The Press

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1859.

FIRST PAGE.—Personal and Political; Aunts Trevor's Thoughts, No. 1; Letter from Washington; Letter from New York. FOURTH PAGE.—Miscellaneous Items; The Courts; Marine Intelligence.

Railway Capital.

We learn from a Parliamentary Return just received from England, that the whole amount of capital and loans authorized to be invested in railways previous to the last day of 1858, was £392,682,755. All this vast sum has been raised, and most of it expended, since 1822—a comparatively short period, of thirty years. Some of our readers may better understand this sum total when they discover that it amounts to $1,963,413,775. As much as £181,687,781 (equal to $909,188,905) of the capital was not receiving, nor entitled to receive, any preferential dividend or interest. The total dividends on the share capital amounted to £6,101,099, (or $30,805,495,) but preferential dividend or interest was payable, to the amount of £829,331, (or $4,146,655,) upon stock for £61,854,647, or $309,272,735. The debts of British railways, at the close of 1858, amounted to £81,683,179, (or $408,415,895,) and the interest payable thereon is £3,591,148, (or $17,955,740.) The whole amount which the railway companies had actually raised, to the end of 1858, by shares or loans, was £325,375,507, but there remained £67,307,248 which they have power to raise, either by existing or new shares, or by loans—the whole, received and receivable, amounting to £325,375,507, or $1,968,413,765, of capital invested in British railways, from 1828 to 1858, both years inclusive. The total amount expended on railway works and rolling stock during these thirty years, and out of this capital, was £287,800,208, or in American money $1,439,001,040. Add to this the money which the various companies can yet raise, and which they will one day call for, and the difference between the sum expended on railways and that which may be raised amounts, in round numbers, to over thirty-five millions of pounds sterling, or $175,000,000, all of which has been wasted in parliament and law-costs of obtaining the statutes organizing the different companies which have constructed all the British railways. This amount seems enormous. So it is—but it has been so expended. There are actually opened and at work, in Great Britain and Ireland, at present, 9,266 miles of railway. The traffic receipts, from passengers and merchandise, average £490,000 per week, or $2,450,000, and this makes a total of railway receipts, in the year, of £25,480,000, or, in American money, $127,400,000.

The gross receipts of the eight railways which have their termini in London are over £200,000, or $1,000,000, per week.

The most extensive of the British railways are—

	Miles.
London and Northwestern, *including Chester*, and Holyhead, and Lancaster, and Carlisle	910
North Eastern, Bedale, and Leyburn	740
Midland, including Northwestern	614
Eastern Counties, Norfolk, and E. Union	490
Great Western	465
Lancashire and Yorkshire, (including E. Lancashire)	395
London and Southwestern	389
Southeastern	306
Great Northern	268
North Staffordshire	226
Great Southern and Western (Ireland)	226
London, Brighton, and South Coast	198
Caledonian	198
Glasgow and Southwestern	183
Midland Counties	174
Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincoln	173
South Wales	171
North British	154

Besides English money invested in British Railways, a great deal of Railway stock in railways all over the world is in English hands.

We should be indebted to any well-informed correspondent who, imitating our brevity in these details, would give us information of the same description and accuracy about Railways in the United States.

The Foreign Slave Trade.

The October number of the *Southern Presbyterian Review*, published in Columbia, South Carolina, contains an able article written by a native of that State, Rev. JOHN LEIGHTON WILSON, D. D., a zealous missionary in Western Africa for upwards of twenty years, illustrative of the enormities of the foreign slave trade, and warmly appealing to the citizens of the South to discountenance all attempts to revive it. He quotes statements from a number of travellers in Africa and missionaries, showing that it is inevitably attended with shocking barbarities and a fearful destruction of human life, and concludes as follows:

"Any amount of similar testimony might be brought together if it were necessary. It is not in the capture of slaves alone, however, that these cruelties are practiced. Equally as great barbarous is inflicted on their journey to the sea-coast, during their detention there, and on what is called the middle passage, which, in fact, is but another term for the grossest cruelties ever practised upon any portion of the human race. We might speak of the principal highways to the sea-coast as strewed with human bones, of human limbs worn to the bone with iron fetters, of hundreds of these human beings dying to death in the barracoons, because no vessel came to take them away at the appointed time; or of whole cargoes suffocated to death in the hold of the ship by the attempt to avoid detection; but we refrain from these painful details.

"After a most careful examination of this whole subject, extending our inquiries over a period of more than a hundred years, and carefully weighing the statements of more than fifty different authors, we have come to the deliberate conclusion that, in the seizure of slaves in the march to the sea-coast, during their detention there, and on the middle passage, *the destruction of life must be more than one hundred and fifty per cent, upon those safely landed in America*—so that, to get one hundred slaves for practical purposes, at least one hundred and fifty lives must be sacrificed! Let all this be taken into account. In order to procure 100,000 laborers for the cotton and sugar fields of the South, we must go into the business with the full understanding that it cannot be done except by sacrificing the lives of at least 150,000 human beings! To say nothing of the wide-spread desolation which it must occasion in other respects in Africa. Is the South prepared for this? Will she forego her honor, her sense of justice, and her pride, so far as to associate herself with the vilest men that ever disgraced the annals of humanity, and once more apply the torch of discord and war for the purpose of obtaining slaves? Unless this civilization be promoted in no other way than by trampling out the last spark of life from the continent of Africa! Had the Greator no other object in forming this great continent, and filling it with inhabitants, than it should become the theatre for the display of the worst passions of the rest of the world?

"If any one would have a true picture of the cruel and desolating results that follow in the train of the slave trade, especially in those portions of the country we have under more special review at the present moment, let him peruse the pages of Mary Kingsley with care and patience; note down the almost innumerable sites of deserted towns and cities through which he passed; the diminished population of the country, compared with what it was thirty years ago when visited by Denham; and let him observe, above all, the perpetual strife and exterminating wars going on in what would otherwise be one of the most peaceful and prosperous portions of that whole continent. Nor has this traffic been less disastrous to the great Pagan kingdoms nearer the sea-coast. Benin and Congo have become completely disorganized, and neither, at the present day, can put up a plausible claim to a distinctive nationality. They retain now nothing but the name of their former greatness. Yoruba would have reached the same condition, if it had not been for the timely change in the tide of affairs, consequent upon the return of so many of her children from Sierra Leone, with the blessings of civilization and Christianity in their hands. Dahomy was once proud of her military prowess and could count her population by hundreds of thousands, but is now rapidly sinking to the condition of mere lawless banditti. Ashanti, with her 2,000,000 of inhabitants, would, long ere this, have reached the same condition of anarchy and depopulation, if her slave trade had not been arrested by the operations of the British forts along the Gold Coast.

"We do not ascribe all this disorder and deterioration to the exclusive influence of the slave trade. Africa is essentially a heathen country, and heathenism everywhere combines in itself almost every element of moral and social evil. But the slave trade has quickened and given intensity to all these elements of discord, and has thus made the African race one of the most unhappy and miserable people on the face of the earth."

Market Street.

A correspondent suggests that Market street, relieved from the sheds which so long have obstructed it, should receive the high-sounding title of *Penn Avenue*. He thinks the idea a happy one—that the new name would sound well—and that it would be respectful to the founder of the city. But, as far as that goes, the compliment has already been paid, upon a very extended scale, inasmuch as the whole State of Pennsylvania bears his name. For our own part, we like to cling by old landmarks and old names. Though the sheds be removed, the locality continues to be a great business-place, where some of our wealthiest merchants congregate, and we sincerely hope that what has been Market street from the commencement of the city, will continue so to be, in fact and in name.

ROTHER PRESENTS.—Pianos, of Haven, Bacon, & Co.; Ballet, Davis, & Co., and others. *Large reduction* till Christmas, for special reasons. J. M. Gould, Seventh and Chestnut streets.

Sons of Malta Charity Ball.

On this day week, (Wednesday, December 28th,) the Sons of Malta give their Second Annual Ball. It comes off at the Academy of Music, under the superintendence of a highly respectable executive committee, who will take care that it shall even surpass last year's ball, which was a decided success. In strict fact, we believe this festival, the results of which will gladden the hearts by relieving the wants of many distressed families and individuals. *Is given by the Supreme Grand Council of the Sons of Malta of Eastern Pennsylvania. The chef d'orchestre* for the music of the promenaders will be Mons. Simon Hassler, and the opening piece will be a march, from Meyerbeer, for drille orchestra, arranged for this occasion by M. Hassler. The other music will be taken from the works of Mozart, Weber, Flotow, Verdi, Adam, Meyerbeer, Donizetti, Auber, and others of scarcely less eminence. Mons. Mark Hassler will be *chef d'orchestre* to the dancers. Quadrilles, polkas, schottisches, galops, mazourkas, and so on, will be the order of the evening, and two novelties, we have to whisper to our fair friends, will be introduced. One is the Sons of Malta Lancliers, composed expressly for this occasion by Mark Hassler, and the other the Minne-ha-ha Galop, also composed for this occasion by Harry Sanderson, the eminent pianist. As we have already stated, the profits of this ball will be devoted to the sacred purposes of charity—which is the basis of the Maltese institution.

Page's Venus.

William Page, an American artist, painted a full-length of that Venus described by Virgil as guiding Æneas, (her son by Anchises,) with his wandering Trojans, to the shore of Latium. In Paris and in London, this truly great painting, in which the beauty of Venetian art, or rather of Titian's, art is reproduced, met with the enthusiastic homage of critics and of the public. In New York and Boston, where some 50,000 ladies and gentlemen have lately seen this picture, admiration has not been less warm. It has been brought to this city, where it will be publicly exhibited to-day, and on succeeding days. We have had a view of it, in the gallery over Messrs. Chicker ing's piano-forte store, 807 Chestnut street, and may say, with Byron,

"We gaze and turn away, delirious, drunk,
With such excess of beauty."

Venus, life size, stands upon a shell, which floats upon the waters, gently propelled by a pair of doves, while a couple of Cupids are pushing it on, one at each side. You see, by the gentle sway of Aphrodite's figure, that the shell is receiving a slight propulsion. She stands, finely balanced, upon one foot—the other is ready to take the advance step the moment that land is reached. The left arm points out the place which she desires to reach, the right, inclined downwards, collects her golden tresses, which the breeze has blown across her back. Action, but not exactly motion, is indicated; and therefore the figure is life-like, and not statuesque. The hair, complexion, features, and rich coloring are Titianesque. A figure is wholly undraped, but it has not even a sensuous expression, though it glows with life and loveliness. We this hastily notice this painting now. At another time we shall endeavor to state what its peculiar beauties and characteristics are.

Literature.

We have been tempted, more than once, when writing about the beautiful gift-book, "A Gallery of Distinguished English and American Poets," so judiciously edited by Professor Henry Coppée, and published by E. H. Butler & Co., to extract the poem with which the collection, so richly illustrated by the best artists, is introduced. Here it is:

"Deep in the inner chamber of the breast
The song-temple, fane of holiest rest,
List to the varied notes, low soft, yet strong,
As Memory's cloistered aisles the sounds prolong.
Now 'tis Earth's lullaby, so sweet and mild,
That the nursing earth becomes her child.
Her notes of Faith, how full of hope and Heaven,
Piercing within "the burning of the Seven."
Her songs of joy, the purest sounds of mirth
That sad laughing chorus of Earth.
Her very test-drops pelter touching airs;
Or pour such *miseres* on our fears,
That, like a trump, to man of noble mould,
They nerve the resoling arm ere half the tale be told.
—H. C."

E. H. Butler & Co. have just published Macaulay's Essays of Ancient Rome, and other Ballads, with portrait and numerous illustrations on wood. This is an elegant "blue and gold" edition, handsome and low-priced.

Marshall Testimonial Benefit.

The friends of Mr. E. A. Marshall, formerly lessee of Walnut-street Theatre, will be glad to learn that his Testimonial Benefit, which came off last night, was a most complete success. The thanks are due to the liberality of Messrs. Ullmer and Sirakosch and who gave the Academy of Music, with their full orchestra, besides permitting Mesdames Sirakosch and Gassaniga to sing a duet from the opera of "Saffo;"—to the generous manner in which Mr. *and Mrs. Barney Williams gave their services*—actually surrendering a night's receipts from their current arrangement, and to the disinterested arrangement by which Mrs. Garretson, lessee of the Walnut-street Theatre, closed her own establishment, and allowed her company to perform in the three pieces represented, besides permitting her excellent dancers to "trip it on the light fantastic toe"—a quotation so unhackneied that we are sure the gentle public will thank us for its extraordinary novelty.

On such an occasion, custom, as well as good taste, dictates that we should not be critical. We shall only say, therefore, that Mrs. Williams' Yankee "help" was exceedingly amusing in its exaggeration, and the audience, which very large, were compelled to laugh at it; that Barney, who is "a broth of a boy," made *his* Irishman very funny also, and that the new farce, "Sarah's Young Man," happily wound up the fun. The Italian duet from "Saffo" was applauded; ditto the dancing. In short, everything went off well.

This has been one of the best managed complimentary benefits that ever came off in this city. It was got up in a hurry, but the consummate execution showed no signs of haste. The Committee who took it in charge did their work without fuss, like men of business as they are. The pecuniary results must be highly satisfactory to the *beneficiaris*.

Another result must be the conviction, to all who were present last night, that the Academy of Music, so well adapted for singing, is not, by any means, the place to hear the spoken voice. Every two words out of five, uttered last night, were nearly inaudible beyond close vicinity to the stage.

MR. BUCHANAN'S VIEWS IN 1856 IN REGARD TO KANSAS.—The West Chester *Republican* of the 20th inst. contains a card from Daniel Nields, in which he says:

"In the latter part of the summer of 1856, Mr. N. Strickland, Mr. George W. Pearce, and Mr. William A. Moore, called on me to engage my services to speak in the two counties of Chester and Delaware, stating that as I had been an old-line Whig, and belonged to the working classes, I could be of much service to the cause, and that I could thereby assist in securing the election of Mr. Buchanan. I stated to them that I was perfectly willing to advocate the principles of the Cincinnati platform, as to my mind it was the essence of political wisdom, and was pleased to believe Mr. Buchanan stood square upon it. But as regards Kansas, which was then the leading question before the people of Pennsylvania, I should like to know what Mr. Buchanan's private views were, and what would be his policy in the administration of its affairs, in the event of his election; for I had come to the conclusion that the people of Kansas had been greatly wronged, and I believed they would come in as a free State if they had fair play, and that I would be unwilling to go before the people and advocate his election unless I was satisfied he would do them justice.

"Mr. Strickland and Mr. Pearce informed me that they, or other persons, had just returned from a visit to Wheatland, where they had a long talk with Mr. Buchanan on that very subject, and that his private opinions perfectly agreed with what I had stated in regard to Kansas, and it decided I would use all his personal influence, as well as the constitutional powers of the Government, to bring Kansas in as a free State, but that he did not wish to compromise his interest in the South, by having his private sentiments made public.

"I then gave my consent to canvass the counties, being satisfied that they spoke by authority, and that Mr. Buchanan would faithfully keep his public and private pledges. I leave it for the public to judge whether Mr. Hickman or his villifiers are in the way of truth."

RETIREMENT FROM OFFICE.—We learn, from a Reading paper, that Mr. Frederick R. Fritz, Route Agent on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, a post-office appointment, has resigned that responsible situation, which he has held for over two years, and will be succeeded by Mr. P. S. Higgins, of Reading, who enters into the discharge of his new duties with the new year. Mr. Fritz, who has won golden opinions by his probity and courtesy, was formerly in mercantile business, and now returns to his old pursuits. He has obtained an eligible situation, in the highly respectable house of M. L. Hallowell & Co., importers and jobbers of silks and fancy goods, 333 Market street, and we congratulate that firm on having acquired the services of an active and able gentleman, who is eminently trustworthy and industrious.

AUCTION NOTICE.—B. Scott, Jr., auctioneer, 431 Chestnut street, will sell this morning, commencing at 10 o'clock, a valuable assortment of rich rosewood, collars, sofa, bands, flounching, honiton and thread-lace collars and sets, hand-made black lace veils, bonnet and trimming ribbons, flowers, feathers, bonnet materials, bonnets, jewelry, 150 lots Germantown fancy knit goods, &c.

SALE OF ELEGANT FANCY GOODS.—This morning, at ten o'clock, at the auction store No. 914 Chestnut street, will be sold the stock of a retail store, comprising elegant goods suitable for holiday presents. T. Birch & Son, auctioneers.

STOCK OF CABINET FURNITURE.—This morning, at ten o'clock, at No. 236 North Second street, will be sold the stock of a cabinet-maker declining business.

EXHIBITION OF OIL PAINTINGS.—There is now arranged, at the sales-room of B. Scott, Jr., auctioneer, 431 Chestnut street, a valuable collection of oil paintings, embracing landscapes, marine views, coast scenes, exteriors, interiors, figure pieces, &c., together with copies of celebrated pictures. The whole collection will be sold on Thursday morning next, at 10½ o'clock.

Letter from Washington.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.

The action in the Senate caucus relative to Gen. Bowman has been of an exciting character. A. G. Brown, of Mississippi, a man of earnestness, and one who sticks by the truth of his convictions, opposed General Bowman on the ground that while Superintendent of Public Printing he received money from that printing; that he was interested in that which he was placed to superintend, and made his office a means of "turning an honest penny" out of the printer. These charges were vehemently denied by his friends, when his receipts for money received from Cornelius Wendell were produced amid some consternation. It was then stated that he was only an agent for other parties—the *Pennsylvanian*, for instance—and received their share of the plunder, giving the proper receipts therefor. On either horn of the dilemma, whether as principal or agent in the matter, General Bowman's position is one not likely to advance his interests or the character of the Administration, with whose cognizance and approbation he was acting.

After the action of the Democratic caucus on Friday night, I was somewhat astonished at the move made yesterday afternoon, by Mr. Bocock. The step was taken, I am aware, after consultation with his most intimate and trusted friends, and the managers of the Administration side of the House, yet I do not think it will result in anything upon which they can congratulate themselves. Mr. Bocock received as large a vote as can be given to any one of his party; probably a larger vote than any other can receive.

I doubt if any combination is possible which will increase the chances of any of his friends, or by which they will even win partial power in the organization.

Mr. Bocock's actions emanated from a high-toned desire to give his party every possible advantage towards success, modestly ignoring, what would seem to be the fact, that under his banner that best possible advantage was attained. Anxious that every effort should be made to test the strength of his party, Mr. Bocock probably felt that a combination could be made on any other man, it would be enough for him to have been thus far so faithfully followed by his party.

His withdrawal evidently was not relished by the majority of the Administration side, and many persistently continue, and will continue, to vote for him. The little speech in which he announced his intentions to the House was exceedingly well put; spirited in feeling, and dignified in phraseology.

On the twelfth ballot twenty-five candidates shared the honor of opposing Mr. Sherman, whose friends voted in a solid body. On the thirteenth ballot some twenty candidates divided suffrages of the minority; Boteler and Barksdale receiving the largest number of votes. The former polled thirty-one, a number of Democrats, Leake and Pryor for instance, going for him, and the latter twenty, all the ultras—Lamar, Curry, Keitt, Gartrell, Crawford, and McRae—voting for him. Davis, of Indiana, and Bocock, each received thirteen votes. Adams leading off for the former, Barr and Clark, of New York, following, and the Ohio delegation, Cox, Martin, Pendleton, Vallandigham, and others, bringing their strength to "The West."

Mr. William S. Holman, of Indiana, had the floor this morning, and spoke for some time in opposition to the Republicans. It was the honorable gentleman's maiden effort, and was a respectable performance. One of its chief points was a complimentary notice of Mr. Buchanan's Democracy for the past thirty years.

Considerable time was taken up in a discussion relative to the pairing of gentlemen who were unable to be present. It was chiefly on the case of Mr. Landrum, of Louisiana, and was chiefly participated in by his colleagues, Messrs. Miles Taylor and Thomas G. Davidson, and by Mr. Grow on the other side.

Mr. John Cochrane, of New York, followed. He was listened to with attention, while he attempted to fasten on the Republican party the doctrines of the Helper book. Mr. Cochrane is one of those gentlemen who, having declined to make speeches, are not above studying the art of speech-making. It is directly evident that he has a laudable ambition to model what he has to say on the most approved style. His words are well, if not elegantly chosen, and his sentences cut with careful precision. His manner is tiresome, at first, from a similarity in tone to a preacher; but by the time he is out of the exordium, he has sufficiently forgotten himself to think closely of the subject; and consequently his manner becomes less meretricious, and more honestly earnest. Some of his rhetorical illustrations were carefully elaborated, and their artistic finish was not altogether lost upon even so inartistic a body as the gentlemen he was addressing.

As to the matter of the speaker, it was a strong sympathy, of course, with the Administration party, of which Mr. Cochrane is so prominent and distinguished a member. We of the North, he said, deprecate secession views, but he implored the South to remember that the North would protect the South, if endangered. A kind of human political encyclopædia close by says this reminds him of a declaration made by Mr. Cochrane while advocating the claims of Martin Van Buren against those of General Cass, at Cleveland, in 1848: "I tell these men (the 'Southern secessionists) that we of the North will surround the South with an atmosphere of freedom which they shall breathe or die!" JOHN BUCHANAN.

ENGLISH PICTORIAL JOURNALS.—Callender and Co have sent us the *Illustrated London News of December 3d*, and the *Illustrated News of the World*, of same date. In the former, the leading attraction is a fine two-page wood cut, in which are figured forth various scenes from Schiller's Song of the Bell, taken from an engraving published at Leipsic. The latter has several good portraits, and a supplement portrait, on steel, of Madame Anna Bishop, the *prima donna*. These publications make the pictorial history of the day.

EVANS'S ALMANAC FOR 1860.—Our enterprising neighbor, Mr. G. G. Evans, of the Gift Book Store, has published an Almanac which, besides a great deal relating to his own business, contains a calendar and the usual astronomical and other information which form the staple contents of Almanacs. Every one is likely to obtain this publication, as it is given away!

PURSER CRAPTS, of the steamship State of Georgia, has our thanks for files of Savannah papers.

Letter from New York.

THE UNION MEETING AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC—COOPER'S SHOP IN WILLIAMSBURGH: NO CHURCH OPEN FOR HIS FUNERAL SERVICES—THE JEWS: CONVERSION OF A PRESBYTERIAN LADY TO JUDAISM—INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND—OFFICIAL VOTE FOR MAYOR—THE BOURGICAULTS! GEO. JORDAN.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.

I take for granted that your last evening's telegraphic despatches alluded, at some length, to the great meeting held in the Academy of Music, which was perhaps the largest assemblage ever witnessed in New York, if not in the Union, and embraced speakers of all varieties in politics and religion. An hour before the doors were opened, not less than five thousand people had assembled in Irving place, where they stood patiently stood awaiting the opening of the Academy doors. In less than thirty minutes after the doors were opened every seat and standing place in the building was filled. The speeches by Gen. Dix, Charles O'Conor, the Rev. Dr. Bethune, *Prof.* O. M. Mitchell, ex-Governor Hunt, James S. Thayer, and others, were on the whole patriotic and to the point. The only drawback was the introduction of speakers of a class of persons at the meetings held outside, to manufacture a little political capital. The letters of ex-Presidents Van Buren and Fillmore were listened to with profound attention, and coming from men so opposed in general politics, exercised a happy influence on the meeting. It was in all respects an imposing demonstration, and cannot fail to allay much of the irritation prevalent on the question now agitating the country.

A fair indication of the state of public sentiment in Williamsburgh on the Osswatomie question, may be found in the fact that the relatives of Cook, whose body reached there on Saturday, had not been able, up to last evening, to obtain the use of any church in which to hold the funeral ceremonies. One of the Dutch Reformed Churches was tendered, out of sympathy for Mrs Cook, but on learning that it was contemplated to make something of a spectacle of it," and that, in addition to the customary *religious services*, speeches and addresses would be delivered by those whose policy it was to turn the execution to partisan account, the trustees felt it incumbent upon them to refuse the use of the church. Moreover, the trustees, while sympathizing with the family of the deceased, took occasion to let it be publicly understood, that the congregation was conservative in all matters pertaining to the slavery question and totally opposed to the acts which brought old Brown and his o nfederates to the scaffold.

Who shall say that the Jews are illiberal? On Saturday last, at the Greene-street Synagogue, over three thousand dollars were subscribed to aid in relieving their suffering brethren at Gibraltar. The Jews, like the Quakers, take care of their poor. An Israelite or a broad-brim is never seen in the poorhouse. At the annual meeting of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, held last winter, I remember that about ten thousand dollars were contributed, at the dinner table, to the fund for the relief of their sick and needy.

Talking of Jews, a very unusual circumstance took place at the synagogue in Twelfth street, last Saturday morning, no less, namely, than the renunciation of the Christian faith by a lady who had been brought up after the strictest rules of Presbyterianism, and her conversion to Judaism. The lady's name is Mrs. Silbermann. She has been married some time to an Israelite, and, from association and investigation, expressed a desire to be ranked amongst the daughters of Israel. Her desire was not encouraged at first, it being against the principles of Judaism to make proselytes; but the scruples of Rabbi Adler were at length removed, and after the usual morning service on Saturday he interrogated her as to whether she was fully prepared to enter the Church of Moses, and whether her motives were pure and unselfish? Having answered affirmatively, the Holy Ark was opened, and supported by her husband, she stood in front of it and pronounced the confession. She then solemnly promised to uphold the Jewish religion until death, and pronounced the Hebrew *Schmaheis*, and the English version: "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is One." The ceremony was impressively conducted, the congregation, as well as the lady herself and her relatives who were present, appearing to be much affected. The new Jewess is about twenty years of age and quite prepossessing.

The New York Institution for the Blind have just purchased thirty-five acres of land on the banks of the Hudson, at One hundred and twenty-sixth street, adjoining the grounds of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. The price paid was $150,000.

The official canvass of the mayoralty election is published this morning, and shows Mayor Wood's majority over Havemeyer to be 3,327, and over Opdyke 3,725. Judge Sconson's majority for corporation counsel, over Tilden, is 6 255, and over Hall 10,665.

It is understood that Bourcicault and his wife have effected an engagement with Laura Keene, but of what precise character has not yet been developed. *Mr. George Jordan* has had a disagreement with the lady manager and crawfished from the establishment.

Literary Entertainments Last Night.

There was a variety of literary attractions presented for the patronage of our citizens last evening, and, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, they were all reasonably well attended. At Handel and Haydn Hall, the Rev. A. A. Willitz, one of the most popular lecturers of the day, delivered a lecture before an appreciative, though not numerous audience, entitled "The Young American Citizen." Although written, it was almost entirely extemporaneously delivered, and was received with marked applause, bestowed at the right points. As stated in the announcement, it was "a lecture for the times." Indeed, we have rarely heard, condensed in so short a talk, as much important practical truth as this lecture contained.

In its tone it was at once progressive and conservative. A right appreciation of our social and political blessings was the first point discussed, in the course of which the quibblers, both north and south of Mason and Dixon's line, who are forever magnifying the imperfections in our system with microscopic eyes, were dealt with without gloves. The contrast between our own country and England was drawn with consummate skill.

The second division of his subject was the right appreciation of our duties as American citizens, in which it was held that the great inheritance we possess in our common country was not merely a thing to *sit down and enjoy*, but rather a *trust to execute*. The Administration, with whose cognizance and approbation he was acting.

Mr. John Cochrane, of New York, followed. He was listened to with attention, while he attempted to fasten on the Republican party the doctrines of the Helper book. Mr. Cochrane is one of those gentlemen who, having declined to make speeches, are not above studying the art of speech-making. It is directly evident that he has a laudable ambition to model what he has to say on the most approved style. His words are well, if not elegantly chosen, and his sentences cut with careful precision. His manner is tiresome, at first, from a similarity in tone to a preacher; but by the time he is out of the exordium, he has sufficiently forgotten himself to think closely of the subject; and consequently his manner becomes less meretricious, and more honestly earnest. Some of his rhetorical illustrations were carefully elaborated, and their artistic finish was not altogether lost upon even so inartistic a body as the gentlemen he was addressing.

As to the matter of the speaker, it was a strong sympathy, of course, with the Administration party, of which Mr. Cochrane is so prominent and distinguished a member. We of the North, he said, deprecate secession views, but he implored the South to remember that the North would protect the South, if endangered. A kind of human political encyclopædia close by says this reminds him of a declaration made by Mr. Cochrane while advocating the claims of Martin Van Buren against those of General Cass, at Cleveland, in 1848: "I tell these men (the 'Southern secessionists) that we of the North will surround the South with an atmosphere of freedom which they shall breathe or die!" JOHN BUCHANAN.

ENGLISH PICTORIAL JOURNALS.—Callender and Co have sent us the *Illustrated London News of December 3d*, and the *Illustrated News of the World*, of same date. In the former, the leading attraction is a fine two-page wood cut, in which are figured forth various scenes from Schiller's Song of the Bell, taken from an engraving published at Leipsic. The latter has several good portraits, and a supplement portrait, on steel, of Madame Anna Bishop, the *prima donna*. These publications make the pictorial history of the day.

EVANS'S ALMANAC FOR 1860.—Our enterprising neighbor, Mr. G. G. Evans, of the Gift Book Store, has published an Almanac which, besides a great deal relating to his own business, contains a calendar and the usual astronomical and other information which form the staple contents of Almanacs. Every one is likely to obtain this publication, as it is given away!

PURSER CRAPTS, of the steamship State of Georgia, has our thanks for files of Savannah papers.

Letter from New York.

THE UNION MEETING AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC—COOPER'S SHOP IN WILLIAMSBURGH: NO CHURCH OPEN FOR HIS FUNERAL SERVICES—THE JEWS: CONVERSION OF A PRESBYTERIAN LADY TO JUDAISM—INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND—OFFICIAL VOTE FOR MAYOR—THE BOURGICAULTS! GEO. JORDAN.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

NEW YORK, Dec. 20.

I take for granted that your last evening's telegraphic despatches alluded, at some length, to the great meeting held in the Academy of Music, which was perhaps the largest assemblage ever witnessed in New York, if not in the Union, and embraced speakers of all varieties in politics and religion. An hour before the doors were opened, not less than five thousand people had assembled in Irving place, where they stood patiently stood awaiting the opening of the Academy doors. In less than thirty minutes after the doors were opened every seat and standing place in the building was filled. The speeches by Gen. Dix, Charles O'Conor, the Rev. Dr. Bethune, *Prof.* O. M. Mitchell, ex-Governor Hunt, James S. Thayer, and others, were on the whole patriotic and to the point. The only drawback was the introduction of speakers of a class of persons at the meetings held outside, to manufacture a little political capital. The letters of ex-Presidents Van Buren and Fillmore were listened to with profound attention, and coming from men so opposed in general politics, exercised a happy influence on the meeting. It was in all respects an imposing demonstration, and cannot fail to allay much of the irritation prevalent on the question now agitating the country.

A fair indication of the state of public sentiment in Williamsburgh on the Osswatomie question, may be found in the fact that the relatives of Cook, whose body reached there on Saturday, had not been able, up to last evening, to obtain the use of any church in which to hold the funeral ceremonies. One of the Dutch Reformed Churches was tendered, out of sympathy for Mrs Cook, but on learning that it was contemplated to make something of a spectacle of it," and that, in addition to the customary *religious services*, speeches and addresses would be delivered by those whose policy it was to turn the execution to partisan account, the trustees felt it incumbent upon them to refuse the use of the church. Moreover, the trustees, while sympathizing with the family of the deceased, took occasion to let it be publicly understood, that the congregation was conservative in all matters pertaining to the slavery question and totally opposed to the acts which brought old Brown and his o nfederates to the scaffold.

Who shall say that the Jews are illiberal? On Saturday last, at the Greene-street Synagogue, over three thousand dollars were subscribed to aid in relieving their suffering brethren at Gibraltar. The Jews, like the Quakers, take care of their poor. An Israelite or a broad-brim is never seen in the poorhouse. At the annual meeting of the Hebrew Benevolent Society, held last winter, I remember that about ten thousand dollars were contributed, at the dinner table, to the fund for the relief of their sick and needy.

Talking of Jews, a very unusual circumstance took place at the synagogue in Twelfth street, last Saturday morning, no less, namely, than the renunciation of the Christian faith by a lady who had been brought up after the strictest rules of Presbyterianism, and her conversion to Judaism. The lady's name is Mrs. Silbermann. She has been married some time to an Israelite, and, from association and investigation, expressed a desire to be ranked amongst the daughters of Israel. Her desire was not encouraged at first, it being against the principles of Judaism to make proselytes; but the scruples of Rabbi Adler were at length removed, and after the usual morning service on Saturday he interrogated her as to whether she was fully prepared to enter the Church of Moses, and whether her motives were pure and unselfish? Having answered affirmatively, the Holy Ark was opened, and supported by her husband, she stood in front of it and pronounced the confession. She then solemnly promised to uphold the Jewish religion until death, and pronounced the Hebrew *Schmaheis*, and the English version: "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is One." The ceremony was impressively conducted, the congregation, as well as the lady herself and her relatives who were present, appearing to be much affected. The new Jewess is about twenty years of age and quite prepossessing.

The New York Institution for the Blind have just purchased thirty-five acres of land on the banks of the Hudson, at One hundred and twenty-sixth street, adjoining the grounds of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. The price paid was $150,000.

The official canvass of the mayoralty election is published this morning, and shows Mayor Wood's majority over Havemeyer to be 3,327, and over Opdyke 3,725. Judge Sconson's majority for corporation counsel, over Tilden, is 6 255, and over Hall 10,665.

It is understood that Bourcicault and his wife have effected an engagement with Laura Keene, but of what precise character has not yet been developed. *Mr. George Jordan* has had a disagreement with the lady manager and crawfished from the establishment.

Recaptured Under Arrest.

[From the N. Commercial Bulletin, Dec. 16.]

The "stray Secretary of State" has at length turned up in Austin, Texas, in which city he arrived some two months ago, since when he has been studying in that place for the ministry, in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. The facts we learn from the Austin *Intelligencer*, of the 5th instant, from which paper we take the extract annexed to these remarks. We have conversed with several gentlemen who know Reaif well while here, and they all believe he is, and now that his character is unveiled, the basest conspirator of old Brown's gang. He is extraordinarily gifted, both as a writer and speaker, and his withdrawal from the political arena was a great drawback upon the success of the Republican party in the North, during the next Presidential election; and if not, then to publish letters. He assures us that he does know that Gerrit Smith sent money to Brown, the latter saying that Smith was cognisant of all his plans; that Dr. Howe and Theodore Parker, of Boston, Thomas Wentworth Higgenson, of Worcester, and Sanborn, of Concord, were cognisant of his plans, and would sustain him with money. He says that Brown was a very secretive man and able leader. Mr. Reaif mentions stopping in Cedar county, midway between Iowa City and Tipton, where he lectured upon education and other subjects.

He tells us that after leaving Cleveland for New York, he never had further correspondence with any of the parties; this was in June, 1858. And when he returned to the United States, he supposed the whole expedition had been broken up. He offers no defence or apology for the monstrous wickedness of the purposes of the association, but professes a sincere conviction of the great moral wrong.

We will add that we yesterday *suggested to the* friends of Mr. Reaif the propriety of his placing himself unconditionally at the disposition of the President of the United States. We are glad to say that he has done so, and has also offered to surrender himself to Gov. Wise, and has notified those authorities that he shall remain here until their wishes are known.

THE LATEST NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

XXXVITH CONGRESS.—FIRST SESSION.

U. S. CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, Dec. 20, 1859.

SENATE.

Mr. JOHNSON, of Tennessee, introduced the homestead bill, which was read twice.

Mr. PUGH's resolution instructing the Committee on Territories to inquire into the expediency of repealing so much of the act for the organization of the Territorial Governments of New Mexico, Utah, and Nebraska as all laws passed by those Territories to be submitted to Congress for approval or rejection, was taken up.

Mr. PUGH read an extract from the Dred Scott decision, which he accidentally omitted in yesterday's speech.

Mr. HARLAN, of Iowa, moved to amend the resolution, by adding that the Committee on Territories be also instructed to inquire into the propriety of authorizing the people of New Mexico and Utah to elect all their Territorial officers, Executive, legislative, and judicial, in such a manner as the Legislature thereof shall provide.

Mr. GREEN, of Missouri, moved to postpone the consideration of the resolution, as the committees had not yet organized, and he wished to speak on the question, but was not in good health to-day.

Mr. HALE, of New Hampshire, liked the suggestion of Mr. Green, as it gave him an occasion to throw out a few hints. When looking back at the history of this country down to the present time, he found that no member of the United States Senate had ever been elected President. He thought the reason for this was that, owing to the introduction of such resolutions, and the making of fillibustering speeches, sentiments were drawn out to put their foot in it before they knew where they were going. If this was understood, he believed it would have a tendency to shorten these debates, and Monday will be time enough to resume the consideration of the subject, as gentlemen will have time for reflection in the interval.

The motion was then agreed to, and the subject postponed until Monday.

The Senate then adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. TAYLOR, of Louisiana, stated that his colleague, Mr. Landrum, was still confined to his room. He could not be brought here except at the risk of his health, and he asked some gentleman on the other side to pair off with him.

Mr. GROW, of Pennsylvania, said that they had heard that appeal every day for a week, and he had pair gentleman present to pair off with him? Pairs were usually made by individuals themselves, and in cases where both parties had to be absent.

Mr. TAYLOR replied that the question was one of courtesy, and, under the circumstances, he thought that it was proper to make a pair. If his appeal was not responded to, he suggested to the gentlemen on the Democratic side, that they should pair off with those who desired to