THE HANGING OF A WRETCH.

Execution of John B. Hoffman, the Remorseless Murderer of His Two Sons.

A Cincinnati despatch says: John B. Hoffman was hanged here on Tuesday morning in the jail yard for the murder of his son. He wept while listening to the reading of the death warrant and begged piteously not to be "downed in the papers." He had to be held while being handcuffed and was supported on the scaffold by two men while the noose was adjusted. He made no speech. Hoffman's crime was that of killing one of his sons in January, 1883: It was the second crime of the kind he had committed in five years. Hoffman was a German, with a wife and six children in 1878. Coming home drunk one night he entered the room where Edward, his eldest son, aged 20, was alone. He had scarcely entered when the neighbors were startled by the report of a pistol. They found Edward on the floor with a pistol-ball in his chest, from which he died in a few minutes, begging that his father be exonerated because he was drunk. A careless coroner held an inquest and brought in a verdict of "not guilty," and a lax judiciary let the matter pass without bringing it before the Grand Jury. Edward had been the main support of the family, including his drunken and inhuman father. Hoffman then attempted suicide by hanging, and his son Robert, then about fifteen years old, cut him down. Five years later Mrs. Hoffman abandoned the brute. She and her children stuck together, and Robert, a bright, industrious young man, 21 years old, was the main dependence of the family. The family were living in a tenement-house, and were doing better than they ever before had done. On the morning of Jan. 12th, 1883, Robert Hoffman started before daylight to open the grocery store in which he was a trusted clerk. He had no sooner stepped into the hall of the tenement house than the flash of a pistol lighted the darkness, and he fell dead, shot through the head. His father had been standing in the doorway on the opposite side of the hall all night long waiting for this opportunity to deprive Mrs. Hoffman of her support. Hoffman was arrested, but was not indicted until more than a year after—in fact, just before the great riot. His trial and conviction followed the riot. The jury in this case prayed when they went out and brought a verdict in a few minutes. He died detested by all who knew him and by none more than by his fellow-prisoners in the county jail.

A POOR HOUSE TRAGEDY.

Fire at a Michigan Poor Farm—One Woman Burned to Death—Another Almost Frozen to Death.

A last (Friday) night's Detroit despatch says: A terrible fire occurred at Lapeer County Poor Farm, two miles from Lapeer, Mich., last night, resulting in the loss of one life and much suffering to others. The fire originated in the poor house, where thirty-seven inmates were housed, and is supposed to have been caused by a defective chimney. The main building was entirely destroyed, together with its contents, consisting of furniture, bedding, clothing, provisions, etc. One woman was burned to death, but all the other inmates were taken out alive, and are now quartered in farm houses in the neighborhood. The poor creature who lost her life was an insane woman named Bertha Rockwell. She was got outside with the others, but dashed back into the blazing building and was burned to death, only her charred and blackened bones being found in the *debris* this morning. Another insane woman named Phœbe Salisbury, escaped from her keepers during the excitement, and clad only in her night gown ran two miles into the country before she could be recaptured. She was badly frozen, the thermometer indicating below zero at the time. However, she will probably recover if she receives proper care. The condition of the surviving inmates is pitiable, but their temporary wants are being supplied. There are no fire fighting appliances at the poor house, but the surrounding buildings were saved by throwing snow upon them. The pecuniary loss to the county is about $6,000.

AT THEIR OWN DOOR.

An Ohio Farmer Shot Dead and His Wife Wounded by a Robber.

A last Thursday) night's Cleveland despatch says: Last evening a farmer named Harrington, living near Geneva, was called to the door, and on opening it was confronted by a masked man who presented a revolver, and said he wanted the farmer's money. The handkerchief fell from the robber's eyes and Mrs. Harrington exclaimed, "I know him!" "You do, do you?" shouted the ruffian, "take that then!" and he fired, the bullet going through her shoulder. She ran to a neighbor for help, and on returning with friends, evidence of a desperate struggle was found. Harrington lay dead on the floor with a bullet hole in his forehead. The murderer is a fellow named Feck, who lived two miles from the farm. Citizens are scouring the country for him.

Frozen Kindness.

The world is full of kindness that never was spoken, and that is not much better than no kindness at all. The fuel in the stove makes the room warm, but there are great piles of fallen trees lying on rocks and on tops of hills where nobody can get them; these do not make anybody warm. You might freeze to death for want of wood in plain sight of these fallen trees if you had no means of getting the wood home and making a fire of it. Just so in a family; love is what makes the parents and children, the brothers and sisters happy. But f they take care never to say a word about it; if they keep it a profound secret as if it were a crime, they will not be much happier than if there was not any love among them; the house will seem cool even in summer, and if you live there you will envy the dog when any one calls him poor fellow.

There are few avenues open to the colored youth. The number who have capital is limited, and necessity forces them to take menial places in hotels, on railroads, in stores and private families. The great danger that threatens the future of the negro is the forced ignorance of them as to trades. It must be met and overcome.—*Louisville Times.*

FIRE AMONG ORPHANS.

Thrilling Scenes at a Fire in a Catholic Asylum—Heroic Rescues and Fatal Incidents.

A last (Thursday) night's Brooklyn despatch says: A fire broke out this afternoon in the large building of the Catholic Male Orphan Asylum, containing seven hundred and eighty-five orphans, sixty of whom were in the dormitory on the top floor. Whether or not all escaped cannot be told until the roll is called. It is thought some were lost. Sister Mary Josephine, who was in the dormitory at the time the fire broke out, made heroic efforts to save the little ones. She remained in the room until driven out by the flames. Then she ran to the window, where she stood upon the cornice until a fireman from the roof swung his coat to her. The sister caught the coat, but when the fireman tried to pull her from her perilous position she lost her grasp and fell headlong to the ground. An 8-year-old boy jumped from the third story and was severely injured. There was great excitement among the inmates. It is believed that all the children on the lower floors escaped. A spectator says he is confident he saw a woman fall back into the smoke. There were thirty sisters in the asylum at the time, but it is believed they all escaped. Father Mahoney, who was in charge of the building, thinks all the children escaped. Several thrilling incidents occurred while the children were being rescued. Two civilians handed seven boys down from the second story window, when the flames compelled them to retreat. Two firemen fell from ladders and were severely injured. The excitement in and around the building was intense. Hundreds of partially clad children forced themselves through every conceivable avenue of egress, and rushed shivering to the nearest place of shelter.

The fire originated in the drying-room, where a boy with a candle accidentally ignited some clothing. The building, which occupied the entire block, was destroyed. Loss on building $200,000. Sister Mary Josephine has since died from her injuries.

THE LONDON BRIDGE.

Something More About the Explosion—How it was Planned—The Reward.

A last (Thursday) night's London despatch says: The sensation caused by last Saturday's explosion at London bridge has been revived and intensified by to-day's developments. Col. Magendie's report, and the Lord Mayor's offer of £5,000 reward for the arrest of those who caused the explosion, prove that it was not an accident, but an intentional outrage deliberately planned, but executed with great stupidity. The theory that the explosion was caused by the special detectives who were discharged on account of a return of confidence, has many supporters, and the Irish Nationalist papers accept this view with a difference. The Dublin *United Ireland* says: "The English exhibit admirable patience under the senseless and wicked frights to which they are subjected, but the police direct the dynamite conspiracy and pay for the explosions."

The researches into the explosion are causing a sensation as the disclosures show that the outrage was planned with an amount of coolness and determination and foresight hitherto uncredited to the terrorists. Everything proves that the participators in the plot must have remained beneath the bridge a quarter of an hour despite the swiftness of the current. The work was prosecuted with immense difficulty, but the deep shadows were sufficient to prevent detection. It is believed that a chemical fuse was used to ignite the explosion giving the conspirators time to escaped and catch the train for Paris. The tide on Saturday was lower than for the past few months or than will be until spring. The hour selected was when the tide was lowest, proving that the plot was carefully elaborated.

A STRANGE YARN.

A Man Tells How He Saw the Ghost of the Wife he Had Murdered.

A Boston despatch says: James Nickerson, on trial for shooting his wife, told the story of his crime on the stand last Wednesday. He had been drinking very hard, he said, and shot her without provocation or warning. After he did it he went out and drank more and then started for Chelsea, "From Chelsea," he said, "I went to East Boston, then back to Chelsea and I know not where afterwards. I woke up in a wood at night. I stayed there two or three days. Then I was walking along at night and heard some talking and two fellows came up to me. They walked past and then I walked up to them. The caught up to me after I passed and ran ahead of me. I turned round and went back to a bridge. I heard a sweet voice talking, and on looking up saw my wife. She was right in front of me, and when I stepped she walked ahead of me, looking back over her shoulder. When she got over the bridge she stopped and faced me. There was a bright thing on her forehead like a diamond. She had a happy smile on her face. I got close up to her and said 'Ellen.' Her veil fell down and she disappeared, and I have never seen her since."

Coolness in a Trying Situation.

The coolness and self-possession of that very remarkable man, Sergeant S. Prentiss, was strikingly illustrated in the following anecdote of his second duel with the late Henry S. Foote [General Foote], which is taken from his memoir by his brother, says *Every Other Saturday.* The meeting occurred on the right bank of the Mississippi river, opposite Vicksburg, and at the first fire Mr. Prentiss' pistol snapped, while General Foote missed, shooting over him. This increased the eagerness of the large crowd assembled to witness the affair to such a degree that they pressed up on each side of the line, until there was left quite a narrow space, scarcely room enough for the passage of the balls. After the parties had resumed their positions, pistol in hand and triggers set, awaiting the word for a second fire, everything being as still as death, Mr. Prentiss observed a little boy, who, anxious to see "the fun," was climbling a sapling in his rear and said to him, "My son, you had better take care; General Foote is shooting rather wild."

Sir Moses Montefiore is reported to have completely recovered his health.

A MESSAGE TO METHODISTS.

Pastoral Letter From the Bishops of the Centenary Conference at Baltimore—Counsel as to the Furtherance of the Work of the Church.

The pastoral of the Bishops was read at the Centenary Conference of Methodists, at Baltimore. It is addressed "To the Methodst people in the United States and Canada." It says:

"Permit us to remind you, dear brethren, while we extend hearty congratulations upon the success of the past and express the profoundest conviction that even nobler and grander achievements await us in the future, that the mission given us by Providential allotment is not yet accomplished. We entreat you, brethren, do not forget that hitherto Methodists have been distinguished by the emphasis they have given the essential doctrines of Christianity. In all the years of our history, the truths relating to God, to moral government, to immorality, to eternal retribution, have been sacredly maintained and asserted with great distinctness, and that we have held in common with all Christian people to the inspiration and divine authority of the Scripture, divine origin of the church, vocation of the ministry, value of the sacraments, and the indispensableness of the strictest morality according to the New Testament standard; and that yet beyond all these points we have made conspicuous the heinousness of sin, the necessity of atonement, universality of provis nal redemption, freedom of will and freene s of grace. Not one of these can be discarded or distorted without marring the scheme of salvation revealed in the gospel.

"But even these foundation truths, however emphasized, will not meet the demands of the soul and never could have produced the phenomena of Methodist life and history. There are other doctrines to be emphasised—doctrines which relate to salvation applied as well as provided—doctrines which underlie the experiences of the soul in its emergence out of the darkness and death of sin into the light and life of righteousness. The other doctrines have been the rallying cry of Methodism in the past and must be in the future. They are repentance, faith, justification, adoption, the witness of the spirit, sanctification and Christian perfection. Out of these come all our experiences, all our joys and hopes, our inspiration and zeal; and upon these are built all our special forms and means of grace, our charities, our benevolences, and our correctional institutions. These doctrines, above all others, have given tone and shape and spirit to the organism, and determined its work and place in history. Take from Methodism these doctrines of experience, or even the emphasis given them, or overlay them with lifeless forms or ceremonies or mar them by human speculations concerning the mode of divine procedure in them, or confuse them by any conceivable departure from their simplicity so they shall become only doctrines of the creed, unverified in the soul as the very essence of salvation, and then our glory is departed forever. We, therefore, plead with you, brethren, as you value the purity of the Church and its power to convert the people, and spread scriptural holiness, hold fast these doctrines as they come from the fathers, as they appear in the Scriptures and as they have been attested by the experience of the Church in past ages."

The address also urges the maintenance of family religion. "The holiest sanctuary on earth," the address says, "is the Christmas home. Neither church nor Sunday school can do the work of the home, or become an adequate substitute for the influence of piety in the household. See to it that children be all taught of the Lord. With sound instruction, let the hand of restraint be employed, yet with such firmness and gentleness as to win and keep the children, as well as to hold them in subjection to authority."

The address speaks of the Sabbath as the pillar of Christian civilization. "The spiritual Church without the Sabbath is an impossibility. God has consecrated one-seventh of our days to rest and worship. The law enjoining its observance is both positive and moral, imbedded in the decalogue, enforced in the New Testament and interpreted and illustrated in the practice of the primitive Church. The grand march for the conquest of all lands for Christ has begun. The voice of the Lord bids us go forward. We dare not accept a secondary place. With our schools and colleges, with our wealth and culture, with our social power and vast numbers, we must have a large share in the world's evangelization."

How Whittier Became an Editor.

Whittier, the poet, is reported as saying to an interviewer recently: "Trifles sometimes have an important bearing on one's life. A copy of the Hartford *Review* fell under my eye, and I determined to send its editor, George D. Prentice, a few poems, which he kindly published. My contributions continued, and when he resigned in order to live in Louisville, where he made for himself a reputation as one of the most brilliant journalists as well as pungent and witty paragraphists in America, he advised the publisher to send for me to take his place. I was out in the corn-field hoeing when the letter came to me inviting me to take editorial charge of the paper. I could not have been more surprised if I had been offered the crown of England. What education, what experience had I for such a task! I knew little of men and things or books. I was singularly deficient in knowledge of the affairs of the day. And yet the task, formidable as it seemed to me, was worth attempting. So I accepted the trust. I had much to learn, but I set myself resolutely to fill the position, and I succeeded, after hard work and patient study, in making the paper acceptable to its readers.

A Question of Pronunciation.

It is but a step-oh
Down to the dep-oh.
The way is quite steep-oh
That leads to the deep-oh.
I slipped on a grape-oh
Just by the day-poh.
In a store near the dee-pot
I bought this small tea-pot.
Perhaps, to end the agitation,
We'd better henceforth call it station.

"Can you tell me, sir," asked a young lady at a book shop, "in what order Thackeray wrote his books?" "No, lady," replied the gentlemanly sales-gentleman, "but, don't you know, I believe it was in order to make money."

LABOUCHERE.

Sketch of the Editor of "Truth."

Labouchere, the member for Northampton, is a good deal in evidence, in Parliament, and in his clever, audacious paper, *Truth.* He is not unlike Mr. James G. Blaine, the defeated candidate for the White House, in appearance. He is about the same height and build, wears his beard, and is somewhat slow in his movements. Mr. Blaine has a square forehead and a larger nose; but there is not much more in his head than is stowed away in the Labouchere brain. A well-educated, and a travelled man, Labouchere has, I dare say, far less earnest views of life than Mr. Blaine has, is certainly far more indifferent to the opinion of Mrs. Grundy, and possibly the only likeness between them is in the build, height and manner of wearing the beard. This trifling similarity may, however, help the reader to realize the figure of Labouchere. If he cared a brass farthing, or even less, for anything or anybody, Labouchere would have more influence in the House of Commons and out of it. Life is to him an amusement. He has plenty of money and plenty of brains. A seat in Parliament, a share in the *Daily News*, a paper of his own, a bank, a house in town, a classic home on the Thames, a clever wife, of whom he is really fond, and a baby that is to him a constant surprise; he finds his time well occupied. He has none of the fears of business men; his bread is buttered on both sides; he is rich beyond the dangers of such speculations as he cares to indulge in; and his heart is neither consumed by the fires of patriotism, nor the canker of a lofty ambitition. Some people despise him; he does not care. Some people admire him; he does not care. A few friends like him; he does not care. Still fewer probably love him; he does not care. He is a good story teller. His best anecdotes are against himself. As a financier and man of business, he is far more generous than is generally known; and I have never heard a whisper against his honor as a banker, speculator and man of business. He has a slight drawl in his speech; is a capital talker; a liberal host; and he stands at the extreme end of the extremest political party in the state. His latest radical performance was to propose in the House of Commons a motion not to exact terms, but favoring the abolition of the upper House. In spite of the Premier, he pushed the motion to a division, and got 71 votes in its favor. The result was loudly cheered by his Irish friends and Radical colleagues. Some politicians regard the division as "very significant."

Prof. Bell's Successes.

Alexander Graham Bell, who has now been pronounced the first inventor of the working telephone by every court but the Supreme Court of the United States, and who expects to win in the latter court as in the others, is not perceptibly elated by his success, writes a Washington correspondent to the Philadelphia *Record.* He bears prosperity as well as any man I ever knew. He is immensely rich, and by his invention all the members of his family have been enriched. But Bell is just the same cheery, eager, hard-working devotee of science that he was back in the old days of his poverty and obscurity. Bell cares nothing for money as money. He is not a money-maker. Like Agassiz and all other great scientists, he is "to busy to make money." Of course, he likes the things that money will provide—his handsome house on Scott circle, with all its elaborate conveniences, its elegant furnishings and its beautiful works of art, his workshop, the "Volta Laboratory," on Connecticut avenue, his apparatus and his library. But he would be just as happy without them. His happiness lies in his family on one hand, and in his scientific pursuits on the other. When he is not busy in his laboratory, or in his library, or in the free school for deaf-mute children which he has established, he is enjoying the society of his wife and children. They are a delightful family. The man who has made the Bell telephone the splendid business success that it is is Bell's father-in-law, Gardiner G. Hubbard, a man of very great business ability, who lives in a handsome house on Dupont circle, opposite Blaine's castle. He is as practical as Bell is theoretical. He, too, is very rich. A Boston man told me the other day that it was understood in Boston that Hubbard made $500,000 by the recent rise in Bell telephone stock. Hubbard is a very agreeable old gentleman, who still writes a good deal for the reviews and magazines, as he used to do when he was a professor in Cambridge on a small salary.

An Appropriate Title.

We find the following in the *Brooklyn Magazine*: It is related of Dr. Newman Hall, that becoming greatly excited over some criticisms passed upon an article which he had written, he sat down and wrote a very sarcastic and bitter reply, which he carried to the celebrated Dr. Binney for suggestions and approval. Dr. Hall read the document to his friend, and whenever he came to any passage which happened to be particularly bitter, he rubbed it in with an emphasis that would make even a mummy squeal. When he had finished reading he said to Dr. Binney: "Well, what do you think of that?" "Oh," was the reply, "I think it remarkably well written, but has extremely sharp and bitter things in it. Have you fixed upon a title for it yet?" "No, I have not," replied Dr. Hall; "Perhaps you can assist me?" Then Dr. Binney said slowly and deliberately, "This would be a capital title: 'Go to the Devil,' by the author of 'Come to Jesus.'" The phillippic found the fire-place.

James Parry, who died a few weeks ago in Chester, England, was noted for his parsimony, and is believed to have been a millionaire. Next to the Duke of Westminster, he was the largest property owner in Chester. He is said once to have instructed a tenant in paying him $10 to bring the amount in two instalments in order thus to avoid the use of a stamped receipt.

A New Haven, Conn., man pawned his false teeth for a quarter recently to buy a theatre ticket.

Bad drinking water given to a few cows owned by a single farmer in Ayrshire, England, caused an outbreak of typhoid fever in three hospitals, and the illness of 104 patients. The germs of disease were transmitted by milk.

FAIRS IN OTHER LANDS.

The Old-Time Customs of Rural Fairs in France and England.

Although the English language is indebted to the Latin for the word, the English fair was a very different thing and answered a very different purpose. They were public marts for buying and selling, and could only be set up by the king's grant or by long and immemorial usage which represented such a grant. The right to hold such a fair or market was jealously guarded, and it was held to be a nuisance to set up a fair near enough to be prejudicial. A new fair could not be set up within a third part of twenty miles of the old one. If held on the same day it was prima facie a nuisance; if on another day, it will not be presumed to be a nuisance, but must be proved to be such Fairs were held in churchyards and later in churches themselves, and when the people crowded the monasteries and abbeys on the feast days of the church, the monks knew how to make the most of the occasion. The English fairs combined business with amusement. Wrestling, boxing and single stick, with an occasional bear-baiting, enlivened the scene. Rude dramatic representations were given in booths, and the professional tumblers and acrobats delighted crowds. The Puritans, when they had the upper hand, frowned on such frivolities, but under the reign of "Ye Merrie Monarch," "who never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one," fairs flourished. The cattle show and the bench show have taken its place, and the racecourse affords a more congenial clime for the vast army of itinerant mirth producers. In France, however, the rural fair has many of its old-time attributes. Held on Sunday, the fete of St. Cloud is perhaps a good type—a long row of booths, at which are sold all sorts of cakes and jimcracks. Lotteries are going on, and there is lots of fun. Not very refined always, but always good-natured. At one end are large booths fitted up for circuses and dramatic entertainments, and the clown, as of yore, tells on the outside of the wonders to be seen within. Crowds of grown men and women are amusing themselves with childish games and toys; but the French peasants go back to their irksome tasks with lightsome hearts, and it is perhaps as well for them as the dull practical instruction to be gained from one of our agricultural fairs. National fairs, such as the Nijni-Novgorod fair in Russia, are interesting to study, and differ as widely as the individuals who frequent them.—*Philadelphia North American.*

A HUMBLE HEROINE.

How the Wife of a Farm Servant Helped Shipwrecked Sailors.

An incident of the storm a few weeks ago in the northeast of Scotland has escaped record. The *St. James Gazette* is indebted to a correspondent for the following account of the gallantry of the wife of a farm servant—gallantry which ought not to be allowed to pass unrecognized: During the height of the gale on Thursday morning this woman, Mrs. Whyte, who lives with her husband in a small cottage on Aberdour beach observed the steamer William Hope, of Dundee, wrecked in the bay almost opposite her own door. Without a moment's hesitation, and in the midst of a blinding shower of hail and sleet, this brave woman proceeded as far as she safely could into the sea and caught the end of a rope which one of the crew threw to her. The rope she fastened round her waist, and with her feet planted firmly on the beach, and with the spray dashing around her, she stood until those on board the steamer were able to make the necessary arrangements for getting ashore, which they did safely. Mrs. Whyte's goodness did not end there. She took the rescued men to her humble cot, and, as far as her poor means afforded, supplied that comfort which the destitute and exhausted crew stood much in need of. Nor is this the first occasion on which this poor woman has shown hereself a good Samaritan. About two years ago the Swedish barque Almater was wrecked on almost the same spot as the William Hope. Mrs Whyte showed the utmost sympatny and kindness for the stranded foreigners; she took them to her house, grudging neither time, convenience, nor material aid such as was in her power to alleviate their wants. These services have never been publicly recognized.

A Blind Boat Builder.

Herreshoff, the wonderful blind boat builder, whose factories and shops are at this place, has just finished his last marvel of beauty, speed and elegance, as applied to steam yachts, in a steam launch for Jay Gould's use. She is a beautifully modelled craft, gleaming in black walnut, mahogany, brass, silver and steel, and is intended for New York harbor cruising and to accompany the rich man's steam yacht, the Atalanta. She is nearly 36 feet in length and 7½ feet beam. Mr. Herreshoff has made several trials in her and is thoroughly satisfied that she is the best of any of his successful efforts in the yacht-building line. In her best speeding in this harbor the little craft ran up to fifteen miles per hour, hardly rippling the water to do it, and parting it as easily as a knife. This speed has never before been attained by a steam yacht of hor size. She is on her way to New York, and attracts much attention. It is said the prince of speculators will upholster her in red silk velvet. She cost over $30,000.—*Bristol (R.I.) Times.*

A Joke on the Grand Old Man.

"Dagonet," in the London *Referee*, says: "Mr. Gladstone burst into our editorial room the other day with his axe in his hand and a broad grin on his face. 'I say,' he exclaims, 'you haven't gone to press yet, have you?' 'No.' 'That's right. I've brought you something for the paper. I was cutting down a tree with my boy Herbert, and he was telling me about the row at Birmingham. I remarked that it was wrong of the boys to fling the benches about. 'Yes, pa,' he said, 'that was a redistribution of seats that the Tories couldn't be expected to approve of.' Not bad for Herbert, was it, eh! Put it in if you can. Ta, ta!' And the hale and hearty old man danced down the stairs four at a time and went off to Downing street in the highest glee."

Somebody has calculated that if the American people should make the effort they could save $150,000,000 in dress alone each year.