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AT THE EVENING TELEGRAPH BUILDING,

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FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1871. THE CONVICTION OF MRS. FAIR. THE general course of a certain class of crimihal proceedings has been reversed by the recent conviction, at San Francisco, of a murderess. Male juries are prone to render verflicts in favor of female defendants er criminals whenever a plausible excuse for such decisions pan be furnished, and it was generally supposed that Mrs. Fair would be acquitted. If she had killed only one man, this would have probably been the result the present instance; even a San Francisco jury was not proof to the clamors of justice against one who had murdered at least two men. A few years ago she killed her husband because he had the audacity to insist that a Union instead of a secession flag should be hoisted upon their dwelling. When she was arraigned for this charge Mr. Crittenden successfully defended her, securing her acquittal. Out of the acquaintance formed during this trial a crimiintimacy grew up between Mr. Crittenden and Mrs. Fair, and the latter, after rendering this intimacy a source of considerable pecuniary profit to herself during a series of years, finally killed Mr. Crittenden because he would not abandon his lawful wife and children to devote himself exclusively to his murderous mistress. There can be no sort of doubt that a woman guilty of such a crime should be convicted of murder and hung in any State where capital punishment is inflicted for murders of any kind, and the verdict in this case is only deemed singular because in many notorious instances other wicked women have been shielded from deserved punishment on account of their sex. The existence of a feeling of delicacy on this point has exerted a deleterious influence on society, and it has done much to increase the race of insidious, dangerous, and reckless female adventurers. While the bulk of women are, morally, decidedly better than the bulk of mankind, thoroughly bad women are decidedly worse than the worst of bad men; and it is even more essential that they should be restrained and punished than that the rigors of the law should be enforced against male criminals. Mrs. Fair is the type of a long line of female adventurers, of high and low degree; and although she went beyond the usual limits of her infamous sisterhood in perpetrating murder, she bears a close resemblance to them all in her unscrupulous exercise of her acts of fascinations, in her greed for money, and in her ungovernable thirst for vengeance against those who thwart her purposes. In this age of woman's rights, when the equality of the sexes in matters of property, professions, and politics is so zealously advocated, it would be well if the doctrine was adopted so far as it applies to equality of a share of punishment for all grades of criminal offenses. Certainly some course should be adopted to thin the ranks of female adventurers and of the female criminals. In governmental affairs they exercise a most pernicious influence, for among all the arts of lobbyists none are so successful as the employment of fashionable but shameless women to persuade representatives to squander the money of the people. Many classes. of predatory criminals habitually enlist female accomplices in their service. Our towns and cities swarm with courtezans whose lives are made up of varied infamy. And then still more infamous and dangerous is the class who, like Mrs. Fair, are wives to-day and mistresses to-morrow, and who are ready to indulge in the loftiest aspirations or to commit the greatest of crimes. Thackeray's famous picture of Becky Sharp owes its great success to the well-recognized fact that it was no fancy sketch, and to the general conviction that parallel characters could readily be found in real life. While police and the courts are hunting down bad men, they should not be of the bad women who are not only wicked themselves, but the frequent cause of great wickedness in others of both sexes.

We are glad to see that the San Francisco press unanimously endorse the verdict in the Fair case; and the moral atmosphere of the country will be decidedly improved if in all sections, hereafter, public sentiment takes the same direction, and approves and applauds the successful prosecution of dangerous female criminals. They should have their full share of the prison and the gallows, despite the promptings of unreasoning gal-

lantry. THE STATE SENATE has passed the joint resolution which proposes an amendment to the Constitution making the State Treasurer elective by the people, instead of by the Legislature. The whole Constitution sadly needs a general overhauting by a convention elected for the purpose, but it is extremely doubtful if the present Legislature will authorize the calling of such a convention. It therefore becomes a matter of importance to secure the concurrent action of the House of Representatives on the subject of the State Treasurer, in order that one of the greatest scandals in our State politics may be done away with without further delay.

THE EXEMPTION OF PROPERTY FROM TAXATION.

In the House of Representatives yesterday a bill for the repeal of all laws exempting property from taxation was discussed with considerable animation, and although it was hotly opposed by a number of influential members, there seemed to be a strong party in favor of it, and it is not improbable that it will finally pass the House. Sweeping as is this bill, it is a serious question whether it is not necessary, if a reform is to be expected. During the present session of the Legislature innumerable bills for the exemption of property from taxation have been introduced, and have generally been acted upon favorably, and unless some check is interposed the evil will grow to a frightful magnitude and the entire burden of taxation will be laid upon the shoulders of a constantly diminishing proportion of the community. Men who have no sympathy whatever with the aims of religious and other establishments which are exempt from taxation will be obliged to contribute to their support, and as the tax rate is increased from year to year the dissatisfaction will become more general, and there will be less and less disposition to extend private aid to religious and charitable enterprises which ought to be liberally supported, but not out of the public treasury. The exemption of the property belonging to religious corporations we believe would be declared unconstitutional if it were ever tested before the Supreme Court. Now men who have no religious beliefs are compelled to contribute to the support of creeds in which they put no faith, and those who profess to be religious must aid in advancing opinions to which they are bitterly antagonistic. The Catholies are compelled to support the Protestant churches, and the Protestants those of the Catholics; the Unitarians must contribute to the advancement of Trinitarianism, and the Calvinists to that of Arminianism, and all to the promulgation of any ism that may be started by the inventors of new religions who are continually starting up. So long as churches themselves were alone exempt from taxation no very serious objection was raised, but now it is demanded that parsonages shall also be released from the burden of taxation, and unless there is a reform property of every description belonging to religious or professedly religious bodies will be excused from the necessity of contributing to the support of the Government. There are some things to be said in favor of the exemption of church property, and the churches are entitled to the support of public on the ground that they are moral agents of the first value. The principle of extending State aid to them, however, is radically wrong, and it has always had an injurious effect upon religion wherever tried. It has repressed private generosity and deadened the religious spirit, which is stimulated rather than otherwise by demands upon the pocket, if they are made in a proper manner. Many a man who is not willing to pay one dollar towards a general fund to be divided indiscriminately among the various religious denominations, will give liberally to support a particular church enterprise; but whether he will or not, the fact remains that, according to the terms of the Constitution, he cannot be compelled to give anything if he does not choose to. A great many persons interested in particular churches, and who are anxious to advance their prosperity in every possible manner, fail to see the great wrong of this whole exemption business, but if they would candidly and impartially consider the matter, they could scarcely fail to understand that it is a highly improper thing, to say the least of it, for them to demand aid of the State. Mr. Dumbell, in his remarks in the House of Representatives yesterday, stated that in Philadelphia alone over \$50,000,000 worth of property is already exempt from taxation by special acts, and that a million or a million and a half more had been exempted this winter. At the present tax rate of \$1'80 on the hundred, the above amount would realize over \$900,000, which would permit the tax rate to be greatly reduced if it were paid into the public treasury. The only property that, in justice to the entire community, should be exempted from taxation, should be that belonging to hospitals, asylums, and other strictly charitable institutions. These aid directly in reducing some of the public burdens, and as they a direct benefit to the public, it is not improper that at least this much aid should be extended to them by the State. If this principle were once clearly recognized, and the projectors of religious enterprises understood that they must rely solely upon such private assistance as they can command, it is possible that fewer gorgeous church edifices would be erected, but it is not unlikely that the cause of true religion would gain in the end. Mr. Dumbell said truly that the proper way to reach the institutions entitled to exemption was by a general law, and not by partial and special enactments making invidious distinctions; and we hope he and other members of the Legislature in favor of a much-needed reform will endeavor to pass the bill now before the

THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES relating to the public lands, and the manner in which they may be obtained, of which an extended description was given a few days ago, have been made the subject of a pamphlet published by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, which can be had gratultously by any one, together with any other information desired, on application to the Emigrant Office of the company, No. 116 Market street. This company has for years past been making every effort to bring laws to the notice of these masses of the people, and emigrants and those wishing to settle in the West will do well to obtain the document. It contains a transcript of the United States Homestead and Land laws, and of all the regulations the knowledge of which is necessary to obtain a title to land by any of the various methods; also a list of the land offices, valuable information concerning the running of trains, the connections, the rates of fare, and a sketch of the various localities in which the lands are situated. It is printed in both the German and English

NOTICES.

OF THE MANY IMPROVEMENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN place in the last ten years that of the

MANUFACTURE OF FINE READY-MADE CLOTHING Is most certainly worthy of more than a passing

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than the same goods can be made up for by other is tablishments. WANAMAKER & BROWN INVITE AN INSPECTION OF THEIR VAST STOCK OF NEW SPRING CLOTH-

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GOOD TITLE will be made to the purchaser.
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TO THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC.

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