## Searching for the Dead.

Early on Wednesday morning, when the fire had been so far subdued that firemen were able to enter the vestibule of the Brooklyn Theater, the body of a well-dressed lady was found near the box-office. It was standing, reclining against the wall, as if the unfortunate victim had there been overcome with smoke while pressing toward the outer door. The body was removed to the Morgue, and careful search was made for others who might have shared a similar fate. Up to this time it was not known that any had perished in the burning building, and few persons had called at the police stations to inquire for missing friends.

It was not long before a ghastly heap of corpses was discovered in the cellar, underneath the vestibule, and the work of exhumation was begun and continued without intermission throughout the day and evening. The news that there had been a heavy loss of life spread rapidly through the city, and every undertaker in Brooklyn sent wagons and assistants to aid in removing the dead. Boxes were passed down through the floor, the bodies were placed in them as fast as they could be taken from the heap, a blanket was thrown over each, the box was carefully raised to the sidewalk, placed in a wagon, and driven away.

Looking down from above the sight was horrible beyond description. Men, women, and children were packed together as closely as possible, their clothing burned from the bodies, and in many instances the flesh from the bones; the limbs distorted with agony or bent out of shape by the positions in which they fell; the faces shockingly burned and blackened; and in between the bodies and covering the whole, piles of cinders and still smoking timbers. Strong men looking on turned pale and faint, and those who were compelled to perform the task of removing the bodies had a look of horror on their faces, and spoke the few words which were necessary to be spoken with bated breath. Hour after hour the work progressed, and every new horror gave fresh evidence of the extent of the calamity which had fallen upon Brooklyn. At first the number of killed was estimated at 35, then at 50, then at 150; and then all waited until the whole truth should be known, venturing no further conjectures. As body after body was extricated from the seething mass, others were found buried beneath, and the sad work continued, the end to be known only when the ruins of the theater have been carefully examined in detail.

At half-past twelve on Wednesday the Morgue was filled with the charred remains of the victims of the fire, and Inspector Waddy ordered the Brooklyn Market, on Adams street, near Myrtle avenue, to be used as a temporary morgue, and there the bodies were taken as fast as removed from the ruins of the theater. The floor was hastily swept, and the bodies as they were brought in by twos and threes, were placed side by side in six long, ghastly rows. On the clothing of each was pinned a number, and the Coroner examined the pockets and clothing in order to obtain means of identification. Whatever was found on each body was placed in an envelope, which was sealed and numbered. Few were admitted except officers and those seeking missing friends. These passed sadly from body to body, examining what remained of the clothing of each, and striving to find some clew by which to recognize those whom they sought. The order and decorum of the scene affected even these sad mourners, and not a loud cry or lamentation was heard. It was almost heart-rending to witness the enforced calmness with which a wife searched for her husband, a sister for her brother, or a mother for her son. A brother and sister spent hours seeking the body of their father. They passed down each line, the young man's arm thrown around his sister's waist, and speaking only in whispers. There were no tears, or if they rose to the surface they were hastily wiped away. There was work to do; weeping would come with the morrow. Detective Loony searched for a favorite brother. He should know him, he said, by the ring belonging to his lately-deceased wife, which he carried in the watch-pocket of his pantaloons. When the body was found the clothes were burned nearly off, but the watch-pocket was uncharred and the ring was found. Mr. Loony burst into silent tears as he bent over the remains of his brother, and was led away by his friends. A widow inquired for her son. She said he wore a watch and chain belonging to his father; she should know him by that. "Poor boy," she said, "he was so anxious to go to the theater last night, and thought he was going to have such a nice time."

As darkness came on candles were inserted in thick slices of turnips and placed one on the upturned breast of each poor remnant of humanity. The coroner and his attendants moved about with candles in their hands, and candles were borne by those seeking to identify their friends. The scene was horribly picturesque beyond description, and will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Toward evening a woman was brought in with two small children, one of whom was found clasped in her arms. They were not identified, but their size and appearance render it probable that they were the bodies of Lena Parbel, a servant in the family of William Haedrick, a printer, living at Fulton and Nassau streets, who went to the theater with Emma and Dora, children of her master. It was rumored last evening that her father had shot himself in despair, but the rumor was not verified.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE IN WYOMING.—The San Francisco *Alta* tells this story: "A Cheyenne young lady had expressed a desire to vote. Her young man was more than willing she should be gratified, and sent for a buggy to take her to the polls. While on their way he asked to see her ticket. It was shown him. While she was looking in another direction, he put her ticket, which was for Corlett, in his pocket, and gave her one in its place for Stelle. The saddest part is yet to be told. She never knew how she had voted for days afterward. He was in the habit of taking candy to her every Friday night. Last Friday he failed. But when he told her so, she could not believe him. So she determined to search his pocket. Horrors! The first thing she discovered was her ticket written in her own hand. When the young man awoke to a proper realization of his situation, he was lying doubled up on the floor, while tufts of his auburn locks were scattered in rich profusion about the room. As he opened his eyes a vase filled with water and an ornamental sea-shell came crashing into his face, followed by invectives of anything but a loving nature from her whom he had so cruelly deceived. He scrambled to his feet, made a hasty exit through a window, and has since studiously avoided the house. He secured a vote for his favorite candidate, but lost his girl."

## The Way Ants Fight.

A correspondent of *Land and Water* writes of these mimic contests:

"One morning a friend and I watched a column of ants starting from their home in the mud walls of a hut in our camp, and determined to follow them to their destination. They marched straight to the parapet, mounted its inner face, descended into the trench, and then mounted the opposite side and proceeded to the open ground there. They directed their course to a small mound of fresh earth, and there the leading insects halted, remaining at the foot of the hillock until the whole force was present. I have counted the number of this liliputian army, by the distance their column extended, allowing an average of four abreast, and a length of one-eighth of an inch to each section of four, to be about 13,824, exclusive of the larger insects.

"When the whole force was assembled, the little army divided; one part remained at the foot of the mound and ran round and round it, the rest mounted to the top, and some of them entered the loose earth and speedily returned, each bearing a young grasshopper or cricket, dead, which he deposited upon the ground and returned for a fresh load. Those who had remained on the outside of the mound took up the crickets as they were brought out of the earth, and bore them down to the base of the hill, returning for a fresh load. Soon the contents of the mound seemed to be exhausted, and then the whole force returned home by the same route as before into the trench and over the parapet, each with his burden of cricket food for the community.

"I must confess that had I not seen this with my own eyes, I could not have believed it, for here was a regular foray, planned and executed with military precision, the country surveyed, and the depot of provisions known accurately before the march was made, and at the mound the prudential division of labor and the care taken that none of their victims should escape. In conclusion, I would say, that improbable as these facts may seem, yet they were witnessed by myself and my friend, and we returned to our camp wondering at the greatness of that Creator who could implant in these puny creatures of His hand so marvellous an instinct."

## The Moon and the Weather.

A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* derides the popular error that the moon produces any effect upon the weather, as follows:

The notion that the moon exerts any influence on the weather is so deeply rooted that notwithstanding all the attacks which have been made against it, it continues to retain its hold upon us. And yet there never was a popular superstition more without a basis than this one. If the moon really did possess any power over the weather, that power would be exercised in one of these ways; by reflection of the sun's rays, by attraction, or by emanation. No other form of action is conceivable.

Now, as the brightest light of a full moon is never equal in intensity or quality to that which is reflected towards us by a white cloud on a summer day, it can scarcely be pretended that the weather is affected by such a cause. That the moon does exert attraction on us is manifest—we can see it working in the tides; but though it can move water it is most unlikely that it can do the same to air, for the specific gravity of the atmosphere is so small that there is nothing to be attracted. Laplace calculated that the joint attraction of the sun and moon together could not stir the atmosphere at a quicker rate than five miles a day. As for lunar emanations, not a sign of them has ever been discovered. The idea of an influence being produced by the moon is, therefore, based on no recognizable cause whatever. Furthermore, it is now distinctly shown that no variations in weather at all really occur at the moment of the changes of quarters, any more than at ordinary times. Since the establishment of meteorological stations all over the earth, it has been proved by millions of observations that there is no simultaneousness whatever between the supposed cause and the supposed effect. The whole story is fancy and superstition which has been handed to us uncontradicted, which we have accepted as true because our forefathers believed it. The moon exercises no more influence than herrings do on the government of Switzerland.

## Better Times.

Dr. J. G. Holland discusses the question of hard times and how to make better times, in an able manner, in the last *Scribner*. We extract as follows:

We have, from sheer necessity, begun to be economical. Let us continue. Let us build smaller houses; let us furnish them more moderately; let us live less luxuriously; let us tune all our social and personal life to a lower key. We have bravely begun reform in public and corporate affairs. Let us continue this and vigilantly see to it that our trusts are placed in competent and honest hands. We are committed to a reform in the civil service—a reform which will extinguish the trade of politics that has done so much to debauch and impoverish the country. Let us see to it that this reform is thoroughly effected. Our cobble-houses have tumbled about our ears; let us not rebuild them. Our speculations lie in ruin, with the lives and fortunes they have absorbed. Our ficticious values have been extinguished; let us not try to relight the glamour that made them. Our long credits and our depreciated currency has wrought incalculable evils; let us not continue them. Let us cease to deal in paper lies, and pay in gold our honest debts. Above all, let us be content with modest gains, cease trying to win wealth in a day, and get something out of life besides everlasting work and worry. Fully one-half of our wants are artificial, and these terrible struggles for money are mainly for the supply of wants that we have created.

A DISTINGUISHED MAN.—A few days ago a stranger at one of our hotels asked for a napkin, at dinner. The waiter refused to give him one. "But," said the guest, "that man at the other table has one." "That man is a regular boarder, and has just got back from the Centennial, and I have to pander to him for a day or so, but it won't be long before he will be wiping his mouth on the table-cloth and cleaning his nails with his fork, like the rest of the gentlemen. No, stranger, we don't allow any style here as a regular thing, but we can't help ourselves sometimes."—*Ex.*

A DRAIN on the land of a citizen in North Haven, Ct., recently became closed. An investigation showed that 261 striped snakes had taken winter quarters in it, and had caused the trouble.

## A Feat at Catching.

"I should like to see a boy beat *me* at catching; or a man either, as for that," were the boastful words I heard uttered by a twelve-year-old lad, as he tossed aloft two balls at once, and caught them as they descended, one with each hand. That was certainly very well done; but let me tell the boys who read the *St. Nicholas* of some "catching" that I have seen in far-off lands—catching with the mouth instead of the hands—and they shall judge whether my boastful young friend of the two balls would be likely to carry off the palm amid *all* competitors.

The first time I witnessed these feats of agility was at the palace of the King of Siam, where I had been dining. His favorite bands of gymnasts were in attendance that day, and he challenged us to see their exploits, and then tell him whether our countrymen could do anything more wonderful in the way of climbing and catching. So he seated our little party on an elevated platform, where we could see readily the movements of the actors, and the first thing that met our view was a swinging stage attached to two slender poles that were planted perpendicularly in the ground. About twelve paces off was another pole, to which was suspended by a funny hook a silk net purse filled with gold. The purse was full forty feet above the ground, while the stage swung about five feet lower, and was kept swaying to and from the pole that held the purse, by the action of a long rope pulled by men standing on the ground. On the stage stood four men, and as it veered toward the money purse, he who stood nearest was allowed one trial of his skill at catching the purse with his mouth. If he succeeded, the money (about sixty dollars in gold) was to be his reward, and he might descend, as he had mounted, by a rope ladder; when the next one would take his turn, till all who wished to do so had made the attempt; a new purse being supplied each time one was carried off by the teeth of a victor.

I thought it a fearful risk, and almost held my breath in dismay; but everybody around me was laughing, and the gymnasts themselves did not seem to think of danger. As easily and naturally as you would catch a ball tossed towards you by your companion, the first man opened his mouth just at the right instant, touched the purse with his lower lip to dislodge it from the peg, and caught the string between his teeth, just as his time was up, by the veering away of the stage. Several others followed, with the same success, each loudly cheered, and appearing triumphantly happy. Then for one poor fellow, who failed to catch the coveted prize, came the usual penalty of being hissed and hooted at by the crowd; but worst of all, he had to let go the stage, grasp the pole to which the purse was attached, and, with hands and legs entwined, slide down as best he could to the ground. I thought, of course, he would fall; but he let himself down as readily as a monkey or a squirrel could have done, and appeared too crestfallen at the disgrace he had incurred to care about the loss of the money, or even the danger of a descent by that bare pole. Of course there were only a few seconds of time for him to seize the pole as the stage swung away, and had he halted or hesitated at all, he must inevitably have been dashed to pieces.—*F. R. Feudge, in St. Nicholas.*

## "Butter from Thames Mud."

Our readers will no doubt call to mind an alarming topic of discussion that was generally debated in the public press some months ago as to the rumored fabrication of "mild Dorset" from the fatty matter contained in Thames mud. A correspondent puts us in possession of the following facts on the subject, for the authenticity of which he vouches, and which are calculated to excite anew in the public mind a demand for inquiry of a searching kind in the means taken to supply our breakfast table: On the Essex or north shore of the river, from Dagenham downward, is a long stretch of artificial embankment, the original construction of which dates back to the Saxon period, and which is still kept up by the proprietors of the river-side meadows, under the watchful eye of the Thames Conservancy Board, with a view to preventing an overflow of the Thames, the land lying in this district being a few feet below high-water mark. Roughly built of sandstone bowlders, and possessing a gloomily uninviting aspect, this stretch of river-dyke is almost unvisited except by an occasional sportsman or the workmen employed at the chemical manure works, dotted at long intervals along it, each with its jetty stretching into the river. At low tide, however, is occasionally to be observed a busily employed "mudlark," basket on back and hook in hand, like the traditional rag-collector of Paris, intently searching each crevice and cranny of the bank near the water's edge for something that appears to be an object of eager desire to the anxious seeker. This something is Thames fat, and the mudlarks are commissioned, we are assured by London manufacturers, to seek the dainty treasure trove in the interests of our metropolitan butter supply. The grease originally poured in the bosom of Father Thames from the drain-pipes of countless factories, and mingled with the liquid household refuse of a million kitchens, is washed, congealed, and agglomerated by the action of the tides until when found it is of about the consistency and almost the purity of ordinary Russian tallow. The stones of the bank are plentifully bespotted with its white particles, but it is not for these that the *chiffonnier* seeks. His basket, if examined, is found to contain perfectly-shaped balls of the oleaginous matter, varying in size from a walnut to that of a cricket-ball. And here is a result of the action of specific gravity. Each of these balls of fat, slate-colored without, but almost white within, has (and is without exception) for its nucleus a cork. Around the cork is matted a collection of hair and wooly fibers, and gathered upon this is the fat, accumulated during days and nights of floating up and down the river until it is left by the retreating tide upon the bank. As nature's refining process would not leave the unctuous matter sufficiently pure for the fastidious palates of the consumers of best Brittany, it is subjected to various boilings and strainings by the manufacturer who receives it from the collectors, and is then sold to the retail trade, who distribute it to the public in the different guises of salt and fresh butter. On a "lucky day" an industrious mudlark will earn as much as 3s. 6d. by his queer occupation at the two tides.—*English Exchange.*

IF idle people only knew that the enjoyment of rest and pleasure is to be attained only by real honorable labor, we should have fewer valetudinarians and hypochondriacs in the world.


## Commercial Insurance Company.

This Company is in a splendid condition. A fine business has been done during the year, and with comparatively little loss. The amount of capital stock of the company paid up in cash is $200,000; capital and surplus, $450,000. The COMMERCIAL since its organization February 26th, 1872, not quite five years, has paid in losses $400,000, which is a creditable showing. The COMMERCIAL has been thoroughly conservative; has transacted a legitimate business in every way, and its present prosperity is owing to the care and attention given its affairs, by directors as well as officers. Mr. LATON, the Secretary, is a thorough underwriter, and manages the various departments of the business with thorough tact and clear intelligence. We are glad to chronicle the success of our local companies, among which the COMMERCIAL occupies a prominent position.—*Illustrated Christmas Spirit of the Times.*

## What the Ladies Say

Must be true, and they do say almost universally that the Davis Vertical Feed Sewing Machine is decidedly the best, and adapted to the greatest range of work of any in use. Not only the ladies say this, but the Centennial Commission says substantially the same thing, and have awarded the *Grand Gold Medal of Honor*, and *Diploma of Merit* to the Davis. In the short time that this machine has been in use upon this coast, it has attained to an enviable popularity that is rapidly increasing as it becomes better known. Mechanical enterprise and development are making rapid strides, and the so-called standard machines that satisfied our wives and daughters a few years ago are now laid aside to give place to a machine worthy to stand in the front rank of inventive progress. See and try the Davis before making a purchase.

## Webster on a Bridge.

We do not believe that so much benefit can be derived from the same amount of money in any other way as by purchasing a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. Is a person at fault about the application of any particular word, or of the way it should be used, and its different meanings, he has but to look in his Unabridged, and he will find examples of all. Every thing that can be illustrated by figures or diagrams is so illustrated, (by the 3,000 illustrations.) It is a perfect cyclopedia, and we would advise any one who has no "Webster on a bridge," as Mrs. Partington has it, to do without an extra coat or dress and get one—they will never regret it.—*Hub. Advertiser.*

## A New Attraction.

Among the many attractions to which the attention of visitors is directed upon reaching San Francisco, none perhaps will afford more pleasure or prove more attractive than Wood's Museum, recently opened at 522 California street. Mr. Wood claims to have (and we believe he has) the best collection of relics west of Philadelphia. The collection consists of curiosities from every department of nature and art, to the number of one hundred thousand. Visitors will find in Mr. Wood a pleasant, genial gentleman, thoroughly devoted to his business, who will spare no pains to please his patrons. Don't visit the Bay City without seeing the Museum.

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DIVIDEND NOTICE, NO. 3.—COLLATERAL Loan and Savings Bank has declared a dividend of Two per cent. for November, payable December 5th to stockholders of record November 27th. F. S. CARTER, Sec'y.

COLLATERAL LOAN AND SAVINGS BANK, Corner Post and Kearny sts., S. F. The shares of this bank are offered for subscription at $12 per share during the month of December. In January the price will be advanced to $15 per share. The shares are now paying regular monthly dividends of 2 per cent.

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