

UNITED STATES.

One hundred and twenty delegates are present at the Woman's Suffrage Convention, now being held in San Francisco.

At the ball given to Prince Arthur on the 27th ult., by the British Ambassador at Washington, nearly six hundred people were present, including all the representatives of foreign nations, the members of the Cabinet, senators and representatives. The Prince was expected to visit Boston yesterday.

The remains of the late George Peabody were disembarked from the "Monarch" on Saturday last, and were taken on Tuesday to Peabody, Mass., for interment. On their arrival there the remains will be deposited in the Peabody Institute until the 8th inst., the day of interment.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

A despatch from London announces that the Queen will not be present at the opening of Parliament. The speech will be read by commission.

Princess Mary of Cambridge, who married Prince Teck, was safely delivered of a prince on the 9th ult.

Twice during the past week a rumour of the Pope's death has received currency in Europe. On Tuesday last it was definitely reported in Paris that His Holiness had had an epileptic fit, which, however, was not regarded as likely to prove fatal.

The *Lancet* says that the Emperor of Russia is suffering from hypochondriasis, a disease to which his father was extremely subject, and which is said to be hereditary in the family. The effects of the disease are such as to throw a complete gloom over him. He often refuses food and shuts himself up in his chamber, a prey to the most harassing melancholy.

The reports from Rome on the infallibility question are of the most contradictory character. One day we are told that the Pope is wavering and inclined to let the subject alone, and the next that his indignation is aroused at an address presented by several bishops protesting against the dogma. The last account is that His Holiness has yielded to the wishes of the French Emperor, and withdrawn his project of infallibility.

An angry discussion took place the other day in the Spanish Cortes between Prim and Figueras, one of the republican leaders, on the subject of the recent republican insurrection. Figueras defended the affair as a deliberate action on the part of the people in defence of their violated rights, and branded the killing of the insurgents by the government as assassination. Prim demanded the retraction of these words, but Figueras refused. It is expected that a duel will be the result.

THE 'IRON BLACKSMITH.'—A Steubenville mechanic, named William Kenyon, says the *Sharon Times*, an American paper, has invented, and has now in operation in that place, a very marvellous piece of mechanism, which he styles the 'Iron Blacksmith.' It occupies the space of an ordinary sized cask, is very compact, is driven by an engine of herculean strength, and the machine itself is of almost incalculable power. It is at present constructed for the manufacture of wrenches used by machinists—gasfitters particularly. These wrenches are prepared from solid steel, at the rate of one every three seconds, doing the work in three seconds which would require the swiftest and most expert workman a whole day to do, besides executing the work much better. When the 'Iron Blacksmith' is 'fully armed and equipped' it will produce, as if by magic, any description of tool or implement, also chains, horse-shoes, fingers for mowers and reapers, all with the same facility and exactness; in fact, almost every article which now comes from the stalwart blows of the arm, and directed by the mental skill and ingenuity of the intelligent smith. This machine, which is the result of many years of thought and labor, besides an expenditure of many thousands of dollars, is destined, our authority thinks, to revolutionize the smithing trade.

REMARKABLE RAINS.—There are, sometimes, real showers of very unreal rain. It is stated by an old writer that in Lapland and Finmark, about a century ago, mice of a particular kind were known to fall from the sky; and that such an event was sure to be followed by a good year for foxes. A shower of frogs fell near Toulouse in 1804. A prodigious number of black insects, about an inch in length, descended in a snow storm at Pakroff, Russia, in 1837. On one occasion, in Norway, the peasants were astonished at finding a shower of rats pelted down on their heads. Showers of fishes have been numerous. At Stanstead, in Kent, in 1666, a pasture field was found one morning plentifully covered with fish, although there is neither sea nor river, lake nor fish-pond near. At Allahabad, in 1869, an English officer saw a good smart down-pour of fish; and soon afterwards thousands of small dead fish were found upon the ground. Scotland has had many of these showers of fish, as in Ross-shire, in 1829, when quantities of herring fry covered the ground; at Islay, in 1830, when a large number of herrings were found strewn over a field after a heavy gusty rain; at Wick, much more recently, when herrings were found in large quantities in a field half a mile from the beach. In all these, and numerous other cases, when a liberal allowance has been made for exaggeration, the remainder can be explained by well-understood causes. Stray wind blowing from a sea or river; a waterspout licking up the fish out of the water; a whirlwind sending them hither and thither; all these are intelligible. The rat shower in Norway was an extraordinary one; thousands of rats were taking their annual excursion from a hilly region to the lowlands, when a whirlwind overtook them, whisked them up, and deposited them in a field at some distance—doubtless much to the astonishment of such of the rats as came down alive. The so-called showers of blood have had their days of terror and marvel, and have fallen, but red spots have occasionally been seen on walls and stones, much to the popular dismay. Swammerdam, the naturalist, told the people of the Hague two centuries ago, that these red spots were connected with some phenomena of insect life, but they would not believe him, and insisted that the spots were real blood, and were portents of evil times to come. Other naturalists have since confirmed the scientific opinion.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Czar, who is very superstitious, has been badly frightened by a gypsy fortune-teller. When the royal hand had been examined, the old woman shook her head and said, "Beware of 1873, I see blood for you in that year." Alexander left without saying a word.

A mysterious deaf girl has been agitating San Francisco. A reporter went to interview her, and while taking down the points indulged in remarks which would not have been complimentary if she could have heard them. She stood it for some time, but finally emptied the coal scuttle over him, and pitched him down stairs. He doesn't believe she is deaf.

It is reported that the expenses incurred in recovering the remains of the late Mr. Thomas Powell, who, with his wife and others, were murdered in Abyssinia last spring, amount to more than £15,000. Chiefs had to be largely propitiated by costly presents, and Egyptian soldiers had to be employed in carrying out this mournful duty. One chief or sheik, on being asked what form his present should assume, replied that he wished for the full uniform of a British general. His fancy has been complied with, and the cocked hat, plumes, sword, &c., are now on their way to Abyssinia. Mr. Henry Powell, who, with Mr. Senkins, went out to recover the remains, has since his return suffered severely from ill health.

Mr. Froude, the historian, has a paper in the current number of *Fraser's Magazine*, which is attracting much attention in England, on the relation of Great Britain to her colonies. He vigorously opposes the views of those politicians who would have the mother country accept and even urge the drifting away of Canada, New Zealand, or Australia to independence or to new alliances. He denounces also the apathy which permits British emigration to pour into the United States, instead of directing it to the provinces. Mr. Froude thinks the future of England will be a very poor one if her American possessions are absorbed by the United States, and she has no land of her own on which to distribute her surplus population, growing every year more dense.

A correspondent of the *Practical Farmer* says:—"I have known as many men, and women too, who, from various causes, had become so much affected with nervousness that when they stretched out their hands they shook like aspen leaves on windy days—and by a daily moderate use of the blanched foot stalks of the celery leaves as a salad they became as strong and steady in limbs as other people. I have known others so very nervous that the least annoyance put them in a state of agitation, and they were almost in constant perplexity and fear, who were effectually cured by a daily moderate use of blanched celery as a salad at meal times. I have known others cured by using celery for palpitation of the heart."

The *London Athenaeum* says:—"A fragment of about eight hundred lines of an early History of the Holy Grail, in alliterative verse, has been found in the noble Vernon MS., in the Bodleian, by the well-known editor of Early English texts, the Rev. Walter W. Skeat. The fragment is without beginning or end, but it describes chiefly the wondrous shield prepared by Evalash or Mordreins (Slow-of-Belief) for his descendant Sir Galahad. Its position in the romance is easily ascertained by reference to Lonelich's translation of Robert of Corren's French Romance, edited for the Roxburghe Club by Mr. Turpin. This alliterative Grail fragment will go to press at once for the Early English Text Society."

The Russian Government is making a very important experiment. The Oxus now flows into the Sea of Aral. It once flowed into the Caspian, its old bed being still visible enough to be a feature in maps. If it could be brought back the Russians would have an unbroken and impregnable water communication from the Baltic to the heart of Khiva, and with further improvements to Balkh would, in fact, be able to ship stores at Cronstadt for Central Asia, and send them without land carriage. The addition to their power would be enormous; for instance, they could send 10,000 riflemen almost to Afghanistan by water, and without any sound audible to the west, and their engineers think it can be secured. An energetic officer, with 1,800 men, is already on the south bank of the Caspian; the natives are reported "friendly,"—that is, we suppose, quiet—and the Russian Government has the means, through its penal regiments, of employing forced labour on a great scale. We shall hear a great deal more of this engineering enterprize.—*London Spectator*.

In *Cassell's Magazine* we read:—"Curing should be as important as killing in the arts of war; extracting your enemy's bullets from your own flesh is the next duty after putting your bullets into his flesh. Now, bullet-probing is a tiresome and painful operation, one that ought to be reduced to the perfection of simple certainty. Some humane philosophers have thought, and they have done their best to give their thoughts tangibility. But we are bounded by our means; and while there were none known whereby a lump of buried lead could be told from a fragment of shattered bone, probing was slow work. However, the next time—far be it—that wholesale bullet extraction has to be performed, it is to be expected that the army surgeons' labours will be lightened by the help that electricity will afford; for two inventors have independently proposed methods of searching for and drawing out metallic missiles from the wounds they have inflicted. Both men told their ideas to the French Institute at one and the same meeting, during the past month. M. Trouve was one; he who made the electrical jewels that delighted fashionable Paris for a few months two years ago. His new bullet probe is a double-pointed needle, each point being connected by a wire with a little electric battery and a bell, which rings whenever the two needle points are united electrically; that is to say, whenever they both touch a piece of metal. With this divining-rod, bullet-searching is a simple business. The suspected part of the body is probed with it, and the instant the points touch the lead, the bell announces the fact. The bullet found, the worst half of the extractor's task is over. This plan was suggested by an Englishman, I fancy, some five years ago, but was not put to trial till M. Trouve made an instrument. The other proposed is of more limited application. M. Melsens is its author, and he promises to draw fragments of iron or steel from a flesh wound by the help of powerful magnets. He can do nothing with lead, though, because it does not follow the loadstone. Trouve's is the best idea. There is quaintness in the notion of a bullet telegraphing its whereabouts."

It appears that the practice of torturing prisoners in order to make them confess, which has been abolished by most civilized nations, still exists in Switzerland. M. Borel, member of the Assembly of Lucerne, has proposed that information should be asked from the Federal Council as to the torturing of a prisoner in the Canton of Zug. The man in question was accused of theft, and acknowledged to the Criminal Court that he had appropriated the missing articles, but he refused to admit that he had stolen them, and insisted that he had accidentally found them. The Court then ordered further inquiries to be made. "From the 26th of October to the 10th of November the prisoner was put on bread and water diet; but he made no confession. Thumb-screws were then applied to the prisoner, but still he made no confession. Six blows were next given him with a stick; he writhed and groaned, but declared he could say nothing more than what he had said already, upon which six more blows were administered. "If you kill me, Mr. Judge, I cannot say anything else." The prisoner was then brought before the Court, and once more earnestly questioned, but he adhered to his former statement. Upon this the prisoner was again placed on the ordinary prison diet."

It has been proved by recent researches in France, that the red rays of the spectrum are those to which the important physiological function exercised by the sun on the plants is exclusively to be ascribed. The leaves act as analyzers of the white light which falls upon them; they reject and reflect the green rays, and thus get their natural color. If plants were exposed to green illumination only, they would be virtually in the dark. The light which the vegetable world thus refuses to absorb, is precisely that which is coveted by animals. Red, the complementary color of green, is that which, owing to the blood, tinges the skin of the healthy human subject just as the green color of plants is the complement of that which they absorb. These facts have been fully stated and illustrated in a paper read by Mr. Dubrunfant before the French Academy of Science; and from them he deduces certain practical suggestions. All kinds of red should be avoided in our furniture except curtains. Our clothes, which play the part of screens, should never be green. This color should predominate in our furniture, while the complementary red should be reserved for our raiment. He also dwells upon the salubrious influences of sunshine. He mentions cases of patients whose broken constitutions were restored by constant exposure to the sun in gardens where there were no trees; and gives an account of four children that had become weak and sickly by living in a narrow street in Paris, but regained their health under the influence of the solar rays on a sandy sea coast.

The Americans are successfully civilizing the Indians, Col. Baker's expedition having resulted in the killing of 173 of the Pigeon's tribe, destroying forty of their lodges, and capturing about three hundred horses. The American loss was one man killed, and another wounded by falling off his horse. This is called "war," but it looks remarkably like murder by wholesale. The following extract from the correspondence of the *Omaha Herald*, dated Whetstone Agency, Dakota Territory, January 18, is apparently confirmatory of the rumour that had already reached Canada, that the Indians were sharpening their tomahawks for a share in the settlement of the Red River trouble. The writer says:—

"The half breeds are working arduously to get the Black Hills for a reservation. This is a good thing, as it is perfectly useless to the Indians and too rich a country to lie unoccupied any longer. The Black Hills are 200 miles West of Fort Randall, and are 150 miles square, and this is undoubtedly the richest gold bearing country in the world. Twenty-five soldiers are now stationed at this agency for the protection of government. There are 6,000 Indians in the vicinity. Very recent arrivals of Indians from the Min-nie-ka-go and Unk-pa-pa-Sioux report them encamped at the mouth of Powder river. Parties from the Red River of the North had visited their encampments and distributed presents in the shape of guns and ammunition. From the description of these strange people I judge them to be English or Scotch. The Indians were informed by them that the "Long Knives" (Americans) intended to overrun their country with troops in the spring, and advised them to prepare themselves, offering assistance in the way of arms. The chief or braves accompanied these white men north for the purpose of holding a council, and were to have been gone two months." Who offered to arm the Indians?

MUSIC.

MR. J. B. LABELLE begs to announce that he has resumed the teaching of instrumental music, and will be happy to give lessons on the Organ, Piano, Harp, or Guitar, either at his own, or the pupils' residence, on very moderate terms. Mr LABELLE may be addressed at the Office of this Paper, No. 10, Place d'Armes.

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