

## EDITORIALS.

## BLACK-HEARTED VILLAINY.

BEFORE us are three instances of seduction, as reported in our exchanges. This is a crime which can not be tolerated in any community that would be morally healthy, a crime which, in its more aggravated phases, deserves and sometimes receives condign and summary punishment without mercy.

According to the *Detroit Free Press*, one Archibald Bixby, with an alias, of that city, was engaged to be married to Annie Sherman, a Canadian girl of seventeen, daughter of a widowed mother. Before the appointed time for the marriage, Bixby proposed to the girl that she live with him as his mistress, a proposition which she indignantly scouted, and, on hearing of it his employer discharged him and advised the girl to have no more to do with him. However, after a time he became so very sorrowful and contrite that she restored him to favor, and he persuaded her to be married to him, which ceremony was performed by a man who was introduced to the girl as "Justice Thomas." After the ceremony the thus married couple went to stay at a "boarding house." The third day after, Bixby went away and sent the girl word that the marriage was a put up job, and that the best thing she could do was to keep silent and stay at the house, which really was one of ill-fame, similar to that concerning which the Third District Court in this city has just decided favorably. The regular inmates of the house laughed at the bogus marriage as a sharp trick and a good joke, and pressed the girl to stay, but she quickly left, leaving two of her dresses to pay for her board bill. Driven nearly frantic by the diabolical trick practised upon her, she probably would have destroyed herself, but for the interposition of friends. Bixby boasted of his conduct as a good joke, but it is likely that he and his confederate will be punished for their rascally conduct, as influential persons have taken the matter up.

In another instance, as recorded in the *Sonora, Cal., Independent*, one Adolph Parrou, a Frenchman of 50 years, residing at Columbia, was shot and instantly killed, Nov. 14, by Thomas Hays, for criminal intercourse with the latter's daughter, a girl of between 13 and 16 years of age. Parrou is described as one who had indulged his base passions until it had become a mania with him. He was "a moral monster, and more dangerous to be at large in the community than a wild beast. No home was safe from the terrible scourge of his presence, and the record of his crimes makes one blush for humanity." Under these circumstances, the community is well rid of his baleful presence.

The third instance is related by the *Union and Advertiser* of Rochester, New York. One Thomas Love courted, borrowed money of, promised marriage to, deferred the same, and ultimately seduced Annie Hoag, a prepossessing Irish girl of twenty-six years, under said promise of marriage. Love's love then cooled and he urged that he was too poor to marry.

Annie brought suit against him, and obtained judgment for \$276 damages for breach of promise, and \$124 for borrowed money, all his mean charges of previous lack of chastity on her part being overturned. Love was also sentenced by Judge Fuller to three years in the State Prison, the Judge calling attention, in his remarks to the prisoner, to the fact that cases of seduction were becoming too common, and that the courts ought to set their faces rigidly against them.

A much heavier punishment was deserved.

**HIGHWAY ROBBERY.**—The New York papers are complaining that highway robbery is becoming a very common crime in that city, and fears are expressed that it will become still more frequent the coming winter, in consequence of the great distress through lack of employment. One paper suggests that unless exemplary punishment

be promptly inflicted for this crime, by the courts, the carrying and use of firearms for self protection by the public will become more frequent.

## THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.

TO-MORROW, Dec. 8, the transit of the most brilliant of the planets, Venus, the morning and evening star, takes place, that is, that planet passes between the earth and the sun, and appears like a small dot, as big as a pea, as it apparently passes across the sun's surface. Only twice will this celestial phenomenon be witnessed by this generation—to-morrow and again in 1882.

Of late Venus has been the evening star, but soon after passing across the sun she will appear as the morning star. She is traveling from the left hand or the east side of the sun to the west or right hand side of him. To-morrow evening (with us) persons situated a few hundred miles west of California may observe Venus, like a little black spot because they will see her shaded side, passing across the upper portion of the orb of day. This is considered the greatest astronomical event of the century, being the first transit of Venus in the century. The importance of the event arises from the fact that it furnishes the most trustworthy means of determining, with a high degree of accuracy, the distance between the earth and the sun, upon which distance as a standard of measure, and as a comparison, the distances of the other heavenly bodies are determined with the nearest possible approximation to accuracy. An error of a thousand miles in the distance between the earth and the sun, it is estimated, would cause an error of 200,000,000 of miles in calculating the distance of the earth from the nearest of the stars, not the planets. A more satisfactory determination of this standard of measure would also be of great service in the sciences of navigation and optics.

For the more perfect observation of the circumstances of this phenomenon, most of the civilized nations have sent out expensive and able scientific expeditions to various parts of the world—Russia has sent out twenty-seven, England, France and Germany ten or twelve each, and the United States eight. All the papers for the week will be freighted with the transit question, and in the scientific journals and records for this and the ensuing year it will have liberal attention. Various parts of the Pacific Ocean and Northern Europe and South Africa are the chosen points for observation. Says an exchange—

"Transits have been known to take place as follows: Dec. 6, 1631; Dec. 4, 1639; June 5, 1761; June 3, 1769. Transits are calculated to occur hereafter on Dec. 8-9, 1874; Dec. 6, 1882; June 7, 2004; June 5, 2012; Dec. 10, 2117; Dec. 8, 2125; June 11, 2247; June 8, 2253; Dec. 12, 2360; Dec. 10, 2368. It may hence be observed that they take place in pairs eight years apart, and that the intervals of years between them are respectively 8, 12½, 8, 10½, 8, 12½, and so on, this being the order of succession for a long duration of time."

**THE PARDON CHAMPIONSHIP.**—Governor Moses, of South Carolina, is not to wear his laurels unchallenged as the champion pardoner. He has a rival in Montana, according to the following—

"Governor Potts of Montana, it is said, is not at all vindictive, as he pardons out about two-thirds of the persons put in the penitentiary."

**WAL OR WIL.**—The Portland, Oregon, papers, with the intellect and culture of that vicinity, are having a warm wordy war upon

the question whether a noted Oregon river shall be called Wallamette or Willamette. At last advice the Willamettes rather had the advantage. Meantime strangers "pay their money and take their choice."

**DISTURBANCE-BREEDING CARPETBAGGERS.**—The Greeley, Col. *Tribune* says—

"One thing is certain, there is a set of miserable Gentile carpetbaggers at Salt Lake City, who are all the time making a disturbance."

Everybody knows that the carpetbaggers, those in Utah especially, are a disgrace to humanity. They are chronic mischief-makers, and they seem to understand nothing better.

**HARD TIMES.**—As one evidence of the hard times a New York letter says—

"At a recent advertisement for 200 girls to dance or march in the extra ballet of the 'Black Crook,' at the Grand Opera House, 800 applied, among whom were music teachers, school teachers, and a number of other well educated young ladies, anxious to earn \$6 a week, and unable to procure employment at anything else."

## BUSINESS.

THAT the year nearly passed away has been a disastrous one to business is almost too trite an observation to be made now. Some mighty firms in the States east have succumbed to the financial pressure, others have had to close reef all sails and scud under bare poles, thankful to be able to ride out the storm in any way. Few firms throughout the country, as a rule, but have felt the necessity of extraordinary precaution and a policy of retrenchment, in one way or another, to enable them to hold their own. In numerous instances firms have been so far from doing this, that they have been glad to just succeed in keeping their heads above water. As to the masses of workers, they have had a fearful time, of which the present winter promises to be the culmination. In New York alone there are reported to be from 50,000 to 90,000 people now out of employment, a deplorable state of things at the beginning of winter. In many other places, through the entire or partial stoppage of mills and manufactories of various kinds and the general depression of trade, thousands of people, particularly in the northern States, are in little if any better condition than are the people of New York.

Hopes are entertained that in the Spring things will mend and gradually improve until business reaches or approximates to the briskness of good times. There are reasons for these hopes, as extremes are usually of brief duration, generally inducing a reaction, one extreme being followed by a gradual approach to its opposite. So that next year business may be much brisker than it has been during the present, which everybody fervently desires.

As a natural consequence the community here has felt the effects of the general depression, and most business houses have been made fully sensible of the necessity of a strenuously careful and prudent policy in order to retain their standing in the commercial world and make a showing in anywise satisfactory at the close of the year. A very few houses have given way under the pressure, but most have passed through the trying times bravely, and comparatively in a very satisfactory manner. So that our citizens generally have much to be thankful for, in that the blighting effects of the general business depression have fallen on them so lightly, compared, or rather contrasted, with the distressing experience of less fortunate business centres in the East.

In this city, Z. C. M. I., the largest establishment of the kind within hundreds of miles, north, south, east or west, could not but be affected by the severe and extensive and lengthened financial stringency which has so seriously borne down upon large mercantile establishments in the States as well as the smaller houses. But we are happy to be able to state that the Institution has weathered the storm in a manner to exceed the expectations of its most sanguine friends. We have been at some pains to ascertain its true situation, and we are in a position to be able to state, from actual knowledge, that to-day the Institution is in a perfectly sound condition financially, as much so as any establishment in the country, which is a most gratifying assurance to all connected with it, directly or indirectly.

The same knowledge is accessible to every shareholder, and the directors would be pleased to furnish all the facilities in their power to the shareholders in the pursuit of that knowledge, instead of their putting any credence in untrustworthy flying rumors. Shareholders who have been to seek this information doubtfully, have returned unexpectedly gratified with the financial status of the Institution. A few persons who have become uneasy in their minds through trusting in unauthorized reports, which have been instigated and circulated partly with malicious purpose, may have offered shares for sale, but the large shareholders and those others who have made it their business to become acquainted with the real condition of the Institution have no shares to sell, they would rather buy than sell. The few shares which have been sold to the Institution have been transferred at par.

In consequence of the sudden stagnation of business and the consequent scarcity of cash, most firms throughout the country, doing a large business, found themselves necessitated to ask an extension of time on their liabilities. At that time the liabilities of the Z. C. M. I. amounted to half a million of dollars, the whole of which has been paid off by instalments, in accordance with arrangements entered into between the Institution and the houses to which it was liable, and in addition the current liabilities of the Institution have been duly and promptly liquidated as they have matured, though, in order to take up the paper of those older liabilities when due, according to arrangement, the Institution, like most other firms, found it expedient to turn the accruing profits into the surplus fund, thus necessitating the withholding of dividends to shareholders until the liabilities were liquidated, but thereby maintaining the soundness of the Institution.

The current business receipts of the Institution are fully equal to those for the same season in any previous year, and the business is increasing, notwithstanding the fact of the Institution gradually retiring from the retail trade with the purpose of confining its attention to the wholesale trade. Jennings and Sons have purchased the retail dry goods department. Mr. Septimus W. Sears has purchased the retail grain and provision department. Day & Co. have purchased the retail grocery, hardware, etc., department. The Singer Sewing Machine department has been sold to the Singer Sewing Machine Company. It is the intention for the other retail departments to be disposed of at convenience, and then the entire business of the Institution will be in the wholesale line, in accordance with the original policy, leaving the retail business, in all its various branches, to individual or ordinary corporate competition, or to the establishment of other co-operative institutions.

There is a policy in some businesses of selling certain articles at very low prices, even below actual cost to the firm. The losses on these articles to the sellers are made up, sometimes much more than made up, by comparatively high prices and increased profits upon other articles. Some things are marked down at extraordinarily low figures and at a loss that would be ruinous if it attached to all varieties of goods sold. For instance, it has long been a custom with many grocers in England to sell sugar without profit or below cost, the consequent losses or lack of profits being more than made good by the increased profits derived from tea and other articles. Some stores

or shops have a habit of marking certain articles very low for display, with the view of attracting more custom thereby. Other things have to be charged correspondingly, for it is presumable that no one is so simple as to imagine that any business house can sustain itself by selling everything at or below cost. Some amusing facts are related and lawsuits have been instituted, concerning the refusal of shop keepers to sell goods out of their windows, marked low for the special attraction of passers by. We believe the judicial decision is that a customer can compel the sale of goods so marked, though it be much to the chagrin of the shopkeeper, who would prefer to sell the same quality of goods off his shelves at a higher figure, or inferior goods at the lower figure.

Z. C. M. I. did not start with the above unequal and somewhat deceptive policy, but upon the fairer one of charging something like a uniform percentage on the cost and freight of all articles sold by it. As a consequence some customers, thinking the prices of some varieties of goods at the Institution rather high, have gone and bought them elsewhere, but when they have purchased a variety of articles they have discovered that, to say the least, they have found no advantage in the average of prices elsewhere over those at the Institution, and consequently they have gone back to it to purchase.

The above remarks may explain some things not generally understood, and, so far as the condition of the Institution is concerned, they will be very satisfactory to all interested.

With prudent and able management in the future, Z. C. M. I. promises to be and continue a commercial establishment, in soundness and stability surpassed, if equalled, by none in the country.

## A TRAINING SCHOOL.

IN New York there is a "Free Training School for Women," "a remarkable experiment of modern philanthropy," says the *Journal of Commerce*. This school was instituted and is sustained by a number of philanthropic people who for many years contributed to relief funds, and succored the needy by gifts of money, coal, and soup, but eventually concluded that such a way, as an established thing, was expensive and productive of no lasting good, however temporarily necessary and proper.

Since the foundation of the school, 3,000 women have there received free instruction in various useful occupations and trades, and nearly all have afterwards, by the help of the managers, obtained good situations and become self-supporting, the failures being through ill health or laziness. "The graduates of the school, now doing well, are 2,300 seamstresses, 200 domestic servants, 95 bookkeepers, 54 phonographers, and housekeepers, governesses, &c., thus accounting for the 3,000, nearly."

The demand for skilled and thorough female help is ahead of the supply, and many applicants for this trained labor have to go away disappointed or wait their turn.

The school at first was limited to instruction in sewing. In this connection some startling statements are made by the above-named journal. It is said that good hand sewers are very hard to obtain in New York; that ladies who wish sewing done at their houses are obliged to engage the services of the sewers weeks and months ahead; that it is one of the greatest kindnesses for one lady to find a good seamstress for another; that such workers command high wages, can almost fix their own prices, besides undergoing no humiliation in the service; that, notwithstanding the common use of sewing machines, in hand-sewing alone there is room and to spare for 20,000 competent workers in New York.

Good cooks are in still better request. In the school named, girls are taught to cook for others and earn a handsome livelihood, to cook for themselves and diminish the cost of housekeeping. They are also initiated into the mystery of buying meats and all articles of food with reference to economy and nutritive value, a branch of