The Press.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1859.

Academy of Music.

"The Sicilian Vespers," repeated last night, for the third time, went off remarkably well. It is an obvious improvement upon the usual brassy loudness of Verdi's music. Madame Colson sang even better than before—difficult as that might appear. Brignoli, Ferri, and Junca, also gave satisfaction. The new ball-room scene in Act II, painted by Mr. Edward Rivierre, demands notice—it has been months in course of execution, and is now a perfect gem.

This evening, the second act of "Lucrezia Borgia," the leading parts by Gassaniga, Stigelli, and Sanini, will be given, with the fourth act of "Rigoletto," in which Madames Colson and Strakosch, with Signore Stigelli and Ferri, will appear. The whole of "Le Sonnambula," in which Adelina Patti, Brignoli, and Amodio will appear, will also be performed. A correspondent, who complains that Susini is announced as wholly new to audiences in this country, had probably not read the notice that he would "make his first appearance in America, *since his return from Europe.*" Our correspondent says: "Susini is a old favorite, having sung with Grisi, Mario, and Badiali in their tour through this country. Philadelphians, owing to the caprice or ill-temper of Mario, had very few opportunities of hearing Susini, but the writer, who at that time lived in Boston, heard him frequently, and with all who heard him considered him a very fine singer. He is a large, fine-looking man, with a very powerful voice, and in martial scenes especially, a very good actor."

His duet 'Sicut la Tromba,' with Badiali, in 'I Puritani,' was one of the finest things ever heard in this country, scarcely, if at all, inferior to the famous rendition of the same song by Badiali and Mario."

The season will be extended a few nights more. On Monday "Don Giovanni" will be brought out, with Adelina Patti as *Zerlina*, Madame Strakosch as *Donna Elvira*, Madame Gassaniga as *Donna Anna*, and Brignoli, Ferri, and Susini, as *Don Ottavio*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Leporello*. This will be Adelina Patti's last appearance here. On Wednesday, Mozart's "Magic Flute" will be performed, with Madames Colson, Strakosch, and Gassaniga, as well as Stigelli, Ferri, and Junca, in the cast. This is the opera in which Madame Colson's singing is so surprisingly better than that of any of her contemporaries—Jenny Lind excepted, and scarcely inferior to her.

G. G. Evans's Gift-Book Enterprise.

In another column we have noticed holiday-books, sold by some of our leading book-vendors, published by themselves and others. We have here to draw attention to one of the most extensive booksellers in this city—we mean in the retail department—who is building up a large fortune, by spirited enterprise. This is Mr. Evans, (439 Chestnut street, a few doors west of *The Press* office,) whose transactions, demanding an army of clerks and porters to execute, have become enormous. With each book purchased, he presents a gift, varying in value from 50 cents to $100. Purchasing books by thousands, where others buy them only in score, he obtains them at a discount which enables him to be liberal in the gift-line, besides yielding him a profit. *Every* book published in this country can be obtained at Evans's, each with a gift. The smallest book, for children, and the most expensive published by Appletons, Harpers, Ticknor & Fields, E. H. Butler, and Lippincott, are all to be bought at Evans's. The stock is immense, and the demand, from all parts of the Union, draws largely upon it, every day. Every holiday-book worth having is procurable, with a gift, at Evans's.

Cosmopolitan Art Association.

We desire to draw special attention to this Association, whose advertisement appears in another column. Messrs. E. H. Hunt & Co., northwest corner of Chestnut and Fifth streets, are sole agents here. The Association was organized in June, 1854, and the conditions are that, for a subscription of three dollars, each person shall receive a fine engraving, (this time it is Faed's "Shakspeare and his Friends," worth ten dollars,) also a quarterly illustrated Art-Journal, worth two dollars per annum; and the chance of receiving a prize, out of our *four hundred* choice paintings, sculptures, statuettes, bronzes, vases, and engravings by the best American and foreign artists. Last year, Messrs. Hunt & Co. obtained over seven hundred subscribers. This year, the drawing will take place a month later, the subscription-list not closing until the last day in January, and we anticipate that Messrs. Hunt will procure at least two thousand subscribers. The engraving is ready, and can be delivered at the time when the subscription is paid. This is really the most liberal Art-Union in the world, the most fairly conducted, the most remunerative to the members.

Thomas Francis Meagher at Musical Fund Hall last Evening.

The announcement through the newspapers that a lecture would be delivered at Musical Fund Hall, last evening, by Thomas F. Meagher, Esq. the distinguished Irish patriot, attracted a large and intelligent audience, four-fifths of whom were males, to that locality at the appointed hour. The subject of the lecture was "Dean Swift, in reply to Thackeray," and he had not proceeded far before the warmest sympathy and interest of his audience were evidently enlisted in his theme. The applause at times was almost deafening, while the lecturer's wonderful power to sway an assembly, he awakened the latent love of many of his hearers for the country in whose behalf he has been an exile, and for whose welfare his heart still seemingly beats.

At a few minutes after eight o'clock Mr. Meagher appeared upon the platform, escorted by the Meagher Guards of this city, numbering some forty men, in full uniform. He was welcomed with the most enthusiastic applause, and was introduced by Mr. John G. Ford, who stated that another lecture would be delivered by Mr. Meagher, in this city, on the evening of the 26th inst., for the benefit of St. John's Orphan Asylum, when his subject would be "The Poets and Poetry of Ireland."

Mr. Meagher is a noble-looking man; he has a splendid *physique*, a head and face of marked intellectuality and strength of character, and a graceful and frequent speaker. Barring a heavy black moustache, his face, which is rather florid, is smoothly shaven, and his dark hair, which is moderately short, is so smoothly combed, showing, to good advantage, the phrenological proportions of his massive head.

He opened his lecture by saying that, generally speaking, men, in endeavoring to write biographies, relied much upon high colouring for the popularity of their productions. Among this class was Mr. Thackeray, who clearly manifested in his misrepresentations of Jonathan Swift, who, it was said, was Irish to the core. In everything that marked the Irish race Swift had proved himself thoroughly Irish, as brilliant and dauntless and chivalrous as Geraldine himself. Thackeray's aim had clearly been to produce a strong effect. He had evidently forgotten that Dean Swift ever cracked a joke or tickled his ribs with a laugh, but had presented him as a sort of melo-dramatic monster. It would be his purpose to show that Swift was one of the truest, noblest, and purest of patriots.

Jonathan Swift was born in the year 1667, in Dublin, of an English family. His father died a few months before the birth of his distinguished son. In early youth he had shown remarkable natural powers, but distilled the discipline of the University, and in consequence had lamented some of the professors, which obliged him to leave the institution, and, in the estimation of those others, he had left his character behind him in doing so. Swift was characterized as a man to attract attention and shun, just as naturally as the rod attracts the lightning.

After being turned out of school, his first essay had been to go to Kilroot, near the place that King James might have something for him to do regarding the invasion of the Dutch. His journey to England was uncomfortable. His being introduced into the house of Sir William Temple was also an admirably-treated feature of the discourse, and he had obtained a menial position with Sir William, as was charged by Thackeray. On the contrary, it was shown that he had been admitted into important consultations. We next found him taking his degree at Oxford, and applying for holy orders in the Established Church, for the obtaining of which he applied to Sir William for a recommendation. Thackeray had sneeringly insinuated that in doing this he had asked for "humble pie." "What if he did?" said the lecturer: "is there anything in it, more than for a man that is seeking holy orders?" [Laughter.]

He had not been installed long before he won the reputation of a mad clergyman, and as a calumny had more lives than a cat, he did not lose his reputation. At last, however, Jonathan Swift did possess what every legitimate son of Ireland should possess—an independent homestead on his own soil. [Tremendous applause.] The Irish person was next described as riding the whirlwind and directing the storm in the political troubles of his country. He was a dictatorial man, Dr. Johnson, and yet as mild as Goldsmith. The description of Swift's apartments and the disorder which generally characterized them elicited much merriment.

He was next held up as the great Irish satirist of his age. In this respect he had preceded Grattan sixty years, and Daniel O'Connell nearly a century.

His very pleasantness only made his society the more attractive. He had pre-eminently the accomplishment of *familiarity*. The opprobrious rubbish which idle gossips and fools had covered his monument was unjust, as, with slight exceptions, the character of the Dean of St. Patrick stood without a blemish.

He was now ready to take up the political course of his hero. Delany once asked the Dean, "Do not the villainies of men sat through your flesh and depress your spirits?" To which the latter replied, calmly: "No." "Why so?" was the reply. "Because," said the Dean, "it is written in the Scriptures, 'free not thyself because of the ungodly;' whereupon Delany had rejoined in a manner wholly unworthy of a true Irishman by saying that he didn't know why the devil he had ever been brought to such a country.

Swift, by his noble daring, soon became the most popular man in Ireland. With all his sternness and severity for battle, he was gifted with a genial and humane nature. He was not a coarse and brutal man, as were sadaciously stated by Thackeray. His charities were quoted to disprove this insinuation. Some of the very measures proposed by him had been distorted by his critics! Biographer into the exact opposite to their real intent. That Swift had possessed some of the severer aspects of character he had already more than admitted. It was a significant fact, however, that he had numbered among his most intimate friends, some of the noblest men of Ireland, and that those who knew him most had loved him most.

He next reviewed the more humorous pages of Swift's life. Having on one occasion made certain sarcastic allusions to a gentleman, he was waited upon soon after by the injured party with a rather threatening air, the latter demanding to know whether Swift was the author of the offensive article, to which he coolly replied: "I have made it an unbending rule of my life never either to own or deny anything that is attributed to me in print!" This reply incensed his inquisitor, who went away threatening that his cohort would not exempt him from due chastisement; upon which the comrades of Swift all felt themselves insulted, and the result was a hearty painshaking of the inquisitor!

Many characteristic incidents in the life of his subject were introduced, and when he closed his picture, at half past nine, his hearers were apparently as deeply intent upon listening to his eloquence as when he commenced.

He came, of course, in a brief and necessarily imperfect manner, to convey but a feeble idea of the lecture, as it was delivered, for it was not only a pregnant with interest in its matter, but had its effect greatly enhanced by the admirable style in which it was given. There is, in Meagher, more than a pleasant pronunciation and accent of Irish patriot, attracted a large and intelligent audience, four-fifths of whom were males, to that locality at the appointed hour. The subject of the lecture was "Dean Swift, in reply to Thackeray," and he had not proceeded far before the warmest sympathy and interest of his audience were evidently enlisted in his theme. The applause at times was almost deafening, while the lecturer's wonderful power to sway an assembly, he awakened the latent love of many of his hearers for the country in whose behalf he has been an exile, and for whose welfare his heart still seemingly beats.

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THE LATEST NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

XXXVITH CONGRESS.—FIRST SESSION.

U. S. CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.

There was no session of the Senate to-day, that body having adjourned over till Monday.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

On motion of Mr. NIBLACK, of Indiana, it was resolved that, till the election of a Speaker, the Clerk of the last House be authorized to exercise the power devolving on the Speaker for preserving order in the galleries and on the floor of the House, for the time being, under the rules of the last House, and that the Sergeant-at-Arms for a like purpose be under the direction of the Clerk.

Mr. BOWMAN, of South Carolina, said the whole country were anxiously looking to the aspect of affairs here, and inquiring why we did not elect a Speaker. The reason was that the majority of the House were unwilling to place in that chair an endorser of the infamous Helper book, and deem themselves justified in realizing his election by all fair and honorable means. He had nothing to say against Mr. Sherman personally, but referred to him politically, and cordially assented to the resolution that neither he nor any other man who endorsed Helper's work was fit for Speaker.

He believed that it was a fatal error when the Missouri Compromise was accepted by the South, for it has only encouraged Northern aggressions against slavery. He referred to Mr. Hickman as a renegade to his party. When he voted for Mr. Douglas's motion to reject the Senate bill for the admission of Kansas all supposed he would finally land on the Republican side. Although he has since claimed to be a Democrat, his vote yesterday for Mr. Sherman settled the question that he is no longer a Democrat. It had been sought to elect a Speaker by the plurality rule, which he believed unconstitutional, for the reason that none but a majority could elect a Speaker. It had been said that there were precedents for its adoption, but the circumstances were different then from what they are now. Mr. Banks had not refused, as had Mr. Sherman, to repudiate the teachings of Helper's book for the abolition of slavery and for insurrection.

In reply to Mr. Hickman, he said the South claimed to have the right to carry slavery into the common Territories and have it protected, like other property, by Territorial law, and that not refusing to afford that protection by positive hostile enactment. The South, while denying the right of Congress or of the Territorial Legislature, to abolish, prohibit, or exclude slavery in the Territories, claim that it is the duty of Congress and the Territorial authorities to protect it while there. He replied to Mr. Nelson, more, he said, he was disposed to be angry, and was not so much so as to cause that President Jackson put down nullification. He also defended South Carolina and her course at that period. That gentleman (Mr. Nelson) had spoken of the Union as more important than the Constitution; but those whom he (Mr. Bonham) represented look to every part of the Constitution as more important than the Union. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Hickman) has spoken of forcing the South back into the Union, should she prefer to retire; but whenever it is found expedient to do so, the Union no longer exists. He said without hesitation, that on the election of Mr. Seward, he (Mr. Bonham) who endorses his claims and holds the sentiments declared by Mr. Seward, call the party by what name you please, he was in favor of immediate disunion, and he thought he spoke the sentiments of his entire State. Now, then, could it be expected that the Southern gentlemen will consent to the election of Mr. Sherman, who comes here reeking with the pollution of Northern sectionalism and Northern interests? The resolution of Mr. Clark, of Missouri, was proper under these circumstances, and he warned gentlemen that they would preserve the institution of slavery or perish in the endeavor. His patriotism began at home, and he was for South Carolina against the world.

Mr. MILLSON made an explanation, denying that he ever said that any man who endorsed Helper's book was unfit to live.

Mr. CLEMENS, of Virginia, wanted the House to proceed to a vote for Speaker, and objected to gentlemen being compelled to sit here for five hours in order to give their brethren an opportunity to vociferate their rhetoric. He gave notice that he shall retire from the hall whenever he was physically disabled from attendance. If he could not get "a pair," his friends would have to do without his vote.

The Clerk stated that having been empowered by the House to suppress disorder both on the floor and in the galleries, he should discharge his duty, but hoped no case would arise compelling him to exercise the authority thus conferred.

Mr. STEMS, of Kentucky, said Brown's foray into Virginia has been followed by a crusade against the rights of the whole South. He would speak plainly, and tell the gentlemen on the other side, that from the very foundation of the Government there has been a diseased public sentiment in the Northern States on the subject of slavery. He spoke of the continued aggressions of the Republican party on the South. The Republicans number more than one hundred men on this floor—men of character and influence, who have sought, on the stump and elsewhere, to direct opinions practically leading to the nullification of the fugitive-slave law, and bring contempt on the Supreme Court, because it has declared that Congress has no power to restrict slavery or exclude it from new Territories. The balance of power in the United States Senate—once deemed a safeguard by the South—has been lost, and the Northern preponderance will be still further increased by the admission of other new States. Nothing is now left between the South and her assailants but the Democratic party and the Constitution of the United States, as expounded by the Supreme Court. The Abolition party in the North having failed to reach slavery in the South by direct legislation, have sought to overthrow it by insurrection—by poisoning the public mind of the North, and by keeping up a constant theft and robbery on that species of property at the South, by scattering incendiary documents throughout the land, and by elevating to the highest public trusts men who proclaim that there is an "irrepressible" conflict between slave and free labor. He was no disunionist, but would ask, Is there to be no limit to these assaults on the South? Were they to bow their necks, and, like conquered provinces be despoiled of their property without redress? If the Union is to be preserved, there must be a cessation of these wrongs on the South. He proceeded to reply to Mr. Hickman's remarks about the South violating its compact of Union, and said that for forty years the South had remonstrated time and again, and have all the time been yielding their constitutional rights. The Constitution was formed by Northern and Southern men. When it was signed the former had the right to sell their slaves in the Southern States, and did so. Southern men had the right to keep their slaves, and purchase those of Northern men, and did so. Northern men took the money they received for their slaves, and invested it in houses, lands, merchandise, and commerce. To this day they have that property and the profits on it, and yet they turn round and denounce the South because they retain the property sold them by the North. At that time the ring of the rain was dearer to their hearts than the clank of the bondsman's chain was oppressive to their consciences. If there be in Hell a burning lake of hissing serpents and fiery dragons torment the damned, a place more fiery than all, it shall be reserved for those Northern fanatics who would seek to scatter firebrands, arrows, and death among brothers and friends, and, with the torch of the incendiary in one hand, and the dagger of the assassin in the other, would invade even the Capitol of the nation, and amid the pillared columns exult in the desolation they had caused. Unless the North ceased to invade the rights of the South, they would be prepared to meet them as the cannon's mouth. For the last forty years they have submitted to these things for the sake of the Union. Although smarting under ten thousand wrongs, there was not a man in his district whose heart would not bleed to-day to hear the death-knell of the Federal Union. They were for the Union with the Constitution. Unless that was preserved the Union was worthless, and worse than worthless. It was time to talk plainly, and he wanted no more dodging the question or subterfuges. He said the North has raised a tempest which it cannot control. It has overleaped the Constitution of the country and the laws of the land. He doubted whether the regrets expressed on the other side for the Harper's Ferry raid were sincere, and predicted that "the promise to the ear would be broken to the hope."

As the representative of a God-fearing, Union-loving, law-abiding people, he entered his solemn protest against the ten thousand wrongs committed on the South. He charged the Republican party as being the cause of these dangers hanging over the country. He no longer was a unionist. For the Union he would peril his life, but if the shock must come, and if the fell calamity of disunion was upon them, he wanted to see his native South stand on the Constitution of his country, and, like one man, stand up in defence of their rights.

The House then proceeded to a vote for Speaker.

Preliminary to taking the vote, the roll of the House was called.

SEVENTH BALLOT.

Sherman	96
Bocock	86
Gilmer	36
Scattering	9
Whole number	227
Necessary to a choice	114

Another vote was anxiously demanded.

Mr. WINSLOW, of North Carolina, suggested an adjournment till Monday.

Mr. GILMER, of North Carolina, withdrew his name as a candidate, and returned thanks to his friends who had complimented him by their votes. He felt, in no less a degree, complimented by the votes of gentlemen with whom he very much disagreed politically. He nominated Mr. Boteler, of Virginia, and thought from the indications, and a corresponding action on the Democratic side, that his nominee could be elected Speaker. [Applause.]

The House then proceeded to the

EIGHTH BALLOT.

Sherman	111
Bocock	83
Boteler	25
Scattering	9
Whole number	228
Necessary to a choice	115

On motion, the House then adjourned.

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS.

A notice was read from the Clerk's desk calling a Democratic caucus to-night, in the hall of the House.

The largely-increased vote for Mr. Gilmer today, came from the anti-Lecompton Democrats and Pennsylvania Republicans elected on the People's ticket. It was intended to test the Democratic members, who had thus the ability to elect a Southern man as Speaker if they wished. Mr. Bocock's 86 votes added to Mr. Gilmer's 36 would have made 122, being eight more than enough to elect. But no Democrat voted for Mr. Gilmer, and he at once withdrew his name.

On the next vote, Mr. Sherman had one vote more than ever before, but still lacked four of an election. The Republican members, to-night, are sanguine of success. They still adhere to Mr. Sherman inflexibly.

THE BALLOTS IN DETAIL.

Mr. Sherman's vote on the first ballot taken today was reduced by some of those who heretofore voted for him going over to Mr. Gilmer, who was supported by the following members:

Messrs. Adams of Kentucky, Anderson of Kentucky, Boteler, Bonligny, Brabson, Briggs, Bristow, Campbell, Davis of Maryland, Etheridge, Hale, Harris of Maryland, Haskin, Hatton, Hill, Junkin, Leach of North Carolina, Malory, Mayes, Millward, Moore, Nelson of Kentucky, Moorhead, Morris of Pennsylvania, Nelson, Nixon, Pennington, Quitles, Robbartz, Scranton, Smith of North Carolina, Stokes, Vance, Webster, and Wood.

Those who voted for Mr. Boteler, after Mr. Gilmer withdrew from the canvass, are—

Messrs. Adams, Anderson of Kentucky, Anderson of Missouri, Bonligny, Brabson, Briggs, Bristow, Dunnigan, Etheridge, Gilmer, Hardemann, Harris of Maryland, Hatton, Hill, Leach of North Carolina, Malory, Maynard, Moore, of Kentucky, Nelson, Quarles, Smith of North Carolina, Stokes, Vance, Webster, and Woodson.

The above votes explain the cause of the difference in the result of the two votes to-day for Messrs. Sherman and Bocock respectively. Each of the above named as had before voted for Mr. Sherman returned to his support after Mr. Gilmer withdrew.

It has been erroneously stated in some of the papers that Mr. Olin, who was absent on Friday last, voted on Wednesday for Mr. Gilmer. He then voted, as before, for Mr. Sherman. It was doubtless a typographical error, as it is right in other papers.

Mr. Vallandigham was misunderstood yesterday by the reporter. He said nothing about slavery in the Territories.

THE LAST ACT OF THE HARPER'S FERRY TRAGEDY.

EXECUTIONS AT CHARLESTOWN YESTERDAY.

FULL PARTICULARS.

DARING ATTEMPT OF COOK AND COPPIE TO ESCAPE.

AN EXCITING TIME.

THE TOWN AGAIN AT FEVER-HEAT.

THE PENALTY AT LAST PAID.

Copeland and Green Hung in the Morning, and Cook and Coppie in the Afternoon.

Firmness of the Condemned on the Scaffold.

CHARLESTOWN, Dec. 16.—We have had an exciting time during the past twenty-four hours, which has just closed with the execution of the four prisoners.

In order to give a correct understanding of what has transpired, we furnish a succinct narrative of the events since yesterday morning.

ARRIVAL OF STRANGERS, Etc.

Throughout the day, yesterday, there was a great influx of strangers and citizens of the country, who were flocking in to witness the last act of the Harper's Ferry tragedy. The feeling seems that now the business is to be finished up at the outposts, as was the case on the day of John Brown's execution.

The weather which early in the morning darkened the horizon were soon dispersed, and the sun came out in unusual brilliancy and beauty for a December morning.

As the hours advanced, groups were seen on all the street corners, discussing the all-absorbing topic of the approaching execution. The afternoon trains of cars from Winchester and Harper's Ferry brought a large number of persons, including a detachment of newspaper reporters from the Northern cities.

The rifle-pits erected at the railway depot, on the arrival of a train, was not so stringent as on the occasion of the execution of Brown, and but little difficulty was experienced in getting in town, although a difficulty was not so light in obtaining accommodations after effecting an entrance.

A GRAND DRESS PARADE.

Shortly after the arrival of the train in the afternoon, a grand military parade of the Virginia companies in attendance took place.

The ground selected for the parade was the immense field on which Brown was executed, and on which the gallows for the execution of the remaining prisoners was being erected. The companies were formed into four battalions, the whole body being under the command of Col. Weisenberger, of the 128th Regiment; Lieut. Ismel Green, of the United States marines, acting as adjutant.

The companies perfected their evolutions with great skill, and were reviewed by General Taliaferro, who was on the ground in full dress, and mounted on a spirited charger. Everything conspired to make the occasion a brilliant one. The bright bayonets and gay uniforms of the soldiers combined to perfect a picture.

A very large crowd of spectators was in attendance, and among the ladies there was a large number who had occupied their handsome equipages to the seat of the line.

During the time of the parade a company of cavalry entered the town. They came from Middleburg, Loudoun county, and were under the command of Captain Carter.

THE PRISONERS YESTERDAY.

The prisoners were visited yesterday afternoon by the Rev. Messrs. Watson, Button, and North, of the Presbyterian, and Messrs. Jones and Jacobs, of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The services held in the cells were of an interesting and solemn character, and were participated in by all the condemned; though it is now evident, from subsequent events, that Cook and Coppie, at least, were "in the mosum," as their minds must have been fixed on the hopes of life and liberty, notwithstanding they at the same time they were making outward protestations of resignation. They all gave an unqualified assent to the correctness of religious truth, and also to the hope of salvation in the world to come. Cook and Coppie were the loudest in their professions of a change of heart, and in the hope of divine forgiveness. They freely admitted their guilt, and acknowledged their sentence to be just, and that, if the law had not been treated with the utmost kindness by all, though they admitted that some of the witnesses should be hanged in their testimony.

The ministers imagined that they had discovered a decided and favorable change in the condition of Cook's mind since his interview with his sisters. Up to that time his coldness and delusive hope were strong, proceeding from a lack of feeling; but on leaving him yesterday afternoon they felt impressed that he did not want to seek forgiveness in his protestations of religious convictions and hopes of forgiveness—all of which was undoubtedly intended by deceitful cunning as a means of escape.

Cook has been visited throughout his imprisonment by the Rev. N. Green North, at the request of the prisoner, as also of Governor Wise and Willard.

Rev. Mr. North was reassigned, at an interview between Coppie and Mr. Butler, a Quaker gentleman from Ohio, who had visited the prisoner. He describes Harper's Ferry as an affecting one, and speaks highly of Mr. Butler's Christian deportment and advice to the prisoner. Mr. Butler was also with Cook early this morning, and left him. An uncle of Coppie of the same name, from Ohio—his father's brother—also visited him yesterday, and gave his last farewell of him for an hour. He seemed in much distress at the sad fate which awaits his relative.

The prisoners were allowed to see their friends and the military, up to seven o'clock last evening. All approaches to the prisoners were closely guarded by the sentinels, and nothing was thought of but the approaching execution, whilst the overflowing throng of strangers were continual guests for the town.

The bar-rooms were all crowded with people discussing the resignation of the prisoners, but their fate was firmly had this conviction settled in the public mind, that the military duty was imperative here, and the finale of the tragedy was regarded as at last approached.

The supper table at the Carter House was crowded at half-past six o'clock, and was soon cleared up quietly and quietly up to 8 o'clock, when an alarm was given, and the whole town became thronged with humanity.

THE ATTEMPTED ESCAPE.

At quarter past eight o'clock last evening the whole town was thrown into confusion by the sound of a rifle, under the jail walls, followed by the cry of a shot from the vicinity of the guard-house, in close proximity to the jail.

The military were called to arms, and the excitement was intense—bordering almost on panic, such as occurred during our ever-memorable era of military occupation.

In a few minutes the streets and avenues of the town were thronged with people, all anxious to learn the difficulty that the cause of all this turmoil could be ascertained.

Rumors of every description were afloat, and it was at one time thought that the prisoners had overpowered their guards and made their escape, and that an attack had been made on the jail by parties attempting to release the prisoners.

It was dangerous for a citizen to go out to ascertain the cause of the alarm, as a detachment of the most extensive character floated in, to be contradicted the next moment by citizens who had been driven in from the streets.

The sentinel stationed near the jail reported that at a quarter past eight o'clock a person came up near the jail wall whom he challenged and receiving no answer, fired at him. The head of another man was also seen over the wall, and he was challenged and fired at, but he had been fired at. The man on the top of the wall was then challenged to persist and the consequence, in making an attempt to jump down when the sentinel declared his intention of impeding him on his beyond. He was returned into the jail yard with the prisoner, both have ensnared up without further resistance. Cook had forward, and Coppie followed. The latter had fallen and threatened the guard he would have made his escape.

The noise occasioned by the firing was heard in the town of the jail wall, and could be have reached them, with his thorough knowledge of the mountains, his escape would have been difficult, especially if the force of the military could have followed him during the night. The alarm was soon quelled, and the town resumed its gloom, and at night, when their bed-clothing muffled the sounds of a saw, which they had made out of a knife, in cutting the irons from their ankles, and shackles, so that they could pry them off at any moment, if they should have their other means failed. They had also made a sort of chisel out of an old bedstead, with which they had taken every opportunity would offer, in removing the plaster from their wall, and then brick-girder brick, until a space sufficient for them to pass through was made, when they effected their escape to the outer brick.

The space in the wall on which they operated was in the rear of the beds on which they slept, and the beds being pushed against the wall completely hid their work from view. The bricks they took out they pulverized in the drum of a stove, and the dirt and plaster removed to the cellar of the building, where it was concealed in clothing. They acknowledged that they had been at work a whole week in making the aperture in the wall. They had reached the first floor, and were within but a more than five feet above the pavement of the yard, and when fired at the sentinel the distance to the yard was quite easy. Here, however, was a smooth brick wall, about fifteen feet high, to scale. This difficulty was, however, soon overcome, by the aid of timbers of the scaffold on which Captain Brown was hung, which they had taken from the place of execution in the succeeding day. They placed these against the wall, and soon succeeded in reaching the top, from which they could have leaped down on the other side, but not the vigilance of the sentinel on duty so quickly as alleged for the purpose.

They were visited in the jail yard by Gen. Taliaferro, and a number of officers of the guard, shortly after the moment the alarm was given. Gen. Taliaferro immediately telegraphed to Gov. Wise, informing him of the attempt, and received in reply a dispatch from the Governor that the military should immediately take possession of the interior of the jail and guard the prisoners until they were executed.

Sheriff Campbell and Captain Avis are, of course, much censured for great negligence in this affair, and especially as they had received all intelligence of the intended attempt to escape from the prisoners.

The prisoners were shrewd and cunning fellows, and they were undoubtedly without any accomplices in their undertaking, as they made "every man their friend," so as to also faithful that they might be suspected of having knowledge of the scheme. Cook was confident of success, that if the prisoners had waited until midnight or later they might have succeeded in their scheme, and, at present, they were fearful of being watched during the night, or desired to have as much darkness as possible to carry a certain distance before daylight would allow of a general pursuit.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE EXECUTION.

At day break this morning the report of a gun was sounded from the various barracks, announcing the dawn of the day of execution, and soon the whole community was astir.

The anxiety to ascertain a true version of the exciting events of last night passed the greater part of the morning off with people at an early hour. The military, most of whom had been on duty all night, or sleeping on their arms, formed in line at the scene of the tragedy, which was anticipated at the time of the parade yesterday.

The weather, however, was beautiful and beautiful, and much milder than for several days preceding.

At 9 o'clock the entire military force in attendance was formed on the hill, right, as the officers and men had prepared themselves at headquarters for duty. The companies detailed for field duty around the gallows immediately took up the line of march, and at half past 9 o'clock were in the positions assigned them on the field. The companies detailed for escort duty took up their positions in front of the jail, awaiting orders.

EX-GOVERNOR OF COPELAND AND GREEN.

At half past 10 o'clock the prisoners were marched, numbering twenty-five officers, having given orders to prepare the two more prisoners, Shields Green and John Copeland, for execution, took their departure, to join the main body of troops on the field. The military then formed a hollow square around the gallows, upon which an open wagon, containing the coffins of the prisoners, drew up in front, with a carriage to convey Sheriff Campbell and his deputies. The ground, filled with strangers was very great—at least five times as numerous as on the occasion of Brown's execution—most of whom were already on the field, whilst others waited to see the procession pass.

The religious ceremonies in the cell were very impressive, and were conducted by the Rev. Mr. North, of the Presbyterian, and the Rev. Mr. Severt, Wards of the M. E. Church. At a quarter before 11 o'clock, the prisoners, accompanied by Sheriff Campbell and the Rev. Mr. North, appeared at the jail door, and with their arms pinioned moved slowly towards the vehicle in waiting for them. They seemed downcast, and were some of that calm, tearless spirit evinced by Brown under similar circumstances. They were helped into the wagon, and took seats on the coffins without scarcely looking to the right or left. The escort now commenced to move, the wagon being closely flanked on either side by a company of riflemen, marching in double file and lock step.

At seven minutes before 11 o'clock the procession entered the field occupied by the military, and the prisoners cast a shuddering glance towards the gallows erected on the rising ground in its centre. In two minutes more the wagon stopped at the foot of the gallows, and whilst the prisoners were alighting, the companies forming the escort moved off to the position assigned them on the field.

The prisoners mounted the scaffold with a firm step, and were immediately joined by Sheriff Campbell. After a brief prayer by one of the clergymen, the caps were drawn over their heads, and the ropes adjusted around their necks. During this few moments they thus stood, Copeland remained quiet, but Green was engaged in earnest prayer up to the moment the trap was drawn, and they were launched into eternity. Green died very easy, his neck being broken by the fall, and the motion of his body was very slight. Copeland seemed to suffer very much, and his body writhed in violent contortions for several minutes. They were accompanied on the gallows by the Rev. Messrs. Waugh, North, and Lehr, to whom they bid an affectionate farewell, and expressed the hope of meeting them in Heaven.

The bodies, after being cut down, were placed in poplar coffins, and carried back to the jail. They will be interred to-morrow, on the spot where the gallows stands, though there is a party of medical students here from Winchester who will, doubtless, not allow them to remain there long.

EXECUTION OF COOK AND COPPIE.

The bodies of the two negro prisoners having been brought back to the jail at about a quarter