the desired haven. That night the roar of cannon and the bursting of rockets in the air testified the joy of the fickle Vera Cruzanos at the return of their lost Coriolanus; and it soon transpired that the wily peace-maker, who had so handsomely duped our Cabinet at Washington, had put himself at the head of the ultra war party and proclaimed—in common with acting President Salas, whom he hastened to join—'no quarter to the Yankees.'"

THE JENNINGS ESTATE.

FROM THE MOBILE TRIBUNE.

It seems by the papers that in all parts of the country there are claimants for the large Jennings estate which lies in England, inviting some lucky fellow to take possession of it.

We have a few facts concerning it which may be interesting to our readers. WM. JENNINGS, who left the principal of it, was an old miser, who took great pleasure in accumulating. He was born some time about 1700, and died in 1798, leaving no issue and intestate. The following is said to be a correct list of his effects:

South Sea stock	£30,000	Interest in arrears	£8,725
Do new do	30,000	Do do	7,650
Do old do	40,000	Do do	9,600
India do	23,890	Do do	18,570
Consols, 3 per cent.	50,000	Do do	17,250
Do his mother's	10,000	Do do	5,450
Bank stock	35,000	Do do	19,600
5 per cent. do	30,000	Do do	17,250
4 per cent. do	24,000	Do do	11,520
Reduced annuities	50,000	Do do	16,800
Long do	2,000	Per annum	22,000
Account at bank	57,719		
Do at Childs's	6,000		
Do at Hoar's	17,860		
Do at Stephenson's	19,000		
Do at Gosling's	7,000		
London Insurance Office	400 Shares.		
New River Company			5,000
On mortgage	200,000		
Landed estate	8,000 per annum, rent, with interest, due for fifty-one years.		

In addition to this, there is a chest of the deceased's mother lying at Childs's, in London, which is said to contain a large amount of plate and other valuables, but has not been opened since the demise of the old lady.

The whole value of this property in 1848, according to English authority, exceeded £8,000,000, or more than $40,000,000—a sum which would make its possessor, we imagine, the richest man in the world.

The question now to solve is, who are the heirs? In England all claim has ceased, and it is certain that the descendants exist on this side of the Atlantic, but as yet unrecognized. Not long ago a whole convention of Jenningses, from all parts of the United States, sat at Nashville to appoint committees to institute inquiries and raise funds to investigate the matter. Subsequently a convention sat at Charlottesville for a similar purpose.

From what we can understand, the impression among eminent legal men who have examined the matter is, that the true heirs are the descendants of the family of Mr. S. S. Jennings of this city. This gentleman has already been to England to investigate the matter, and intends, we learn, to proceed thither again on the same business.

The British Government has been desirous for a long time to find the owners of the estate. Through English papers notice has been made by its authority; but, finding no response to it, instructions were sent twice to this country for the descendants of Charles Jennings, who came hither from England in 1681. The first inquiry was addressed, some years ago, to the Secretary of State of the United States, and advertisement of this fact we believe was made. More recently, the British consul at Norfolk received from high functionaries at home directions to proceed to Elizabeth City county, to institute similar investigations as to the descendants of this same Charles, who, it was believed, are the true heirs.

The sacredness with which the British laws are observed with regard to property is beautifully illustrated in this matter. Here is an immense estate, which was left fifty years ago without any owner, and, as far as the Government knew, without a probability, after so great a lapse of time, of one being found; but, under the paternal care of the laws, it is watched and cherished until, we suppose, it has trebled its original value. It is still held in trust, to be conveyed to the heir, how remote soever, or how far soever removed from allegiance to English sovereignty.

Mr. Emerson, in one of his recent lectures, related a similar incident to show the stability of the English laws. A man died seven hundred years ago, leaving a portion of his property to be invested in such a way as to supply a bait of bread and ale to whomsoever should apply for it. Notwithstanding revolution, civil war, and progress and change of all sorts, the bequest is as rigidly observed to-day as it was when it was first made. Mr. Emerson himself, to test the matter, enjoyed the benefit of this strange and remote charity.

MRS. PREWETT, the spirited editress of the Yazoo Whig, has lately been put into a most capital humor at having the opportunity of issuing her paper in a new and handsome dress. So delighted is she that she avows her perfect indifference to abuse from any quarter, and in the following paragraph seems, in truth, rather pleased at the prospect of receiving her due share: "Indeed," says she, "we would fear 'we were not doing our duty to that great unsympathising leviathan, the public, if we didn't get abused by some folks. 'The kind old man who was letting his wife whip him, on 'being remonstrated with for want of spirit, said, 'it 'pleases her and don't hurt me.' We, perhaps, are not 'possessed of accute sensibility, but just now we don't know 'of any thing that could hurt our feelings unless some one 'should break our china, throw a cat into our cistern, make 'a face at our baby, or call us ugly."