

single words "Yes," or "No." Postcards for such answers were prepared and four were conveyed for a franc. These were collected, printed on large sheets, and photographed one-eight-hundredth of the original size, on a thin film of collodion, two inches long and one and a quarter inches wide, weighing three-fourths of a grain. This small pellicle contained as much matter as eighty of the large print pages of this magazine. Each pigeon carried twenty of these sheets, carefully rolled up in a quill, and attached to the tail feathers of the airy courier. They contained as much matter as 1,600 pages of this magazine, and yet weighed only fifteen grains. When the pigeon arrived at his cot in Paris, his precious burden was taken to the Government office. The collodion films were placed between glass plates, and their enlarged image thrown on a screen, like the pictures of a magic lantern. They were then copied and sent to their destination. Some of the messages were of great domestic interest and pathos. We translate the following examples: "Baby is better, she sends a kiss to papa." "Madelaine happily delivered of a beautiful boy." "All well, you will find charcoal in the cellar." There were many money orders payable to persons in the city. The pigeon post was often interrupted. Of three hundred and sixty-three pigeons sent out of Paris, only fifty-seven returned. Many were lost in fogs or chilled

with cold, and it is said the Prussians chased them with birds of prey. Great was the excitement caused by the arrival of these pretty couriers. No sooner was a pigeon seen in the air than the whole city was roused, and remained in a state of intense anxiety till the news was delivered. A contemporary engraving represents Paris, as a woman in mourning, anxiously awaiting, like Noah's imprisoned family, the return of the dove.

The greatest difficulty in air voyaging is that of giving direction to the balloon; to make it travel *through*, not *with* the air. Gifford's balloon, spindle-shaped, one hundred and fifty feet long and forty feet in diameter, took up a three-horse-power engine, weighing three cwt., which turned a fan-armed screw one hundred and ten revolutions in a minute. To avoid the danger of exploding the gas in the balloon the chimney was turned *downward*, and the draught was caused by the steam blast. This sailed against the wind seven miles an hour and steered well. The aeronaut was thus able to choose his place of descent, and to avoid that dragging with the wind which is so often the cause of the fatal termination of balloon voyages. We must not despair that the ingenuity of man will yet discover a mode of controlling balloons, which will make sailing through the air one of the safest as well as one of the swiftest and pleasantest kinds of locomotion.

CURRENT TOPICS AND EVENTS.

MINISTERS' MEETINGS.

IN the magnificent premises occupied by the Methodist Publishing House, at New York, is a large and comfortably-furnished apartment, especially prepared for ministers' meetings. Here, every Monday morning, a large number of the

city ministers, and often those from adjacent circuits, meet for social intercourse, and for the discussion of matters concerning their personal or connexional welfare. These meetings are frequently of such interest that the ubiquitous newspaper reporter is present, and brings the outside world *en rapport* with this cleri-