The Charleston Daily News.

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BY TELEGRAPH.

Our European Dispatches.

[BY ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH.]

LONDON, December 4.—L'Etendard states that all but Holland and Belgium accept the conferences.

There are many political arrests in Italy.

The bark Maximilian, from Philadelphia for Antwerp, is ashore and is a total loss.

PARIS, December 5.—M. Thiers made an elaborate speech, defending the French preservation of the Papal power, and characterized the Garibaldians as the falcon with which Italy always hunts. All the French troops have left Rome.

LONDON, December 5—*Noon.*—Consols 93¼. Bonds 71⅞.

LONDON, November 5—*Evening.*—Bonds, 71. Consols, 93¼.

LIVERPOOL, December 5—*Noon.*—Cotton steady; sales 10,000 bales; prices unaltered. Breadstuffs quiet.

LIVERPOOL, November 5—*Afternoon.*—Cotton buoyant; sales, 15,000 bales; Uplands advanced to 7¾d; Orleans, 7¾d. Lard, 48. Bacon, 42s.

LIVERPOOL, December 5—*Evening.*—Cotton closed active; advanced ¼d; Uplands, 7¾d; Orleans, 7¾d.

The bark Humboldt, from Baltimore, with a cargo of tobacco, has been lost off the coast of Holland.

Our Washington Dispatches.

MORE ABOUT THE COTTON TAX—WILSON'S BILL—CHANCES OF RETROACTION—RADICAL SCHEMING—THE WORD WHITE STRUCK OUT FROM THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ORDINANCES—THE KENTUCKY DELEGATION—ALL BUT THREE ADMITTED—THE IMPEACHMENT—MR. BOUTWELL'S OPENING SPEECH.

WASHINGTON, December 5.—The following is Wilson's bill, as introduced in the Senate yesterday:

"Be it enacted that so much of the several acts, relating to reconstruction, as required a majority of the registered voters to determine any election, or the ratifications of constitutions framed by conventions, elected under the present provisions of said acts, is hereby repealed; and at any election which has been, or may hereafter be held, for conventions or ratifications of constitutions, framed thereby, a majority of the votes cast at such elections shall determine the result."

The Committee of Ways and Means, in pushing through a repeal of the cotton tax in a shape which can get no relief until next year, is regarded as absurd. The friends of the South are intensely indignant at this perversion, as they claim, of the generous views of the Northern people as expressed at the polls. There are slender hopes that the Senate will insist on retro-action, or at least immediate abolition.

The report to the Radical caucus last night states that one hundred and seventy-eight speakers and organizers have been added by the committee, and many more have been employed and given pecuniary assistance by State Committees. The caucus devoted the entire session to the consideration of the canvass in the South [to secure the ratification of the new Radical constitutions in the Southern States].

General Steedman had a slight attack of vertigo yesterday, but is on the street to-day.

Brevet Major-General Buchanan, Colonel 1st Infantry, has been ordered to report to General Hancock, to command the sub-district of Louisiana, and be Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau.

There will be no withdrawal of the legal tenders during December.

The debt statement for November will be issued to-morrow, showing an increase of debt of ten to twelve millions.

The Revenue to-day amount to $751,000.

Stanbery's opinion, called for by Congress, confirms the Government's clear title to the Harper's Ferry property.

Private advices state that the United States steamers De Soto and Monongahela were lost during the recent West India hurricane. A large portion of the crew of the De Soto, and a portion of that of the Monongahela, were saved.

The sale of the Government interest in the Dismal Swamp was postponed until the 2d of January.

In the Senate, after the local business, a bill was introduced to convert registered into coupon bonds, and to provide for appeals from the Court of Claims.

General Grant was called on for the number of white and colored persons who registered and who voted, and the number of whites disfranchised.

Mr. Stanbery was called on for information regarding the Assistant United States Attorney.

A resolution to print the usual number of copies of the President's message was adopted.

A bill striking the word white from the laws and ordinances of the District was discussed. Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, and Hendrix, of Indiana, taunted the extremists, whose States had repudiated their doctrines. Mr. Wilson advised the opposition Senators to be more modest, saying that Congress was always ahead of the people, but the people came up in good time, adding, because the people faltered, it was no reason why Congress should swerve from the right path. The whole matter was postponed.

The debate on the bill pledging coin for the bonded debt was resumed, elaborately discussed and laid over.

The bill, abolishing white in the District ordinances, was resumed. During the discussion, Mr. Morton, of Indiana, said the feeling against the rebellion, its aiders and abettors, was as strong as ever, and ten years hence would be stronger. The bill passed by a vote of 30 to 8. It is Mr. Sumner's bill of last session, and abolishes every distinction.

The Senate then adjourned.

In the House, Mr. Williams, of Indiana, introduced a bill funding the interest bearing debt, and taxing the same for a sinking fund for its liquidation.

The Committee of Ways and Means were instructed to inquire into the expediency of exempting from tax the products of hand looms.

Mr. Paine introduced a bill for the more efficient government of the rebel States. Referred to the Judiciary Committee.

The memorial from the Chamber of Commerce, regarding the removal of obstructions from the Mississippi, was referred to the Committee on Commerce. Several financial bills were referred.

Mr. Ashley, of Ohio, introduced the bill to facilitate the restoration of the rebel States. The committee on the ordinance was continued. The case of Messrs. Blackie and Golladet, of the Kentucky delegation, came up before the House. Both were allowed an hour. Blakie consumed his hour, and was further indulged. Golladet contented himself with a brief but eloquent defence of Judge Hise. The committee's report in favor of Golladet was almost unanimously adopted. He was sworn in. Trimble, Brown, and Young, of the Kentucky delegation, remain excluded.

The debate on the impeachment was resumed. The Speaker announced that expressions of applause or otherwise would lead to clearing of the galleries, and like demonstrations on the part of members would lead them to the bar of the House. Mr. Boutwell, who had the opening, was allowed unlimited time. Early in his speech he argued against suspension pending the final decision. Before Boutwell concluded, the House adjourned.

The Georgia Conservative Convention.

MACON, December 5.—The Convention passed most of the afternoon listening to speeches from Judge Wright and General Wright. The Business Committee reported at a late hour. The report was discussed till 10 o'clock to-night, when it was recommitted, and the Convention adjourned till to-morrow.

The Alabama Convention.

MONTGOMERY, December 5.—The Convention has been engaged all day, considering the Constitution. The final vote on its adoption was taken late this evening, and resulted, yeas, 67; nays, 10. Absent and not voting 28. Mr. Semple, of Montgomery, presented a protest, signed by 15 members, some of whom are absentees. The protest was ordered to be spread on the journal, but the names of two other members gave notice that they would present a protest to-morrow; one had been presented previously by a sick member, which makes seventeen members who protest against the Constitution. The Convention will probably adjourn to-morrow.

The Louisiana Convention.

NEW ORLEANS, December 5.—The Constitutional Convention yesterday resolved that the per diem and compensation allowed members be reduced half after the thirtieth day from assembling. Ayes and nays called; rejected—47 to 37.

Resolved, That the loyal people of the State of Louisiana, from a long experience under the white man's bondage in this State, present our thanks to the Thirty-ninth and Fortieth Congress; further that we endorse every deliberation for the oppressed races of the State, and are also thankful to the Radical friends throughout the United States and elsewhere on the arc of the globe. We furthermore pray that the Convention assembled to deliberate thoroughly upon the poor, oppressed people, under the same basis of Congress of 1867—that all men are created free, equal citizens, be referred to the Committee on the Bill of Rights.

A resolution to levy a tax of fifty cents per gallon on all spiritous, alcoholic, or distilled liquors, sold in the State during the year 1868, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the Convention. Referred to the Finance Committee.

The following preamble and resolutions were laid over, under the rules to the effect:

Whereas, the Republican party of the United States are now preparing themselves for the last great struggle to forever determine the question of equal, political, and civil rights of all citizens of the Republic, and,

Whereas, The Republican Congressional Committee has been the chief instrumentality of the Republican party in the dissemination of its principles and organizations in all now reconstructed States; and,

Whereas the Hon. Thomas W. Conway is chief organizer and representative of the Committee in the Southern States,

Resolved, That he is hereby invited to deliver an address in the hall on the situation of the country.

To-day a resolution was referred to the Committee on the draught of the Constitution, that no legislative body hereafter, in general assembly, shall have power to annul any articles of this Constitution; nor shall they have the right to call another Convention in this State before a period of seventy years, dated from the day of adoption of the said Constitution.

Special Order No. 203, Section 2, says the free and proper use of military power, besides defending the national honor against foreign nations, is to uphold the laws and civil government, and to secure to every person residing among us the enjoyment of life, liberty and property. It is accordingly made, by act of Congress, the duty of the commander of this District to protect all persons in these rights; to suppress disorder and violence, and to punish or cause to be punished all disturbers of the public peace and criminals. The Commanding General has been officially informed that the administration of justice, and especially of criminal justice in its Courts, is clogged, if not entirely frustrated by the enforcement of Paragraph No. 2 of the Military Order numbered Special Order No. 125, current series, from these headquarters, issued on the 24th of August, 1867, relative to qualification to be placed on the jury lists of this State to determine who shall and who shall not be jurors, and until the laws in existence, regulating this subject, shall be amended or changed by that department of the civil government which the constitution of all the States under our Republican system, vested with that power, it is deemed best to carry out the will of the people as expressed in the last legislative act upon this subject. The qualifications of a juror under the law is a proper subject for the consideration of the Courts. The Commanding General, in discharge of the trust reposed in him, will maintain the just power of the Judiciary, and is unwilling to permit the civil authorities and laws to be embarrassed by military interference, and it is an established fact that the administration of justice in the ordinary tribunals is greatly embarrassed by the operations of Paragraph No. 2, Special Orders No. 125, it is ordered that the said paragraph, which relates to the qualifications of persons to be placed on the jury lists of this State, be and the same is hereby revoked; and that the trial by jury be hereafter regulated and controlled by the Constitution and civil laws, without any regard to any military order heretofore issued.

By command of Major-General HANCOCK;

[Signed] W. J. MITCHELL,

Lieutenant-Colonel and A. A. G.

The paragraph alluded to, which is revoked by this order, provided for the immediate revision of the jury lists, and excluded all persons not registered under the Reconstruction.

New York News.

NEW YORK, December 5.—The Fall River Globe Print Works were destroyed by an explosion of the boilers. Two persons were injured, and many had a narrow escape.

Snow in Virginia.

RICHMOND, December 5.—Snow is four inches deep along the line of the Central Railroad to-day.

Market Reports.

HAVANA, December 4.—Sugar, nothing doing. Sterling, 13½a14. Federal Currency, 24a25 discount. Gold, 2 per cent. premium.

NEW YORK, December 5—*Noon.*—Stocks active. Sterling, 9½. Money 7 per cent. Gold, 137⅛. Bonds, old and new, 107¾. Flour 10a15c better. Wheat, 1a2c better. Corn a shade firmer. Oats a trifle higher. Pork firmer, at $21½a21¾. Lard dull at 12½a13c. Cotton firmer at 16½. Freights firm. Turpentine scarcely as firm, at 54½. Rosin irregular, common, $2 87; No. 2, $3.

NEW YORK, December 5—*Evening.*—Cotton active, and advanced ¼a¼c.; sales, 4000 bales, at 16¼a16½. Flour active; State, $8a10 25; Southern, $9 50a13. Wheat firmer; white Southern, $2 80. Corn firmer at $1 30a1 31. Provisions quiet. Mess Pork, $21 75. Groceries and Naval Stores quiet. Freights steady. Gold, 136½a137. Sterling, 9¼a10.

BALTIMORE, December 5.—Cotton firmer at 15½a16. Flour firmer and more doing; City mills superfine, $9.50. Wheat active, especially for the best grades; choice red advanced 10 cents; medium advanced 5; Receipts light. Corn active. New White $1.12 a$1.15; yellow, $1.13. Oats active and lower, 65a70. Rye scarce at $1.50a1.60. Provisions firmer. Mess Pork $22.25a$22.50.

CINCINNATI, December 5.—Flour firmer. Corn, new in the ear, 83a87. Mess Pork, old, $20 50 now at $22.

ST. LOUIS, December 5.—Flour very dull. Corn 97a$1. Pork unsettled at $21 50a22. Bacon weak; Shoulders 11; clear Sides 15.

AUGUSTA, December 5.—Market active; sales, 936 bales; receipts, 875 bales; Middlings, 14½c.; sales for the week, 4820 bales; receipts, 5265 bales.

SAVANNAH, December 5.—Cotton in active demand. The firmness of holders made sales light. Middlings 15½c. Sales 1264 bales; receipts 1223 bales; for the week 11,111 bales. Exports—To Liverpool 8274; to New York 5872. Stock 36 9/94. Receipts for the season 155,890. Exports 108,756.

MOBILE, December 5.—Opened active, and be coming excited during the day, closed with an advance of ¼a¾. Sales 4500 bales; middling 14½a14¾ Receipts, 1105.

WILMINGTON, December 5.—Spirits Turpentine dull at 49c. Rosin active at $2 for No. 2, and $2 50 for No. 1. Cotton advanced to 14c. for Middlings. Tar $2 25.

NEW ARTILLERY EXPERIMENTS.—The London News of the 12th ult., says of recent experiments with the Mackay gun:

"The fifth was a spherical steel shot fired from the 8-inch gun, with 20 pounds of powder, at the 5-inch plate. The plate was completely penetrated, and a large amount of metal carried away. The sixth was of the same character, with 16 pounds of powder. It struck a perfectly firm part of the same target, through which it passed with equal success. The seventh was a 70-pounds cast-iron shot (spherical), fired at the 5-inch plate from the 8-inch gun, with only 14 pounds of powder. It struck the target to the right-hand, close to the edge, and carried away bodily a mass of metal weighing at least 2 cwt. The 5-inch gun was then fired with the steel elongated shot, and with a charge of 3 pounds of powder, the target being the 2½-inch plate. The penetration was complete, and the shot was picked up at some distance from the target. The same gun was then tested at high elevations for range, and several projectiles were sent on errands from 6000 to 7000 yards. During the afternoon one of the powerful guns on the ground was sold to a foreign government. Admiral Farragut, in a letter to Mr. Mackay, has expressed his regret at not being able to attend the experiments. On the 11th a successful trial was made of the 6-inch gun against the 8-inch plate, with a 83-lb steel shot, and with a 25 pound charge."

—General Custer, the well known cavalry officer, was some time ago court-martialed for conduct during the Indian campaign last summer. He was tried at Fort Leavenworth, and the proceedings of the court sent to Washington. A dispatch from Fort Leavenworth states that the President has approved the proceedings, and that on November 25th the record and sentence were received at Leavenworth and read before the troops at that post. Some of the charges upon which he was tried were absence from his command without leave, and leaving his men in the hands of the Indians without any effort to rescue them; making undue haste in his return march, thereby causing much damage to the stock, and conduct prejudicial to good military discipline. The court finds him guilty, and suspends him from rank and pay proper for one year.

One Way to Induce the Investment of Northern Capital in the South.

To the Editors of the Charleston Daily News:

In the Charleston Mercury of the 3d inst., I find the following:

"SELLING A FARM BY SAMPLE.—One of our earliest recollections of Greek is a story of a *schoiastikos* who carried a brick about with him as a specimen of a house which he had for sale. The story did not say, however, that any one purchased. To judge by the following item from the New York Tribune the race of *scholastikoi* is not dead yet, and there are two of them in New York, one a seller and the other a purchaser:

"A NOVELTY FOR NEW YORKERS.—Specimens of strawberries in blossom, and ripening vegetables, rice, cotton, pine, etc., from the farm of four hundred acres in Aiken, South Carolina, recently purchased by J. C. Derby, of this city, can be seen at the seed store of Messrs. Bliss & Co., No. 41 Park Row."

That the Mercury should have been guilty of traducing a well known and estimable gentleman, as it has done in the above paragraph, is as astonishing as that it should have inferred from the extract of the Tribune, that there was a sale effected, and consequently two fools—one a seller and the other a purchaser. Viewing it either as exhibiting malice and ill-feeling to the New York Tribune, or a poor attempt to display wit and scholarship, or as a gross inadvertence, it was uncalled for and discourteous.

Apart from the personality of the article it is calculated to injure an earnest attempt to bring Northern capital to assist in the development of the natural resources of this vicinity, or similar efforts in other sections. It appears to us that a moment's reflection should have elicited commendation instead of ridicule. The exhibition of the products of this neighborhood, and bringing to the notice of Northerners the capabilities and advantages offered here—the striking contrast of displaying strawberries ripening and in blossom (without forcing), when in the North they are leafless and withered, thus demonstrating the comparative mildness of the climate, is a practical mode of aiding in reconstruction and furthering the prosperity of our people.

Mr. Jas. C. Derby, a well known book publisher, of New York, visiting Aiken last spring, and appreciating the advantages of this vicinity, was induced to purchase an extensive orchard, vineyard and farm, not on speculation but as a home for his family. His investment includes not only the amount paid for the lands, but also for the employment of laborers and mechanics, in various improvements, and the introduction of imported cattle and improved implements. Returning to New York a few weeks since, he carried with him specimens of the products of his and the adjoining farms, and called the attention of a number of editors and other prominent gentlemen, as indicating the capacity and resources of his new home, and is now doing all he can to induce others to locate here also.

Deeming that a refutation of such a charge as that so pointedly and publicly made by the Mercury is due to Mr. D., I would respectfully request a place in your columns for this communication.

AMICUS.

AIKEN, December 4, 1867.

Frauds in Cotton.

HOW AMERICAN COTTON SUFFERS IN PRICE AND REPUTATION—AN ENGLISH COTTON SPINNER'S COMPLAINT.

The New Orleans Picayune publishes the following letter from an English cotton spinner of respectability, which gives timely hint to our cotton growers. It is most deplorable that the reputation of Southern people should thus suffer, even in comparison with that of the Hindoo, from the frauds of some bad men among our generally conscientious and honorable planters. But it is not only the fraudulently admixed and packed cotton which is found less merchantable than that from other countries. Neglect, carelessness and hurry, to which we may add the indifferent and even hostile labor of the negro, causes the bulk of our cotton to be so poorly handled, packed and forwarded, that there is from dampness and fine dust a loss of weight to the buyer of it. There is a remedy for this. Let no more cotton be raised than can be carefully picked and ginned; no more than can be well covered and fastened; no more than the planter can attend to himself, and with choice, willing and intelligent labor, if he be so fortunate as to get such assistance, and let him accept no other:

MILLS PRESTON, November 4, 1867.

Dear Sir: Perhaps the following remarks on cotton may not be uninteresting to your American friends at the present juncture:

It was well known before the late American war that cotton grown in that country contained a large amount of sand and moisture, sometimes even fraudulently put into the bale to increase its weight. This was endured by our spinners with occasional grumbling, because they did not know how to use other cottons as substitute for American, nor did they know that other cottons were much better in this respect. During the war, however, and especially this last year, it has been discovered that no description of cotton is subject to so much "insensible" loss as American, and the result is that other cottons, especially the better classes of Surats, approach in value more nearly to American than was ever known before.

We have ourselves used every description of cotton quoted in the Liverpool circular, and our experience is, that when we use American cotton there is about 2½ per cent. in weight for which we have nothing to show in either yarn or waste, the fact being that this per centage is dissolved into the atmosphere in the form of moisture or fine sand, and this, in addition to the loss in weight borne by the importer, and which varies from 4 to 7 per cent. When we use any other kind of cotton, and especially Surat, we find that owing to the extremely dry condition of the cotton and freedom from dust, there results a slight excess of yarn and waste over and above the weight of cotton bought, amounting generally to about three-fourths per cent. This has been our experience of the past twelve half-yearly stock-takings, and the consequence is that we never buy American except when it is comparatively very cheap, because we can depend more fully upon the honesty of any other description of cotton. As regards regularity of staple, however, and pleasantness in working, no cotton is equal to American; but what does this avail when you cannot depend upon your calculations, and find that when you thought you were working to profit you have been deceived, owing to this invisible loss in weight.

We would urge upon all those who desire to see American cotton restored to its old place in the regard of English spinners, the necessity of baling it perfectly dry, free from sand and dust, and of regular quality.

Affairs in the State

—The store of Mr. G. W. Lowe, in Chester, was entered on Thursday night last, and a large amount of goods taken.

—The Georgetown Times learns that Mr. S. R. Carr has been appointed sheriff of that district, and Mr. J. B. Anderson clerk of the court.

—The remains of Colonel John H. Means arrived in Winnsboro' on Wednesday morning from Virginia, in charge of Colonel R. Starke Means. It will be remembered that Colonel Means fell in the second battle of Manassas, 30th August, 1863, while in command of his regiment, the 17th S. C. Infantry.

—The Newberry Herald's report of sale-day in that place says: The closing sales of the year brought a large number of persons together, and considerable land was disposed of. The Commissioner's sales were as follows: one tract of eight hundred acres brought $4100; one of two hundred, $470; one hundred and ninety, $575; one hundred and five, $400; one hundred and sixty-three, $1,115; one hundred and eight, $950. The following tracts were disposed of by the Sheriff: one hundred and twenty-five acres, $195; sixty-one, $385; sixty-five, $180; fifty-six, $160, forty-six, $100; three hundred and sixty-eight, $605, and one of one hundred and sixty-eight, $275; being an average of about $3 80 per acre.

CROOKEDNESS OF NEW YORK POLITICS.—A New York letter gives this instance of the remarkable phases which New York politics sometimes assume:

There is much talk in political circles about the discovery of an alleged plot, which places a certain Democratic Congress man in a somewhat equivocal light before his constituents. The pith of the story is about this: That he, the Democratic member, has subscribed $10,000 to the Republican fund, which is to be used in starting Mr. Dana's new Chase organ, on the condition that the Republicans would use their influence in Washington to have Speaker Colfax place the subscriber on the Ways and Means Committee, in place of Hon. James Brooks, whose friends say he is entitled to the position by virtue of experience and long service in Congress, and devotion to constitutional principles, etc. It does not appear how the fact of the subscription to the Republican paper came out, but as soon as it was divulged, a conference of prominent Democrats was held to inquire into the facts. The result has not transpired at this writing, but it is understood that the member referred to is so alarmed at the disclosure of his plans, that he has given notice of a withdrawal of his subscription and a cessation of all further endeavors to procure for himself a place on the committee above mentioned.

—M. Deschamel has recently published three works, of which woman is the subject: "Le Mal qu'on a dit des Femmes," "Le Bien qu'on a dit des Femmes," and "Les Femmes Peints par Elles-Memes." The first passed rapidly through seven editions; the second and third would not sell at all.

CHARLES DICKENS.

His First Reading in America.

[Correspondence of the New York Tribune.]

BOSTON, December 2.—Ever since it was announced that Mr. Dickens would give his first Reading on this side the Atlantic in Boston, the inhabitants of our quaint old-fashioned sister city have been in a state of feverish excitement. No sooner was the news flashed along the cable that he was coming than everything was immediately put in apple-pie order. The streets were all swept from one end of the city to the other for the second time in the twenty-four hours; the State House and the Old South Church were painted off-hand a delicate rose-pink; a new statue of Edward Everett was put up in the Public Garden, in the attitude of throwing up his hat and shouting "hurrah!" every bookseller's window was stacked up with copies of Ticknor & Field's new edition of "Dickens," to the temporary displacement of Longfellow's "Dante" and Dr. Holmes' "Guardian Angel;" the segar shops came out as one man with their brands all new-christened, and nothing is smoked, chewed or taken in snuff to-day but "Little Nell Segars," Mr. Squeers's Fine Cut, the Mantilini Plug, and the "Genuine Pickwick Snuff;" while at every turn, in the illustrated newspapers, in the hotel office, and in all the shop windows, the new portrait of Mr. Dickens is to be seen, showing as a man somewhat past middle life, with thin, gray hair, a scanty beard, and eyes downcast reading on a book; a striking contrast to the boyish face of twenty-five years ago, with its large eyes full of wonder and sensitive feeling, its delicate, almost girlish contour, and its long locks of dark, abundant hair. The younger portrait was, perhaps, a little flattered; but the older one is as good as a quiet, impassive, picture of a face full of life and expression, and rarely at rest, can be. We had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Dickens at dinner a few days ago, and, of course, it was not difficult to recognize him, even though seeing him for the first time; but this portrait would, we think, have helped us but little. All we can say is, to those who wish to know beforehand how so famous a man will look when they see him, that this portrait prepares the mind to recognize him, but that is all its office. It shows us all that time, and labor, and care, have done, to batter down the beautiful house of youth and haunting fancy, but it gives no gleam of the radiant spirit that still lights up the enchanter's face.

Meanwhile, until to-night, Mr. Dickens has kept himself strictly secluded from all but one or two old and intimate friends. His rooms are at the Parker House, and there he has remained, busily engaged all day, in writing and study, except when he is taking his daily eight mile "constitutional" walk with his publisher, Fields, and steadily declining all the invitations to breakfast, dinner, tea, supper, parties, balls, and drives, that hospitable Boston pours in upon him in an unfailing stream. Much of his time is spent in the most laborious, pains-taking study of the parts he is to read. Indeed, the public has but little idea of the cost—in downright hard work of mind, and body, and voice—at which these readings are produced. Although Mr. Dickens has read, now, nearly five hundred times, I am assured on the best authority that he never attempts a new part in public until he has spent at least two months over it in study as faithful and searching as Rachel or Cushman would give to a new character. This study extends not merely to the analysis of the text, to the discrimination of character, to the minutest points of elocution, but decides upon the facial expression, the tone of the voice, the gesture, the attitude, and even the material surroundings of the actor, for, *Acting it is, not Reading*, in the ordinary sense, at all. Mr. Dickens is so essentially an artist that he cannot neglect the slightest thing that may serve to heighten the effect of what he has undertaken to do. And he is as conscientious, so strict in all his dealings—a very martinet in business and thorough man of affairs—that he will leave nothing undone, that time and labor can do, to give to the public that pays so much for the pleasure of hearing him, the full worth of its money. This is the reason why he, a man of the world, greatly delighting in society, thoroughly fitted to enjoy it himself, and to make others enjoy it—deliberately cuts himself off from it, until his task shall be done. "I am come here," he says, "to read. The people expect me to do my best, and how can I do it if I am all the time on the go? My time is not my own, when I am preparing to read, any more than it is when I am writing a novel, and I can as well do one as the other without concentrating all my powers on it until it is done." Whoever, then, fancies that the crowd that packed the Tremont Temple to-night, that the crowd which, after the splendid success of this first Reading, will continue to pack it till the Readings are all over—have given their money for a bagatelle, an hour's careless play of genius—whoever thinks this, is quite mistaken. This wonderful two hours' performance—so full of varied power; grim full, from end to end, of feeling, pathos, mirth and fun, a sunlit shower of smiles and tears, not to be described in words, hardly to be comprehended by the mind; all this—if it be not the pure result of unremitting study, and thought and physical labor, would, at least, not have been the perfect thing it is, without these helps.

Although the tickets of the reading do carry twice repeated on their face the request that "the audience would all be seated punctually at 8 o'clock," it was nearly 8:15 before the vast crowd had simmered down to a state of comparative quiescence. And it was indeed a vast audience—such a crowd as is seldom gathered in a single hall to meet any single man. The line of carriages ran down all manner of streets and lost itself in the suburbs. All the cars leading from the outlying towns brought in fresh recruits to the great army, and the snow that had been falling all the afternoon at last gave up trying to get to the pavement, and went to some other place, while the moon shone out and helped the gas lamps light the gay, struggling, swarming multitude that was trying to get inside the doors—watched by a long faced silent multitude that crowded round the door ways without tickets and no hope of getting in at all. Inside the house the scene was striking enough. Few cities, anywhere, could show an audience of such character. Hardly a notable man in Boston, or fifty miles about, but was there, and we doubt if in London itself Mr. Dickens ever read before such an assemblage. There sat Longfellow, looking like the very spirit of Christmas, with his ruddy cheeks and bright soft eyes looking out from the vest of snow white hair and snow white beard. There was Holmes, looking crisp and fine like a tight little grape-skin full of wit instead of wine. There was Lowell, as if Sidney himself had come back with his poet's heart smiling sadly through his poet's eyes. Here, too, was the older Dana, now an old man of eighty, with long gray hair falling round a face bright with shrewd intelligence, as able now as thirty years ago to write "Paul Felton or The Buccaneer." Running the eye over the hall one saw other men widely known. Charles Eliot Norton, whose translation of Dante's *Vita Nuova* may well stand side by side with his master Longfellow, of the grander song. There in the gallery is Edwin Whipple. Yonder is Fields, to whom all owe this great pleasure, for he suggested, urged, and made this visit of Dickens easy to him. Bishop Eastburn, over on the other side, seems thankful that clergymen have yet some pleasures left. There is Poole, the librarian of the Atheneum, one of our men who knows most about books, and Samuel Eliot, the President of the Social Science, and George Green, who recently crossed blades with Bancroft. Emerson's face I could not catch. Concord is far away, and snow storms no joke to travel in. Nor did Whittier come, as was promised,—Whittier, who has never in his life been present at an evening entertainment of any description, concert or opera, or even, strange to say, a lecture. He promised, but at the last his heart failed him, and the "good gray head that all men know" did not bless our eyes to-night.

I have said that Dickens is an artist in all he does, and seldom have I seen a more finished piece of work than this whole reading. So careful is he of every point, that nothing shall go amiss, that he has brought with him from England all the appointments by which he is surrounded, when he reads at home. At the back of the platform is stretched a long screen covered with dark red cloth—red at least it looked by gaslight, though Fields told me it was purple—and in front of it stands a table with square legs covered with rich crimson velvet—the top, also, covered with the same, hanging over the edge, and bordered with a heavy fringe. At one side of this table projects a little shelf, also covered with velvet, on which are a water-bottle and glass, and at the left hand corner is a square block about eight inches high—that also covered top and sides, with velvet, like the rest. On this block the reader rests his book, and uses it, beside, as an accessory in his by-play. Now it is Bob Cratchitt's desk in Scrooge's office. Now it is Mr. Fizziwig's desk, from which he looks benignantly down on his apprentices. Now it is the desk on which rest the Christmas goose of the Cratchitt family. A very useful little velvet box Mr. Dickens makes it, I assure you, and the audience gets to look upon it as quite a delightful piece of furniture.

Mr. Dickens is not quite as rigid in his punctuality as dear Fanny Kemble used to be, who began like a beautiful fate the minute the clock struck 8, no matter whether people had come or not, and treated the laggards to bewitching frowns as they crept belated up the aisles. But at last he comes! He enters, holding the book in both his hands; comes up the steps with a quick, springing walk, and, standing at his velvet desk, proceeds to work, like a man of business. He is dressed with perfect neatness and simplicity, not a trace of the old foppery—the Autumn's flower of all the youthful dandyism—is seen in his button hole in the shape of a white carnation, and a pink rose-bud on his shirt front. There is nothing more pretending than a plain gold stud. He has, to be sure, considerable watch-chain, and on his finger a diamond ring—but nothing is noticeable in his dress. He stands there a quiet gentleman, plain Charles Dickens, and that name is grace and ornament enough.

For a Boston audience, his reception is remarkably enthusiastic. Seldom does the polished foe of the proper community crack as loud, and so cheerily, under the thawing beams of any intellectual sun, as it did to-night when Dickens stood before them, and while cheer after cheer broke forth, and cries of welcome and clapping of innumerable hids, rose and fell and rose again in a friendly roar, tried to speak and was defeated, and returned gallantly to the charge again, but had scarcely got as far as 'Ladies,' when he was obliged to succumb, and made another dash at "Gentlemen," and gave it up, and at last saw that one Englishman was nothing to so many hundred Yankees, and waited, smiling and bowing, until they had had their will, and were ready to let him have his.

The very first words, "Marley was dead, to begin with!" That was certain"—settled the question of success. The way in which those words were uttered, showed also that the reading was to depend for all effect upon the worth of what was read, and upon the sincerity of the reader. From first to last there is no trickery in it—all of nature, abounding in gesture, with a voice for every character in every mood; with a face for every man, woman and child, reflecting every feeling. There is no straining for stage effect, no attitudizing, no affectation. The most effective reading we ever listened to—it was the most beautifully simple, straightforward, hearty piece of painting from life. Dear Bob Cratchitt made twenty-five hundred friends before he had spoken two words, and if everybody had obeyed the impulse of his heart, and sent him a Christmas goose, he would have been suffocated in a twinkling, under a mountain of poultry. As for the delightful Fizziwigs, not the coldest heart in the audience, but warmed to them at once. Probably never was a ball so thoroughly enjoyed as the one given by these worthy people to their apprentices. The greatest hit of the evening was the point where the dance executed by Mr. and Mrs. Fizziwigs to Miss Fizziwig was described. The contagion of the audiences laughter reached Mr. Dickens himself, who with difficulty brought out the inimitable drollery: "after which Mr. Fizziwig cut positively—cut so that a light seemed to shine from his very calves, and he actually winked with his legs." This was too much for Boston, and I thought the roof would go off. Next to this, the most effective point, was Tiny Tim, who in plaintive treble, with Bob Cratchite's way of speaking of him, brought out so many pocket handkerchiefs that it looked as if a snow-storm had somehow got into the hall without tickets. Seldom do we hear such genuine pathos as that with which Mr. Dickens read the poor father's lament over his little lame child, and great was the genius which enabled him to walk so safely on the dangerous edge that separates nature, pure and simple, from mere travestic.

The Christmas party at the house of Scrogg's nephew, where Tuppins plays blind man's buff with the plump sister in the lace tucker, was a thing never to be forgotten. When Dickens said, "I no more believe that that man was blindfolded than I believe that he had eyes in his boots," his facial expression—indignant as of a man who is being put upon, and yet with a consciousness of the absurdity of the statement that makes him laugh in spite of his anger—was inimitable, and it was long before the audience would let him get on. At last we had it, and the plump sister with the lace tucker to become immortal. There was an intermission of about ten minutes between the reading of "The Christmas Carol" and "The Trial Scene from Pickwick," and as he closed the book with Tiny Tim's "God bless us every one," the enthusiasm of the vast assembly broke forth in such expressions, as to those who know the impassive nature of Boston audiences showed plainly enough that the heart under all their silk and broadcloth was fairly stirred and beating with warm good will. But Dickens was plainly not to be persuaded into a speech. For all the uproar, he did not appear again, until the court called up the case of Bardell *versus* Pickwick. It was easy to see that the reader himself had a peculiar affection for this part—a leaf torn from a book that is associated with the beginning of his fame, the end out of which this splendid tree-stock set with flowers and fruit, has grown. He read it with full force, throwing himself into it with all his heart, and, I may add, with all his body, for he put much more acting into this part of his reading than into the first part. Sergeant Buzfuz's speech to the jury was without a flaw, a pearl of the art of acting, and no words of mine or anybody could express the way in which Nathaniel Winkle was before us. Not less excellent was the Judge—the sourest, dryest, most cross-grained piece of legal stupidity that ever was seen or heard of. Talk about facial expression, nothing more wonderful was ever seen than the change from the Judge, who seemed to always be smelling something disagreeable, to the frank, cheery face of Samuel Weller, as fresh as a rose, and as good to look at. Here was a scene: The minute the Court said, "Call up Samuel Weller," that friend of near thirty years standing was recognized by all Boston at a glance, and his mounting the stand was signal for such a hand-shaking (speaking in a figure) that he will never forget. And wasn't it jolly to see him, jolly to hear him, and jolliest of all to hear that deep, rich voice of his old father, deep and rich as the foam on his quart pot of ale, calling out from the gallery, "Put it down with a we, my lord, put it down with a we."

In reading these works of his, Mr. Dickens neither follows the original text, nor adheres closely by any means to the text of the pretty and convenient hand-books which he has himself condensed and prepared. He leaves out a good deal, changes words, mistakes words sometimes, and really much of it seems impromptu. I thought, now and then, that he was thinking of his present audience, and putting in what he fancied would suit better here than in London. His delivery has marked peculiarities, and is thoroughly original. He dealt much in the rising inflection at the end of sentences, is sometimes monotonous, and keeps up old pronunciations that we seldom hear on this side of the water: "Clark" for clerk, "wind" with a long "i," "Ojus" for odious, are a few. But on the whole, his accent and pronunciation are not, what we call, English. The great difference between his delivery and that of our best Americans is in its slow, deliberate clear-cut distinctness. This is in the descriptive parts. Where it suits the occasion, his delivery takes every shape, and is good for all needs. Scrogg's growl,—Bob Cratchitt's trembling appeal—the pompous bluster of Buzfuz—Mrs. Cluppin's maundering whine, and Sam Weller's manly yeoman's shouts are all echoed by that magical voice, which will be recognized wherever it is heard in America as the voice of a great author, and of the greatest, perhaps (certainly in versatility, of power the greatest), that has ever charmed our Western World.

BOLD ROBBERIES IN FLORIDA.—We take the following items from the Ocala (Fla.) Banner:

On Tuesday night last the store of Neil Fergerson, in this county, was attacked by a band of freedmen, and robbed of a considerable quantity of goods. The particulars, as we learn them, are as follows: One of the freedmen first came to the door of the store and asked admittance, his comrades remaining in the back ground, but was refused by the occupants of the store, a man and small boy. He then pretended to have a letter for Mr. Fergerson, but was told to bring it in the morning. Thus foiled in their attempts to gain admittance by stratagem, they retired for a few moments and returned with a company, which immediately attacked the house in order to force an entrance. The storehouse is constructed of logs and ceiled on the inside, and the villains made their first attack by striking off the ceiling so that they could draw the goods through the apertures between the logs, and when resisted by the inmates of the store, kept them at bay with long poles run through the cracks. Having made simultaneous attacks on different parts of the house, they finally succeeded in forcing the door and carrying off a considerable quantity of goods.

A few nights since a party of robbers, with masks on their faces and muffled feet entered the house of Captain James Dunning, near Flemington, and robbed him of a considerable amount of money. The first intimation that Captain Dunning had of the presence of the marauders, was one of them standing by his bedside with a cocked pistol, threatening to kill him if he moved. While one thus stood guard, the others searched the house until they found the money, and then decamped.

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