

lands and timber policy as affecting their principal interests, he is almost certain to support the Government, though previously elected as a member of the Opposition.

There is no danger of the spots freezing in winter, as the internal heat from the sewers keeps them open. I can point to several examples in the city on that plan that answers well.

Perhaps it might be said that the bad odors from the sewers would enter the upper windows; but I apprehend if every spot in the city was thus open there would not be much danger. I am, sir, &c.

COMMON SENSE. Montreal, 29th Dec, 1871. [We are afraid that our correspondents' apprehension about the upper windows is too well founded.—Ed. W.]

THE GRAND DUKES BENEFICIARY.

(To the Editor of the Witness.) Sir,—Would you be surprised to learn that by direction of His Lordship the R. C. Bishop the Grand Duke Alexis was not permitted to visit the Roman Catholic convents and other institutions of the city? Now, as His Imperial Highness has sent a donation of one thousand dollars to be distributed to the poor of the city, it will be interesting to know whether the establishments he was not permitted to see will, nevertheless, share in his beneficence. As yet there is no public intimation of the distribution of this money.

MONTREAL WITNESS.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1872.

MR. CHAPLEAU AND THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL.

A Quebec letter announces that Mr. Chapleau is to be named Solicitor-General in place of Mr. Irvine; but it is hard to believe that such an appointment is contemplated. We have heard of "lying like a bullet," and we would faint imagine that we have here a mistake such as is often made by a telegram. To confer one of the highest positions in the Government, and in the legal profession, one of the highest that a lawyer aims at, on a young and inexperienced advocate, would be an outrage as well as a blunder.

While we would not knowingly slander Mr. Chapleau, nevertheless, the pleader of the causes of Sabbath-breaking tavern-keepers, and the proprietors and inmates of brothels, in Montreal, would ill become the task of speaking for the Government on the floor of the Parliament of Quebec; and a man who audaciously strove to swamp the property-holders and tax-payers of our own city may not be trusted to defend the legal and proprietary interests of the country in general. But we have yet to learn that fluency of tongue, abundant audacity, and a willingness to be a henchman of the Programmers are qualifications for the honorable office of Solicitor-General; or that demagogical associations can qualify for a position so intimately associated, not only with the restrictions of law, but with social morality.

SMALL-POX VS. VACCINATION.

(To the Editor of the Witness.) DEAR SIR,—We have just now an alarming prevalence of small-pox in this city, and it is not so much among the poorer classes as among the well-to-do that it is spreading. It cannot, therefore, be due to a want of cleanliness, either in person or dwelling, but must be mainly attributable to the closeness and want of ventilation which constitute our dwellings so many hot-houses, in which infectious diseases such as small-pox, measles and scarlet fever are fostered during the winter season. In places of public resort, and in shops where this disease may happen to make a temporary abode, great care should be taken that the unsuspecting public be not victimized. The case of the two young ladies in Quebec, who contracted disease and died, by wearing unwillingly to go to hospital, in boarding-houses or hotels where such cases are as liable as elsewhere to occur, it is a serious and troublesome matter to contend with, and even in families, except in the case of mothers and infants, all patients should be taken at once to hospital and in every city there should be a hospital entirely set apart for small-pox and other eruptive and contagious diseases. In this way alone will families and neighborhoods be spared from unnecessary exposure. Even the bed used should be burned, else there can be no security against infection at some future time to other parties making use of it.

IMMIGRANTS DECLINED—WITHOUT THANKS.

The Quebec Government have lately shown an unmistakable disposition to give the cold shoulder to any immigration, except such as shall emanate in the bringing hither of good sons of the Catholic Church from Belgium or France. An offer from Britain has lately been made of the very class of settlers the country wants, but the overflows of towns, but farmers, farm servants, and laborers; yet this offer has been declined, and even treated with rude neglect.

In the early part of August last, Mr. D. Slaw, Emigration Commissioner of the Dominion Government to Scotland, addressed a letter from Glasgow to the Provincial Secretary at Quebec, stating that a number of gentlemen, whom he had interested in the emigration movement to Canada, were desirous of forming a company for the purpose of advancing the passage-money, by way of loan, to the classes above mentioned, and others desirous to emigrate; paupers, however, being especially excluded. All that was asked of the Provincial Government was, that free grants of land should be made in the premises, something like what has been done with such success in Ontario. The company would subscribe a capital of \$100,000, and undertake to settle, within about five years, all the land it should assume, with a population mostly cultivators of the soil; one Scottish emigrant to be settled for every pound of capital, and security being arranged in Scotland for the due fulfillment of the emigrant's agreement as to re-payment of the passage money advanced, and any clearing and improving of the land.

Here one would think there would be shown on the part of Government some sign of a wish to obtain the aid of such an apparently powerful auxiliary to immigration as was here offered. But no. The conduct of the Bureau to which the proposal had been addressed was in effect, "No Scotchmen need apply." Three months elapsed, and no notice was taken of the communication from the Agent of the Dominion Government; and we are informed that it was not till, during the early days of the recent session, a member made enquiry in his place in Parliament, as to whether the Government had not received such a communication, that one of the Ministry in reply acknowledged that it had been received, but mislaid! This was a singular ministerial announcement. Official documents are not often mislaid—perhaps because applications in favor

of Scotchmen or Protestants seeking to be settlers are not often made. Had the communication sought for the introduction of immigrants from Alsace, Lorraine, or Belgium, the letter would probably have been carefully filed and its proposal favorably entertained. Attention having been thus called to it, the missing letter seems to have been hunted up, and found in some pigeon-hole, into which it may be supposed to have been contemptuously tossed. A reply to it was sent, to the effect that the Government were gratified at the offer of so desirable a class of immigrants, but were adverse to the Free Grant system, and supposed the tridling price of from 20 to 60 cents per acre would not prevent either individuals or companies from taking their choice of such lands as were not already appropriated. For the rest, the gentlemen were informed there were some fifty colonization societies already in existence in the country itself, and were especially referred to seven of these that made it their special object to promote emigration to this Province from the British Isles.

The prospective company were thus politely bowed out, and the Province for the present has been secured from the intrusion of those whose presence, however otherwise desirable, would only have interfered with the idea, cherished in a certain quarter, of a homogeneous rural population for Lower Canada. But can Quebec afford to spurn the very class of agricultural settlers she requires, and is British immigration to be discontinued whilst originers are invited and assisted? Also do not settlers under the French colonization societies virtually get the best lands free? The Catholic clergy are constituted emigrant agents, whilst old country and Protestant settlers are allowed to drift away or be absorbed. Is Mr. Pope, the new Minister of Agriculture for the Dominion, alive to this? What seems to be wanted is some central Protestant association, to protect the rights, educational and other, and promote the interests of the Protestant minority, especially in localities where it is numerically very weak; and, above all, to see that no irregular obstruction, either covert or open, is allowed against the continued entrance and working out of its mission amongst us of the old country element, which in the past has wrought so well for Ontario, and also for certain parts of the Province of Quebec. A chance to secure a hundred thousand immigrants, bringing with them Scottish thrift and endurance, and a knowledge of farming in its best forms, was not to be lightly esteemed; and if the door for them seems at present to be closed, it may yet be possible to bid them a hearty and practical welcome.

DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION.

The new system of popular education in England can hardly be called a success. It does not work smoothly. Whilst all agreed that some system of education was needed, and none was possible except a compromise, the one adopted has given great umbrage to the Nonconformists. The power left with localities to establish denominational schools has, it seems, enabled the Established Church, owing to its enormous wealth, to set up so many that through the country generally the new schools are in the hands of the clergy. Leading ecclesiastics do not conceal their satisfaction at this state of things, and boldly state that this system, carried out for a few years, will restore the Church all its waning prestige, and give it more than its former power.

As a matter of course the Dissenters oppose this arrangement, as they do the Establishment itself. They do not regard it as concession enough that restrictions are imposed on the denominational schools in regard to religious worship. They contend for an entire separation of the schools from any clerical control, as they contend for the separation of Church and State. They express themselves as willing to accept only a general system of secular education.

A movement is accordingly organized to give effect to their views; and they had arranged for a general conference, to be held at Manchester in the middle of December, which, at the last moment, was postponed on account of the dangerous illness of the Prince of Wales. We see it stated that at least fifteen hundred gentlemen had been delegated from all parts of the Kingdom to take part in this conference. It is expected that the meeting will still take place by the middle of this month.

All of this adds to the embarrassing situation of the Gladstone Ministry. Mr. Lowe has made a pacificatory speech, in which, whilst admitting the principle advocated by the Nonconformists as the correct one, he says that the Government did all they could do without running the risk of leaving another generation uneducated. Denominational education is encouraged in England, it is said, chiefly out of regard to Romish difficulties, and there is every indication that an attempt will be made in Ireland to establish a system which will place the education of the people of that country more completely under the influence of the priesthood than is the case in the most Catholic countries of Europe. This does not augur favorably for the pacification of that unhappy country.

THE SANITARY SITUATION.

It is notorious that the health of the city is far below the standard to which it usually attains at this season of the year. The death-rate, nearly a hundred weekly, puts one fearfully in mind of the summer average. Whilst scarlet-fever and measles are unusually prevalent amongst our youthful population, typhoid and small-pox are eminently rife all over the country, and, in some localities, of a very severe type. Small-pox, that terrible scourge of humanity, is on the increase amongst us, and in view of this, a writer in the *Canada Medical Journal* complains that while other communities are endeavoring, by isolation and the erection of temporary small-pox hospitals, to do away as far as possible with contagion, we in Montreal are allowing the disease to spread from house to house. Unfortunately the new Fever Hospital, which was not long ago built in connection with the General Hospital, cannot receive small-pox patients without endangering the fever patients, and even those of the General Hospital. It is true it is contemplated by the Managing Committee to make such alterations as may isolate the

small-pox patients more completely from the rest, but the writer suggests that the building had better be put to some other charitable purpose, and a fever hospital, or pest-house, be erected in the outskirts of the city. To do this might be the duty of the Corporation; but if, as we are told, we are at the present time throughout the country suffering from epidemic disease, and if there is every prospect of epidemic cholera making its appearance during the coming summer, it might be well for the Government to think of appointing a Central Board of Health for the Dominion, as was done in 1866 with the happiest results. By the regulations which were then put in force, Montreal and other cities were cleansed of much of their chronic filth, and the period of alarm was passed through in safety. But the writer of the article in question, who is, doubtless, a medical man, declares, "We have greater reason at the present time for anxiety, as not only is the disease of cholera smouldering in Europe, awaiting a favorable opportunity to break forth with unparalysing violence, but our own condition, from a sanitary point of view, is very much worse than it was six years ago." It is to be feared there is but too much truth in this latter remark, and we should follow the example herein set by England, where sanitary reforms are being diligently put in force, with a view of preventing, as far as possible, the spread of contagious disease.

It is no doubt very disagreeable to be wakened up from our dream of fancied security. It is so long since we seriously suffered from pestilence that a sense of immunity therefrom may have crept over us. The continued prevalence of small-pox, however, must show how ill-grounded this is. Health, like liberty, is only to be enjoyed at the price of perpetual vigilance. But city drainage is still defective, and in many instances conveys poison to our lungs instead of carrying it away; houses are over-crowded and imperfectly ventilated; uncleanness of all sorts, including animal and vegetable decay, engender disease and death, and though frost at present holds these things in check, once it is absent, the relaxing grasp of spring will let them loose, to work their natural consequences on the human frame. Are our Health Committee and Medical Officers alive to the sanitary exigencies of the hour? The subject is just now one of the highest order to the community, when so many of our citizens have lately lost, and others are daily threatened. The terrible expense of the guests, royal and noble, at Lord Londesborough's aristocratic but unscientifically drained and ventilated mansion, should teach us the danger of trifling with so many of our life's advantages, and both this and small-pox, as well as scarlet fever and measles, are fostered by unfavorable local conditions.

RESIGNATION OF DR. T. STERRY HUNT.

Dr. T. Sterry Hunt has, we learn, recently accepted the Chair of Geology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston, vacant by the resignation of Prof. W. B. Rogers, who chose Dr. Hunt as his successor. He has, however, accepted with the condition that he shall enter upon his duties there next October, and will therefore remain for several months longer with the Geological Survey, with which he has been connected for twenty-five years. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has grown to be the most extensive technical school on the continent, and already numbers 262 students, who pursue there a four years' course and take degrees in mechanical and civil engineering; in chemistry, geology, and mining; in architecture, and in general science and literature. We may at a future time give a further account of this institution. Dr. Hunt takes the chair of pure geology only; there being four separate professors for applied geology, chemistry, metallurgy and mineralogy.

We cannot but regret to lose from our city so distinguished a student as Dr. Hunt. It is high time that Montreal had institutions of sufficient importance, at least to retain in our midst our own men of science, if not to attract from other places those famed for zeal and brilliant discoveries among her most carefully hidden mysteries. We would say, and say most emphatically, that Canada cannot afford to lose her scientists. The unfathomed riches concealed in her rocks will far more than repay any efforts made to retain in our midst those whose learning and skill are absolutely necessary to their economic discovery and use. It is a suicidal policy for Canada to let her best men go, and to allow another nation to reap the fruits of their carefully acquired knowledge.

PRAYER FOR REVIVAL.

We see it stated in the *Evangelist* that the Presbytery of Philadelphia has modified the programme of topics suggested by the Evangelical Alliance for the Week of Prayer, as they did not think that it made distinct enough its original design in praying for the world's conversion. However that might be, it is a matter of question by some, there can be only one feeling as to the eminent appropriateness of the topic assigned to this evening, to be made a matter of prayer by all Christians everywhere.

We must feel here in Montreal, as do other Christians throughout the world, that there is only too much cause for the "humiliation, confession, and prayer for the revival of religion," as is set forth by the Alliance. What Christians need in their own souls, in their own families, in the churches, in mission work, is the influence of the Holy Spirit. This will cause a true and genuine revival of religion. Let Christians, then, from all the churches, assemble this evening, humbly and in the spirit of believing prayer, to seek this blessing of the Pentecost. Montreal could receive no greater blessing than such a revival of religion in all the churches as they enjoy "in past times."

WEEK OF PRAYER.

The Prophet Zechariah tells of a time when "it shall come to pass that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities, and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord: I will go also." We are reminded of such passages as this when we hear the annual call to prayer sounded through the world, and responded to, as it has been for the last eleven years, by Christians in every quarter of the globe. The summons, which is now looked for as a matter of course, has again gone forth, and this week the united voice of the church militant will ascend in earnest thanksgiving and supplication. A peculiar blessing is promised when *two shall agree*, as touching anything that they shall ask: What showers of blessing then may reasonably be expected when hundreds of thousands agree in asking. We are glad that the Protestant clergymen of all denominations in Montreal have this year united to invite Christians to prayer, and it will augur ill for the state of

religious earnestness in the city if the meetings which have been announced for every evening in the week should not be crowded with earnest worshippers. We observe, too, that this year the places where the meetings are to be held are more various than usual, and are carefully selected from the different denominations. It is to be hoped that a true spirit of Christian union will be manifested, and that people will not limit their attendance to the church with which they are connected, or to the nearer meetings, but will rather take special pains to unite with Christians whom they do not meet on ordinary occasions. Among the causes of thanksgiving to-day, one fact should not be forgotten: and that is, that the feeling of the unity of all believers in Christ is ever widening and deepening, and that petty, sectarian jealousy is everywhere giving way to united work for the Master.

Fiji.

We are glad to welcome Fiji into the family of nations. King Cakaban has given his people a constitution. This monarch is, on a small scale, the South Sea Constantine. He has subdued the cannibal pagans who inhabited the interior, and now seeks to elevate the whole people to the rank of a Christian nation. Any one who contrasts what the Sandwich Islands are with what they were half a century ago, will believe that there is a bright future before Fiji. It ought surely to encourage Christian people in the missionary work thus to see the "islands of the sea" become Christian, and "a nation born in a day."

The constitution of Fiji, in seventy-eight articles, fills three columns of the *Hawaiian Gazette*. It limits the monarchy, abolishes pagan cruelties, and protects the people in their natural inalienable rights. The following extracts from the constitution read about as well as the preamble of the American "Declaration of Independence," from which they are evidently copied. We trust that they are no mere rhetorical flourish or "glittering generalities," to remain for two generations a dead letter:—

"God hath endowed all men with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the right of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

"All men have the right, to write and publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall be enacted to restrain the liberty of the Press, except such law as may be necessary for the protection of His Majesty the King and the Royal Family.

"All men have the right, in an orderly and peaceable manner, to assemble, without arms, to consult upon the common good, and to petition the King or Legislative Assembly for redress of grievances."

THE HOLY BROTHERHOOD.

Any of the apostolic churches would doubtless have stood aghast at the announcement of a conversation, and yet, perhaps, any of these churches would have looked with equal wonder on a Christian church with nothing of the kind. To their mind the church was a brotherhood, whose strength lay in the strong affection the members felt for each other; an affection which was nourished by almost unceasing intercourse. Their Christianity was not a thing of the solemn assembly wherein one does not know the person who has sat for twenty years within a yard of him from any other sinner, but it took possession of the whole life, and more especially of the social instincts. It would have thought its great strength gone and a new power put into the hands of the enemy, had the social gatherings ceased to belong to it as a church. The wise will hail with delight the partial return in the present day to this primitive source of happiness and power. Christianity has to break down many prejudices before the churches can have really social meetings where all shall meet as brothers and sisters in Christ. But the social meeting is itself, perhaps, the readiest means to this end. It is high and holy work to bring into mutual acquaintance, and possibly into mutual affection, the members of one body, who are too often found as cold towards each other as the bones Ezekiel saw. The Young Men's Associations, and others, to whom this great mission seems to have been committed in this age, should look upon the work in this exalted light. The Christian folk are to be called together, not to make funds for an association to dispense in some worthy charity, not to draw out the gifts of the singers and readers for the amusement of the rest, but to find in mutual intercourse that best principle which spread the Church over the Roman world in a century. Mirth and society young people must have: companionships and attachments they will form. These powerful impulses may be allowed to pull against the Church and its designs, but they may be yoked into its service and become its most powerful allies.

THE BOARD OF ARTS.—The determined stand taken by those who wish to see the Board of Arts officered by men capable and desirous of promoting the ends for which it was instituted, against the arbitrary and overbearing attempts of a faction to make it the battleground of national prejudice and a feeder of the revenues of the Romish priesthood, seems to have produced a change of tactics on the part of the aggressive body. *La Minerve* espouses the side of the Bellefleur faction and puts on a very injured air. It claims great credit for its party, that the provoking and disagreeable letting in of light upon the intrigues of the priests and their followers in Lower Canada by the *Witness*, and other independent papers, has not resulted in civil war and a Napoleonic extinguishment of the offending journals. A free press is as distasteful to the priest party here as in other countries, it seems; but there is something very refreshing in that party, after driving Protestants to the wall by their selfish exactions and appropriations of public money largely derived from taxes paid by the latter, to complain and threaten when they offer resistance to further encroachment. *La Minerve* acknowledges that the Province has taken valuable lessons from the Anglo-Saxon race in the fields of commerce and industry, and has no objection to recognize them as the founders of enterprises which have changed the face of the country. It also states that in view of the terrible lack of population to fill up the immense vacant expanses of the Provinces, a welcome is extended to all; that the French-Canadians have only the desire to make an honest living, and count the influx of men skilled in industry and commerce, as they English, American or French, as a gain to

themselves. If a comparison be made of all these fine professions, however, with the practice of the ruling party in the Province, it will be found that they resolve themselves into *vox et preterea nihil*; they are like the predictions with which the witches fooled Macbeth—the word of promise is kept to the ear and broken to the hope. It is unnecessary to enlarge on this subject, as any one who dares consider his eyes and his soul his own can easily find corroborative examples.

La Minerve entirely upholds the legality and propriety of the course of the Bellefleur faction in reference to the Board of Arts. The French-Canadians had been so long reprobated with want of enterprise and as being behind in the race of progress; and now that they came with a rush, determined to carry the Board by storm and go ahead with a vengeance, and yet met with decided resistance, and had a damper put on their impetuosity, *La Minerve* calls for commiseration on the painful position in which they are placed! It will not see that it was the unlawful and underhand dealing of the Bellefleur faction that has caused all the trouble; and that if the French-Canadians approached the Board in a fair and open way with a real desire to promote its interests, no one would have any objection. It is as much for the French-Canadians' interests as for any other that Bellefleur & Co. have been resisted.

FISK.

(From N. Y. Tribune.)

No career in our time has been more intensely dramatic than the one which closed yesterday in the death of James Fisk. His life was passed entirely in the public view. The whole world rang with the reports of his prodigious transgressions. No name of an American was better known at home or abroad. He rose at one bound to the summit of apparent success. He seemed for a time impregnable to the combined attack of honest creditors and dishonest foes. It appeared as if he were likely to defy all the credit restrictions, closing a youth of audacious fraud with an age of opulence and impunity—still far from demoralizing and poisoning the public conscience by the spectacle of a hollow decorum assumed when the objects of villany were accomplished.

It is the irony of destiny that the objects which no genius, no industry, no devotion can accomplish are sometimes compassed in a moment by a freak of circumstance. For several years the Bar of two continents have been harassed by the presence of this persistent adventurer upon the life of Erie Road, and all to no apparent effect. But by means which were contemptibly trivial the work is almost done. The provoking fascinations of a light woman, the anger and jealousy of two dissolute men, give rise to a deadly feud among the creditors of Lavina, yet by the very necessity of their nature and the imperious demands of their brutal instincts, the two enemies are brought into a position where there is no turning or retreating. The pistol-shot of a cyprusian champion will have its consequences in exchange of Lavina, yet it is doubtful whether even in this age, so fruitful in phenomenal men and in sudden transitions, any more picturesque life than Fisk's can be recorded. His purposes were as insane as those of Train or Cloots, yet he accomplished them all. His morals were as loose as those of the Countess of Lavina, yet in this respect he had no reserve or concealments. He was an adventurer as fantastic as Cagliostro, but never pretended to be anything more than what he was. Even the story of Aladdin ceases to seem so impossible when we think of the brilliant success of the stepping almost without an interval from his cart of notions to take the reins of a great corporation, to purchase to-day a fleet and tomorrow a theatre, to make to-day a panic and tomorrow a statute, to buy legislators and prima donnas, to dazzle the West, with the brilliancy of his thefts and Central Park with the splendor of his equipages; to complement Sardanapalus with Robert Macaire.

It is not creditable to our society and our civilization that such careers are possible. But the public conscience, if not vigorous enough to prevent them, has still enough vitality to mark and to resist them. In the height of his power, Tweed knew no men but politicians. When Fisk was the most dreaded man in the business world, he had no social relations, and even his name could not be surveyed more spotted reputations than his own. His box in his own Opera House was shunned as if infected, by all who had any character to lose. The enormous diamonds he so delighted to wear only showed a stronger light upon the isolation in which he lived.

His social relations, and more especially his vanity and desire for admiration made him so grotesquely picturesque, that he became a sort of type of that spirit of lawless fraud and plunder which created him and by which he flourished. His social position, as stepping almost without an interval from his cart of notions to take the reins of a great corporation, to purchase to-day a fleet and tomorrow a theatre, to make to-day a panic and tomorrow a statute, to buy legislators and prima donnas, to dazzle the West, with the brilliancy of his thefts and Central Park with the splendor of his equipages; to complement Sardanapalus with Robert Macaire.

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THE AMERICAN TELEGRAPH SYSTEM.

The *New York Tribune* opposes the transfer of the telegraph system of the United States from the control of private companies to that of the Government. This transfer has just been recommended by the President and Postmaster-General. The management of the telegraph, like the post-office, by the Government, in Great Britain and some other countries, after the first inconveniences of the change were overcome, has proved an entire success. The imitation of their example by the American people has been generally regarded as only a question of time. All that was supposed to prevent the immediate adoption of the measure was the great expense it would involve.

her telegraph added nothing to the political power of her Administration; here it would increase it by at least fifty per cent.

"THE END OF THESE THINGS IS DEATH." In perusing the melancholy recital of the various phases of the Fisk-Stocks tragedy, we cannot help calling to mind a famous painting exhibited in London several years ago, entitled "The Pursuit of Pleasure—A Vision of Human Life," by Sir J. Noel Paton. In it a crowd of both sexes, of all ranks, ages and professions, were depicted in mad pursuit of a beautiful figure with a ruffled face, which was leading them on to destruction. The path was strewn with the forms of the fallen; icy tongues of flame darted from the abyss to slay the revellers; while overhead was the dark form of the angel of death, with his sword uplifted to strike. Bearing in mind the proverb, "De mortuis nil nisi bonum," to speak only good of the dead, it is nevertheless a duty to point the moral of Fisk's life and tragic end, as a warning against a life of unallowed aims and pleasures.

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It is the irony of destiny that the objects which no genius, no industry, no devotion can accomplish are sometimes compassed in a moment by a freak of circumstance. For several years the Bar of two continents have been harassed by the presence of this persistent adventurer upon the life of Erie Road, and all to no apparent effect. But by means which were contemptibly trivial the work is almost done. The provoking fascinations of a light woman, the anger and jealousy of two dissolute men, give rise to a deadly feud among the creditors of Lavina, yet by the very necessity of their nature and the imperious demands of their brutal instincts, the two enemies are brought into a position where there is no turning or retreating. The pistol-shot of a cyprusian champion will have its consequences in exchange of Lavina, yet it is doubtful whether even in this age, so fruitful in phenomenal men and in sudden transitions, any more picturesque life than Fisk's can be recorded. His purposes were as insane as those of Train or Cloots, yet he accomplished them all. His morals were as loose as those of the Countess of Lavina, yet in this respect he had no reserve or concealments. He was an adventurer as fantastic as Cagliostro, but never pretended to be anything more than what he was. Even the story of Aladdin ceases to seem so impossible when we think of the brilliant success of the stepping almost without an interval from his cart of notions to take the reins of a great corporation, to purchase to-day a fleet and tomorrow a theatre, to make to-day a panic and tomorrow a statute, to buy legislators and prima donnas, to dazzle the West, with the brilliancy of his thefts and Central Park with the splendor of his equipages; to complement Sardanapalus with Robert Macaire.

It is not creditable to our society and our civilization that such careers are possible. But the public conscience, if not vigorous enough to prevent them, has still enough vitality to mark and to resist them. In the height of his power, Tweed knew no men but politicians. When Fisk was the most dreaded man in the business world, he had no social relations, and even his name could not be surveyed more spotted reputations than his own. His box in his own Opera House was shunned as if infected, by all who had any character to lose. The enormous diamonds he so delighted to wear only showed a stronger light upon the isolation in which he lived.

His social relations, and more especially his vanity and desire for admiration made him so grotesquely picturesque, that he became a sort of type of that spirit of lawless fraud and plunder which created him and by which he flourished. His social position, as stepping almost without an interval from his cart of notions to take the reins of a great corporation, to purchase to-day a fleet and tomorrow a theatre, to make to-day a panic and tomorrow a statute, to buy legislators and prima donnas, to dazzle the West, with the brilliancy of his thefts and Central Park with the splendor of his equipages; to complement Sardanapalus with Robert Macaire.

THE AMERICAN TELEGRAPH SYSTEM.

The *New York Tribune* opposes the transfer of the telegraph system of the United States from the control of private companies to that of the Government. This transfer has just been recommended by the President and Postmaster-General. The management of the telegraph, like the post-office, by the Government, in Great Britain and some other countries, after the first inconveniences of the change were overcome, has proved an entire success. The imitation of their example by the American people has been generally regarded as only a question of time. All that was supposed to prevent the immediate adoption of the measure was the great expense it would involve.

