Evening Telegraph

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1869.

Special Legislation the Source of Cor-

ruption. GOVERNOR HOFFMAN last week astonished beyoud measure the lobbyists and politicians of Albany by returning with an indignant and decisive veto a private bill. Such an action was an anomaly in the history of State legislation, for, with the exception of laws which tend to cede moneys due the State to private corporations, no bill of a private nature is ever vetoed. The action of the Governor of New York was not prompted by any defect of the bill as to its merits, but was occasioned by a decision on his part to put a stop to all such private legislation, except such as was by law necessary. He says in his message that the power to order many things which are ordered by legislative enactment is lodged in the courts of the Commonwealth, and whenever that power is so lodged he shall veto all bills in which the Legislature attempts its exercise. In his action in this matter he has the warmest sympathy of all honest man. Let us look at the condition of affairs at Harburg by a comparison with those at Albany. and see how wise the action of Governor Hoffman has been.

It is conceded by all that at the capitals of

pestilent corruption. There are of course gentlemen in both branches of all Legislatures who are entirely honest and above reproach, who would not support a bad bill, and who cannot be approached by mercenary considerations. These men are the bulwarks which protect us from the utter prostitution of all the legislative power of government. But in spite of them there are rascality, bribery, and every species of corruption going on of which they know nothing. Thus, what causes the rush of cormorants to the capital, the presence of lobbyists, and the use of money? On what species of bill is money spent? It requires no knowledge of the workings of the Legislature to be sure that all these corrupting influences cluster around private bills. A general law never causes any such corruption. People feel an interest in its merits, but never feel sufficient interest to use money to defeat it or facilitate its passage. When, therefore, a general law of really great importance comes up, there is a lull in corruption, and it is considered from some other standard than dollars and cents. But it is the private legislation which draws the lobbyists together, and it is because of the lack of real merit in law of this class of legislation that secures the expenditure of money. The class of laws which are usually passed are of a kind which would not stand the investigation of a court. We do not say that they are bad, but they are all of a character which would not be granted if tested by an examiner of a properly constituted court. Let us take the case of divorces. The law gives to the Courts of Common Pleas of the different counties power to order a divorce for cause. The causes for which they can be granted are so broad and numerous as to cover almost every real ground for the separation of man and wife - desertion, ill-treatment, crime, and all the other good reasons for demanding that a solemn contract be set aside. Yet we see every session hundreds of applications to the Legislature for divorces. Why do these parties go to Harrisburg and spend five times as much corruptly as is necessary to get a divorce from the courts, unless it be that their cases do not possess sufficient merit to secure the assent of a well-regulated court ? This is the true reason. The interposition of the Legislature is necessary because the parties have no right to be set free. Take a case of the present session. A divorce was granted because a husband did not feed the children of the wife by her first husband on the same food that he ate himself. Can there be any wonder, when this was the ground for setting aside a sacred contract, that the parties should avoid a court and go to the Legislature? This is typical of all species of private legislation. There is nearly always a defect somewhere which will prevent a court of justice granting what is asked for; and it is on such bills as these that corruption takes place and the lobbyists thrive.

Now the action of Governor Hoffman is suggestive of a mode of remedying this evil. It is the vetoing of all bills which can be granted by the courts, irrespective of the merits of the bills themselves. In doing this the Governor would be only obeying the provision of the Constitution of the State which especially forbids the interference of the Legislature in any case in which the courts have power. The immediate effect of a death-blow to this species of laws would be the exclusion from illegal perquisites of both lobbyists and members, and the consequent withdrawal from the Legislature of the element which disgraces it. The example set by Governor Hoffman is one of real merit, and we doubt not that it will have a beneficial effect wherever it is adopted. Let Governor Geary examine and imitate the action of his brother executive of the Empire State..

We are glad to see that the Governor has already been induced to act in this manner in the case of the Kutztown Savings Bank. He vetoed that act last evening, because the courts had power to grant the law. We

hope that he will not make this an exceptional case, but rigorously refuse his signature to every such species of legislation.

Another Legislative Outrage. Tus citizens of Philadelphia have submitted to a great deal from the Legislature, but there is a point where patience ceases to be a virtue; and the boldness and impunity with which rascality has been carried on at Harrisburg this winter indicate that it is high time that a determined resistance to legalized outrages should be made, and the political jobbers, who misrepresent us at the State capital, should be taught that the people have some reserved rights which even legislators are bound to respect. Mr. Honszey has distinguished himself this session as the chief engineer of most of the obnoxious measures urged upon the Legislature, and his last performance in this line is such a bold and infamous invasion of the rights of the citizens of Philadelphia that the very unblushing impudence of the thing excites our admiration.

The measure we allude to is a bill presented by Mr. Hensey to incorporate "The Commercial Weighing Company of Philadelphia," and it is proposed to give the said company the right, without the consent of City Councils, to erect and use public scales upon or in any street in the city of Phila lelphia; the company to pay into the City Treasury annually the sum of one cent per ton for each ton of coal or other merchandise weighed. All coal sold or delivered from any coal yard, railroad siding, wharf, or landing is to be driven by the owners to the scales provided by the com pany, and receive a certificate of correct weight under a penalty of not less than three and not more than five dollars. The company is to charge a commission not to exceed ten cents per ton for each and every ton of coal or other merchandise weighed, and is to collect the same from the parties selling or delivering, in such a manner as may be provided for in the by-laws of said company.

all the larger States there is an atmosphere of The company is to charge ten cents a ton and is to pay the city two cents for the use of the streets-a very profitable operation for the stockholders in the concern, certainly; and when it is remembered that the profits are doubled and tripled in the weighing of the same articles as they are transferred from time to time, the beauty of the scheme must strike every citizen of Philadelphia with awe and admiration.

We scarcely think it possible that the Legis. lature will have the effcontery to pass this bill, now that the attention of the public has been called to it, or that Governor Geary will sign it if it is passed. Some of the members of the Legislature are desirous of reclection; and while it may be natural that they should desire to make their sojourn in Harrisburg as profitable as possible, common prudence would suggest the expediency of not forgetting entirely the fact that the people have something to say about matters of this kind as well as the lobby. A few hundred dollars in hand are tempting; but the proverb that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" does not hold good in all cases.

The "Congressional Globe." HE contract with the present publishers of the proceedings of Congress expires on the 6th of March, and both branches of the National Legislature are just now agitating the subject of making a change in the business. From a report presented to the Senate by the Printing Committee of that body, it appears that the estimated cost of publishing the proceedings of the Forty-first Congress, including the Daily Globs, and the bound volumes known as the "Congressional Globe," by Rives & Bailey, the present publishers, will be \$389,455. To have the same work done at the Government Printing Office, it is estimated, will cost \$276,495; while Mr. Joseph T. Crowell of New Jersey offers to do the work for about \$261,149. If Mr. Crowell is a responsible bidder, the job should certainly, under these circumstances, be given to him, especially as the Government Printing Office is already so overloaded with work beyond its capacity that the regular Government documents, valuable and worthless alike, are almost invariably delayed in their publication for months, and frequently for a full year or more.

But whatever is done with this branch of the subject, a referm in another direction is certainly demanded. Under the present system, members of Congress have access to the proofs of the Globe, and whenever any one of them hurls at the ears of his colleagues a longwinded or abusive harangue, he makes it a point to drop in at the Globe office to straighten his syntax or tone down his asperity. In this way the most rambling and disjointed nonsense is twisted into readable English, and the official record of the two houses is frequently purged of the most offensive words which are uttered in them. For the credit of the nation and its legislators, this is certainly an advisable privilege; but the evils attending it are very serious. A member of Congress is thereby enabled to unburden himself after the most ridiculous fashion, and yet to make a decent show before his constituents and the country at large. While it is actually an impossibility for him to stand on his feet and put two sentences together according to the dogmas of Lindley Murray, he appears before the world in the light of a man who knows how to talk good English. Then, again, he may descend to the very depths of positive blackguardism, and yet appear in the Globe as one of the most amiable and gentlemanly of men. This is all wrong. The words that are spoken in Congress should be printed for the world to read just as they are spoken, word for word, without addition or elimination. Not until this is done will the country be able to measure the capacity and decency of its representatives at Washington. If the true measure of all of them could be taken, it is quite probable that not a few of them would find their occupation gone.

The Indian Iniquity.

THAT "foul nest of thieves," the Indian Bureau, is likely to remain intact for an indefinite period. The Senate yesterday, by a vote of 26 to 8, rejected an amendment to the Indian Appropriation bill, proposed by Mr. Stewart, of Nevada, transferring the Bureau from the Interior to the War Department. Hence there is not the remotest prospect of an end being put to the wholesale swindling of the Indians and the Government until the Forty-first Congress gets into working order, and not even then, unless a change should come over the spirit of the dreams of a score or so of Senators. The difficulty appears to be that the transfer of the Bureau would dislodge from exceedingly warm and profitable berths a number of gentlemen who are intimately associated with certain Senators by ties of blood or other, and equally paramount interests. During the debate which preceded the rejection of the amendment, Mr. Elmuads of Vermont, one of the ablest and most caudid men in the Senate, stated that, although he had previously voted against the proposed transfer, he "had since obtained further light on the subejet," for which reason he deemed it his duty to favor the measure. "Further light" is as accessible to the other Senators as to Mr. Edmunds, and it is to be hoped that a few glimpses of the utter rottenness of the present Indian system will dawn upon their minds before many more months pass by.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

HALL YOUNG MED SCHRISTANN
ASSOCIATION, NO. 1210 HESNUTS for the Mouthly secting of the Association will be held on Moeday Even og next, at 8 octock.
Essay by R-v. DAVID A. CUNNINGH & M. Subject, "Delsm and Christianit, Compared."
Subject for discussion "I Delsm batter than no Religion for an Individual or a six"e."
Votal and Instrumental Mesic under the direction of Theodore Over Eng.

Theodore Oves Eq. The public ere lavited.

SERMON TO YOUNG MEN. YOUNG MEN'S CHRIST AN ASSOCIATION. Rev. J. SPENCER KE -NARD will preach a s men especially to young men To morrow (Sabnath evening at the TEN.H BAPTIST CHURUA RIGHTHI street, by we Greet, at the o'clock.

Seats reserved for young men. Seats reserved for young need.

Medical students and strangers in the city are cordially invited to alread.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
(HURCH, WASHINGTON EQUARK, - sev.
HERBICK JOHNS'IN, D. D. Pastor, will preach
To-marrow at 16', a. M. and 7's P. M.
Morring subject—The night question of the series,
"Who Touched Ma?"
Evening—"The Relation of the Church to Amusements, or the Gospel Law of Things Indifferent," all
are welcome.

CENTENARY M. E. CHURCH.

CAMDEN, N J.—The Annual Missionary Sermor will be delivered by the Rev. Dr. G. D. CARRUW.
To-mor ow (Sunday) Moralog, the 21s. last. Service at half past 10 o'ce ck.

The Rev. W. V. KELLEY. A. M., Pastor, will preach in the Evening. Service at half-past seven

Mer."-Supple VICTORY FOR YOUNG Mer."—sermon of the above subject usions the Young People's association of the TABSIN ACLE BAPTIST CHURCH, CHEND'T Street, west of RI httenth, to-morrow evening by Rev. J. F. ELD'R. 1 Orenge N. J. "ervic" LI commones at 7% o'c ock. Seats reserved for a rangers.

"THE POWER TO BECOME SONS of G.d"-Rev. D. MARCH will continue his Course of Sermons Formorrow (Sanday) Eve log at 7% o'clock, in CLINTON STREET CHORCH, TENTH Street, below Sprace, subject as above. All persons cordiativ invited.

"SERMON TO YOUNG MEY,"-THE fourth of the series will be deducted To-mor-row evening at 7'- by B. v. 'N. E. B. & A. D.E., D. D. in the NORTH PRESSYTERIAN CHURCH. SIX VII Street. shove Green. The pastor, Rev. B. BENRY, D. D. will presch at 16% A. M.

SEVENTEENTH and SPRUCE Streets -Rev. W. P. BREED D. D., will preach the eleventhor the discourses on the Book of Eather To-morrow at Kt₂ A. M. Subject, 'The Monument,' Service in the afternoon at 3'; o'clock.

TRENITY M. E. CHURCH, EIGHTH Street, above Race. - Annual Missionary Sabbath, Rev. O. H. TIFFANY, D. D. will present this A. M. and Rev. J. F. CHAPLAIN at 75, P. M. Strangers invited. ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, THIRD Street, below Walnut - Divine service Tomorrow Morning at 10% o'clock, by the Rev. Dr. CLANTON, and in the Evening, at 7% o'clock, by the Rev. Dr. PRATE.

TERIAN CHURCH. Corner EIGHTEEN CH.
-Proching by Dr. WILLITS at 10; A. M. and
75; P. M. Lecture by Ray. T. DE WITT TALMAGE.
February 25, 73; P. M. Subject, "Grumbler & Co."

REV. TROMAS S. BRUCKEN WILL FRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MASTERStreet, near Fifteesh, at 20% A. M. and 7% P. M. Seats free. All are invited.

Superi r to Augel?" at 7%, 10%, 'Why Comple b?' - Rev. NOAH M. PRICE, at LUTHER-BAUM, TWELFTH and OXFORD Streets. Pews

SPRING GARDEN BAPTIST CHURCH, THIRTERN TH Street, above Wallace,—Rev L.P. HORNBERGER Pastor, Preaching to-morrow at 10% A. M. and 7% P. M. Sandath School at 2 P. M.

TWENTIETH and CHERRY Streets.— During Lent the Sunday afternoon services will be omitted. Service To-morrow evening at 7% o'clock. REV. E. E. ADAMS, D. D., WILL treach in the WEST SEN PRESBYTICEIA - CHURCH SEVENTEENTH and FILSERF, at 10% and 2%. Afternoon sermon on "Jonan."

CHILDREN'S CHURCH.-THE Wonders "at the CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY, To-morrow aftersoon at 3 o'clock.

DR. STORE, IN ST. ANDREW'S, N. E. corner BROAD and ARCH, Sabbath Moraing at 1032. Nev. Mr. GOMPH. of the Theological Seminary, at 7% P. M.

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February 20, 1869

WILLIAM PURVES, Treasur

SPECIAL NOTICES.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER Will Lecture under the auspices of the YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

IN THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC. THURSDAY EVENING, February 25. Subject:-"RATIONAL AMUSEMENTS."

The sale of tickets will begin at J. E. Gould's Piano Rooms, No. 923 Chesnut street, Saturday morning, 20th inst. Reserved seats, on first day of sale, 75 cents; after Saturday, 50 cents to all parts of the house. 2 16 wt-31

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cursion to Washington March 3, 4, 5, 1869 to attend the Inaugura ion of the President of the Members and their friends desirous of participatrg with the Club on this occasion are requested to present their names to the Committee IMMEDIATELY.

Fireher information can be had of EZRA LURENS, and Treasurer of "Washing of Com-

No. 147 S. FOURTH Street, (E strance on Harmony), 2 16 turns 3t

OFFICE PENNSYLVANIA RAIL-PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 17, 1869.

NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS. The Annual Election for Directors of this Company will be held on MONDAY, the first day of March, 1869 at the office of the company No. 238 South THIRD Street, The polls will be open from 10 o'clock A. M. until 6 o'clock P. M. No share or shares transferred within sixty days preceding the election will entitle the holder or holders thereof to vote

EDMUND SMITH, Secretary. OFFICE OF THE OIL CREEK AND
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CORRY, Feo. 10, 1859. At a meeting of the Stockholders of the Off. CREEK AND ALLEGHENY RIVER RAIGWAY COMPANY, held this day, the following officers were President-EDWARD F. GAY.

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H. F. SW REIVER,

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