THE CITY.

AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

WALNUT STREET THEATRE, Walnut and Ninth sts.—"Don Cesar de Bazan."—"Robert Macaire."

WHEATLEY & CLARKE'S ARCH-STREET THEATRE, Arch street, above Sixth.—"Hamlet."

MCDONOUGH'S OLYMPIC (late Gaiety). Race street, below Third.—"The Seven Pirates."

CONTINENTAL THEATRE AND CIRCUS, Walnut Street, above Eighth.—"The Merchant Prince of Genoa, or the Innkeeper and the Robbers."

COMMONWEALTH HALL, Chestnut Street—"The Temple of Wonders"—Oscar Bliss.

UNITED STATES BUILDINGS, Chestnut street, below Fifth.—Van Amburgh & Co.'s Menagerie.

SANFORD'S OPERA HOUSE, Eleventh street, above Chestnut.—Concert nightly.

Park Benjamin on Fiction and Fact.

Agreeably to announcement, Park Benjamin, Esq., delivered a lecture at Musical Fund Hall, last evening, on "Fiction and Fact." The audience was not as large as the character of the lecture deserved, although it made up in respectability what it lacked in numbers. Financially, considering the charitable object of the lecture, it was not as successful as could have been desired. The lecturer was warmly applauded on entering the platform. His jovial face, since he last lectured in Philadelphia, has been embellished with a grizzly moustache, now in course of cultivation.

There are, he said, two worlds—the world of Fiction, and the world of Fact. They seemed to revolve in different orbits, in constant danger of collision, and sometimes collide they did, though gently; when they again moved on in obedience with undeviating laws. To speak plainly, in the language of some people, fact was one thing, fiction another. The greatest book of fact that the world had ever produced was the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* the greatest book of fiction was Milton's Paradise Lost. The lecturer here endeavored to show that the theologians of the day, unwittingly, drew many of their doctrines from Mitton, Pollok, and Dante, instead of the Bible. Minerva was oftener quoted as a type of wisdom than Solomon.

A great horde of modern writers had expatiated largely on fancy and imagination. The former of these was used in very absurd connections. Thus we had fancy men, and fancy women, and fancy horses, and fancy dogs, and fancy pigs, and fancy everything. "Tell me where is fancy bred!" said an insane man—quoting the poet—in walking along the street. "At the bake-shop around the corner," was the prompt response. In short wandered the field of imagination. Some modern critics, as a class, though wise in their own conceit, too often mistake fiction for fact, and *vice versa*. To please the public, the writer of *history*, while he drew his inspiration from facts, invested them with fiction in order to gratify popular taste. Facts, he said, were not always true. The same story might be told in a score of different ways. Facts were like chameleons: they presented different colors from different stand-points. Thus, four persons viewing the same man from as many directions would necessarily give four different descriptions. Some might controvert the proposition that a fact, correctly stated, was not a truth, yet the speaker persist ently maintained it. To his mind, a fact was but the *sign* of a truth. It was the body of what truth is the soul. Art was fact etherealized by fiction. It often happened that fictions were more truthful than narrative. Art's marble world was also more enduring than our world of human bones and sinews. In all respects the world of fiction was superior, and more eternal than that of reality. Boswell's life of Johnson was placed at the head of books of memoirs, which were regarded as the most interesting class of books of fact.

He described a picture in Goupil's window, New York, representing the Queen of England in stately loveliness, with fair skin and beautiful mouth, and surrounded with an interesting family of children. Now, the truth was, that the Queen of England was by no means fair, and had anything else than a beautiful mouth. She was also dumpy in person, and was said never to look well except on the throne and on horseback, in her long robes. Thackeray's "Four Georges" the lecturer cut up terribly, giving a variety of reasons for believing that not more than one word in fifty of the satire book could lay any claim to truth, so great was the preponderance of fiction over fact in its composition. He esteemed "Mother Goose" as a great author, far superior to the last sensation novel; for it could at least be understood. The funny lecturer next gave his "patient audience" an artistic reading of "Jack and Gill went up the hill:"

"There was a man in our town, and he was wondrous wise," and sundry other antique pabulum for juvenility, to the evident amusement of the audience.

A wig upon a bald head, he said, was one of the best illustrations of a fiction founded upon a fact. The whole fabric of society was, in a great measure, founded upon falsehood. Correspondence, beginning "My dear sir," and ending "Your obedient servant," and all manner of diplomacy, were filled with lies. But of all lying things, the newspapers were the worst, and of all these, the New York *Herald* carried off the palm; and of the newspaper contents, the biggest lies were contained in the advertisements. A merchant who would not condescend to shave his customer out of a penny had not the slightest scruple in glorifying himself and puffing his stock in public print. It was, he thought, very unjust to say that lawyers were the chief of Liars. For his own part, he had heard more false dogmas uttered in the pulpit than he had heard false principles enunciated at the bar.

The lecture was replete with humor and entertaining pleasantry, and was received with frequent applause.

The Nineteenth Ward Homicide Case.

CONCLUSION.

Yesterday, the crowd in and about the court room was greater than at any former time during the progress of this extraordinary case. Before the doors were opened they were beset by an eager throng, the persons composing which were so persistent in their efforts to obtain admittance to the room, that a requisition had to be made upon the chief of police for a force of men to prevent disorder. Armstrong, the prisoner, had regained his composure, which was somewhat shaken by the testimony of Smith.

Mr. William D. Kelley resumed his argument, which had been interrupted by the adjournment of the court on Monday evening. In referring to the theory that the prisoner had murdered Crawford for the sake of the money the latter had taken out with him, he thought it by no means clear that he did not part with it when he first left the house that evening. Certainly that point was in doubt. Judge Kelley scouted the idea that murder was committed to conceal a larceny. Where was the evidence that if Armstrong had been stealing from his employer, that Crawford knew the fact, or that knowing it he had threatened to expose the prisoner, and thus render himself liable to a charge of receiving stolen goods.

In regard to the wagon, he asked why the Commonwealth had not called the man who had it out during the afternoon, to show that it was clean when he got it, and that it was clean when he returned it. Then it might be a fact against the prisoner. The neglect of the Commonwealth to call this testimony could not justify the jury in presuming that the vehicle was clean when Armstrong took it out.

Mr. Kelley then reviewed the testimony of the witnesses who saw the wagon driven rapidly through the streets, and he held that there had been no identification either as to the horse or the wagon, and the excitement under which the different witnesses labored at the time they saw the wagon and horse to which drew it, was referred to as an evidence of their inability to identify it. Mrs. Earnest was positive that the curtain was down at the door, and was certain that the colored head was projecting from the side, and between the wheels. That was impossible. It had been raining the day before, and in all small streets like St. John street, there is always more or less mud, and, therefore, how could this have been the position of the head, without the upper portion of the body being bespattered with mud and filth? And no one says that Crawford's person was so covered.

Smith gives no description of the horse and wagon; he looked at but one object, and looked so intently that the fact is he will never be forced from his memory. And why? Had he seen a man in full life shot down? He was standing five hundred feet off! It was an improbable story. What does he say? He saw the side of a face, and it looked like that of the prisoner; but he will not say it was the face of the prisoner—he will not say it was not. On the fact that he will not say "this is the face," will the jury say that it is, and hang the man? He will not take it upon his conscience to say it was the face, and will the jury take it upon their consciences to say that it was?

Mr. Kelley now adverted to the many cases of mistaken identity. No man should have his life imperiled by the casual glance under the circumstances of excitement as sworn by Mr Smith.

The jury would have to settle whether Crawford could have told it in the dark with feeling and without getting any of it on his clothing. Where did he keep the pistol from Friday until Saturday when he returned? Why not show where he discharged it if not at the deceased? It would have been well for him to account for his whereabouts from 7 until 10 o'clock. He had time to go to West Philadelphia and also visit Crawford that afternoon.

Judge Allison charged the jury at 6 o'clock last evening, and the court adjourned, there being no probability of the jury agreeing during the evening.

THOMAS J. ARMSTRONG IN COURT—HIS APPEARANCE AND POSITION—THE ATTORNEYS—Elsewhere in this paper the proceedings of yesterday in the Court of Quarter Sessions will be found reported at length. Abstracts of the arguments, however comprehensive, will, however, give no adequate idea of the scenes of the trial, and the personages there prominent.

As this is now the all-absorbing theme, we have invaded the province of our court reporter, and will endeavor to sketch the incidents of the day and a portrait of the prisoner.

Imagine for the court, a room at the west end of the State-house, approached by two entrances from Independence Square, and one entrance from a hall opening on Sixth street. A narrow screen, unable to gain admission, are peering into this room through some dingy windows. Occasionally they laugh, or shout in concert, and the merriment almost ingulfs and interrupts the solemn proceedings of the tribunal within.

Into this dingy room, badly ventilated, and of limited superficial area, the same dull-eyed, sallow faces predominated—men and youths without the energy of manhood, whose own excesses had made them weak-brained. They crowded, with elbows upon their knees, drinking in the sickening details of the murder, and feasting their hollow eyes upon the prisoner and the court.

The court-room was crowded. A few females were there, three of whom were the daughters of Crawford, in full black dress, and others were Armstrong's relatives. The rest were women whose erratic dispositions had drawn them to the tribunal to gaze upon scenes repugnant to all womanly feelings.

There were a better collection of men than is usual to the Court of Quarter Sessions. But in the dock or gallery at the rear, the same dull-eyed, sallow faces predominated—men and youths without the energy of manhood, whose own excesses had made them weak-brained. They crowded, with elbows upon their knees, drinking in the sickening details of the murder, and feasting their hollow eyes upon the prisoner and the court.

The court crier reposed in the morning the usual formula. Two or three tipstaves shouted "silence," and the tall form of Judge Kelley rose to speak in the defence. No abstract of his address can do justice to their delivery, nor carry with them the music of his deep, modulated voice, sometimes burning into He full power, and sometimes more musical when it fell. With no ground of defence to occupy; compelled to substantiate the strange story of the prisoner, in view of the immense testimony against it, Judge Kelley has managed to throw doubts of his criminality even into the minds of his fellow-attorneys. Every breath in the Commonwealth's evidence he wielded, and inveighed against the infallibility of presumptions with rare effect. Few who listened can ever forget his remark: "You cannot, when he is dead, presume life into his remains or fame into her and happiness to the threshold your verdict has disgraced."

But if the counsel for the defence had hope in some weak ears of the District Attorney, their calculations failed.

Step by step he followed the links of circumstance, like an avenger on the trail. If he dovetailed at times into levity or sarcasm, or flights of rhetoric, it was to return again with new vigor to the argument. Every assumption of the defence he unburdened; his introspection into the motives and character of the prisoner was almost merciless. Once, he drew tears to his own eyes when he mentioned Crawford's broken household. And, in the end, as if with a fearful consciousness of his responsibility, he implored the jury to "spare the blood from them." Not an emaciated idiot in the gallery was unmoved.

Then Judge Allison charged the jury, according to the evidence, and in view of their duties.

The court-room was very still: some were wiping the *drops from their eyes, others looked like* folks at funerals.

And Thomas J. Armstrong, young, vigorous, surrounded with friends, sat in the dock where criminals had congregated and cursed for years, and heard the judgment of all his past career. Hundreds of curious eyes sought to read his face, and he heard, ever and anon, the yells of the folk outside who climbed to the low windows, and, even with laugh and merriment, the facts of the mysterious tragedy for which he stood arraigned. The faces of sisters and mother were hidden in their thoughts, and the dreary light of the court was not heavier to the lashes than their bruised hearts.

If that court room, even with the infamy of its trial, were the bitterest image that rose before them, all would have been well But there was a darker one they feared to come!

POLICE CASES.—Henry Matthews, confined, was charged before Alderman Beitler yesterday with breaking the window of a jewelry store at Third and Girard avenue, and stealing therefrom a couple of gold watches and other gems. Part of the stolen property was recovered. The accused was held to answer. John Tiner, also colored, was charged before the same magistrate with assaulting and beating Jane Smith.

The woman testified that she had been married three months and caught John walking with another woman, when she spoke to him about it he beat her. The wife showed signs of rough treatment, her face being badly bruised and one of her fingers broken.

Tiner, on the other hand, denied being married to the woman, who, he said, followed him wherever he went and gave him much trouble The defendant made them weak-brained They ascended with elbows upon their knees, drinking in the sickening details of the murder, and feasting their hollow eyes upon the prisoner and the court. bail in the sum of $300 to answer.

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