Things and Thoughts in Europe.

Foreign Correspondence of The Tribune. [No. XVI.*

Review of Past and Present....The Merits of Italian Literature—Manzoni.... The Classes of Italian Language.... Milan, the Milanese, and the Simplicity of their Language....The North of Italy, and a Tour to Switzerland Italian Lakes—Maggiore, Como, and Lugano—Lago di Garda....The Boatmen of the Lakes and the Gondoliers ....Lago di Garda poetically described together with the Journey from Trent to Riva....Lady Franklin, Widow of The Navigator....Return to, and Festivals at Milan—The Archbishop—Austrian Rule and Austrian Policy....The Future Hopes of Italy....A Glance at Pavia, Florence, Parma and Bologna, and the Works of the Masters.

ROME, October, 1847.

I think my last letter was from Milan, and written after I had seen Manzoni. This was to me a great pleasure. I have now seen the most important representatives who survive of the last epoch in thought. Our age has still its demonstrations to make, its heroes and poets to crown.

Although the modern Italian literature is not poor, as many persons at a distance suppose—but, on the contrary, surprisingly rich in tokens of talent—if we consider the circumstances under which it struggles to exist, yet very few writers have or deserve an European, an American reputation. Where a whole country is so kept down, her best minds cannot take the lead in the progress of the age; they have too much to suffer, too much to explain. But among the few who, through depth of spiritual experience and the beauty of form in which it is expressed, belong not only to Italy, but to the world, Manzoni takes a high rank. The passive virtues he teaches are no longer what is wanted; the manners he paints with so delicate a fidelity are beginning to change—but the spirit of his works—the tender piety, the sensibility to the meaning of every humblest form of life, the delicate humor and satire so free from disdain—these are immortal.

Young Italy rejects Manzoni, though not irreverently; Young Italy prizes his works, but feels that the doctrine of "Pray and wait" is not for her at this moment, that she needs a more fervent hope, a more active faith. She is right.

It is well known that the traveler, if he knows the Italian as written in books, the standard Tuscan, still finds himself a stranger in many parts of Italy, unable to comprehend the dialects, with their lively abbreviations and witty slang. That of Venice I had understood somewhat, and could enter into the drollery and *naiveté* of the gondoliers, who, as a class, have an unusual share of character. But the Milanese I could not at first understand at all. Their language seemed to me detestably harsh and their gestures unmeaning. But after a friend, who possesses that large and ready sympathy—easier found in Italy than anywhere else—had translated for me verbatim into French some of the poems written in the Milanese, and then read them aloud in the original, I comprehended the peculiar inflection of voice and idiom in the people, and was charmed with it, as one is with the instinctive wit and wisdom of children.

There is very little to see at Milan compared with any other Italian city, and this was very fortunate for me, allowing an interval of repose in the house, which I cannot take when there is so much without tempting me to incessant observation and study. I went through the North of Italy with a constantly-increasing fervor of interest. When I had thought of Italy, it was always of the South—of the Roman States—of Tuscany. But now I became deeply interested in the history, the institutions, the art of the North. The fragments of the Past mark the progress of its waves so clearly, I learned to understand, to prize them every day more, to know how to make use of the books about them. I shall have much to say on these subjects some day.

Leaving Milan, I went on the Lago Maggiore and afterward into Switzerland. Of this tour I shall not speak here; it was a beautiful little romance by itself, and infinitely refreshing to be so near Nature in these grand and simple forms, after so much exciting thought of Art and Man. The day passed in the St. Bernardin, with its lofty peaks and changing lights upon the distant snows; its holy, exquisite valleys, and waterfalls, its stories of eagles and chamois, was the greatest refreshment I ever experienced: it was bracing as a cold bath after the heat of a crowd amid which one has listened to some most eloquent oration.

Returning from Switzerland I passed a fortnight on the Lake of Como, and afterward visited Lugano. There is no exaggeration in the enthusiastic feeling with which artists and poets have viewed these Italian lakes. Their beauties are peculiar, enchanting, innumerable. The "*Titan*" of Richter, the "*Wanderjahre*" of Goëthe, the Elena of Taylor, the pictures of Turner, had not prepared me for the visions of beauty that daily entranced the eyes and heart in those regions. To our country, Nature has been most bounteous, but we have nothing in the same class that can compare with these lakes, as seen under the Italian heaven. As to those persons who have pretended to discover that the effects of light and atmosphere were no finer than they found in our own lake scenery, I can only say that they must be exceedingly obtuse in organization—a defect not uncommon among Americans.

Nature seems to have labored to express her full heart in as many ways as possible, when she made these Lakes molded and planted their shores. Lago Maggiore is the grandiose, resplendent in its beauty; the view of the Alps gives a sort of lyric exaltation to the scene. Lago di Garda is so soft and fair—so glittering sweet on one side—the ruins of ancient palaces rise so softly with the beauties of that shore; but at the other end, amid the Tyrol, it is so sublime, so calm, so concentrated in its meaning! Como cannot be better described in generals than in the words of Taylor:

"Softly sublime, profusely fair."

Lugano is more savage, more free in its beauty. I was on it in a high gale; there was a little danger, just enough to exhilarate; its waters wild and clouds blowing across its peaks. I like very much the boatmen on these lakes; they have strong and prompt character; of simple features, they are more honest and manly than Italian men are found in the thoroughfares; their talk is not so witty as that of the Venetian gondoliers, but picturesque and what the French call *incisive*. Very touching were some of their histories, as they told them to me while passing sometimes on the lake. Grossi gives a true picture of such a man in his family relations; the story may be found in "Marco Visconti." The idea of the situation is borrowed from Walter Scott, but many touches are his own. At Riva di Trento (Lago di Garda) De Henry, called on me. He is an Irish gentlemen, author of a Temperance tract which has been widely circulated in the United States. He gave me a little piece of playful doggerel which may be inserted here as a good description of the journey from Trent to Riva. Unhappily in the refrain *Adige* must be mispronounced to make it rhyme with *carriage*.

FROM TRENT TO RIVA ON THE LAGO DI GARDA.
June 7, 1847.

At five leave Trent
In coach and pair,
For Riva bent
And cooler air,
My wife and I
And daughter tall
And Maestro Monti,
Four in all.

Good company,
In south, are we,
And for six hours
May well agree.

If quarrels come,
As poets teach,
From too free use
Of the parts of speech,
For we no word have
Of Italian,
No English the
Nor cramp Germanian,
Nor hath as yet
To acquaintance made
Even of Miss French,
That common jade,

That walks at ease
Wide Europe's streets
And chats and laughs
With all she meets.

Pleasant the view is
As our carriage
Rolls smoothly down
The vale of Adige;
Toward southern suns
And genial skies
Gently sloped
That valley lies;
From wintry blasts
North, east and west,
Alpine steeps
Defend its breast;
And with a thousand
Ice-fed rills
Water its fields
And turn its mills,
And cool the sultry
Summer air,
And play sweet music
To the ear.

Here the cliffs
Are bleak and bare;
With pine forests
Covered there;
Or with various
Carpet spread
Of fern and heath,
The black cock's bed.

Here mica schist,
Red porphyry
And granite peaks
Invade the sky;

There slumbering marble
Waits the hand
That bids it into
Life to stand;

Lower down
The sandstone rock,
At our feet
The boulder block.

Pleasant the view is
As our carriage
Rolls smoothly down
The vale of Adige;

Trellised vines
Stretch far and near,
Through fields of lentil,
Maize and beer;

Chestnut and walnut
Stately stand
Flanking the road
On either hand;

And gentler willow
Lends its shade
And droops and arches
Overhead;

And sunburnt peasants'
Hands rapacious
Call the mulberry's
Foliage precious;

The sacks stand full,
The carts are loaded,
The patient oxen
Yoked and goaded;

The master hears
With ears of pleasure
The axle groan
Beneath the treasure;

Let six weeks pass,
The work is done,
The worms are fed,
The cocoons spun,

The crysalis killed,
Its intricate clue
Unraveled nice
And spun anew

Into a firm,
Tenacious line,
Yellow as gold,
As gossamer fine;

Parent of
The bombazine,
Rustling satanet,
Satin sheen,

Of the sofa's
Gay brocade;
Of the lutestring
Quilted bed;

Of the flag
That floats on high
Defiance to
The enemy;

Of the garter,
Of the pall,
Wond'rous thread
That mak'st them all!

Pleasant the view is
As our carriage
Rolls smoothly down
The vale of Adige;

On our right hand
The broad river,
Gay and clear
And sparkling ever,

In its stony
Channel dashing,
Raving, fretting,
Foaming, splashing;

What though still
Its course is forward,
What though still
It rushes onward:

Downward still,
Although its motion
Toward the vast,
Absorbing ocean;

See! each wavelet
Backward curls;
See! reversed
Each eddy swirls;

See! it casts
Its lingering look
Toward the scenes
It hath forsook,

Toward its native
Ortler mountain,
Toward its parent
Glacier fountain;

Life's traveler so
Casts back his view
On the dear scenes
His childhood knew;

With free reverted
So it is borne
Down the rough road
Whence no return,

And plunged at last
Into the sea
By fleites called
Eternity.

Pleasant the view is
As our carriage
Rolls smoothly down
The vale of Adige;

We thread the gorge
Where Lagerthal
In battle saw
Sanseverin fall:

Leave on our right
Old Castel Barco,
And hear thy tower,
Holy San Marco,

Chime night's first watch
In Roveredo,
As we arrive
At half past eight.

After supper,
Fresh and merry,
We turn in west,
Toward Adige ferry;

And where 'twixt banks
Of flowery rushes
Deep, silent, smooth,
The river gushes;

Carriage and all
Across it float
In broad, flat-bottomed,
Lugger boat;

Dark though it be
Small dear have we,
And Maestro's still
Good company;

And part by signs,
And part by looks,
And part by words
Picked out of books,

Contrives to let us
Understand
He guides us through
No unknown land;

Guides us through Merl's
Village rude:
T'were picturesque
By daylight viewed;

Past Loppio's lake
With islands dotted,
Past Loppio's rocks
With lichen spotted;

Then where our passing
Lamp-light falls
On yonder gray,
Time-eaten walls:

Awful from
The rocky steep
Frowned, Nago, once
Thy castled keep.

Our downward course
Is fair and free
From those drear hights
To Torbole,

Where snugly moored
In Morpheus' arms
Lake Garda's boatmen
Dream of storms;

Hang on lines
Their nets are drying,
High on the strand
Their boats are lying.

Cross we thus
Hoarse Sarcca's bridge
And turn Mount Brion's
Jutting ridge;

Where scantly may
The strait road sweep
'Twixt the deep lake
And mountain steep,

Overhead
Swings, drearily,
The glimmering lamp
Of a Calvary;

With widows' oil
That lamp is fed,
A widow's tears,
On that slab are read:

"Fellow sinner
Bend thy knee,
Fellow sinner
Pray with me

"For him that in
The tempest's shock,
Foundering, sank
By yonder rock.

"Mother of God!
The sailor gave
On Lake Garda's
Dangerous wave."

Two short miles more
Run quickly past
And Riva safe
We reach at last.

And just as cocks
And clocks tell one,
At "Il Jardino"
Are set down.

Here Maestro Monti
Bids 'Good night;'
And all to bed
In weary plight.

* When the bed of a river is smooth and its water deep, its waves break and fall in the direction of the course of the river. When, on the contrary, the water is shallow, the bed rocky, and the descent considerable, the waves receiving a contrary impulse from the impinging rocks turn over and fall back upon it (i. e. in the opposite direction to that in which the river is flowing). A similar phenomenon is produced in all large collections of water, and very remarkably in the sea, by a wind adverse to the course of the water.

On this lake, also, I met Lady Franklin, wife of the celebrated navigator. She has been in the United States, and showed equal penetration and candor in remarks on what she had seen there. She gave me interesting particulars as to the state of things in Van Diemen's Land, where she passed seven years when her husband was in authority there.

I returned to Milan for the great feast of the Madonna, 8th September, and those made for the Archbishop's entry, which took place the same week. These excited as much feeling as the Milanese can have a chance to display, this Archbishop being much nearer the public heart than his predecessor, who was a poor servant of Austria.

The Austrian rule is always equally hated, and time, instead of melting away differences, only makes them more glaring. The Austrian race have no faculties that can ever enable them to understand the Italian character; their policy, so well contrived to palsy and repress for a time, cannot kill, and there is always a force at work underneath which shall yet, and I think now before long, shake off the incubus. The Italian nobility have always kept the invader at a distance; they have not been at all seduced or corrupted by the lures of pleasure or power, but have shown a passive patriotism highly honorable to them. In the middle class ferments much thought—a capacity for effort; in the present system it cannot show itself, but it is there; it ferments, and will yet produce a wine that shall set the Lombard veins on fire when the time for action shall arrive. The lower part of the population is in a dull state indeed; the censure of the press prevents all easy, natural ways of instructing them; there are no public meetings, no free access to them by more instructed and aspiring minds:—the Austrian policy is to allow them a degree of material well-being, and though so much wealth is drained from the country for the service of the foreigner, yet enough must remain on these rich plains comfortably to feed and clothe the inhabitants. Yet the great moral influence of the Pope's action, though obstructed in their case, does reach and rouse them, and they, too, felt the thrill of indignation at the occupation of Ferrara. The base conduct of the police toward the people when, at Milan, some youths were resolute to sing the Hymn in honor of Pius IX. when the feasts for the Archbishop afforded so legitimate an occasion—roused all the people to unwonted feeling; the nobles protested, and Austria had not courage to persist as usual. She could not sustain her police, who rushed upon a defenceless crowd that had no share in what excited their displeasure, except by sympathy, and, driving them like sheep, wounded them *in the backs*. Austria feels that there is now no sympathy for her in these matters; that it is not the interest of the world to sustain her. Her policy is, indeed, too thoroughly organized to change except by revolution; its scope is to serve, first, a reigning family instead of the people; second, with the people to seek a physical in preference to an intellectual good; and third, to prefer a seeming outward peace to an inward life. This policy may change its opposition from the tyrannical to the insidious; it can know no other change, yet do I meet persons who call themselves Americans—miserable, thoughtless Esaus, unworthy their high birthright—who think that a mess of pottage can satisfy the wants of Man, and that the Viennese listening to Strauss's waltzes, the Lombard peasant supping full of his polenta, is *happy enough*. Alas! I have the more reason to be ashamed of my countrymen, that it is not among the poor, who have so much toil that there is little time to think, but those who are rich, who travel—in body, that is, they do not travel in mind—absorbed at home by the lust of gain, the love of show, abroad they see only the equipages, the fine clothes, the food—they have no hear, for the idea, for the destiny of our own great nation: how can they feel the spirit that is struggling now in this and others of Europe?

But of the hopes of Italy I will write more fully in another letter, and shall state what I have seen, what felt, what thought. I went from Milan to Pavia, and saw its magnificent Certosa. I passed several hours in examining its riches, especially the sculptures of its facade, full of force and spirit. I then went to Florence by Parma and Bologna. In Parma, though ill, I went to see all the works of the Masters; a wonderful beauty it is that informs them, not mine—not, I mean, what is the chosen food of my soul, yet wonderful and which did its message to me also. Those works are failing; it will not be useless to describe them in a book. Beside these pictures, I saw nothing in Parma and Modena; these States are obliged to hold their breath while their poor, ignorant sovereigns skulk in corners, hoping to hide from the coming storm. Of all this more in my next.

*

Kentucky and Tennessee.

Extract from a Letter from a gentleman in West Tennessee to his friend in this City:

"Tennessee has become Whig again, having elected (as you know) a Whig Governor, and a Whig Senator in Congress. Notwithstanding we can raise any number of volunteers for the Mexican War, especially in the Eastern division of the State, they are generally composed of those who imagine that, in Mexico, they will be relieved of those restraints which a more orderly state of Society imposes. The mass of the reflecting part of the community,—those who would wish to see the Nation governed by principles of right and justice,—are becoming rather clamorous to know the causes and objects of the War; and with many, the tremendous National Debt the Government is accumulating to carry on the War, and the disproportionate benefits that are to accrue from the War, for so vast an expenditure of blood, money, and principles of National justice, are the causes that have generally effected the change in the politics of the State. In CLAY'S Lexington Speech you have a pretty fair delineation of the sentiments of the people of Kentucky and Tennessee on the subject of the War. On the subject of Slavery—Cotton being the staple production of Western and Southern Tennessee—it will be many years before the matter of the prospective Abolition of Slavery is discussed in this State; in Kentucky the subject has been under discussion for many years."

☞ Hon. JOHN M. HOLLEY, Member of Congress from New-York, and family, arrived in this city on Friday evening last and took lodgings at the Pearl House. The sympathies of the Whigs of the Union are with him for his devotion during the exciting organization of the House of Representatives, notwithstanding the perilous state of his health. We trust he will meet a speedy convalescence, and be enabled soon to return to his duties at Washington. [Savannah Rep. 20th.

* This should have reached us previously to that we and been published a since, numbered XVII.

The Holy Land....BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

From the People's [London] Journal.

VI....THE JORDAN AND DEAD SEA.

This day, (April 6,) we were to visit the Jordan and the Dead Sea. In the early morning, about five o'clock, I ascended a steep mound near our encampment, and saw a view as different from that of the preceding day as a change of lights could make it. The sun had not risen; but there was a hint of its approach in a gush of pale light behind the Moab Mountains. The strip of woodland in the middle of the plain looked black in contrast with the brightening yellow precipices of Quarantania on the West. Southward, the Dead Sea stretched into the land, gray and clear. Below me, our tents and horses, and the moving figures of the Arabs enlivened the shadowy banks of the stream.

We were off soon after six, and were to reach the banks of the Jordan in about two and a half hours. Our way lay through the same sort of forest land as we had encamped in. It was very wild; and almost the only tokens of habitation that we met with, were about Rihhah—by some supposed to be the exact site of the ancient Jericho. This is now as miserable a village as any in Palestine; and its inhabitants are as low in character as in wealth. No stranger thinks of going near it who is not well armed. Yet there is no need to resort to any means but honest and very moderate industry, to obtain a comfortable subsistence here—if only honesty were encouraged, and industry protected by a good social state. The fine fig trees that are scattered around, and the abundant promise of the few crops that are sown, show that the soil and climate are not to blame. At this place there is a square "tower, conspicuous afar above the trees, which some suppose to be the sole remnant of the great city: but it can hardly be ancient enough to have belonged to the old Jericho.

On a hillock in the midst of the brushwood, we saw a few birds of such a size that one of the party in a moment of forgetfulness, cried out "Ostriches!" There are no ostriches in this country; but these cranes looked very like them, while on their feet. One by one they rose, stretching out their long legs behind them—certainly the largest birds I ever saw fly—or probably shall ever see.

Though we had been told, and had read, that the river could not be seen till the traveler reached its very banks, we could not help looking for it. Three broad terraces have to be traversed; and then it is sunk in a deep bed, where it rushes hidden among the woodland. Its depth of water varies much at different seasons; though less now than formerly. The Scriptures speak so much of the overflow of Jordan; and of the lion coming up at the swelling of Jordan, that it is supposed that formerly the river was subject to inundations which may have formed the three terraces above mentioned, and caused the extraordinary fertility of the plain in old times: and that the wild beasts which then harbored in the brakes, came up to terrify the dwellers in the fields. However this may have been, it is not so now. The channel is no doubt deepened; and the river now in the fullest season, only brims over its banks into the brakes, so as to stand among the canes, and never reaches the terraces.

Though we were all on the look out, and though we reached the river at the spot which is cleared for the approach of the Easter pilgrims, we could not see the water till we could almost touch it. The first notice to me of where it was, was from some of the party dismounting on the Pilgrim's beach.—When I came up—O! how beautiful it was!—how much more beautiful than all pictures and all descriptions had led me to expect! The only drawback was that the stream was turbid.—Not only whitish, from a sulphurious admixture, but muddy. But it swept nobly along, with a strong and rapid current, and many eddies, gushing through the thick woodland, and flowing in amotor the tall reeds, now smiting the white rocks of the opposite shore, and now winding away out of sight behind the poplars and acacias and tall reeds which crowd its banks. It is not a broad river: but it is full of majesty from its force and loveliness. The vigorous, up springing character of the wood along its margin struck me much; and we saw it now in its vivid Spring green.

The pilgrims rush into the sacred river in such numbers, and with so little precaution as to the strength of the current, that no year passes without some loss of life; and usually several perish.—This year only one was drowned. Whatever superstition there might have been among our company, it was not of this wild sort; and we bathed in safety. The ladies went north; the gentlemen south. I made a way through the thicket with difficulty, till I found a little cove which the current did not enter, and over which hung a sycamore, whose lower branches were washed by the ripple which the current sent in as it passed. On these branches the bather might stand or sit without touching the mud, which lay soft and deep below. The limestone precipice and wooded promontory opposite made the river particularly beautiful here; and sorry I was to leave it at last.

It is useless to attempt to make out where the baptism of Jesus took place, or where his disciples and John administered the rite. And on the spot one has no pressing wish to know. The whole of this river is so sacred and so sweet that it is enough to have saluted it in any part of its course.

One thing more we did: we remembered friends far away, and carried away some water for them, having provided tin cases for the purpose. The Queen's children are baptised in Jordan water; and I brought away a caseful for the baptism of the child of a friend who lives farther away from the Jordan than our Queen does. This business done, we were summoned to horse, and ride away southward to the Dead Sea.

The belt of woodland soon turned away eastward, and we found ourselves exposed to extreme heat on a desolate plain crusted with salt and cracked with drought. There had been a closeness and muskiness in the air all the morning, which was very oppressive; and now it was, at our usual slow pace, almost intolerable. I put my horse to a fast canter, and crossed the plain as quickly as possible, finding this pace a relief to my horse as well as myself. The drift on the beach of the sea looked dreary enough; ridges of broken canes and willow twigs washed up, and lying among the salt and the little unwholesome swamps of the shore: but the water looked bright and clear, and so tempting that our horses put their noses down repeatedly, always turning away in disgust. I tasted the water—about two drops—and I almost thought I should never get the taste out of my mouth again. And this is the water that poor Costigan's coffee was made of!

Costigan was a young Irishman, whose mind was possessed with the idea of exploring the Dead Sea, and giving the world the benefit of his discoveries. It would have been a useful service; and he had zeal and devotedness enough for it. But he wanted either knowledge or prudence; and he lost his life in the adventure, without having left us any additional information whatever.—He had a small boat carried overland by camels; and in this he set forth (in an open boat in the mouth of July!), with only one attendant, a Maltese servant. They reached the southern end of the lake—not without hardship and difficulty; but the fatal struggle was in getting back again. The wind did not favor them, and once blew such a squall that they had to lighten the boat, when the servant stupidly threw overboard the only cask of fresh water that they had. They were now compelled to row for their lives, to reach the Jordan before they perished with thirst; but the sun scorched them from a cloudless sky, and the air was like a furnace. When Costigan could row no longer, his servant made some coffee from the water of the lake, and then they lay down in the boat to die. But the man once more roused himself, and by many efforts brought the boat to the head of the lake. They lay helpless for a whole day on the burning shore, unable to do more than throw the salt water over each other from time to time. The next morning, the servant crawled away, in hopes of reaching Rihhah, which he did with extreme difficulty. He sent Costigan's horse down to the shore, with a supply of water. He was alive, and was carried to Jerusalem in the coolness of the night. He was taken care of in the Latin convent there; but he died in two days. Not a note relative to his enterprise was ever found; and during his illness he never spoke on the subject. Any knowledge that he might have gained has perished with him; and no reliable information could be obtained from his servant. Costigan's grave is the American burying-ground; and there I saw the stone which tells his melancholy story.—He died in 1835.

There appears to be no satisfactory evidence as to whether any fish are to be found in the Dead Sea. Our guides said that some small black fish have been seen there; but others deny this. A dead fish has been found on the shore near the spot where the Jodan enters the lake; but this might have been cast up by the overflow of the river. It is said that small birds do not fly over this lake, on account of the deleterious nature of its atmosphere. About small birds I cannot speak; but I saw two or three vultures winging their way down it obliquely. The curious lights which hung over the surface struck me as showing an unusual state of the atmosphere—the purple misty light resting on one part and the line of silvery refraction in another. Though the sky was clear after the morning clouds had passed away, the sunshine appeared dim; and the heat was very oppressive. The gentlemen of the party who stayed behind to bathe declared, on rejoining us at lunch time, that they had found the common report of the buoyancy of the water of this sea not at all exaggerated, and that it was indeed an easy matter to float in it, and very difficult to sink. They also found their hair and skin powdered with salt when dry. But they could not admit the greasiness or stickiness which is said to adhere to the skin after bathing in the Dead Sea. They were very positive about this; and they certainly the fact very carefully. Yet I have seen, since my return, a clergyman who bathed there, and who declared to me that his skin was so sticky for some days after, that he could not get rid of it, even from his hands. And the trustworthy Dr. Robinson, a late traveler there says—"After coming out, I perceived nothing of the salt crust upon the body, of which so many speak. There was a slight pricking sensation, especially where the skin had been chafed; and a sort of greasy feeling, as of oil, upon the skin, which lasted for several hours." The contrast of these testimonies, and the diversity which exists among the analyses of the waters which have been made by chemists, seem to show that the quality of the waters of the Dead Sea varies. And it appears reasonable that it should; for it must make a great difference whether fresh waters have been pouring into the basin of the lake, after the Winter rains, or a great evaporation has been going on under the Summer's sun. In following the margin of the sea, we had to cross a creek, where my shirt was splashed. These splashes turned presently to thin crusts of salt; and the moisture and stickiness were as great a weak afterward as at the moment.

We wound among salt marshes and brakes, in and out on the desolate shore of this sea; this sea which is not the less dead and dreary for being as clear and blue as a fresh mountain tarn. As we ascended the ranges of hills which lay between us and the convent where we were to rest, the Jordan valley opened northward, and the Dead Sea southward, till the extent traversed by the eye was really vast. How beautiful must it have been once, when the Jordan valley, whose verdure was now shrunk into a black line amid the sands, was like an interminable garden; and when the Cities of the Plain stood bright and busy where the Dead Sea now lay blank and gray! As I took my last look back, from a great elevation, I thought that so mournful a landscape, for one having real beauty, I had never seen.

CITY ITEMS.

☞ The weather yesterday was deliciously cool, bright and inspiring. In the morning a thin veil of snow was found to cover the streets, but it soon disappeared in the sunshine. The evening was clear, as Christmas Eve should be, giving promise of a fair and favoring morning for the Merry Christmas which our readers will be busy wishing each other as *The Tribune* is first at their doors. We must not be excluded from that interchange of kind wishes, and so friends A Merry Christmas to you all!

WASHINGTON MONUMENT.—Messrs. Trimble and Cherry, Architects, have submitted a design for this Monument to the Committee. It consists of 4 Doric Portices, on which is placed a Corinthian Colonade and Lantern supporting a magnificent dome 100 feet in diameter. On the apex of the Monument is placed a statue of the Goddess of Liberty. The total hight of the edifice is 340 feet. The whole comprises a chaste and colossal Temple of Liberty, in which the statue of the "Father of our Country" is enshrined. The Design is at present exhibited in the large room of the Merchants' Exchange.

A NEW SCULPTOR.—We had the pleasure yesterday of examining some busts by Mr E. C CLUTE, who not long since established himself in this City. Among them was one of MORRIS KETCHUM, Esq and another of HIRAM KETCHUM, both exceedingly life-like and striking. Mr CLUTE has executed a multitude likenesses in Cameo. His room is at 29 Wall st. up stairs.

DEATH OF DR. PORTER.—Dr. Charles A. Porter, an efficient assistant of Dr. Van Horenbergh at the Quarantine, died yesterday afternoon of the Ship Fever, at Staten Island, lamented by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. May he rest in peace!

☞ "The Steyermark'sche Musical Company," as will be seen by their Programme, give their first concert at the Tabernacle on Tuesday evening, 28th inst.

☞ Christy's Minstrels give an extra performance this afternoon at Mechanics' Hall for the particular amusement of young people.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS—*Friday.*—Some petitions for correcting tax were presented and referred.

A bill of the County Clerk, amounting to $1,141 65—and also between $200 and $300 additional in fitting up offices was received and referred.

The Coroner's bill for the three months from 1st July to 30th Sept. amounting to $2,276 33, being for 370 Coroner's Inquests (averaging a little over four a day, or about 29 a week,) was also received and referred to the Committee on Public Officers.

On the question of reference, Ald. McElrath, Chairman of the Committee on Public Offices, said he hoped the subject would be referred to some other Committee, as the Committee made a report on the presentation of the last bill, which, if it had been adopted, would probably have saved all further trouble. The bill, however, was referred to that Committee.

The Committee reported in favor of correcting personal tax of Mr. Shepherd Knapp, in Twelfth Ward he having sworn that he has no personal property liable to be taxed. The amount taxed is about $25,000, the tax on which would be about $250. Objection was made by the Supervisors of the Tenth, Eighth, and one or two other gentlemen, and the report supported by Alderman Oliver and Lawrence. Ald. O'Brien quoted the law of 1841 as giving authority to the Board to correct.

The Recorder stated that he was a member of the Senate at the time the law was passed and was in favor of it, but it was opposed on the ground that persons might make improper affidavits as to the value of their property. There are certain exemptions, such as clergymen and militia officers, who are not liable to pay tax, and the assessors themselves can readily ascertain whether such is the fact or not, and correct, but in all other cases the parties should be compelled to state on oath what kind of property they possess, whether stocks or otherwise, and what kind of stocks, so that this Board on an application of this kind, may judge for itself as to whether the property is taxable or not.

A motion was made to refer back. Ald. Kelly said he hoped the Committee would examine the matter in relation to the new Constitution, and see if Ministers of the Gospel are any longer exempt; they being made eligible to office under that Constitution.

The report, with another in favor of correcting tax of sundry persons, was referred back to the Committee—the inquiry 1st being if there was neglect in the parties calling upon the assessors; and 2d, if the particulars sworn to by them are sufficient to exempt them.

Ald. McElrath presented a report in favor of paying sundry advertising bills. Referred back.

Ald. Kelly offered a resolution in favor of applying to the Legislature for permission to elect two Coroners for the City of New York. Referred.

Ald. Messerole offered a resolution that the person in charge be requested to have the room properly warmed, as the Board this evening has been in danger of freezing. Referred.

Ald. Kelly stated that the Committee would be ready next week to report on the question of salaries of County Clerk, &c.

GENERAL SESSIONS—Robert Patterson, convicted of an assault and battery on Dr. Reynolds, was fined $50....Washington F. Jackson, for an assault and battery on Henry L. Vultee, was fined $5....Robert Farlow was then tried and convicted of a misdemeanor, in having indecently exposed his person in the streets. The Court suspended judgment in his case....James Derrick was then tried for a grand larceny, in having stolen a set of sails, alleged to be worth $50, the property of Stephen Waring. The jury found the prisoner guilty of a petit larceny only, and recommended him to mercy. The Court accordingly suspended judgment in his case also.

POLICE.—James Sherlock, doing business at No. 178 Maiden-lane, under the name of Sherlock & Co. was arrested yesterday on a charge of false pretences, in having on the 27th of February last obtained from William Killips, through the hands of Isaac E. Tate, the sum of $90 as payment of passage money for John Gibney and family, consisting of eight persons, from Liverpool to this port, by fraudulently representing that the said firm of Sherlock & Co. were the owners of a number of ships, and that one of the said firm resided in Liverpool and attended to the forwarding of passengers in their ships from that port; and gave printed certificates to that effect, together with written acknowledgment of the receipt of the money in question—whereas it is now alleged that the said firm have no interest in any ships or agency in any line. The accused was held to bail in the sum of $500....John Norris was taken into custody yesterday, and committed to answer a charge of having forcibly taken a silver watch, valued at $20, from Joseph Bowman of No. 246 West st. at the grocery store of Washington Adams.

BROOKLYN AFFAIRS.

ACCIDENT.—A man named Hiram Willens, an overseer of the prisoners at the Kings County Jail, had his leg badly fractured by the upsetting of a wagon loaded with straw, as it was passing through a gate into the yard.

SCALDED TO DEATH.—A boy about 12 years of age, fell through a trap door into the sewil vat of Manley's distillery, corner of Tillary and Gold sts on Monday last. He was immediately rescued, and taken to his house in East Brooklyn, but was so badly scalded that he died in a few hours.

Law Courts.

SUPERIOR COURT—Before Justices Oakley, Vanderpoel, and Sanford—*Decisions*—*The Mayor, &c. of New York* ads. *Edward C Mathews*.—This was a suit against the surety of a public administrator, to recover a bill of costs. The Court considers that the surety of the public administrator is liable for his acts. Judgment for plaintiff on demurrer.

Paul Neary ads. *Brian O Hara*.—Motion denied with costs.

Henry Andrews, et al. admr &c. ads. *Frances O J. Smith*.—Motion to set aside report of referees denied on counsel as per decision.

Phillip Hone and David A Baker, receivers, &c. vs. *Mutual Safety Ins Co*.—This was a claim of $22,000 for reinsurance. The defendants contended that the plaintiffs had no right only to pay *pro rata*. The Court decided that on contracts for reinsurance in case of loss the insurers are responsible for the whole loss to the extent of the policy—it is different from contracts for double insurance, by which parties contribute *pro rata* to the loss. Judgment for plff for the amount of the verdict.

Same vs. *George Gault and S Ballard*.—Judgment for plaintiff according to plaintiff's third point.

Same vs. *Caleb Smith and others*—Judgment for plaintiff.

Same vs. *Benjamin H. Folger, copleidet, &c.*—Judgment must for plaintiff, amount to be adjusted in conformity to plaintiff's third point.

Same vs. *John Hughes*.—Now told denied.

Same vs. *Eugene Babts and Charles Jardo*.—Judgment for plaintiff according to plaintiff's second point.

John Brower, Rocester Croton Insurance Co. vs. *Leonard Appleby*.—Action on a premium note. Decided that the notes given on the organization of the Company are valid, and supported by a valid consideration; also that a mere mistake alleged in going into operation, could not affect the rights of the Company as relate to the parties giving the notes, it could only be taken advantage of by Government on quo warranto, and farther that the agreement set up in relation to the President, that the note should not be paid, was invalid and contrary to the terms of the note. Judgment for plaintiff.

Merchants' Mutual Ins. Co. vs. *Manuel De Purge*.—Motion for new trial denied.

Same vs. *John B. Ray*.—New trial granted, costs to abide event.

Same vs. *Gordon J. Leeds*.—New trial denied.

John Ireland vs. *John McGarrish*.—Action for slander, where all the words charged were not proved. The question was, if those proved were slanderous. The Court thought not. Motion to set aside nonsuit denied.

SUPREME COURT—In Chambers—Before Judge Jones.—*Case of Madam Restell*.—The subject as to bail and changing place of trial was again brought up yesterday, but postponed to Monday.

MARINE COURT—Before Judge Waterman.—*Wm. Field* vs. *James M Bryan*.—Action for assault and battery at sea, brought by a seaman of the ship New-York, against the chief mate, who beat him, it is said, on the ground of disobedience, &c. that the man became insensible. Verdict this forenoon.

There was also a section by Henry Allen, another seaman, against the captain and mate, but the Court gave judgment for defendants.

☞ But if we adopt the strait forward process of common-sense reasoning, at what conclusion must we arrive? Most clearly, that *heaven is on our side in this War*.
[Reporter.

If this "common-sense reasoning" be correct, we must be unavoidably led to the conclusion that Heaven was on the side of Cain in the death of Abel; on the side of the victors in their persecution of the Waldenses and Huguenots, and indeed in every instance where victory was secure. [Keokuk (Iowa) Reg.

MARRIED:

On Wednesday, Dec. 22, instant, by Rev. Bishop Jones, GEO. W. ALSEBROOK, to ANN CITY, to CATHARINE, daughter of John Storms, of Sing Sing.

☞ Sing Sing papers please copy.

On Thursday, 16th inst. by Rev. A. Bloomer Hart, Mr. CLARE W. BEAMES, to Miss SARAH M. HART, eldest daughter of Joseph C. Hart, all of this City.

DIED:

On Friday morning, 24th Dec. inst., after a short illness, in the 8th year of his age, HENRY CLAY, youngest son of N. W. and Ann Eliza Roberts.

The relatives and friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral from 3 Cortlandt-st. on Sunday, 26th inst. at 3 o'clock P. M.

☞ Albany and Auburn papers please copy.

On the 23d instant, GRACE SHOTWELL BANGS, daughter of Rev. Dr. Bangs, in the 25th year of her age.

The friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend the funeral from the Sandcast. M. E. Church, Brooklyn, on the 26th inst. at ½ P. M.

On Tuesday, the 21st inst. after a lingering illness, Mrs. HANNAH, widow of the late Capt. Elias Sturtevant, of this City, aged 69 years.

The friends and acquaintances of the family with those of her son Seth and her son-in-law, Dr. C. S. Archer, are respectfully invited to attend her funn. All Saints Church, in Henry-st. on Monday next at quarter past 3 P. M. where services will be performed without further invitation.

On the 15th inst. at Jones's Swamp, Long Island, after a lingering illness, Mrs. MARY C. wife of Gideon Frost, in the 45th year of her age.

At Westport, Conn. on Tuesday the 21st inst. in the 46th year of her age, JULIANA C. wife of Hezekiah Nichols and daughter of Dr. Daniel Comstock of Danbury, Conn.

On Thursday, Dec. 23d, WILLIAM D. second son of J. D. & A. E. Culver, of South Brooklyn, aged 4 years and 2 months.

In Waltham, Mrs. Lydia consort of the late Zacheus Farewell of Fitchburg, aged 81 years and 4 months. She has long enjoyed a pleasant home in the family of her son, Br. Jacob Farwell, of Waltham, who has cheerfully fulfilled the first commandment with promise. She has had ten children, among whom are two pairs of twins, one pair being sons and the other daughters; and all her children are yet living, the eldest 59 years of age. One of the sons is in Valley, N. Y. and of the daughters, one is in Brownwick, Me. one other in Richmond Va. and another in Cincinnati, Ohio. She has left three descendants of the *fifth generation*, two of whom she has seen. Truly she has lived a long and favored life in the land which the Lord God hath given us. [Boston Christian Freeman.

☞ "The Steyermark'sche Musical Company," as will be seen by their Programme, give their first concert at the Tabernacle on Tuesday evening, 28th inst.

COMMERCIAL AND MONEY MATTERS.

FRIDAY, P. M.

SECOND BOARD.

50 Harlem Rd	b5 41½	50