## Grening Telegraph

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1833.

#### THE CITY FINANCES.

THE report of the Finance Committee of City Councils, based on the Controller's statement. contains a number of interesting and important suggestions. It appears that the municipal credit is not, after all, at such a low ebb as superficial observers are apt to consider it; and in view of the many defects of the present financial system, it is surprising that Philadelphia is not more hopelessly involved in debt.

The aggregate of the funded debt of the city on November 1, 1869, reaches the large sum of \$44,797,096 34, which far exceeds the indebtedness of any other city on the continent, and would in former times have been considered an obligation of no mean importance by the whole nation. There are, however, so many legitimate offsets to this indebtedness in the shape of city loans in the Sinking Fund, loans unsold, stocks, railroad, water, and gas loans, and gity property, that the real balance of indebtedness unrepresented by actual assets is set down at \$12,-304,274°13, which exceeds only by \$750,000 the amount expended by the city for war purposes. Nevertheless, the interest on the entire bonded debt must be provided for annually, and it now reaches the large sum of \$2,500,000, forming the largest item in the appropriations. The estimated receipts for 1870, from other sources than taxation, however, amount to \$1,564,345, and a large portion of this is obtained from the property or investments which form a partial offset to the debt, so that in reality tax-payers are by no means compelled to bear the burden of the interest of the whole indebtedness. By prudent and energetic management and wise State and municipal legislation, these receipts from other sources than direct taxation could be greatly increased, and it would not be a very difficult task to swell them to an aggregate equal to the entire amount of interest payable by the city. The Commonwealth should surrender to the municipality some of the revenue which it now derives, especially that obtained from tavern licenses; the existing sources of city revenue should be made more productive; and all the important Row offices should be made to yield a municipal revenue, instead of enriching the partisan adventurers who habitually strive to extort from the public the largest possible amount of fees for poor service.

Philadelphia, unlike any other large American city, derives no considerable amount of levy taxes, is set down at \$7,992,235. If New York or Boston had acted on this system they would have been bankrupt long ago. They obtain every year, from taxation on personal property, nearly as much as they derive from taxation on real estate, and thus get immense sums from a source which is here unproductive. It is a grave question whether Philadelphia should forever be compelled to labor under so great a disadvantage as compared with other cities; and she will certainly be obliged to either fall far behind them in the extent of her modern improvements, to swell the volume of her indebtedness, or to impose extremely heavy rates of taxation on real estate, if she continues to rely on the latter as her principal source of revenue.

But the most startling statement of the Finance Committee is that even the provisions for the prompt collection of taxes on real estate are practically so defective that at this moment nearly six millions are due to the city from this source alone, a large portion of which, judging from past experience. will never be collected, mainly on account of the neglect or mismanagement of city officials! It is no wonder, under these circumstances, that repeated new loans are necessitated, that a large amount of warrants are outstanding, that the erection of new public buildings is indefinitely postponed, and that the city credit is impaired. We begin by restricting the sources of revenue, and end by neglecting the main reliance so grossly that a very large percentage of its legitimate yield is forever lost to the treasury. The Finance Committee, after a full consideration of the whole subject, giving facts and figures in detail, say:-

"We have been unable to find, from the records of the city, that any property has of late years been sold for unpaid taxes, and from the figures presented above it is apparent that any man desirons of evading the payment of taxes has full opportunity to do so successfully, provided he can keep the collector of outstanding taxes of his ward in good humor, and provided he has no occasion to sell the property upon which the taxes are due; and the result is that the tax-payer who pays readily and willingly not only pays his own fair proportion of the expenses of the city government, but from ten to twenty to twenty-five per cent, additional by reason of the dishonesty of his fellow-citizens."

The mode of procedure by which the defalcations that at once impoverish the treasury and oppress honest tax-payers are facilitated far exceeds in iniquity the "how not to do it" process of the circumlecution office. It seems that liens against properties on which taxes have not been paid are not prepared until five years after the taxes are levied; that this duty is entrusted solely to the Solicitor of the Receiver of Taxes, who is responsible only to that official, and not to the city; and that the whole business is conducted in such a loose and careless manner that the liens become void for informality. During the five year interval ward collectors have power to collect the outstanding taxes by distraint, but their total failure to discharge this duty offi-

ciently is fully proven by the following state-

976 26 3,496 30 9,455 77 99,851 72 190,641 66 178,799-29 52,576-10 869,816-00 878,761 15 974,544 80

\$303,969 11 \$4,256,808-24 To remedy this fearful evil or defect two plans are suggested by the Finance Committee, which we have not space to discuss in this article. That a remedy of some kind should speedily be found is manifest to every taxpayer and to all who are interested in the welfare and credit of the city, and we hope this subject will speedily receive from Councils and the Legislature the attention it de-

MILL ON THE COOLIE SYSTEM. JOHN STUART MILL has written a letter to a gentleman of San Francisco giving his views on Chinese immigration into the United States as a problem of social and political economy. Mr. Mill admits the difficulties with which the subject is surrounded, and he thinks that Chinese immigration, if it attains great dimensions, must be economically injurious to the mass of the present population, and that it will undoubtedly reduce them to a lower stage of physical comfort and wellbeing. From this point of view Mr. Mill thinks that, on general principles, if this state of things were likely to continue, the exclusion of such immigrants would be justifiable. because only a temporary good would be done to the Chinese people by admitting a part of

ceptible of improvement, if every Chinese child were to be brought under the inflaences of the public school system of the United States, they might in time become a most valuable element of our population. So long as the Chinese do not come to the United States in families and settle, Mr. Mill is of the opinion that the evil results that many fear can scarcely become so important as to require forcible measures for

their exclusion. Mr. Mill urges strongly, however, the necessity for stringent laws against introducing Chinese immigrants as coolies, under contracts binding them to the service of particular persons. The coolie system, he asserts, is nothing more than a form of slavery, and that if a prohibition is put upon it, no other mode of immigration is likely to reach such dimensions as to compete very injuriously

with American labor. The Chinese question is coming before the public plainer and plainer every day as a source of difficulty in the not very far distant future, and it is the duty of the American people to examine it carefully and impartially from all points of view. The opinions of such a dispassionate thinker and such an able political economist as John Stuart Mill are of value in arriving at a right understandrevenue from taxes on personal property. ing of the subject, and the sound, practical For 1869, the entire valuation of "furniture, common sense that he brings to its discussion horses, and carriages" on which she can will commend his argument to thoughtful men in this country, who are now endeavoring to calculate the influences that will be exerted on our future destiny by the swarm of Asiatics who seem disposed to seek our

> THE STAFF AND LINE DIFFICULTY. THE Board of Naval Officers, convened by order of the Secretary of the Navy, to settle the differences between the line and the staff, has adjourned without having accomplished anything. This will surprise no one who has any acquaintance with the subject in dispute, as it was scarcely within the range of possibility that any satisfactory understanding could be arrived at by such a method as this, The line officers have nothing to lose and nothing to gain in the controversy, and they are only interested in preserving their own supremacy in all respects by crushing out the pretensions of the staff. Any compromise, therefore, that might be effected would be to the disadvantage of the staff, and as they have not asked for anything more than they are justly entitled to, it is perfectly proper that they should refuse to accept less. The advancement of the staff cannot injure the line in the least, and that it will wound their pride of place is of very little consequence to the nation, which is interested only in having the navy maintained at the highest state of efficiency, and in giving to every officer and man in the service all the rights and privileges that he can justly claim, and that will serve to make him contented with his position. It now remains for Congress to take up this dispute between the two branches of the naval service, and settle it finally by defining exactly what the duties, responsibilities, rank, emoluments and rights of each officer are, so that there will be no occasion for future contention and no excuse for tyranny on the part of those who are entrusted with military command.

WENDELL PHILLIPS is still in bad temper. In fact, if we should discover that Wendell were in anything but a bad temper we should feel alarmed about his health, and lay his unusual sweetness to a sense of approaching dissolution and a desire to make his peace with his fellow-men as a preliminary to a peace-making of even greater import. Among other causes for Wendell's latest scolding is the discovery by him that the war has not ended, but, on the contrary, has just begun. As the great majority of the people will persist in believing the opposite, Wendell of course lashes himself into a fury about it, and, imagining everybody else to be in a fury, likens the Southern people to a bull-dog, and challenges them to combat. Wendell has encountered so many bull-dogs in his time that | this last round will not attract much attention.

a 22 minut to the last are

THE QUESTION OF CASTE. - Last evening, Senator Sumner achieved one of his greatest oratorical triumphs at the Academy of Music, which was filled to suffocation to listen to his lecture on "The Question of Caste." Mr. Sumner's long association with the antislavery cause, and his careful study of the laws and customs which have borne oppressively upon a certain class of our population, qualify him especially for an impartial and thorough discussion of this subject. It is needless to say that his lecture was not less a complete summary of the important question, than a forcible presentation of his own peculiar views upon it. To-morrow evening the Rev. Robert Collyer will appear. Subject-"Clear Grit."

BrownLow has gone over to the Democracy, to all intents and purposes. We wish the unterrified much joy over their new acquisition, and hope they will at last see the gross injustice of which they have been guilty in the past in characterizing the ex-gubernatorial parson of Tennessee as a ranting demagogue and first-class hypocrite.

> SPECIAL NOTICES. Por additional Special Notices see the Inside Pages.

BOY TO COUNTERACT an opinion prevalent among some who have not tried us, that, because we are on Chesnut street and deal only in a class of clothing finor than ordinary Ready-made garments, our prices must be

enormously high, we here publish a LIST OF PRICES. Light Weight Overcoats
From \$9 to \$23.

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Vests to the Chinese people by admitting a part of their surplus numbers, while a permanent harm would result to the more civilized and improved portion of mankind.

On the other hand, he contends that if the character and habits of the Chinese are susceptible of improvement if every Chinese.

The list embraces only a small portion of our stock, but gives an idea of what buyers can do, and

THE VERY FINEST STYLES, THE VERY FINEST QUALITIES, THE VERY FINEST MAKES GENTS', YOUTHS, AND CHILDREN'S READY-MADE CLOTHING can be sold and are being sold by us VERY MUCH

demonstrates that

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BO JOHN B. GOEGH ACADEMY OF MUSIC,

MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 6, Subject-"CINCUMSTANCES." MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 13,

Subject-"HAUT." HENRY WARD BEECHER,

Subject not yet ancounced,

TUESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 1. HORACE GREELEY, "THE WOMAN QUESTION,"

TUESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 22. Tickets for these Lectures for sale at Ashm "d's, No.

724 Chesnut street. Reserved Seats in Parquet Circle and Balcony, 75c.; Stage Tickets, Standing Tickets, and Re-served Seats in Family Circle, 50c. OF THE NO W I S S I C THE NO W PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GETHANY SECOND AND SHIPPEN STS. FAR THE SALE USPEUL AND OF

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ERIDAY EVENING, Dec. 3, REV. ROBERT OGLIYER, D. D., Subject. "Clear Grit." Dec. 7: MARK TWAIN, Dec. 9: DECORDOVA, Dec. 16: WENDELL PHILLIPS, 

Reserved scats. 75 cents.

Tickets for any of the Lectures for sale at GOULD'S Plans Watersoms, No. 25 CHESNUT Street, and at the Academy on the evening of the Lecture.

Doors open at 7: Lecture at 8.

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POSTORIAN PAR December 2, 1893.

Mails for Great Britain and the Continent, per Steamer CITY OF BRUSSELS, will close at this office, FRIDAY, December 3, at 5 P. M. r 3, at 5 P. M. HENRY H. BINGHAM, Postmaster. PROFESSOR BLOT

will commence a Course of LECTURES ON COOKERY, THURSDAY, Dec. 2, at 11 A. M., in the ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS.

Terms for the Course of Seven Lectures, \$4. Single Lecture, 75c. Tickets at the hall.

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PAPER SHELL ALMONDS,

CHOICE LAYER FIGS. ALSO, LARGE FIGS AND PRUNES, IN SMALL, FANCY BOXES, SUITA-BLE FOR PRESENTS.

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