From the N. Y. Tribune.

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics-Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE AMAZONS AT THE CAPITOL.

The assemblage of vocal and argumentative women at present bewildering the Judiciary Committee of the lower House at Washington is evidently making the best use of its opportunities. The Senate committee declines to listen to the ladies, so they wisely determine that the auditors whom they have secured shall get enough of them. They probably do not expect to achieve any distinot result. In fact, at the close of the session, their situation will doubtless be similar to that of the grazier who drove his refractory bull to market, the animal breaking into every cornfield and upsetting every beehive on the way; after roaring and pawing around the market all day without finding a purchaser, he was at last reluctantly driven home by his owner, repeating on the way the picturesque but tedious exploits of the morning. When at last, after infinite labor, the brute was safely returned to the stall from which he had been led forth in the morning, his owner thoughtfully and with considerable cheerfulness observed:-"Well, I had a good drive out of the bull anyhow." It is likely that at the expiration of the session the ladies will solace themselves with similar congratulations in respect to Congress. They will have accomplished nothing, but will have harried and fatigued the legislators as effectually as the grazier did his

Of course this is to be regretted; but what are we to do about it? Our stupid and narrow-minded legislators will persist in thinking that the fisheries dispute, the San Domingo imbroglio, the settlement of the Alabama claims, the restoration of wholesome and friendly relations with the South, the national indebtedness, and so on, are subjects of more urgent consequence than those which Mrs. Victoria Woodhull so eloquently advances. Whether she shall be entitled to run for President, and whether Miss Susan B. Anthony shall be entitled to vote for her, are, we confess, matters of the deepest concern; but it is difficult to get your average member of Congress to think so. Confronted with actual and positive women, not merely the documentary and recorded shadows thereof, such as petitions, resolutions, affirmations, and the like, he is apt to make a present show of concession, even of conviction, and to promise all sorts of aid and comfort to his besiegers. But, alas, he generally backs out as soon as they are gone, and the wizard spell of their voices and the compelling enchantment of their eves are withdrawn from him. Possibly it will be so with Mr. Cook and Judge Loughridge, and even with the flery and determined Butler, upon whom, in full conclave, Mrs. Woodhull emptied her ethical and expostula-

But whether they succeed or fail, their attibude is alike courageous and interesting. It is no joke to beard the Judiciary Committee in its den, and, in presence of so many learned doctors, enter upon a new exegesis Mrs. Woodhull should not, so far as intrinsic courage is concerned, be placed upon a level with Joan of Arc or the Maid of Saragossa. It is really a feather in her cap that the Senate Committee declined to trust itself in her declamatory presence. However fortified in their present convictions, that venerable and learned body could have no assurance that at the first wooing accents of her voice, the structure of their faith, however solidly buttressed with biblical citation and contemporary prejudice, would not topple over like the walls of Jericho before the persuasive quaver of the ram's horns. They would have been like so many Samsons before the fair and fluent Philistine, and she would have bound them one and all with her logical withes. They have escaped that destiny by declining to confront the enemy and immuring themselves within the walls of their official Troy. If the House committee had set a similar example, it is difficult to conjecture what the women would have done and to whom they would have intoned their plaints. They couldn't have gone direct to the President, as he is known to cling to the oldfashioned notion that women ought to stay at home and mind their business. Boutwell couldn't have given them any comfort, unless, perhaps, he had assigned them all to situations in the Treasury Department—and among the remaining Secretaries and other high dignitaries of the Capitol we can think of none to whom in such an event they could have advantageously presented them selves. Now, if they had gone all that distance and found nobody to listen to them it would have been in every particular a circumstance of misery, and we are therefore moved to suggest the appointment of a joint committee of both houses to be in perpetual session, whose special function it shall be to hold interviews with wandering squads of wemen who with supplicatory, denunciatory, or argumentative intent may chance to visit the Capitol. If anybody deems this suggestion irrelevant or needless, we invoke his attention to the fact that any of the present committees can at will decline such interviews and send the wandering and reformatory ladies home again without giving them a chance to unburden themselves of their grievances. This will never do. Let us make it somebody's business to listen patiently to all the feminine "whereases" "resolves." We always give them a faithful hearing, and any quantity of good advice. Why should Congress be less mindful of its duties and obligations?

A VILLAGE POPULATION IN ONE

From the N. Y. Sun. Gotham court, which comprises the immense pile known as Nos. 36 and 38 Cherry street, is one of the institutions of New York. With the exception of some of our penal establishments, it is the most populous dwelling in the State. It has had as many as 260 families, consisting of 1218 people, packed into it at one time. When it is remembered that there is many a flourishing village which does not contain 1200 inhabitants, nor even half that number, the reader may get some notion of what Gotham court is when in the full cram of its plethoric horrors. But whatever idea a reader may get of the density of the population of this gigantic tenement-house, he can get no adequate notion of its actual condition except by the application thereto of his own organs of sight and smell.

Gotham court is in the Fourth ward, and

within a stone's throw of the spot, at the head of Cherry street, where General Washington at one time lived when he resided in this city. It is to be hoped that the General's ghost is never compelled to revisit his former | proof of the reclitude of his intentions than

metropolitan residence. An "Old Virginia | be has given in the selection of the gentlewalk-ground" in that vicinity would be an unsavory excursion in these days for General Washington's ghost or any other man's.

Gotham Court is 234 feet long, 34 feet wide, and five stories high. It is divided by a centre wall, from end to end and bottom to top, into two back-to-back ranges of dwellings. Every floor, in each range, is divided into sets of apartments of two rooms each, one of which is called a living room and the other a bedroom. The living room is 14 feet by 9 in extent, and the bedroom is 14 feet by 8. On the south side of the building there is an alley seven feet wide, which is not a pleasant promenade in the dog-days, nor at

any other season of the year. If this huge structure were the only tenement house in the Fourth ward, it would be less intolerable; but the truth is, there are over three hundred and fifty others, containing a total tenement-house population of 12,221 within that circumscribed area. The result is such a state of degradation, filth, vice, disease, wretchedness, suffering, and woe as it is impossible to describe. The children are eaten alive by marasmus and devoured by what has come to be named "the tenement-house rot." The ewners of the houses cannot help this state of things, nor can the tenants themselves help it. As the Sanitary Superintendent says in his reports to the Board of Health, "Given this over-crowding of population, and the results are sure te follow. They may be somewhat mitigated; but so long as the overcrowding is permitted, they cannot be eradicated."

The Sanitary Superintendent is right. It is the overcrowding that does the mischief and works all this evil; and the problem is, How shall this overcrowding, this tenement-house packing, be got rid of? So long as the poor laboring people, the mechanics and daily toilers of all kinds, who have to earn their living below Chambers street, are prevented by A. T. Stewart and his confederates among the politicians from getting quickly and cheaply from their places of work to homes in the suburbs, this tenementhouse packing cannot be got rid of; but it will, on the contrary, grow worse and worse all the time. We must have steam communication and cheap fares from one end of the island to the other, and out into the country, before this abominable state of things can be overthrown. How long will the people allow A. T. Stewart and his political confederates thus to shut them up within jail limits, and compel them to sacrifice their health and lives in tenement houses?

THE SAN DOMINGO COMMISSION. From the N. Y. Times.

The way in which some of Senator Schurz's arguments against the annexation of San Domingo were met in the Senate by Senator Wilson and others gives indications of a spirit which we trust will not preside over the inquiries of the commission. Mr. Schurz argues that the inhabitants of tropical countries are not capable either of conducting an orderly and free government, or of engaging in energetic and prosperous industry. Now, he may be wrong in this; it is an assertion which the Romans might have used against the inhabitants of Northern Europe, and which, had all traces of the Roman Empire perished in the Dark Ages, the inhabitants of Northern Europe might now make of the inhabitants of Southern Europe. It is, of course, always dangerous to lay down any proposition about the absolute and perpetual capacity or incapacity of any race or people. There was in the ninth century a petition in the litany used in the churches of Northern Italy-"From the darts of the Hungarians, good Lord, deliver us!" and if anybody had uttered to those who used it the prediction that those thieving, murdering savages would eventually have become one of the most sensible and successful sets of politicians in the civilized world, he would have been well laughed at. Illustrations of this kind might easily be multiplied.

Nevertheless, the longer the period during which people have failed to do a thing, the more reason is there for believing that they cannot do it, and the safer is it to assert that they will not do it; and certainly there could not be a safer assertion of the kind made than that the inhabitants of tropical countries will never succeed either in politics or industry. We know them since the very dawn of history, and they never have succeeded in all that time in achieving eminence either as producers or politicians. We know, too, that as a matter of fact, the effects of the tropical climate on the human frame are very debilitating and enervating. Different races suffer from them in different degrees -the Caucasian most of all, and the negro least-but all suffer. The great industrial regions of the world, those of Asia, as well as those of Europe and America, lie, and have always lain, outside the tropics; and the successful Governments of the world have always been found outside the tropics. Is that reasoning as we usually reason, and have to reason, in politics? He is not to be con-sidered a rash or bad man who says that if we annex San Domingo the Dominicans will say:

-"Give as much help in the work of government as in the work of production;" and it would be very unfortunate for them and for us if the Commission went to San Domingo under the influence of very high-flown a priori notions as to the capacity of all mankind for self-government.

Senator Wilson says that if the inhabitants of tropical countries were not fit for self-government, "the Almighty ought to have called the philosophers into His councils before He made the torrid regions." With all respect to the Senator be it said, this was a very foolish speech. There is nothing more mysterious or improbable in God's having made the inhabitants of the torrid regions incapable of self-government, than his having allowed large bodies of the inhabitants of all climates to pass their lives from age to age in sin sed misery, or in his allowing disease and death to ravage the world. Both are mysterious, to be sure, but we must not deny the existence of things because we do not understand them, nor doubt the existence of Providence because the whole earth is not covered

by a bappy republic. On the other hand, it would be very unfor tunate for the commission to go down clothed with prepossessions of any kind against the Dominicans. We have the great-est respect for Mr. Wade, Mr. Dodge, and Mr. White. Their honesty is unquestionable, and their judgment is sound, but the judgment of the community at large upon the question of annexing Dominica is likely to be sounder. We think they will do best service in the careful collection of evidence, without respect to persons, parties, or opinions, and its presentation to the country in a lucid and compact form. We know very little about the Dominicans, their religion, morals, manners, opinions, or espacity, and need to know a great deal. The first requisite of a commission appointed to investigate their condition, in the midst of such a controversy as is now raging in Washington, is character, and this we have undoubtedly got. The President could not have given better

men we have named. They will certainly try to get at the truth. But to get at it effectually they must not go to the island under the influence of any theory, either as to the capa-city or incapacity of the negro, or of the in-habitants of tropical countries generally. What we crave for is facts, and facts let us bave. Having them, the country will be abundantly able to form its own conclusions

from them. There is one consideration connected with the inquiry which is very important, and yet has hardly been touched on, and that is the length of time which it will consume to, make it thorough. The work of the commissioners, as traced out by the resolution, if done well would take five years; if even done partially would take two; and it can only be prosecuted in winter. The gentlemen, too, who have been put on the commission, though not old, are well past their prime, and can hardly be expected to encounter the dangers and fatigues of residence in a tropical climate with much ardor. It would seem as if they ought either to be surrounded by large and competent corps of more youthful assistants, to act under their inspiration and direction, or else have the sphere of the inquiry considerably diminished.

THE SITUATION. From the Pall Mall Gazette.

Before the world had recovered from its first amazement at the Russian announcement that the Treaty of Paris was to be violated. the Times informed its readers that there were two classes of persons who carried their alarms to the point of absurdity: one consisted of those who were persuaded that there was an understanding between Russia and Prussia; the other of those who were convinced that there was an understanding between Russia and the United States. In the month that has since elapsed we have had every sort of explanation of the conduct of these three States; but, after all that has been said and done, we are compelled to ask whether there is any hypothesis to connect the facts which is more plausible than that which seemed ridiculous to the Times. The optimists who denounce the alarmists appear to forget that there is a priori presumption for the existence of such an understanding. Count Bis-marck is the parent of contemporary diplomacy, and all his great diplomatic movements have been preceded by a series of negotiations, at once audacious and obscure, aimed at establishing understandings which might be disavowed if necessary, but which might also bear fruit in action at the decisive moment. Taking first the Black Sea question: what evidence have we to weaken this presumption? There is a rumor that Count Bismarck denied any such understanding to Mr. Odo Russell; but all we really know is, that Mr. Odo Russell began his negotiations at Versailles with a very bad cold, and after he was well again his namesake with the doctorial title only mentioned him to state that he had heard nothing from Count Bismarck. The only facts really in point and really established are that Prussia has proposed a conference on the Treaty of Paris, and has declared herself free from the obligations of the Treaty of Londen. The second fact gives its color to the first. The important question with reference to the conference was whether it would assemble to discuss the future necessity for the observance of treaties or the expediency of relaxing by agreement the obligations of the Treaty of Paris. England and Austria go into conference to consider the last point; Prussia and Russia to argue the first. The evidence, therefore, against an understanding between the two last-mentioned powers stands precisely as follows:-One has proposed and the other has consented to meet the representatives of other European States for the purpose of contending that the power to whom a particular convention is onerous may decline to be bound by it without the permission of any other State which may be a party to the convention. There may be many dis putes as to the exact intent and significance of the Black Sea and Luxemburg circulars; but it is impossible to deny that this at least

is their common meaning.

We do not profess to have a clear opinion on the correctness of the statement telegraphed from Washington to the New York Tribune, and repeated in one of our occasional notes. It is alleged that Mr. Fish, the American Secretary of State, has been for three months beset by the Russian Minister with proposals for a joint demonstration against this country. Russia was to denonnce the treaty of Paris; the United States was to press simultaneously for a settlement of the Alabama claims. If this account of the facts be true, there ceases to be any question as to the Russian intrigues which preceded Prince Gortschakoff's circular. The assertion that the proceeding startled not only England and France, but all the other allies of Russia, is at once overthrown. Mr. Fish, indeed, is stated to have claimed credit for his resistance to the Russian suggestions; but we are compelled to ask what more could the Government which he represents have done than it has done, supposing he had made no resistance at all? Let us reflect that, until the Gortschakoff circular was on the point of being issued, we heard nothing whatever of the probability of disturbed relations with the United States. We were told that the American public had listened with great completency to the conciliatory lectures of Mr. Thomas Hughes, and that the claimants of compensation for the captures of the Alabama were asking why in the world they should not get the money which England was ready to pay. But, almost contempora-neously with the Russian diplomatic stroke, a rumor of alliance between President Grant and General Butler reached this country. This was quickly succeeded by Butler's inpudent speeches on the Canadian Fishery grievance; then came President Grant's message, amusingly complimented by the Times on being less audacious than the proposals of General Butler; and now the American House of Representatives has, by a great majority, voted all the measures hostile to England recommended by President Grant, ex-cept those which would visibly cost money. If we think the evidence of understanding be-tween Russia and the United States inconclusive, it is less because we believe the semiofficial paragraph in the N. Y. Tribune than because there was really no necessity for egreement. It has long been said that the Emperor of Russia has bought American sympathies with cheap civilities; but the price was thrown away, nasmuch as any demonstration against this country would have adequately served as purchase money. The more closely the state of American feeling towards Great Britain is

observed, the less satisfactory do those accounts of it appear which explain it by accidental and temporary circumstances, such as the escape of the Alabama or the coldness of

British sympathy during the Confederate war. The truth is that the sentiments of the

American people towards the British are like the sentiments of the Athenians towards

tyrants. They are the legacy of the past, not

the product of the present; and they are kept | alive by a series of commonplaces which are of perpetual recurrence in the themes of schoolboys and in the perorations of grown politicians. Mr. Goldwin Smith is said to be anxious for the reform of American school-books, as giving a totally false view of history. Well he may be. They all but omit the history of the world down to the American Revolution, and then go on to paint George III as a sort of Xerxes who led against a nation of patriots a population of subject slaves—poor old George III, who in these days would deserve to rank as a paragon among monarchs-who never broke a treaty, nor tore up a constitution, nor dreamed of such a thing as a forced conscription, nor prayed over a hecatomb of victims—who merely wanted to make his colonial subjects bear part of the expenses of the empire which bad squandered blood and treasure to secure the territories on which they were settled, and who made a feeble attempt to subdue them when they declined to pay. It is this elaborate training in batred—it is the fact that the Americans meet regularly and solemnly once a year to repeat these views of history-which relieves us from the necessity of giving any other ex-planation of the alacrity of President Grant in seizing the opportunity of the Russian difficulty. We do the Americans the justice of believing that they have no natural liking for the modern fashion of treaty-breaking. Contracts are never so much respected as among men of business, and the faults of the Americans, which are also the faults of the English, would lead them rather into chicanery and into inequitable constructions of treaties than into their open violation. Nor do we suppose that they have any special fancy for the political leadership under which they seem to be ranging themselves. An attorney with a stain on his honesty; a soldier with a slur on his courage; a man known throughout the world for brutality to women-these are not the types of character which singly or combined commend themselves to a community which voluntarily chooses its political director. But everything is condoned by Americans when there is a chance of injuring this country. On such an occasion they are satisfied to follow General Butler, and to take

their opportunity in a breach of solemn public engagements. The hostility of the United States is the true key to the position occupied by Great Britain, and we should stind a great deal better with the world if we honestly acknowledged it. Those among us who are striving their hardest to put some other construction on Russian and Prussian diplomacy than that which every organ of opinion outside of England has placed upon it would most of them admit, if they would speak fraukly, that the consideration which reconciles them to turning the other cheek to Count Bismarck after one has been smitten by PrinceGortschakoff, is their conviction that if we made a bold step forward on the European political stage the Americans would take us at a disadvantage. The great error of English statesmanship is unquestionably its tendency to tide over the difficulties which arise with the United States by the help of the expedient which comes first to hand. But it is labor lost, and an ultimate rebuff invited, when the Foreign Office meddles with European politics, so long as any American question remains unsettled. No greater blunder was ver committed than the postponement of the Alabama grievances. It is true we can never be sure what complaints the Americans will advance. Even the English Foreign Office might be forgiven for not having looked forward to a renewal of the fishery dispute. The true policy is nevertheless to solve all American controversies as rapidly as possible, and by any issue rather than none. The policy actually followed has been the very worst conceivable. When the Alabama claims had been postponed-when the Dominion of Canada had been establishedwhen our American territories were virtually garrisoned by a weak militia, there remained, as M. Thiers put it, not another fault to be guilty of.

THE I LFORM BEGUN.

From the Harrisburg Patriot. When it was announced that by the election of a Democrat in the First Senatorial district the control of the higher brauch of our State Legislature had passed out of the hands of the radicals, a great majority of the people of Pennsylvania were made glad Multitudes of honest Republicans rejoiced secretly at this result, and not a few of the more reputable journals of that party expressed the hope and the conviction that such a division of authority and responsibility would be productive of good resul's. This feeling, so general in the minds of the opponents of the Democratic party, was an involuntary tribute to the integrity of that great political organization. Many who had long been its open and avowed enemies saw that its accession to power in the Senate of Pennsylvania would put it in a position wherein it would be compelled to do something to check the tide of corruption which had swept like a flood over former Legislatures. By an unexpected combination of circumstances, the Democratic party has been put on trial before the people of Pennsylvania, and much depends upon the seventeen Democrats of the Senate. That they will discharge the high duties devolved upon them in a manner calculated to estab-lish and perpetuate the supremacy of the Democratic party in Pennsylvania for many years to come, we have no reason to doubt.

In the able address delivered by Hon. William A. Wallace when he took his seat as Speaker of the Senate, promises of reform were made. And now, just as the work of the session is about to begin with the appointment of the different committees, we have had convincing proof given to us that Mr. Wallace intends, so far as in him lies, to make his promises good. Special legislation has been the curse of Pennsylvania under radical rule. It has swelled the volumes of our pamphlet laws to enormous proportions, and has rendered it an impossibility for any one to keep the run of legislation during the session. Under tacit agreement, by which the private bills of each member were allowed to pass without interference or objection from his fellows, much of what is most objectionable in the course of our legislation has sprung up. There is a wise pro-vision in one of the amendments to the Cen-stitution of the State which prohibits the passage of any bill by the Legislature granting powers or privileges in any case where the authority to grant such powers or privileges has been conferred upon the courts of the commonwealth. Acts have been passed from time to time giving the courts jurisdiction over a large number of subjects which were frequently made the objects of special legislation; but the constitutional restrictions which removed all such matters from the possession of the Legislature have been disregarded by one radical Legislature after another. Public laws have been smothered under piles of unconstitutional private bills.

To remedy this great and growing avil, to out up by the roots the bulk of the special legislation which has cumbered the two houses year after year, is the first step taken by Mr. Wallace in his official capacity as Speaker of the Senate. He has laid down the laws very plainly in the rules of order which he presented to that body. He calls attention to the constitutional restrictions upon special legislation, and the joint rule of the two houses recognizing the force and effect thereof; and, in order that Senators may know well their duty, he enumerates nearly fifty subjects upon which no bills will be allowed to be introduced. Senators offering bills on any such subjects will be promptly ruled out of order, and committees will not be allowed to report them.

None but those who are familiar with the tedious course of business in the Legislature of Pennsylvania can properly appreciate the full importance of the step taken by Mr. Wallace. That he will firmly enforce the rules and confine business within constitutional limits no one who knows him will doubt. He is a man of strong will and resolute character, and when he takes a stand is not easily moved. The people at large will soon see the good fruits of Senator Wallace's action in the greatly diminished size of the volumes of pamphlet laws, and in an important decrease of expenditures. It is fitting that the advent of a constitutional party to power should be signalled by the restriction of all legislation within constitutional limits,

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PROPOSALS.

PROPOSALS FOR PUBLIC PRINTING AND BINDING.

Notice is bereby given that Sealed Proposals for the Public Printing and Binding for the State of Pennsylvania, for the term of three State of Pennsylvania, for the term of three years from the first day of July, 1871, will be received by the Speakers of the Senate and House of Heprescutatives from this date to the fourth Tuesday of January, 1871, is compliance with the act of Assembly entitled "An act in relation to Public Printing," approved 9th of April, 1856; said proposals to be accompanied by bonds, with approved securities, for the faithful performance of the work, as required by the act of 25th February, 1862, entitled "A further Supplement to an Act in relation to Public Printing" appropriate the first perfect to the fact of the f Printing," approved the 9th day of April, 1856.

F. JORDAN. Secretary of the Commonwealth HARRISBURG, Jap. 2, 1871.

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