

your readers: "What was the highest price ever given for any book? We leave this question to be decided by competent authorities among book-lovers. We may, however, venture to say that we know of one for which a sum of 250,000*fr.* (£10,000) was paid by its present owner, the German Government. That book is a missal, formerly given by Pope Leo X. to King Henry VIII. of England, along with a parchment conferring on that Sovereign the right of assuming the title of 'Defender of the Faith,' borne ever since by English Kings. Charles II. made a present of the missal to the ancestor of the famous Duke of Hamilton, whose extensive and valuable library was sold some years ago by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge, of London. The book which secured the highest offer was a Hebrew Bible, in the possession of the Vatican. In 1512 the Jews of Venice proposed to Pope Julius II. to buy the Bible, and to pay for it its weight in gold. It was so heavy that it required two men to carry it. Indeed, it weighed 325 lbs., thus representing the value of half a million of francs (£20,000). Though much pressed for money, in order to keep up the 'Holy League' against King Louis XII. of France, Julius II. declined to part with the volume."

EXECUTION BY ELECTRICITY.—Judge Childs pronounced the first sentence of death under the new law, at Buffalo, May 14, upon William Kemmler, for the murder of Tillie Ziegler, as follows:—"The sentence of the Court is that for the crime of murder in the first degree, whereof you stand convicted, within the week commencing on Monday, June 24, and within the walls of Auburn State prison, or within the yard or enclosure adjoining thereto, you suffer the punishment of death, to be inflicted by the application of electricity as provided by the Code of Criminal Procedure of the State of New York, and that in the meantime you be removed to, and until the infliction of such punishment you be kept in solitary confinement in said Auburn State prison." It is said that the prisoner's counsel will appeal from the sentence on the ground that the punishment is cruel and unusual, and contrary to the spirit of the Constitution.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE IN THE UNITED STATES.—Mr. Carroll D. Wright has submitted to the United States Congress a special report on the statistics of the laws relating to marriage and divorce in the United States from 1867 to 1886. It appears that while the increase in population from 1870 to 1880 was 29.4 per cent., the increase in divorces was no less than 79 per cent. In the number of divorces during the whole twenty years (1867-86) Illinois takes the lead with 36,072; Ohio comes next with 26,637; Indiana granted 25,193; Michigan, 18,433; Iowa, 16,564; Pennsylvania, 16,020; New York, 15,365; Missouri, 15,278; California, 12,118; Texas, 11,472; and Kentucky, 10,248. Of the 323,716 divorces granted in the United States for the twenty years covered by the report, 216,733, or 65 per cent. of the whole, were granted to wives, and 111,983 to husbands. The cases of cruelty in which wives sought divorces were as 7 to 1; of desertion $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1; and of drunkenness 9 to 1. The husband sought divorce for unfaithfulness of the wife in 38,155 cases, while the wife obtained a divorce in 28,480 cases for unfaithfulness of the husband. The cause for which the greatest number of divorces were granted was desertion, being

126,557, or 38 per cent. of the entire number. Commissioner Wright says that the divorces granted for drunkenness, numbering 13,843, by no means represents the total number in which intemperance is a serious factor. In a few representative counties it was proved that intemperance was a direct or indirect cause in more than 20 per cent. of the whole number of divorces granted in such counties.

WHAT IS IN A NAME?—Our genial townsman Dan Dougherty has been delighting the Chicago people with his well-told anecdotes, in some of which the joke is decidedly on himself. Here is one of them: "My name has always been against me. A few years ago I was invited to be one of a party of prominent people who made an inspection of the State penitentiary in Pennsylvania. In going through one of the corridors an attendant had occasion, not knowing who I was, to call out the name Dan Dougherty, and in the twinkle of an eye three of the hardest-looking criminals I ever saw popped their heads out and answered 'Here.'" And he added, "There has always been a Dan Dougherty hanged in Pennsylvania every year since I can remember." No wonder he came to New York.—*Tribune.*

MR. GLADSTONE ON DIVORCE.—Mr. Gladstone writes:—"Reflection tends to confirm me in the belief that the best basis for a law is the indissolubility of Christian marriage, that is to say, to have no such divorce or severance that allows re-marriage. Short of this I think it highly probable that the Canadian system, of which I had not previously been aware, is the best, as being attended with the least danger."

JUDGES IN THE UNITED STATES.—Those who wish to learn something about the administration of justice on the other side of the Atlantic cannot do better than read Professor Bryce's excellent book on America. The chapter on the state judiciary is especially interesting to lawyers. The difference between the powers of an English and American judge are very remarkable. According to that learned writer, an American judge "is not allowed to charge the jury on questions of fact, but only to state the law. He is sometimes required to put his charge in writing. His power for committing for contempt of court is often restricted. Express rules forbid him to sit in causes wherein he can have any family or pecuniary interest. In one Constitution his punctual attendance is enforced by the provision that if he does not arrive in court within half an hour of the time fixed for the sitting, the attorneys of the parties may agree on some person to act as judge and proceed forthwith to the trial of the cause. And in California he is not allowed to draw his salary till he has made an affidavit that no cause that has been submitted for decision for ninety days remains undecided in his court." We learn from a note appended to this statement, that "the Californian judges are said to have contrived to evade this." The salaries paid to State judges of the higher courts range from one to two thousand pounds; in most states they are elected by the people, and they hold office for a short term of years. It is therefore not surprising that the States fail to secure the best legal talent for the bench, and that it is necessary to impose restrictions upon the judges which would be thought degrading in this country.—*Law Times.*