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One Copy 1 year, postage paid, \$1.50. 6 months, " " 1.00. Clubs of 10 or more, postage paid, \$1.25 per copy.

Under this new arrangement we shall enforce the cash system more rigidly than ever before; and unless our subscribers remit promptly many names will be dropped from our list.

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Remember that we send all papers free of postage after January 1st.

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Now is the time for getting up Clubs to the WEEKLY STAR. Show the paper to your neighbors and friends, and get them to join in. We want the biggest subscription list in North Carolina.

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EXTINGUISHING FIRES.

Opening winter suggests a subject, which is at all times important, but more so at the approaching season than at others—the subject of how to put out conflagrations.

Recently there assembled in New York a convention of chief engineers of fire departments. That body suggested a system of direct water supply which we shall go to the pains to explain, both because of the general importance of the question and because it seems to bring out a novelty in the mode of fire extinguishment.

We learn that this plan proposes to deliver water all over a city at a pressure producing a stream, at any hydrant, of the same power as that sent through the most powerful steam engine. This pressure is obtained not from the height of the reservoir, but from a force pump at the water works.

It is the same agency used for the delivery of water throughout the city, but is increased to a high degree on notification that a fire has broken out. The system operates well as an auxiliary of a fire department provided with movable engines; but one of its great claims for adoption is put on the ground that engines may be dispensed with altogether, and that only a few firemen are needed to screw hose to the hydrants and direct the streams on the burning buildings.

While this hydrant plan is found to be effective where the hydrants are thickly placed, yet it is the sense of experienced firemen that it will not do to trust to it alone. The convention of 1874 appointed a committee to gather facts and opinions from all sources relating to this subject, and replies were overwhelming against the exclusion of fire engines as aids of the direct service system. The reason is obvious. Suppose the force pumps should break or cease to work, there would be no agency to extinguish the fire.

This subject warrants the greatest care in experiments and no hasty abandonment of old and moderately effective agencies should leave the lives and property of our cities at the mercy of the devouring element.

The fire convention also discussed the means of extinguishing conflagrations other than by water. It was seen that the petroleum fires will not yield to water unless thrown on in immense quantities, but will succumb to carbonic acid gas, nitrogen, and clay, the use of which articles the

convention approved. The chemical fire engines also, including the small portable extinguishers and the larger machines carried about on wheels, received the favorable notice of the convention. The New York Journal of Commerce thinks the time may come when the chief work of fire departments will be the employment of chemical apparatus of one kind and another, and water may sink to the grade of an auxiliary agent. If this period is ever reached, it will be a golden age indeed. Much of the injury done at fires results from the use of too much water, which pours in upon and drenches frequently all the floors of a building.

MR. McCULLOCH'S MISTAKES.

The Ohio election has not buried the financial question. It is still one of great interest and importance. The issue is changed, however, from one of greenbacks vs. gold redemption to one of legal tenders vs. national banks, and to one of opposition to immediate resumption. We are glad to acknowledge assistance again from so able and dispassionate a journal as the New York Bulletin, a paper which, although advocating immediate resumption of specie payments, is candid enough to expose the false argumentation of the bullionists.

It is our purpose in this article to quote the Bulletin against ex-Secretary McCulloch and the New York Tribune, in order to show the weakness of the whole theory of speedy resumption. The Tribune of Saturday contains McCulloch's "Plan for Resumption." Mr. McCulloch begins by asserting that "gold and silver have been made by the universal consent of all nations, the standard of the value, because they cost in labor all that they represent."

The Bulletin says: "Since the discovery of the California and Australian gold mines, gold has been produced with at most one-tenth of the labor formerly required to produce any given quantity, and yet its relative value to silver has been increased rather than lowered; and its relative value to products and commodities has not been changed, to any extent, all the variations being without doubt traceable to other causes than the decreased cost of producing gold." It is certainly true that such assertions, unaccompanied by the slightest proof, should cease to be made.

Mr. McCulloch says: "It is disheartening to think that the products of our mines, averaging from \$70,000,000 to \$100,000,000 per annum have been going steadily out of the country since 1848 with so little to show for them." To this our sharp financial contemporary replies:

"But what would Mr. McCulloch have had the owners of this gold do with it? Would he have had them retain it in hand producing nothing? or would he have had the Government of the United States purchase it and pay for it by creating a debt, or by taxing the people of the United States for the cost, and issue it in redemption of the legal tender notes? How would this have contributed to the welfare of the people of the United States? Is it true this would have led to the resumption of specie payments, but at what cost? Who is the best judge as to the most imperative momentary wants of the people of the United States? The individuals themselves or theorists like Mr. McCulloch? or legislators like the members of Congress?"

The Bulletin, with a force that most intelligent business men acknowledge, says that "the people of the United States have been perfectly right in refusing to resume specie payments through contraction of the currency, the experiment of Mr. McCulloch, while Secretary of the Treasury, in contracting it to the extent of \$44,000,000, having satisfied every intelligent person that to continue this process would be the destruction of every business house in the United States that was at all indebted." Mr. McCulloch recommends:

"The gradual retirement of the legal tender notes and fixing a time after which they shall cease to be legal tender. If I were a member of Congress, my first act would be to introduce a bill making the United States notes at once convertible into bonds bearing interest at the rate of 4 or 4 1/2 per cent, with a provision that bank notes to an amount equal to the notes which may thus be retired may be issued, if required by the banks, and that from and after the first day of January, 1876, the United States notes shall cease to be a legal tender."

The Bulletin asks if this would be just to the holders of the legal tender notes who have accepted them because they were a legal tender by statute, and have believed that they could legally liquidate their own indebtedness with them? And will Mr. McCulloch explain what would be used as legal money after the legal tender notes were deprived of this attribute? If he intends to force the people of the United States to substitute \$75,000,000 of coin for the present legal tenders, will he please state where, and how, this gold is to be obtained? and what effect this operation will produce here and in Europe?

THE SESSION OF CONGRESS.

A Washington correspondent of a conservative and well-informed journal says that the currency and the national banks will figure largely in the debates, but that it is not probable that any financial legislation of importance will be seriously attempted. It is to be expected that some modifications of the tariff may be proposed. Investigation will be the order of the day, and everything and everybody that has excited suspicion may look out for an overhauling. Such of the Democratic members as have been in Washington, in speaking on this subject say there will be no secret investigations, but that the examinations shall be conducted with open doors.

One of the beneficent results of electing a Democratic Congress will be the thorough overhauling which all departments of the Government will receive. It will take a long while even to clean off the worst of the ordure from the Augean stables of the Republican party. But we are satisfied the new Congress will be equal to the task.

What Congress should do. Yesterday we alluded in general terms to the probable work of the approaching Congress. Of course after the exposures of Republican frauds which will largely engross the attention of Congress during the session the most important matter will be the settlement of the financial problem as far as it is possible by legislation at this time.

The session's work will not be complete, no matter what may be done, until the act decreeing resumption in 1879 shall be repealed. That is the main question in the great discussion. There must be no further contraction, because the industries of the country cannot stand it. Whether the currency be made more flexible or not, early resumption is impossible, so all except extreme bullionists admit. The country is not in a condition to bear such a strain as an attempt to resume in 1879 would bring. That measure will fail to accomplish its purpose, but it will disturb values, and bring irremediable disaster upon trade. It will bring ruin upon the people. There is not enough gold in the country to resume with, and if it could be bought conveniently the effort would cost more than it would come to, for the effect would be that the hard money would immediately float, and a half further up, where he expected to find a gentleman of his acquaintance who would cheerfully see her to her destination; but upon stopping at the place designated he found that also deserted, no one being present but a colored man, with whom he was not disposed to trust his passenger, whereupon, rather than see her disappointed or confide her to an irresponsible party, Capt. Green actually split his boat and tramped three miles and a half, climbing fences, fording branches and jumping ditches, saw the young lady safely to the home of her relatives, and walked back again to his boat, together a distance of seven miles, and proceeded on his trip to Fayetteville. Now, there is an instance of gallantry for you worthy to be compared with the most famed of ancient or modern chivalry.

A correspondent informs us that, in conversation with a member of the bands in the State, he understood that it was their intention to engage in the band contest at our Fair only in case a valuable prize is offered and free transportation secured for them to come and return. Our informant suggests that the Committee having the matter in charge make an effort in this direction at once, and thereby secure a contest between bands whose presence will be at once a credit to their liberality and aid interest to the occasion; also that the judges to be appointed should be professional musicians. The age of the bands, he thinks, with the number of instruments in each, are questions which might properly be left to the discretion of the judges.

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Only a few lending gentlemen are talked of for President. A comparatively new man may get the Democratic nomination. Putting up distinguished men a year or so before the Convention as targets for all aspirants to shoot at, is not a brilliant piece of political strategy, but it is quite effective, sometimes as a boom-erang, and I will not wonder if the Elizabeth City boomers have been revived by its former editor, Mr. R. B. Greedy, a gentleman of ability and culture, who has had much experience in journalism.

OUR LITERARY LETTER.

"A Question of Honor." By Christian Reid. D. Appleton & Co., Publishers, New York City.

Christian Reid's "Question of Honor" is a novel which, in excellence of plot, in philosophical description of nature, in sensible characterization, and in dramatic force, has rarely produced quite equal results here of our former works. Perhaps its popularity will not be as pronounced as the popularity of his immediate predecessor, "The Daughter of Bohemia," because in the latter, "the whip of sarcasm" is in the hands of the piquante heroine, who is welded and welded, or mercy, against the follies and meannesses of society, and society itself, by the scourge of his wit; each individual member is evidently following its own path, and the plot is not so much a plot as in "A Question of Honor," is more romantic in tone; it appeals to a freer, less sophisticated, and less refined taste, and therefore, not likely to obtain so much favor among the critics and worldlings, who seem to constitute now-a-days, the ultimate deciding jury in literary matters; nevertheless, it is, as we have hinted, an able, healthy, vigorous story. The plot, without being complex, is ingeniously constructed; although touching the main pivot upon which it turns, we must say that "the question of honor" at footings the conduct of the two chief personages, hardly rises to the dignity of a moral problem, at all; the course to be pursued by hero and heroine—in accordance with the character of each—being too plain to admit of a moment's doubt. It is, in fact, the events of the plot are consistent and interesting. And the characters are life-like, drawn with that quick, firm, artistic touch, which shows that Christian Reid is not dealing with abstractions; but presenting us with the mental and moral features of actual persons; people who have "lived," moved, and had their being, and not "soiled earth," not "creations of the elements," the mere offspring of fancy.

Madeleine Sevret is charmingly portrayed. A deep-thoughted, earnest-souled woman, she has the true, and the truest, possible character for the heroine of a novel; the qualities of imaginative insight, and sound common sense, to a degree, not usual, it is true; but every now and then, (she has a right to be found in her own woman destined to become the mother of men, not puppets. Her sister, the weak, selfish, vain Rosalind, and her acquaintance, Miss Champlain, hard, worldly-wise, yet shallow, with but one object in existence, the husband, and frequent allusions to an eligible girl, both serve as admirable foils to Madeleine's noble pride, generosity, and conscientiousness.

The sweetest, most pathetic character in the book is that of the blind girl, Marie Corille. In delineating her, the author seems to us to have succeeded in a task of no slight difficulty. The child-like ignorance of what the French would call "le monde" is so real, and so touching, as to be entirely compatible with the presence in Marie of a native intelligence and shrewdness, just verging occasionally upon human wisdom, which she touches as she goes.

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OUR LITERARY LETTER.

"A Question of Honor." By Christian Reid. D. Appleton & Co., Publishers, New York City.

Christian Reid's "Question of Honor" is a novel which, in excellence of plot, in philosophical description of nature, in sensible characterization, and in dramatic force, has rarely produced quite equal results here of our former works. Perhaps its popularity will not be as pronounced as the popularity of his immediate predecessor, "The Daughter of Bohemia," because in the latter, "the whip of sarcasm" is in the hands of the piquante heroine, who is welded and welded, or mercy, against the follies and meannesses of society, and society itself, by the scourge of his wit; each individual member is evidently following its own path, and the plot is not so much a plot as in "A Question of Honor," is more romantic in tone; it appeals to a freer, less sophisticated, and less refined taste, and therefore, not likely to obtain so much favor among the critics and worldlings, who seem to constitute now-a-days, the ultimate deciding jury in literary matters; nevertheless, it is, as we have hinted, an able, healthy, vigorous story. The plot, without being complex, is ingeniously constructed; although touching the main pivot upon which it turns, we must say that "the question of honor" at footings the conduct of the two chief personages, hardly rises to the dignity of a moral problem, at all; the course to be pursued by hero and heroine—in accordance with the character of each—being too plain to admit of a moment's doubt. It is, in fact, the events of the plot are consistent and interesting. And the characters are life-like, drawn with that quick, firm, artistic touch, which shows that Christian Reid is not dealing with abstractions; but presenting us with the mental and moral features of actual persons; people who have "lived," moved, and had their being, and not "soiled earth," not "creations of the elements," the mere offspring of fancy.

Madeleine Sevret is charmingly portrayed. A deep-thoughted, earnest-souled woman, she has the true, and the truest, possible character for the heroine of a novel; the qualities of imaginative insight, and sound common sense, to a degree, not usual, it is true; but every now and then, (she has a right to be found in her own woman destined to become the mother of men, not puppets. Her sister, the weak, selfish, vain Rosalind, and her acquaintance, Miss Champlain, hard, worldly-wise, yet shallow, with but one object in existence, the husband, and frequent allusions to an eligible girl, both serve as admirable foils to Madeleine's noble pride, generosity, and conscientiousness.

The sweetest, most pathetic character in the book is that of the blind girl, Marie Corille. In delineating her, the author seems to us to have succeeded in a task of no slight difficulty. The child-like ignorance of what the French would call "le monde" is so real, and so touching, as to be entirely compatible with the presence in Marie of a native intelligence and shrewdness, just verging occasionally upon human wisdom, which she touches as she goes.

How different she is from the other "blind girls" of modern fiction. Take, for example, Wilkes Collins's