SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Edkorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Carrent Toples-Complied Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE PROBLEM OF REVIVING AMERI CAN COMMERCE. From the N. Y. Herald.

The national Congress, which commences its session in Washington next Monday, will have many and great questions to deliberate on—questions of foreign and home policy, questions of finance, questions of tariff and internal revenue; but we think we are not exaggerating when we say that, so far as con-cerns the grandeur and prosperity of the metropolis, Congress will have before it no question of greater importance than that of restoring American commerce to the proud position which it occupied fifteen years ago. Do our readers know that whereas in 1851 the tonnage of the United States had reached about five and a half millions-somewhat in excess of the tonnage of England-it has since fallen off to four million three hundred thousand tons, and that of England has increased to seven million three hundred thousand? The fact is a startling one, and particularly when the statement is added that of the tonnage which we still possess only about one-fourth is occupied in the foreign trade, and even that chiefly in the scavenger work of supplying Europe with the guano of Peru. We do not to-day possess a single steamer plying between New York and any European port, but have surrendered the whole foreign commerce of our port to the English, the French, and the Germans.

Many causes have operated in producing this disheartening state of things. As Mr. Low, one of our most enterprising shipowners and merchants, stated before the select committee of Congress, which has been recently collecting information on the sub-"It is easier to explain the causes of our decline than to suggest a remedy." The causes assigned before that committee were various, the principal ones being the gradual revolution that has been effected in ships, from the wooden sailing vessel and side-wheel steamer to the iron sailing vessel and screw steamer-a revolution in which we took no part, preferring to cling to the sailing vessel and the wooden side-wheel steamer; the preference in freights and insurances given to the iron vessels over the wooden ones; the difference in the cost to the English merchant of his vessel and that of his to the American merchant: the high duties paid on materials entering into the construction of American ships, which materials are free of duty in England; the advantage which the English have over us in getting all their ships' stores out of bond free of duty; the difference in the rates of wages; the disadvantage under which our depreciated currency placed us; the failure of our Government to subsidize steamship lines in competition with the English and French; and, finally, the generally prejudicial effect of our high protective tariff. All these, with the exception of the first, are causes which it is in the power of Congress to remove or mitigate: and as to the first, we suppose it may be safely left to the intelligence and enterprise of our shipbuilders and

shipowners. But notwithstanding Mr. Low's remark as to the cause being more easily discovered than the remedy, there has been no lack of suggestions as to the remedy. These suggestions may be condensed into three principal groups. They are—first, the removal of all egislative restrictions on the purchase of foreign ships and on their admission to American registry; second, the granting of liberal subsidies by our Government to steamship lines; and, thirdly, the allowance of a drawback of duties on all materials entering into the construction and outfit and maintenance of ships. It will be readily understood that these propositions are not equally favored by the two great interests that are most closely involved in the question-the shipowning and the shipbuilding interests. The shipowners, as a class, may be set down as in favor of all three. The shipbuilders are and will be opposed, to the bitter end, to what is termed free trade in ships. They say, and with much force and reason, that it would be the finishing blow to the now languid and tottering interests which they represent; and that it would not only be ruinous to that interest, but would be seriously detrimental to the nation at large in closing up all the shipyards, sending the ship mechanics out of the country or to other occupations, and thus depriving the Government of its most useful and indis pensable artisans in case of war with a naval power. On the other hand, the shipowners do not believe that, even with the allowance of a drawback, the shipbuilders of this country can compete with those of England. As Mr. Westervelt, formerly one of our greatest shipbuilders, stated before the committee, "The days of wooden ships are ended; and to build wooden ships would be labor lost." The shipowners say; "Let us buy our ships where we can buy them cheapest; and if American ships can be produced as cheap as foreign ones, of course we will give our own the preference." Some of our principal shipbuilders, including Mr. Webb, of New York, and Mr. McKay, of Boston, have expressed the fullest confidence that if they are put, in regard to the cost of material, on an equal footing with the great iron shipbuilders on the Clyde and the Tyne, they can, notwithstanding the disparity of

they ask is a fair field and no favor. THE EMPEROR'S CHECKMATE.

workmen's wages, produce as good and as cheap ships as their English rivals. All that

From the N. Y. Times. While the foes of the Second Empire are trying to persuade the world that they have left the Emperor no place to stand upon, they are suddenly surprised to find that he has cut the ground from under their own feet. This operation has now been repeated so often, that French Liberals might save themselves many disappointments by always going in expecta-tion of it. But they are led astray by those fascinating theories about his bodily and mental ruin. They publish articles to prove that the Emperor cannot possibly live six months longer, and that he is the victim of innumerable horrible complaints, which keep him in constant torment. By way of relief to his sufferings he every now and then takes a red hot poker and cauterizes his own back. Stories of this kind circulate in every Parisian cafe, and are, as is well known, even sent abroad for the entertainment of foreigners. The Opposition, in fact, picture the Emperor to themselves as a worn-out, decrepit, brokendown old man. When he comes forward and makes a speech full of his old fire and vigor, and anticipates all the really popular parts of their own programme, they are of course immensely astonished. Everybody will admit that his address to the Corps Legislatif on Monday was a remarkable effort for a dying

man to make.

to abandon the field to his enemies; and, | years! The young humbug, it is true, has an secondly, that revolutionary schemes at pre- | old appearance, but this has been caused "by secondly, that revolutionary schemes at present stand no chance of success. The Emperor understands the temper of the times an advantage of which few rulers of France could ever boast. He sees quite plainly that the bulk of the French people would shrink back in alarm from any thought of a new revolution, while at the same time they earnestly desire to see liberal principles exercising a more decided influence upon the course of the Government. They want reforms, but they do not want another Republic. The Emperor's speech is a very elever echo of their own opinions. He is quite right, and they know it, in saying that "it is not easy to establish regular and peaceful liberty in France." They are alarmed at the vision of the excesses foreshadowed by the Red Republican organs. When, therefore, he says to the Corps Legislatif, "France wants liberty with order—order I answer for; help me, Messieurs, to secure liberty"—when he talks in this strain, the vast majority of the people see their own vast majority of the people see their own ideas caught up and forcibly expressed, and they necessarily sympathize with the speaker. The wild projects, the rough menaces, the unbridled violence of the revolutionists cannot prevail against a ruler who simply says:-'You are enjoying prosperity now; trust in me, and I will secure you in the possession of it." The Emperor understands the people, and how to appeal to their interests, far better than all his adversaries put together.

The reforms which are now promised are not so thorough as the "Reds" demanded, but so far as they go, they will be extremely acceptable to the people. They are social rather than political reforms, and because they are of that nature, the poorest in the land will be able to appreciate them. The popular vote is to be rendered more powerful than ever, and the range of universal suffrage is to be extended. Measures are to be taken for the development of primary education, for placing justice more at the command of poor men, for extending the advantages of savings banks to the humbler classes-perhaps on the model of the excellent post office savings banks in England, which enable a man to deposit money in any town or village where there is a post office, and to withdraw it afterwards in any other town where he happens to be, Government standing the security for principal and interest. Besides these measures, which are but faintly sketched in the telegram, there is to be an increase of small salaries in public offices; observe that it is always the middle and lower classes which the Emperor chiefly strives to please. Humane regulations are to be made for controlling the labor of children, agricultural interests are to receive attention, and the customs and excise duties will be revised. This may not be an ambitious dish to set before the people, but unde niably it is a very substantial one. It is better than anything yet offered by the revo-lutionists. We are told that the Emperor was frequently applauded, and that when the name of Lanterne Rochefort was called in the roll of deputies, it was received with hisses. There we may see the appreciation in which both parties are held by the French people at large. Napoleon is preferable to a revolution. The French like to play with edged tools, and to be always talking about upsetting the Government—just as their country-women thought no pleasure complete unless it had a spice of wickedness in it. But they know when they are well off. The Empire is repugnant to abstract conceptions of liberty, but it keeps the people prosperous, it guarantees order, it renders property secure. The people amused themselves with the Lanterne, but they are not ready to exchange the Emperor for Rochefort and his friends.

THE PETRIFIED GIANT.

From the N. Y. Tribune. The great stone fellow found at Cardiff continues to stimulate the minds of the savants. Some will have it that he once walked and breathed in all his huge proportions; and if we do not keep too strict a rein upon the imagination, we may conjecture anythingthat he was the identical Goliath; that he was one of the large and cruel villains destroyed by nimble little Jack; that he figured in the Trojan wars; that he was distinguished in the old fights with the immortal gods; that if we had but eyes to find it, his whole biography in his pre-petrified state is to be found in some nursery volume of fairy tales-his life in his enchanted castle, his keen scent for the blood of Englishmen, his mysterious "fe-fo-fi-fum" dialect, his enormous doings and his colossal darings in general! Unfortunately, the men of science who will allow us a good, comfortable belief in nothing marvelous, and who, for all their microscopic eyes, see nothing uncommon in the most uncommon things, have been scrntinizing the giant of Cardiff with remorseless precision, and have come to the conclusion that as a giant be never roared, fought, stalked, killed, and devoured, being no more than a counterfeit presentment or simulacrum of a giant, and a confoundedly modern character even at that. The petrifaction theory, under this cool manipulation, has pretty completely exhaled. Mr. Palmer, the sculptor, has taken a professional view of the monster, and Mr. Palmer does not think that the stone was ever warm and living flesh. He knows what the tools of his craft will do, and the marks which their use leaves behind them, and these marks he finds "as plain as can be, and some of them, where the legs join, exceedingly fresh." As for the little pin-holes, out of which the bristles of the giant have been supposed to have sprouted. Mr. Palmer refers them "to the action of some chemical in the earth." In some parts of the statue are signs of the employment of tools in common use at this time among sculptors. "A veritable statue," says this eminent statuary, but clearly no petrified giant."

The news of the discovery of this lapideons enigma, this Columbian male sphinx, of course reached in time the Smithsonian Institute, and occasioned a mild and regulated curiosity in that dignified seat of science. Professor Baird was moved to write for information to Dr. Boynton, of Syracuse, stating that he had been exceedingly bothered by "conflicting statements." "Of course," by "conflicting statements." says the Professor, "the petrifaction theory is too absurd to talk about." A careless remark which demolishes all our fine romances, and raises the deuce with our historical reveries and pre-Adamite speculations. Dr. Boynton makes hot haste to reply with cruel dis-tinctness:—"The absurdity of the existence of petrified human flesh, or giants of stone that once lived," is such that Dr. Boynton would not speak of it, were not "the community agitated to the core." But he speak of it, and he knocks the Titan into pebbles. The big creature is merely "a reclining statue, carved from gypsum." Not an ancient statue either. If it had been a petrifaction, a gypsum giant, it would have been washed away long ago. At first, Dr. Boynton was disposed to be reverent and liberal, and to admit that the image was at least about 300 years old; now he Two things are clear-first, that the Em- thinks that it may have been buried aboutperor is no more likely now than he ever was ah! what a coming down!-about three

the dissolving action of water," which the Doctor thinks might have been accomplished "in a few months." The scientific probability is that the giant has been under the sod about 371 days. It is evident that Dr. Boynton's experiments have led the petrifaction ists into most embarrassing proximity to the

year of our Lord 1869. We shall endeavor to await with exemplary patience the full development of this hard, old mystery, or perhaps we should speak more properly if we called it a soft and new one. We wish it to be distinctly understood that we have no ill-feeling against the giant himself, whatever may be his age, and whether he has passed from life to limestone or not. But if the image was buried but lately, the man who buried it may be living; and we call upon him to come forward and make a full and circumstantial confession before our archeologists get to fisticuffs—unless, in-deed, the whole affair is a speculation, for the success of which a continued silence is necessary.

GEARY AGAIN.

From the N. Y. World, From the letter of "Justitia," in relation to the case of Dr. Schoeppe, we learn that the Attorney-General of Pennsylvania opposes the pardon of the accused-firstly, because it is easy "to find one set of chemical experimentalists who will flatly contradict the theories of another set;" secondly, because Dr. Schoeppe had "purchased prussic acid at two different places within fifteen days prior to the death of Miss Stennecke;" and, thirdly, because a suspicion of forgery attaches to two papers subsequently offered by the al-

leged culprit. To these propositions we reply, firstly, that toxicological analysis is not a matter of but of positive demonstration. As regards the particular case in question, the merest tyro in physiological chemistry should know that sulphuric acid (the reagent employed by Dr. Aiken), acting upon nitro-genized animal matter, would be likely to give the "test" of more than the "trace" hydrocyanic acid claimed to have been detected, and that enough evanogen commonly exists in the saliva alone to form prussic acid under appropriate chemical conditions. Far from two "sets of experimentalists" being opposed to each other in this instance, the testimony at the trial showed so conclusively the fallacy of the tests employed that the evidence with regard to prussic acid was abandoned by the prosecution; and since that time the case has been thoroughly reviewed by prominent bodies of scientific men in New York, Baltimore, and other cities, whose unanimous decision has been in favor of the

That a physician should purchase prussic acid need not seem a very suspicious circumstance, if it be known that this substance, despite the popular terror attached to its name, is frequently and safely employed in medical practice, and forms an ingredient in very many "cough mixtures. Dr. Schoeppe's second purchase of this drug was explained on the trial by the worthlessness of that which he had previously bought. Furthermore, if the deceased were "in sound health" up to "the day before the prisoner is known to have prescribed for her," to attribute criminal intent to his purchase of medicine would imply supernatural prescience on his part. Moreover, we are told by medical men that the symptoms were in no wise indicative of poisoning by prussic acid, and that there were, on the other hand, appearances of paralysis caused by apoplectic effusion in the brain.

To the third point adduced against the condemned man, we would answer simply that whether he committed forgery or not has nothing to do with the charge of murder, on which alone he was tried. The former offense is not, we believe, a capital crime under the laws of Pennsylvania, and, even if it were, Dr. Schoeppe has not been indicted for it.

We entirely fail to see the strength of our correspondent's plea, that the condemnation of one probably innocent man should be allowed to offset the "unaccountable pardons" of numerous "notorious criminals;" and we find no reason to alter the opinion we have already expressed with regard to Governor Geary's action in this affair.

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By order, CHARLES WESTON, JR.,

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