

May 10, 1856

der such aid as they could devise. The first thing suggested was a raft. This they formed by placing a cask in the centre, with some strong timbers fastened over it in a square form, and several stout ropes secured it on either side. The spirits of the poor lad revived when he saw the preparations making, as did the hopes of spectators. The raft was launched, and floated slowly down towards him. All watched it with anxiety; but none could have felt, as did he, for whose preservation it was intended. It swam buoyantly on the waves—it drew nearer—it was almost within his reach—in another minute he might be saved, when, alas! more of the rope was slackened than was requisite, and sinking for a moment, it jammed between the rocks, leaving the raft scarcely a dozen feet from him. A sigh of regret ran through the crowd; but other means of escape for him might be found even should this fail. Ebert, still undaunted, maintained his spirits. He sat contemplating the raft for some time, as if discussing in his mind the possibility of disengaging the rope from the rocks. Then bracing up his nerves to the hazardous task, he slid down into the water and waded out till he could reach the rope; grasping it, he hauled and pulled, jerked up and down, till, after some time and great labour, he succeeded in freeing it from the rocks which held it. The spectators shouted with satisfaction, and still more so when they saw him manfully towing the raft out of the strength of the current towards the place of his refuge. He was not long in scouring himself to the raft by the lashings made fast for that purpose, and in giving the signal that he was ready to commence his fearful voyage. Those who had charge of the raft commenced hauling away, and it floated where the boiling current was deepest; then it sheered over towards the little islands near Goat Island and had reached within thirty feet of one of them in safety, when again the rope caught in the rocks, and the raft lay in the most fearful part of the rapids.—Now more than a sigh—a groan of sorrow and commiseration, escaped from the bosoms of the spectators. In vain those on shore hauled at the rope, fearful all the time lest it should be cut by the rocks, and the poor fellow, after all, he hurled over the precipice. Ebert himself could not now venture to move lest he should be washed off the raft. But there were many gallant hearts anxious to save him, though the wish to do so was evidently greater than their knowledge of the best means to obtain success. A boat was now brought overland, and with a long rope secured to her, a volunteer bravely shoved off from the island as far as he could venture towards the young man. Courage Ebert! courage, my lad! he shouted, 'we'll heave you a rope, and just you make yourself fast to it, and we'll haul you safe on shore.' But Ebert shook his head. He felt his strength failing, and fearful that while he was securing the rope to his body he might be washed off the raft. Various other plans were now proposed for getting the raft or its occupant to the shore; but one after the other was abandoned as being too full of risk.—Seldom has a human being been placed in a position of danger so terrific, yet so close apparently to aid. As soon as he was discovered, some humane person had sent off to Buffalo for a life-boat, under the belief that it would more safely float in those troubled waters than one of ordinary build. How frequently are the best intentions the means of destroying those they are intended to aid! Had Ebert remained in his first resting place, while in the meantime food had been conveyed to him, till the arrival of the life-boat, he might have managed to leap into it, and have escaped the peril in which he was now placed. However, at length the life boat arrived by the railway, was dragged down to the Falls, and with a strong tow line attached to her, was launched a little above where the raft floated. With anxious gaze poor Ebert watched what was going forward. Now was the time to summon all his energies. In another moment he expected to grasp the side of the life-boat and be saved. He cast off the lashings by which he was held to the raft—the boat came floating down buoyantly towards him—the lockers on held their breath with the intensity of their anxiety—would the boat reach him, or would it even then be dashed to pieces in those fiercely agitated waters? No; she floats, she floats—the boat nears him—she has touched the raft itself—Ebert sees her—the courage for which he has been so conspicuous throughout this terrible day revives within him.—A shout of joy is heard—all think he is in safety. He springs up and leaps toward the boat. What means that cry of horror which escapes from the crowd? Alas, he has missed his aim, the boat sheers away from him, and he falls headlong into the foaming current. 'Haste! haste ye who hold the rope, slacken it out—let the boat drop down to him—he may grasp it yet!' Still he is not lost. He rises to the surface—he strikes out boldly—his

foot catches a rock—he springs with the last efforts of despair towards the shore—he makes three or four almost superhuman leaps—as many more and he will be safe; but alas! the water deepens—again he swims—he swims strongly in spite of all his exertions. Life is sweet, and Ebert has life, and youth, and strength; the fair world, and its joys and pleasures. He seems to make way against that headlong tide; it was but for a moment, the waters are too mighty for him—his strength begins to fail—his strokes grow feebler—slowly he recedes from the shore—his straining eyeballs fixed on those who would save him but cannot. Now he is borne backwards into the fiercer part of the current. All hope has fled; swiftly and more swiftly he is borne onwards towards the brink of that terrible precipice. The unrelenting Spirit of the Cataract claims the brave youth as his victim. He has him as his own. No human aid can avail him now.—His fellow-men, those standing around, sickened at the sight. In another moment he reaches the fatal edge, still full of hope and nervous energy. Even then he strives to combat with his inevitable fate. Just as he reaches the very edge, as if to gain one more look at the fair world he is about to leave, he springs upright, clear out of the water—his arms waving frantically above his head; he seems thus to stand for a moment, rigid and fixed, then uttering one last fearful shriek, heard even above the ceaseless roar of the torrent, he falls backwards and the next instant is hid for ever from human eyes, amid those wildly foaming waters as they fall into the river.

Miscellaneous.

SARCASTIC SENTENCE.—Old Elias, Hayes, formerly Judge of Windsor county Vt., was a strange composition of folly and good sense, of natural shrewdness and want of cultivation. The following sentence, it was said, was pronounced upon a poor ragged fellow convicted of stealing a pair of boots from Gen. Curtis, a man of considerable wealth in the town of Windsor:

"Well," said the Judge, very gravely, before pronouncing the sentence of the court, undertaking to read the follow a lecture, "you're a fine fellow to be arraigned before the court for stealing. They say you are poor—no one doubts it who looks at you; and how dare you, being poor, have the impudence to steal a pair of boots? Nobody but rich people have a right to take such things without paying! Then they say you are worthless—that is evident from the fact that no one has ever asked justice to be done to you; all by unanimous consent pronounced you guilty before you were tried. Now you might know you would be condemned. And now you must know that it was a great aggravation; that you stole them in that large town of Windsor. In that large town such an act is most horrible. And not only to go into Windsor to steal, but you must steal from that great man, Gen. Curtis. This caps the climax of your iniquity. Base wretch! why did you not go and steal the only pair of boots which some poor man had or could get? and then you would have been let alone, nobody would have troubled themselves about the act. For your iniquity in stealing in the great town of Windsor from the great Gen. Curtis, the court sentences you to three months' imprisonment in the county jail, and may God give you something to eat."

LEAP YEAR.—THE LADIES.—Leap year has come again, when by long established custom, ladies are privileged to "pop the question." Crusty old bachelors go about in terror, giving wide berths to every pretty girl they meet, and blessing heaven for the invention of hoops, which prevents the fair creatures seizing *vi et armis*. Sweet little creatures, for whom coy swains have long sighed in vain, pluck up courage, and by a few gentle hints, which are no longer unlady-like, bring the modest youth to the point. Manœuvring mammae, thanking their stars that leap year comes once every four years, but secretly wishing also that it came every year, look for a fine harvest out of bashful lovers, and hurry their daughters into society, that they may take advantage of the blessed time. Even papas, rubbing their hands in glee, rejoice over the privileges of a leap-year, as they calculate the annual cost of their daughter, and the cent. per cent. they could make out of the money if saved. Lucky leap-year! Propitious leap-year! The inventor of the happy costume ought to have a statue raised to him by the ladies. Or, if the inventor was a woman—for we doubt our sex having sagacity enough for such a splendid *coup de main*—they should honor her by a leap-year festival, as the ancients honored Ceres.

Dr. Browning states that the entire population of the Chinese empire is 400,000,000.

ALLEGED ACCEPTANCE BY RUSSIA OF THE AUSTRIAN PROPOSITIONS.—The preceding article was in type when the public was startled by a telegraphic announcement in a second edition of the *Times*, under date of Vienna, Wednesday, ten p. m., stating "that Russia had unconditionally accepted the propositions of the Allies," and that the news was "authentic." The Funds rose in consequence; but, as in well-informed quarters little credence was attached to the statement, and as the *Morning Post*, at a later hour, announced, on the authority of a telegraphic dispatch from Sir Hamilton Seymour, that Russia merely accepted the Austrian proposals "as a basis for negotiation," the public securities again declined. In fact, the Russian answer amounts to little or nothing. All the world knows that the Czar in March last accepted in the same manner the famous "Four Points" as the basis of a pacification, without ever intending to make peace upon them, as the result but too surely proved. What faith can be put in Russia at the present time? What is their in the character of Russian diplomacy to induce the belief that she accepts the larger basis, with a sincerer object than she did the smaller one? Between an unconditional acceptance without parley, and the acceptance of a basis to parley about, there is a wide difference. Of course the Allies will not, and ought not to, raise any difficulties in the way of renewed negotiation; but while the diplomatists talk the war must proceed. We hope that peace will result, but we are certainly not sanguine.—*Illustrated News*.

THE CONDITION OF THE ARMY NOW AND IN 1854.—The reflections which the close of the year 1855 forces on the mind of each person who has witnessed the progress of the last twelve month's campaign in the Crimea, is a comparison between the condition of the army as it now is, and as it was at the corresponding date of the year 1854. Then, without depots of commissariat stores, means of transport, but, or proper clothing, the troops were in want of every necessary ingredient for sustaining bodily vigour. The season itself, too, proved unusually stormy and severe, and the inclemency was all the more felt on account of the want of the common means of protection against its influence. The duties were harassing and trying in the extreme.—In the trenches, the hazard of losing life or limb from the shot and shell of the enemy, was not greater than from the soaking wet, or bitter frost, which the men were unable to guard against. The troops, officers and men, were equally inexperienced in the art of lessening the weight of the difficulties in which they found themselves placed. The consequence was that nearly all were out of health and spirits. The sick could not be carried away fast enough. The drafts of young soldiers which came out as reinforcements, in a short time disappeared altogether; and the number of deaths in any one division was greater, period for period, than it is at present in the whole army. The very reverse of all the circumstances I have mentioned now exists.—A stranger looking on the army now, could no more form a notion of its appearance at the same date last winter than a native who had never quitted the torrid zone could form a notion of the snows and fogs of a polar region. The troops appear no less cheerful and inspired than they are conspicuous for sturdiness and health; their duties chiefly consist in perfecting their drill for future service, and the younger soldiers are rapidly advancing to a condition of frame and training which will put them on an equality with their more experienced comrades in fitness for campaigning.—*Daily News Correspondent*.

NEW MODE OF SHARPENING EDGE-TOOLS.—A German scientific journal states that a great improvement has been discovered in the method of sharpening all kinds of fine edge-tools. Into water acidulated with one-twentieth of its weight of muriatic or sulphuric acid, the blade is plunged for half an hour, and then left to corrode, which it does very evenly, though slightly, and then, after an hour or two, if applied to a hone, it is easily polished down to a fine edge. The water may be wiped off when the tool is taken out, as the acid has already taken effect in creating a roughness. It is suggested that the plan will be highly advantageous to farmers, as it will save a deal of hard labor in sharpening scythes. It is certainly worth a trial. It is said to be a very easy way of putting an edge upon a dull razor.

It is stated in United States papers that an old lady in Morristown, New Jersey, nearly 90 years old, has had a growth of fine black hair on her head for a year past. She is also cutting new teeth, and her sight has come to her for the second time.

The yellow fever is said to be raging fearfully at Aux Cayes, Hayti. Some of the ships in the port are entirely deserted, their whole crews having died.

ENGLAND PROSECUTING THE WAR ALONE.—The *Paris Siecle* takes up the question thrown out by the enemies of the alliance, as to what England would do in the insultingly-supposed case of desertion by France.—It has been said lately that England would be greatly embarrassed if France was to retire from the struggle, and were, after having saved the Mediterranean from Russian conquest, to conclude a separate treaty. In the first instance, such conduct cannot even be supposed, for it would be against the history, the habits, and genius of France. But it would be a grave error to believe that England, when isolated, would be impotent. Doubtless, in losing our alliance, she would lose a support impossible to replace. But what could Russia do against her? Matters have greatly changed since the commencement of the war.—What England has effected in three years is incalculable; what she would attempt, if reduced to her own resources, would be beyond imagination. The question of triumph has become for each Englishman the famous "to be, or not to be" of the poet. Were our alliance to be severed, one of those implacable duels of which England has so often furnished an example would commence. And in that duel with Russia let it not for one moment be doubted the power of England would increase, her influence would augment for she alone would have saved liberty.

PEACE AND WAR.—"I could not but be struck as I was watching the moon rise from the deck of the St. Jean d'Acre, by the wonderful and glorious difference between God's work and man's. It was a picture composed by two artists. It might have been fitly called 'Peace and War.' Shining over the central fort of the town was the full moon looking with calm and steadfast face out of the serene sky, in whose 'deep heaven of blue' star after star trembled into light and life; whilst down upon the placid waters gleamed the pale broad pathway reflected from her beams. The distant hills wrapped in light haze were visible to the eye; but, immediately before us, no object save the grim corner of a fort could be discerned from the heavy weight of smoke that clung to and covered the city like a shroud. Here and there across it shot the lurid glare of the guns, darting across the palpable atmosphere like a flying ball of fire. Who cannot see in this a representation of what has often filled his own mind? The wrathful stir of passion raging within, until calmed and softened by 'the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit of God.'—*Letter from Sebastopol*.

A HOOSIER AT THE ASTOR HOUSE.—I met on the train an elderly Hoosier who had been to the show case exhibition at New York, and who had also seen the *hi po dro me*, as he called it.

"Did you remain long in New York?" I asked him.

"Well, no," he answered thoughtfully, "only two days, for I saw there was a right smart chance of starving to death, and I'm opposed to that way of going down. I put up at one of their taverns, and allowed I was going to be treated to the whole."

"Where did you stop?" said I, interrupting him.

"At the Astor House. I allowed you don't ketch me to no such place again. They rung a *gong*, as they called it, four times afore breakfast, and then when I went in to eat, there was'n't nary vittles on the table."

"What was there?" I ventured to inquire.

"Well," said the old man, enumerating the items cautiously, as if from fear of omission, "there was a clean plate wrong side up, a knife, a *clean towel*, a *split spoon*, and a *hand bill*, and what was worse," added my companion, "the insultin nigger up and asked me what I wanted. 'Vittles,' says I, 'bring in your vittles, and I'll help myself!'"

The New York Herald says that an interesting report on the effect of the reciprocity treaty between the United States and Canada, was made by the Hon. J. Phillips Fenix, at a meeting of the New York Chamber of Commerce, held on Friday the 4th inst. from this document it appears that the trade between the two countries, viz:—England and France. Its value is near equal to the commerce of the later. The report recommends Congress to still further extend the principles of the reciprocity treaty, by admitting of produce free.—A report was also made on the usury laws, in which the Chamber adheres to their formerly expressed opinion in favor of their entire abolition by the State Legislature.

A most horrible occurrence lately took place in the vicinity of Baltimore. A family of 11 people who resided in a miserable shanty near that city were all frozen to death in the course of one of the cold nights of last week. The statement appears almost incredible, but we make it on the authority of the Baltimore Republican.—*Quebec Chronicle*.

An immense gun is in course of construction at the Mersey Steel Iron Works, Liverpool, which when finished, is expected to weigh 24 tons, will be 15 feet long, 13 inch bore, and will project a ball of upwards of 300 lbs. at a distance of five miles.

The actual strength of the United States army at present is 15,752 men.