Birmingham Daily Post AND JOURNAL.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1876.

THE WEEKLY POST.—A New Tale, by CAPTAIN MAYNE REID, "Green Wynn: a Romance of the War," appears every Saturday in the *Weekly Post*.

"A Tangled Web," by the author of "The Mystery of Atherstone Grange," appears every Saturday in the *Weekly Post*.

A Series of Sketches, entitled "Notes of Travel: in Australia and California, by J. A. LANGFORD, LL.D., appears week by week in the *Weekly Post*.

NEWS OF THE DAY.

In the House of Lords, yesterday, the Earl of SAYNOR referred to a statement made by Mr. BERGNY, in the course of the discussion upon the Education Bill in the House of Commons, that he had carefully excluded Nonconformists from the Commission of the Peace, and distinctly denied its accuracy. The Lord CHANCELLOR commenced the adjourned debate upon Earl GRANVILLE's motion for further correspondence respecting the extradition question. He contended that it was a fundamental rule that persons whose surrender under extradition treaties with foreign states should not be prosecuted or condemned except for the crime in respect of which the extradition had been obtained, and that this rule must be adhered to if we were to have any security that no man should be surrendered by this country for a political offence. Lord SELBORNE said the Lord CHANCELLOR's view was consistent with his speech, and that of Lord DERBY, in 1866; but excepting those utterances the British Government had hitherto acted on a different view as set forth by Mr. Fish in his correspondence. When we were satisfied that there was a *primâ facie* case against a man justifying his surrender to take his trial in America, he might be tried for any offence for which the American law might allow, except only a political offence. The motion was then withdrawn, and their lordships adjourned.

Yesterday's sitting of the House of Commons opened with a number of notices of motion for next session, and in these and a few queries had been disposed of, on the motion for considering the Education Bill, as amended, the Marquis of HARTINGTON moved as an amendment, "That, in the opinion of this House, principles have been introduced into this bill since its second reading which were not then either mentioned to or contemplated by the House, which tend to disturb the basis on which elementary education now rests, to impede the formation of a national system of education and confusion into the election of School Boards, and to place the management of schools in the hands of persons who neither contribute to their support, nor are elected by the ratepayers." It was to be expected, he said, that this bill would have a denominational character; but generosity, if not justice, might have led the majority to have some respect for the feelings of the Nonconformists. He condemned the attack which had been made on School Boards, and the proposal to take away the power which he objected as tending to reopen grievances which should have been let alone. Government could under such circumstances scarcely object if, when the time came, the opposition proposed to deal with the matter in a manner more in accordance with their own views. Lord SANDON asserted that the rights of Nonconformists were rigidly protected by the bill, and justified the amendments introduced after the second reading. He appealed for a reference to the course adopted by the late Government in the bill of 1870, when most important amendments were introduced long after the second reading. After a few words from Sir G. Bowyer, Mr. E. Pease (who supported the amendment), and Lord J. Manners, the House divided, and the motion to consider the bill was carried by 132 votes against 120. A new clause moved by Mr. Dodson with respect to introduced after the second reading, and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre's new clause requiring a statement of the income of schools receiving an annual grant was negatived.

The Ministerial Whitebait Dinner is fixed for Wednesday next, at the Ship Hotel, Greenwich.

At Bristol Assizes, yesterday, EDWARD LEGG was sentenced to death for the murder of THOMAS ALLEN. The jury recommended him to mercy.

The three brothers, named HARDING, charged with the murder of a policeman at Manchester, were yesterday remanded. The coroner's inquest was adjourned, after formal evidence had been taken.

In sentencing a prisoner at Gloucester Assizes, yesterday, Mr. Justice GROVE said that intemperance had destroyed large numbers of people, and would, at its present rate of increase, in time destroy the country itself. He characterised as rubbish the cry about "robbing a poor man of his beer," and said that intoxicating drink was totally unnecessary.

Lord CHARLES INNES KERR was summoned at Windsor Petty Sessions yesterday, as master of a pack of draghounds, for hunting the fox without a licence, after the fox had been killed for half an hour. The magistrates inflicted a fine of £10., half the fine being for keeping the servant and half for keeping the dog, as the defendant was only summoned in respect of one dog.

Speaking at the annual dinner of the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland, on Wednesday evening, the LORD-LIEUTENANT referred to the advancing prosperity of that country, in which, he said, the labouring classes had their share. He regretted, however, that there was still a large amount of popular error connected with the tenure of land, and that the perfect security of life and property, essential to industry and progress, was still wanting.

A baby show was opened at the North Woolwich Gardens, on Wednesday, and one hundred and twenty-three babies, and their mothers or nurses, were "on view." Prizes were offered for the finest specimens of triplets, twins, and individual infants of both sexes, and considerable success being built up of beauty in some of the classes, and size and weight in others. The maternal desire to see children taken notice of is only natural, but it is not so intelligible that English matrons should exhibit themselves and their offspring at public gatherings.

It appears from the railway returns for 1875 that the total number of miles of railway open for traffic in the United Kingdom at the end of 1875 was 16,635. The gross receipts from all sources during the year, exclusive of season ticket holders, was 506,975,234. The gross receipts from all sources were £30,237,000., of which sum £25,714,631. was derived from passenger traffic, £33,262,000. from goods, and £2,254,247. from rents, tolls, and other sources. The net receipts were £28,016,272., being in the proportion of 4.45 to the total paid-up capital, which amounted to £630,224,000.

At the Wesleyan Conference at Nottingham, yesterday, the Revds. JOHN WATERHOUSE, from Nova Scotia; WALTER LANG, Methodist Episcopal Church, America; and JAMES G. HAWKES, Primitive Methodist, were admitted into membership with the Conference. A ballot was taken, and the following ministers were elected to the offices named:—The Rev. JOHN KILNER, as missionary secretary, 289 votes; the Chairman, as home missionary secretary, 300 votes; the Rev. H. G. Pope, as chapel secretary, 273 votes. The question of lay representation was presented. A vote was taken, and it was resolved that all the documents and counsel's opinion should be read. The reading was not concluded when the time for closing arrived.

A Bolton jury sat on Wednesday to enquire into the death of a platelayer's wife, named BENTHAM, who had died from injuries received at a quarrel with her husband. In the course of a quarrel, the latter struck his wife with a poker over the left ear, inflicting a serious wound. About a fortnight after tetanus set in and she died. During this time she had been drinking heavily. The surgeon who attended the woman said that injuries sometimes induced lockjaw, but in this case he had little doubt that tetanus was caused by the wound. The jury found that death had resulted from lockjaw, and that the husband was not guilty of the murder or manslaughter. Bentham is in custody, and will yet have to be brought before the magistrates.

At the meeting of the British Medical Association, held at Sheffield yesterday, a report was brought up from the committee appointed to take consideration of the advisability of legislative restrictions for habitual drunkards. A petition accompanied the report urging that the State, with a view of reforming habitual drunkards, should interfere with their personal liberty. Dr. CARPENTER moved the adoption of the report, and Dr. BUCKNILL objected; and an animated discussion followed, in the course of which Dr. WILLIAMS, of Birmingham, said he knew a great many ladies and gentlemen who were habitual drunkards; while Dr. CARPENTER stated that private drinking had greatly increased in the middle and upper classes of society, and, instead of taking place late in the day, as was formerly the case, commenced in the early part of it. Ultimately the amendment was lost by a large majority.

At the resumption of the enquiry into the Balham mystery, yesterday, Mrs. CLARBE BRAVO was called, and gave an account of her life with Captain RICARDO, stating that he was very violent towards her on two occasions, and was generally sullen and drunken. Dr. GULLY had said, when she wanted to break off the acquaintance with him, that whatever was for her happiness he wished to do. She gave up Dr. GULLY because she thought she could be reconciled to her family. She informed Mr. BRAVO of her improper intimacy with Dr. GULLY at Kissengen. The intimacy was repeated at Kissingen more than once, but it had ceased since her return to England. She had said at the Treasury that the intimacy was innocent, as Mr. BRAVO had made her take a solemn oath before God never to divulge the fact that she had erred in 1873. Subsequently, Mr. BRAVO had refused to marry her unless she settled her furniture, horses, and carriages on him, which she did. The enquiry was again adjourned.

At a meeting of the Governors of the Birmingham Eye Hospital, yesterday, a series of alterations in the rules were adopted, having reference to the appointment of honorary medical officers to the institution, and providing that such appointments should in future be made by a committee of election, instead of by the whole body of governors.

At a special meeting of the members of the Birmingham Exchange, yesterday, it was resolved to confirm the resolution passed at the annual meeting, to the effect that rules be drawn up that members should be relieved in the payment of an annual subscription of £1. 10s. for town members, and £1. 5s. for country members for one ticket of admission, and the sum of £2. 2s. for every firm and joint-stock company in town or country.

At the Warwickshire Assizes, yesterday, CHARLES ROLLISON TODD was sentenced to five years' penal servitude, having pleaded guilty to a robbery from the person, at Leamington, on the 26th of May. A similar sentence was passed upon HERBERT KING for rape at Grandborough. ROBERT CAMPION NEAL, who was tried at the last Assizes on a charge of forgery and uttering an order for delivery, when the jury could not agree in their verdict, was put retried, and found guilty. He was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment. JAMES CONNOR, for committing a robbery, with violence, in Northwood Street, Birmingham, was sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

A meeting of the Birmingham School Board was held yesterday, under the presidency of Mr. J. S. WRIGHT. The CHAIRMAN called attention to remarks made by Lord SANDON and Mr. FORSTER, reflecting upon the conduct of the Board, pointing out that the observations were founded upon ignorance of the facts, and expressing regret that members of Parliament should not take the trouble to inform themselves more carefully about the subjects on which they speak. It was stated that five more schools would shortly be ready for opening, and the Education and School Management Committee were authorised to secure a staff of teachers in readiness. The accounts committee, of the Finance and Accounts Committee, it was resolved to increase the salary of the clerk to the Board from £350. to £450. per annum.

Intelligence is brought by the New Zealand mail that Sir JULIUS VOGEL had announced that Government intended to make education compulsory, and to abolish the education rate and fees. Penny banks were to be established in the schools throughout the colony.

The Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* is assured that there is no foundation for a rumour that a treaty is about to be signed between Russia and America providing for a reduction on both sides of the duties on silk, wine, and cotton. The denial made by the French Foreign Office, he says, quite coincides with that given by Mr. BOURKE in the House of Commons on Monday last.

The Turkish Ambassador in this country has just issued a statement prepared by the Porte in reply to the declarations of war issued by Servia and Montenegro. This document throws the entire responsibility of the outbreak of hostilities and the consequences that may ensue therefrom, upon the Princes MILAN and NIKITA and their advisers, and concludes by expressing the confidence of the Turkish Government in the justice of its cause, and its firm resolve to bring the conflict to as speedy a termination as possible.

The special correspondent of the *Courrier de France* telegraphs from Vienna that the Turkish Government has declared it would accept the project for an international conference presented by Germany, Russia, and England, to be held in a neutral town, either Geneva or Brussels, as soon as a decisive victory has been gained by the Turks or the Servians. According to the Russian Telegraphic Agency, the Turkish Authorities agree in principle, but it does not yet appear certain when mediation can be brought about without causing prejudice to either party. Austria has been strengthening the garrison of Semlin, in view of eventualities arising. Russia is also sending more troops to the frontier.

The proceedings of the deputation to Lord HARTINGTON on Wednesday, and the speech made by his lordship, possess an interest beyond that which is created by the special circumstances which gave rise to them. The subject under discussion was of the greatest importance, since there is scarcely a distinctly Liberal principle of government, which it does not affect. It is necessary to recal the extent of the issues thus raised, in order that we may the more clearly see how they bear upon the general question. The oldest of all Liberal ideas, that public money should be raised and expended only by the representatives of the taxpayers, the conditions under which personal liberty shall be restricted, the maintenance of religious liberty by the establishment of religious equality—all these great objects are concerned in the settlement of the educational policy of the country. They are all imperiled by the proposals of the Government, and the conduct and direction of the manner in which they shall be vindicated must be undertaken by the whole of the Liberal party. This is not a matter of detail, which can be arranged merely by Parliamentary leaders; it is one which affects the very existence of the party itself. Of course there will be differences of opinion as to the extent to which politicians should go in opposing a measure like that which has passed the House of Commons, but it might well be thought that there would be no division upon the broad questions of principle involved. There is, no doubt, a difficulty in ascertaining in any way except by a general election the real wishes of the Liberal constituencies. On the other hand, it must be felt to be desirable that any subject in dispute between different sections of the party should be arranged before an election takes place. On the occasion of a contest, Liberals should be engaged in opposing the enemy, and not in fighting out their own differences, by nominating separate candidates. The difficulty of making an arrangement of this kind is decreased exactly in proportion to the efficiency of organisations of Liberals in the various constituencies. This is another proof of the necessity of completing those organisations, so that there may be no doubt of the authority with which their representatives may speak. It is satisfactory to know that this work is going on. In Birmingham, for instance, there is no trouble in ascertaining what is the opinion of the majority of Liberals on any great question which arises; and the same may be said of Manchester, Sheffield, and other great towns in which associations similar to ours have been established. The deputation representing these places had a right, therefore, to speak with authority on the important subject which it was appointed to treat.

On this point Lord HARTINGTON's speech raised questions of very grave importance. His remarks necessarily give rise to considerations of the relations which Parliamentary representatives bear towards their constituents, to the foundation upon which the existence of the Liberal party must rest, and to the ultimate authority which must decide upon its policy. His lordship said that "he was glad that there was no intention on the part of the deputation to dictate, in the name of one section of the party, any policy to the whole of that party; or to impress their views upon the bulk of the party." But the question is who is to decide what view "the bulk of the party" really takes? The party must, as a whole, have some opinion upon subjects which so vitally affects all its principles. The doubt at present cannot be as to the nature of the opinion, for whenever the feeling of Liberals has been tested by a vote, a great majority has voted, either with Mr. DIXON in favour of universal School Boards, or with Mr. RICHARD against sectarian teaching in State-supported schools. The question is whether the official leaders thoroughly understand and accurately express the opinions of the bulk of the party. Lord HARTINGTON admits that "it is quite possible that occasions may arise, especially sudden occasions such as this, in which it is desirable that the feeling which exists outside doors, particularly as to the great centres of Liberal opinion, may be directly represented to those who are placed in charge, or upon whom the responsibility rests of directing the conduct of the Liberal party." These words make a very useful distinction, which it is not clear that his lordship thoroughly appreciated. The official leaders are responsible for conducting the party in Parliament, but not for the formation of its creed or the declaration of its principles. These were settled before the present members were elected. The manner in which the principles of the party shall be carried out in Parliamentary practice is what the leaders have to decide; but always as not to consult merely the convenience of members, but the best way of forwarding the general policy. In ordinary times there is no difficulty in settling Parliamentary conduct, because there is none in understanding the principles involved. So far, Lord HARTINGTON was right in saying that occasions requiring direct interference by the constituencies are rare. But the party is not now in an ordinary state. There is confessedly disunion, or, at least, divergence of feeling, between some of its sections. Some sections, therefore, will have to decide which section must be called upon to make concessions, and which represents "the bulk of the party."

Those who have taken part in the outside agitation on the educational question are quite willing that the severest possible test should be applied in order to arrive at the necessary decision. But the subject is too important to allow of merely personal considerations being insisted upon. The Liberal leader tells us that there is "nothing about which the House of Commons is more jealous than any attempt to dictate to it from without." He adds that the Liberal party is just as jealous of its independence as the House of Commons. This is quite right; but members of Parliament have to remember that they are elected "from without," and elected not merely to increase their own importance and dignity, but to carry out in practical legislation certain principles which are entertained by their constituents. It is an old difficulty to decide how far the loyalty of members to their principles can be maintained, without reducing them to the position of mere delegates. Constituencies are just as much interested as members in preserving the independence of representatives. If direct interference were permitted on matters of detail, where the application of principles is under discussion, there would be no method of deciding the degree of authority possessed by persons who might interfere. Active and noisy minorities would cause trouble and annoyance. On the other hand, no reasonable man will deny the right of a constituency to call in question the conduct of its representatives on important occasions. It is not insisted by the greatest stickler for independence that members who are elected as Liberals have a right to use the power so conferred upon them in order to support a Tory policy. In this, as in all other matters, discretion must be exercised on both sides. On the one hand, the conduct of details must be entrusted to the representative; on the other, loyalty to principles may fairly be asked for by constituents. This important matter is to settle whether or not the present is one in which Liberal principles are so far jeopardised as to call for direct interference of Liberal public opinion. The answer to this enquiry depends to some extent upon the really representative character of the deputation, but still more upon the importance of the views which it was appointed to urge. On both of these points the gentlemen who spoke gave a good account of themselves. One thing, it is evident, Lord HARTINGTON and his colleagues will have to take into account. Lord HARTINGTON is afraid, he told the deputation, that by insisting upon the great principles which had been invoked the Conservative majority in the country will be increased. But if they are neglected the Liberal vote will practically be destroyed. It is better that a distinct understanding should be come to now, so that when an election takes place there may be unity of counsel and of action.

THE *Record* is in mourning, and Mr. BRIGHT is the cause. In his recent speech he made the right honourable gentleman referred to, he ventured to say that Dissenters do not receive fair treatment in rural parishes, and that in various ways a social as well as a spiritual ban is imposed upon them. "This intolerance" on the part of Mr. BRIGHT affects the *Record*; it argues a disunion of truly religious feeling amongst Nonconformists. "The existence (says the Low Church organ) of such a deeply-seated sense of injustice is deeply to be lamented, and all the more because it has no real and essential justification in fact, but is a morbid and groundless jealousy, which is in the highest degree demoralising to the principles and prejudicial to the spiritual life." The truth is, the *Record* says, that Dissenters are jealous of the superior social position of the Church. The origin of the feeling "is social rather than political." Then follows a delightful expression of sympathetic woe:—"We have long been conscious of it, but lamented over it in our readers' pages rather the touching spectacle, the editor of the *Record* sitting down to weep over the declension of spiritual life amongst Nonconformists, evidenced by the dislike of a Church Establishment! Perhaps the manner in which reproves seems enough to strike out at those with whom he sympathises. "But (he says) the social superiority of the Church is inevitable, and nothing but the most monstrous tyranny could conceivably remove it. So long as the ministry of the Church of England is mainly drawn from a higher social grade, and so long as the great mass of the higher classes prefer the ministrations of the Church of England, it is ridiculous to complain of it as a grievance, and to lamentable consequences of this inequality, as we fear that no small number of Nonconformists do, as a personal injury to themselves, and an injustice to the congregations over which they preside, is to cherish a most unchristian and spiritual jealousy. So long as the heart of religious life, and is as demoralising to the Christianity of Dissent as it is prejudicial to its public influence and reputation." Most people who read this extract will recognise another "morbid and spiritual jealousy" in the *Record*, we think, to the Nonconformists over whom the *Record* weeps, and whom, drying its eyes, it whips with the scourge of "inevitable social superiority."

PROPERTY, as we are frequently reminded, has its duties and responsibilities as well as its rights, but it is not every property owner who displays the readiness and liberality in recognising them which have distinguished Lord DARTMOUTH's conduct towards the people of West Bromwich. Learning, through the chairman of the Board of Commissioners, that the inhabitants of that busy and thriving town are much in need of some of their invaluable open spaces for which Birmingham is so fortunate in possessing, Lord DARTMOUTH has generously presented to the people of West Bromwich for the purposes of a public park a piece of land, fifty acres in extent, on terms which are virtually the equivalent those of a free gift. The estate, which is situated at Cooper's Hill, on a site convenient of access to the bulk of the population, described by Mr. FARLEY, through whom the gift was made, as "a park formed by nature, consisting of fine undulating hills, commanding a charming view of Sandwell Park, Sutton Coldfield, and Perry Barr, beautifully wooded, and really constituting one of the best landscapes in Staffordshire." This covetable property the owner has, with the concurrence of his heir, placed at the absolute disposal of the Board for a term of 99 years, at the nominal rent of £1. per annum, subject only to the usual and necessary conditions that the land shall be enclosed with suitable railings, and kept properly drained and laid out for the recreation of the public. In a purely pecuniary point of view, this gift is a munificent one; but its money worth represents really but a small portion of its value for the people of West Bromwich, to whom it will be principally accepted as a source of the friendly interest felt by Lord DARTMOUTH in the welfare of his tenantry, and as a much-needed means of healthful recreation for themselves and their families for generations to come. Would that there were more landowners in the rainfall of the wants of those more landowners and, more intermediaries as public-spirited and modest as Mr. FARLEY has proved himself to be in this matter. Whilst paying due tribute to the generosity of a Staffordshire landowner, we must not overlook that of a townsman of our own, Mr. WILLIAM MIDDLESTONE, whose gift of three and a half acres of land in the Lozells district as a playground for the children of the neighbourhood is in some respects even more valuable than a public park. To enjoy the advantages of the latter involves usually a walk of some distance, which young children can scarcely be trusted to make without escort in their brief play hours, but a playground placed in the very midst of their dwellings is at all times a safe and convenient resort, and its beneficial effects upon the health and strength and morals of the rising generation can scarcely be overrated. Birmingham has reason to be grateful for such gifts, and proud of such givers.

As we anticipated a day or two ago, in noticing the resumption of active hostilities on the south-eastern frontier of Servia, the Turkish generals, though invading the country by two different routes, converging to a common objective point—the town of Gurgusovatz, better known perhaps under its modern name of Krujazevatz, on the river Timok. In an official Turkish despatch, which we published yesterday, it was stated that SCHEFKET PACHA, who entered Servia on Saturday by the pass of Pandirola on the eastern side of the angle formed by the Servian territory to the north-east of Nisch, had succeeded in effecting a junction with AOUNIS BEY, who had crossed the mountains with a strong corps, which invaded Servia by the pass of Granada, on the south-western side of the same angle, and that the combined Turkish force was advancing upon Gurgusovatz, where they are now, with the main army of Osman Pacha, drawn up in entrenched positions on both sides of the river. Our information on Wednesday brought this new phase of the war down to the point where the Turks, after storming the Servian redoubts on the heights of the village of Granada, including, it seems, the strong redoubt crowning a steep natural precipice at the extremity of the valley, were advancing upon Derbent, another village situated half-way between Gurgusovatz and Nisch. Sunday morning, it seems, the Turks succeeded, by shelling the Servian positions, in driving them out of Derbent, after which they marched unmolested during the remainder of the day, when they had arrived within nine miles of Krujazevatz, or Gurgusovatz, when they halted. On the following day (Monday) fighting was resumed, the further advance of the Turks being opposed by a powerful corps of Servians, and after a severe engagement, lasting several hours, the Turks, it is said, succeeded in driving their opponents before them with heavy loss, including many prisoners, and a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and military stores. The Turkish army then resumed the offensive, and, "marched victoriously towards Krujazevatz, and its advanced guard is already near that place." On Tuesday the Turks, still fighting their way from position to position, appear to have crossed from the Southern to the Northern slopes of the Servian mountains, and to have gone upon Krujazevatz, which is situated just below the Turkish camp, on a hilly plateau covered with thickets. Its steep slopes are described as being protected on all sides by rivers and impassable pitfalls, and the approaches covered with redoubts. Nevertheless, preparations were at once made by the Turks for shelling the town preparatory to an assault, the issue of which may be looked for almost immediately. Indeed, a message received yesterday from the Porte announcing that on Wednesday the Turks attacked and carried the fortified positions of the Servians near Gurgusovatz, "inflicting upon the enemy great loss," but it does not appear that the ground thus lost was yet regained by the Servians. Should they succeed in carrying it, the Servian position at Zaitchar, lower down the river, scarcely be tenable, or, if tenable, worth holding, seeing that it may be turned by an unobstructed advance across the Upper Timok. The same remark will apply to the very strong positions which the Servians have spent so much labour in fortifying at Alexinatz and Deli Jovan. According to the description given of these fortifications by the Paris correspondent of the Daily News, they are well nigh impregnable for a force advancing from the valley of the Morava, but there is nothing to prevent them from being turned by an army sufficiently strong and self-reliant to risk the severance of its communications with the Protectorate, though the extent of MUSSA PACHA's losses in the affair near Bilek appear have been somewhat exaggerated, the subsequent success achieved by the Montenegrins is in question, and, in the absence of fuller accounts, are still following up their victory.

A CURIOUS illustration of the manner in some English people observe Sunday was afforded by a trial at Warwick on Tuesday. Charged with assaulting a Church Sir ALEXANDER DIXIE, Sheriff of Leicestershire, successfully resisted claim for the price of a hunter which did answer the promises made on his behalf. The horse in question was purchased by Lady Florence DIXIE, the wife of the defendant, gave evidence as to the Professor's qualities. He was, she said, tried on a Sunday morning. Her husband, the owner of Cheveley Park, did a little "touching up" with a tandem whip." Asked about another horse, "The Butcher Boy," the witness said he was "not there on the Sunday morning; he might have gone to church, he did not know; he was not at the Abbey." We do not think the sketch of manners and customs thus incidentally disclosed is quite a laughing matter. Those who are not unfrequently described as "the lower orders" are often reproached with practising neglect of religious duties, and with amusements on the Sunday; and their sins in this respect are usually considered as their special characteristic. It seems, however, that some of the "superior orders" also require exhortation and reproof on the same score. There does not seem to be much difference between JACK SUTTER flying pigeons on a Sunday morning, and a High Sheriff and his wife trying the merits of "The Professor," aided by Lord DERBYSHIRE's "touching up" strokes with a tandem whip.

THE oft-quoted sage of Saltoun, who declared that if he might have the making of a people's songs he cared not who made their laws, apparently attached no great importance to popular influence in him than is commonly imagined. What the elective and hereditary legislators of the nation receive for their often anxious and laborious services is well known—sometimes public thanks, and even fame, but oftener grumbling, censure, and eventual disfavour, and always heavy drains upon their time and purses. Contrast with this ingratitude of the public towards their law-makers the substantial rewards heaped upon its popular song-makers, as attested in a case tried in the Common Pleas yesterday. The action was for infringement of the copyright of the words of some songs which the plaintiffs, the publishing and printing firm, paid at £100., though they admitted purchasing them for some £18. The songs, it was stated, were published with the music at 1s. 6d. per copy, but the defendants, it was alleged, reproduced the words with the music, and sold them at a penny a copy, of which 110,000 copies had been sold. Among the witnesses called on behalf of the plaintiffs was Mr. HENRY D'ALCORN, the comic music publisher of Oxford Street, who said that the copyright of a popular comic song was sometimes worth from £1,000. to £2,000., and that he had sold as many as 90,000 copies of the song "Slap, bang, here we are again!" and of another song he had sold 70,000 copies. Ninety thousand copies of "Slap, bang, here we are again!" Shades of HANDEL and BEETHOVEN! who shall say after that the English are not a musical nation? Two thousand pounds for the copyright of a single successful comic song could be represented a tolerably good income to a fairly fluent and industrious writer, even if he restricted his Pegasus to the production of one such masterpiece per week. The intellectual qualifications for such a feat do not appear to be of a particularly high order, judging from the music hall compositions which have come under our notice, and such pay might brighten the faculties even of a dunce. Evidently old ANDREW FLETCHER of Saltoun was a wise man in his generation in preferring the composition of popular ballads to the thankless and wearisome task of making a people's laws.

THE BIRMINGHAM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME.

The House of Commons Select Committee has been appointed to sit on Monday next, at eleven o'clock, to consider the Local Government Board (Birmingham Improvements, Dwellings and Labourers' Dwellings) Bill "so far as it relates to the borough of Birmingham and Swansea." The committee consists of Mr. J. G. Hubbard (chairman), Sir George Bowyer, Mr. Young, and Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

THE MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Owing to the unforeseen interference of other engagements, Sir Michael Costa was compelled to revoke the appointment made the other evening for a rehearsal of the Festival chorus on the previous evening (Saturday), in lieu of which the last regular Wednesday rehearsal was transferred to that building. Sir Michael Costa, who came down from London expressly to conduct it, was at his post with enlarged numbers of the Festival Choral Society, and Mr. Stoodley. The change from the bare, homely, and confined amphitheatre of the Midland Institute to the ornate, spacious, and airy interior of our new-decorated Town Hall, was highly appreciated by the chorus, as well as by the few privileged auditors of their efforts, and the musical results, as may be supposed, benefited not only by the improved acoustic conditions and aesthetic surroundings, but still more perhaps by the presence of Mr. Stimpson's organ accompaniment for the meagre support of a pianoforte. As the full choir, male and female, was in attendance, Sir Michael Costa profited by the opportunity to try one of the choruses in Sterndale Bennett's "Woman of Samaria" ("*Die letzten Dinge*"), for which new English words have been prepared by Mr. Taylor. Although this able and original work is but rarely heard in Birmingham, and has never, we believe, been performed in its entirety in this town, it is so well known to choralists as of course more or less familiar to every large choir, and the rehearsal on Wednesday night passed off with remarkable smoothness and excellent effect. After the somewhat rugged and tumultuous music of Sterndale Bennett, the chorus in refined and meritorious choral writing of Spohr for the full choir was inexpressibly grateful, even though divested of Spohr's most characteristic advantage—the orchestral accompaniments. After Spohr's overture, the ladies resigned their seats to the gentlemen, who, in turn, seated themselves over the floor and galleries in order to listen to the scriptural scena of Wagner, which was then rehearsed with the organ accompaniment with much more satisfactory effect than on the Midland Institute on Monday evening, though the tuning of the organ is evidently not quite perfect yet, and the choir are still shaky in one or two passages. At the rehearsal to-night we shall hear the choruses of the Festival rehearsed in full, and, if possible, rehearsed, probably, at the next rehearsal, which takes place on Tuesday next, instead of Monday, which is a Bank holiday.

THE BIRMINGHAM FREE LIBRARIES.—The fourteenth annual report for the year 1875 is one of the most important and satisfactory which has yet appeared. The great addition of the year was the purchase of the far-famed Stanton Collection, a large and invaluable library of engraving and illustrative literature from the very earliest times. More than £1,500. was given towards the purchase by private subscriptions, and it is hoped that the £567. 10s. will yet be given, so as to present this magnificent collection to the Birmingham people free of charge. The funds for the purchase of books for the Reference Library, which now contains 41,859 volumes, and 211,139 volumes were issued to readers during the year. The Branch Libraries contain 37,923 volumes, and the issues were 202,000. The Lending Library, at Ladywood, issued 222,080 on week days and 40,862 on Sundays, and the latter number would have been much larger but for the alteration of the hours. The Art Gallery contains many valuable pictures, purchased at very reasonable prices, and is in good order for work, and is now open on Sundays from two to seven p.m. The average attendance on Sundays was 801. In 1875 the tickets issued were 7,490, of whom 1,293 were under fourteen years old, and 2,952 were under twenty years of age. Tickets are also issued to those who are not ratepayers, but who are specially intended. The total number of borrowers' tickets was 16,948. The report is full of valuable and interesting statistics as to the ages and occupations of borrowers, and is highly honourable to the energy and ability of Mr. Mullins and his assistants.

THE BIRMINGHAM EXAMINER.—The August number of this promising local magazine contains more matter than its previous issues, and more of it is devoted to subjects from local pens. Two more chapters of "Edith Melville," by the Editor, continue an attractive tale. "The Measure of My Grief" is an amusing poem on the hackneyed "depth" of grief. The "Evolution of our Moral Life," by Mr. Lawson Dodd, is a very able, beautiful, philosophical paper, showing how all our "moral life" is really a growth—as clearly and distinctly as the physical progress of the world and the development of animal life. The paper, a fitting tribute to the Darwinian theory in moral as well as physical life, is eminently scientific in argument and tone, and well worth the attention of all, whether scientific or otherwise. "Money Tokens" describes the principal examples known of the old tokens, currency so largely made in our town, and is interesting generally a century ago. Mr. C. J. Woodward contributes a valuable and interesting paper on the volcanic district of the Rhine and Moselle. "Church Bells and their Images" is a very able, learned, and beautiful