

GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

The overland travellers to California are often attacked, plundered and even murdered by Indians. A recent horrible instance of this is recorded. Three or four persons killed—among them an infant—and the mother supposed to be carried off by the savages to a worse fate than death. It would seem to be time that Christianity had reached those wandering tribes, who are on the very track of civilization.

Acts almost as barbarous as the above, however, are recorded in the focus of intelligence. An Editor of Charleston (W. B. Faber) was killed by one Magrath, in a duel, on the third fire! A young man named Kearns, quarreled with another called Sponser, about an umbrella, in a boarding house, and stabbed him to the heart. Truly Christianity was as absent in these cases as in the other.

EXPENSE OF THE WAR.

It has been roughly estimated that the total sum expended by all the belligerents during the war cannot fall far short of 2,000,000,000 dollars [£400,000,000]. If to this sum be added the value of property sacrificed in consequence of the war, of the fleets destroyed, the towns burnt, the fortresses, harbours, bridges demolished—all of which cost millions in their construction—if account be taken of the property of private individuals utterly devastated in the course of the struggle, and of the untold losses occasioned by the withdrawal of hundreds of thousands of men from the ordinary industrial and productive employments of peace, some idea may then be formed of the deplorable expenditures of the war. During the two short years of the war, it is estimated that upwards of three-quarters of a million perished on the field in fight, on the wayside from cold or want, or in the hospital from disease, who had they been left to pursue their ordinary avocations, might have enriched their country and benefited their fellow-men. But apart from the material considerations of pecuniary profit or loss, considering the question as one affecting the cause and interests of humanity, who can compute the anguish, the misery, the despair, which war brings in its train? Who can estimate the blighted hopes, the desolate hearths, the crushed fortunes, and countless domestic miseries which war occasions? They are not remembered, when the triumph of the hero is celebrated; they are not noted by the chronicler; they are not taken into account by those who engage or provoke the contest to satisfy ambition, lust for power, or some other unworthy passion; and yet they are the saddest, because irremediable, consequence of war.—*New York Journal of Commerce.*

A MISSISSIPPI STEAM-BOAT.

There is a good reason why it is built with so little depth of hold. It is to allow the boats to pass the shoal water in many parts of the river, and particularly during the season of drought. For such purpose, the lighter draught the greater the advantage; and a Mississippi captain, boasting of the capacity of his boat in this respect, declared that all he wanted was a heavy dew upon the grass to enable him to propel her across the prairies! If there is little of a Mississippi steam-boat under the water, the reverse is true of what may be seen above its surface. Fancy a two-story house some 200 feet in length, built of plank, and painted to the whiteness of snow; fancy along the upper story a row of green-latticed windows, thickly set, and opening out upon a narrow balcony; fancy a flattened or slightly rounded roof covered with tarred canvas, and in the centre a range of skylights like glass forcing-pits; fancy, towering above all, two enormous black cylinders of sheet-iron, each ten feet in diameter, and nearly ten times as high, the funnels of the boat; a small cylinder on one side, the 'escape-pipe'; a tall flagstaff, standing up from the extreme end of the prow, with the 'star-spangled banner' flying from its peak—fancy all these, and you may form some idea of the characteristic features of a steam-boat on the Mississippi.—*Captain Mayne Reid's Quadroon.*

FIRST ATTEMPT AT THE PROBLEM OF THE ISTHMIAN.

The *Hinchinbroke* was, in the spring of 1780, employed on an expedition to the Spanish main, where it was proposed to pass into the South Sea, by a navigation of boats along the river San Juan and the lakes Nicaragua and Leon. The plan was formed without a sufficient knowledge of the country, which presented difficulties not to be surmounted by human skill or perseverance. It was dangerous to proceed on the river, from the rapidity of the current, and the numerous falls over rocks which intercepted the navigation; the climate, too, was deadly, and no constitution could resist its effects. At San Juan, I joined the *Hinchinbroke*, and succeeded Lord Nelson who was promoted to a larger ship; but he had received the infection of the climate before he went from the port, and had a fever, from which he could not recover until he quitted his ship and went to England. My constitution resisted many attacks, and I survived most of my ship's company, having buried, in four months, 180 of the 200 who composed it. Mine was not a singular case, for every ship that was long there suffered in the same degree. The transports' men all died, and some of the ships, having none left to take care of them, sunk in the harbour; but transport-ships were not wanted, for the troops whom they had brought were no more; they had fallen, not by the hand of an enemy, but from the contagion of the climate.—*Correspondence of Lord Collingwood, published in 1828.*

GRATIS LUNCHEONS.

At the hotel at which I am now—the Orleans—there is daily spread, at one o'clock a table professing to bear upon it a luncheon gratis. The eatables exhibited consist of the leavings of yesterday, which now reappear in some new shape or other. A number of people flock in at this time, and in ten minutes, it is difficult to find a vacant place, so eager is the unpaid community to avail themselves of this opportunity of dining gratis. The proceedings of this great body amused me. It consumes voraciously. Its members seize a slice of meat, dip it into the salt-cellar and salad mixture, then bite off the end so palatable, continuing to dip and bite till the whole slice is eaten. Others moisten their forks, not being particular as to the source of the moisture, and thrust them into the salt or pepper, and so carry away a certain portion, and wipe it on the slice of meat in their possession. There is method in this system—it brings some large number of the community to the hotel; and though these visitants pay nothing for consuming the rubbish, yet they are each expected to take a 'drink' at the bar, which is close to the luncheon-table. This they all do with much fidelity, and the drink costs twenty-five cents. Now, one drink almost uniformly suggests another; and many have found out that the gratis reputation of the luncheon is but a fiction after all. Strange as it may seem to Europeans, I have seen well-dressed people wedding their way to the table through a mass of draymen, labourers, &c.; and not unfrequently has the governor of the state himself acquired a forward position there, exercising at the time, like a good republican democrat, more prowess than dignity.—*New Book on California.*

ARREST OF FORTION SWINDLERS.—Three of the parties connected with the great swindle of the Northern Railway of France, were arrested in New York on Saturday. Their names are Louis Gilet, one of the cashiers; and a younger brother, and August Parot, a stock speculator. They arrived in the Atlantic. Carpenter, the other cashier, came in the *Fulton*, from Havre, but has not yet been arrested. 70,000 francs only were found on the parties. The whole amount of the swindle is known to be nearly 3,000,000fr. The parties were followed to this country by a member of the London Detective Police, and one of them was arrested in the office of Mr. Belmont, where he had gone to exchange some notes for gold.—*Quaker Paper.*

BALLOON FIGHT AT SEA.—*Provincetown, Oct. 6.*—Arrived, *schrs. Kuritas, Whetting, Grand Banks.* Yesterday 35 miles northeast of Cape Cod, picked up balloon Young America. The balloon, when first seen, was aloft, with the basket under water. It was slightly damaged in taking it on board.

THE CHOICE OF BOOKS.—The following sensible remarks we copy from the *St. John Observer and Literary Gazette*, a paper in every respect, well printed and edited. The present is emphatically the age of Books—books on all subjects—at all sizes—of all prices. Some of these are triumphant exhibitions of the dignity of human intellect, when expanded by study; and the reading of them will enlighten the mind, purify the heart, and elevate the whole man in the scale of being. Were all the books that constitute the current literature of the day of this character, we would not think it necessary to make the choice of books a distinct subject of investigation. But then it cannot be denied, that a large proportion of the literature of the day is entirely of an opposite character. It is a melancholy thought, that many of the publications which are daily issuing from the Press—which occupy a place in public libraries, and even find their way to drawing-room tables are decidedly immoral and pernicious. To say that the perusal of such is time lost, would not by any means express the whole idea which we would wish to convey in this article, for we believe that they have a direct tendency to enfeeble the mind, debase the heart, and like the deadly Opus, taint and poison, with pestiferous breath, the moral atmosphere wherever they are admitted. Thus it is that whilst books expand the intellectual powers, and increase the store of human knowledge, they have a tendency to produce a powerful effect either for good or evil, on the moral dispositions and propensities; according to their quality. In accordance with this principle, we are free in expressing our conviction, that the volume of Plutarch's lives," which Napoleon is said to have delighted in reading and which he is reported to have kept under his pillow by night; operated in no inconsiderable degree in developing those passions, and forming those traits of character, which distinguished that extraordinary man.

It is of very great importance that this fact be practically recognized by all; but especially by those who are undergoing that process of moral discipline which will render them either respectful, useful and happy, or degraded, worthless and miserable in future years. And this is peculiarly requisite in the present age, when thousands of publications are daily issuing from the press, bearing the impress not only of the writer's intellect, but exhibiting a variety of quality, corresponding with the intellectual vigour and moral disposition of their respective Authors. We therefore conclude that were parents more particular as to the quality of the books which they put into the hands of their children,—were the managers of reading societies more choice in the selection of books for circulation amongst the members,—and were the youth of the age more sensible than they seem to be of the mighty influence of the Library, then might we expect society to attain to a more elevated standard of excellency, whilst many a species of moral and political evil would be forever banished from the earth.

The extraordinary advance in the price of tobacco is in some measure accounted for by the rapid and vast increase of the consumption of the article in France, where, we read, "it has increased to such an extent that the old manufactories are altogether insufficient to provide for the demand." In one cigar manufactory lately established in Paris no less than 800! women are employed daily; the whole number of hands, including 200 boys, being 1025.

MINERALS THAT WE EAT.—There is one mineral beyond all others essential to life. If we may be permitted to recall the very common phrase by which a man said to be a brick, we would indicate the propriety of speaking of phosphate of lime as the mortar which completes the edifice. The phosphate of lime cements and stiffens the gelatine of the bones. It is the so-called bone-earth to which the bones owe their stiffness and solidity. It is the phosphate of lime which renders them capable of sized vessels."

supporting the weight of the body, protecting the delicate organs of life, and serving as levers on which the muscles may act. Phosphate of lime reaches us in all flesh, and in most articles of vegetable food, but especially in some of the cereals. A striking illustration of the value of the phosphate of lime, as a constituent of our dietary, may be found in the fact that, nearly all the nations of the earth feed either on wheat or rye, or on barley or oats, and these grains appear to be specially adapted for human use, by reason of the large quantities of phosphate lime which they contain.—*Household Words.*

WEALTH OF THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY.—In evidence of the wealth amassed by ancient families, the traveller is shown the palaces in Piccadilly, Burlington House, Devonshire House, Lansdowne House in Berkshire Square, and, lower down in the city, a few noble houses which still withstand in all their amplitude the encroachment of streets. The Duke of Bedford includes or included a mile square in the heart of London, where the British Museum, once Montague House, now stands, and the land occupied by Woburn Square, Bedford Square, Russell Square. The Marquis of Westminster built within a few years the series of squares called Belgravia. Stafford House is the noblest palace in London. Northumberland House holds its place by Charing Cross. Chesterfield House remains in Audley Street. Sion House and Holland House are in the suburbs. But most of the historical houses are masked or lost in the modern uses to which trade or charity has converted them. A multitude of town palaces contain inestimable galleries of art.

In the country, the size of private estates is more impressive. From Barnard Castle, I rode on to the highway twenty-three miles from High Force, a fall of the Tees, towards Darlington, past Raby Castle, through the estate of the Duke of Cleveland. The Marquis of Breadalbane rides out of his house a hundred miles in a straight line to the sea, on his own property. The Duke of Sutherland owns the county of Sutherland, stretching across Scotland from sea to sea. The Duke of Devonshire, besides his other estates, owns 96,000 acres in the county of Derby. The Duke of Richmond has 40,000 acres at Goodwood, and 300,000 at Gordon Castle. The Duke of Norfolk's park in Sussex, is fifteen miles in circuit. An agriculturist bought lately the island of Lewes, in Hebrides, containing 500,000 acres. The possessions of the Earl of Londsdale gave him eight seats in Parliament. This is the Heptarchy again; and before the Reform of 1832, one hundred and fifty-four persons sent three hundred and seven members to Parliament. The borough-mongers governed England.

These large domains are growing larger. The great estates are absorbing the small freeholds. In 1786, the soil of England was owned by 200,000 corporations and proprietors; and in 1822, by 32,000. These broad estates find room on this narrow island. All over England, scattered at short intervals among ship-yards, mills, mines and forges, are the paradises of the noble, where the live-long repose and refinement are heightened by the contrast with the roar of industry and necessity, out of which you have stepped aside.—*R. W. Emerson's English Travels.*

SHIP BUILDING.—The *New York Courier and Enquirer* says:—"Fall brings no relief to the general dullness which prevails in the ship yards of this city and Brooklyn. The business is confined, entire to meeting the wants of business. Nothing or at most very little, is done on speculation, what business there is, however, is of a healthy character, and safe in its returns. The stock of ship-timber in the market is quite large, and we learn that there is a large quantity in the forests, ready for delivery when a demand shall spring up. We cannot say there has been any change in prices since our last notice. Georgia Pine still remains at a low figure. The supply of ship knees exceeds the demand. There is some call for the lighter timbers used in the frames of medium sized vessels."