THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1871.

GRARY AS A PARDONER. GEARY has made a greater parade of his abstinence in the exercise of his prerogative of granting pardons than any previous Governor of Pennsylvania, and he has adopted the unusual course of publishing an annual list of his pardons, thus challenging criticism. He has kept the number of pardons below the average standard of his predecessors, and if he has erred in this direction at all, it is rather by an exhibition of excessive steraness than of superabundant mercy. Nobody should blame a Governor for pardoning prisoners who, in justice and equity, ought to be pardoned, and it is a matter of little moment whether the number of deserving cases is restricted to 74 or whether it runs up to 146. The legitimate object of complaint is not the proper use of the pardoning power but its abuse, and if Geary's course is subjected to this test, he is as obnoxious to censure as any of his predecessors. Among the large number of prisoners condemned by the courts of this city there can be little doubt that there were a fair proportion of legitimate objects of mercy, and if Geary had observed the rules he ostentatiously laid down a few years ago, of acting in harmony with judges and district attorneys, he might have extended relief in many deserving cases. But for reasons best known to himself he has practically ignored the counsels of the judiciary of this city, and in nearly every instance, save that of Dunn, who was recommended for good reasons by the present District Attorney, Geary's pardons are totally destitute of their moral support. Criminals charged with the most dangerous or obnoxious offenses are included in the list of Philadelphia pardons. It embraces professional thieves and burglars, incendiaries, forgers, a murderer, a lottery-policy dealer, and an obscene book publisher, and the reasons set forth for the pardon of some of these criminals are so manifestly frivolous, insufficient, or absolutely false, that there is scarcely a convict in prison in Pennsylvania to-day who cannot put forward as good a plea for release as some of those which have passed muster with Geary during the past year in his disposal of Philadelphia applications. These errors would be condoned by a good-natured public if the Governor made less effort to claim superiority for his pardon record, but as he insists on receiving praise for it the people should give it a searching investigation.

THE MISSISSIPPI LEVEES. SENATOR REVELS yesterday made an excellent speech in favor of the proposition for the Government to aid in reconstructing and repairing the levees upon the Mississippi and Yazoo rivers. Many of the levees in the State of Mississippi were destroyed during the war, and a vast quantity of valuable cotton land was thus inundated and rendered worthless. Since the conclusion of the war the people of the State have been too much impoverished to attempt to repair these damages themselves, and they have applied to the General Government for assistance on the ground that the promotion of the cotton culture is a matter in which the whole nation is interested. Hitherto this subject has not received in Congress the candid and liberal treatment that it deserves, and the reconstruction of the Mississippi levees has been bitterly opposed by some of the members, for the reason that the people of Mississippi deserved to be punished for their participation in the Rebellion, and that they were not entitled to receive from the Government the costly aid that would be involved in the reconstruction of the levees. It is certainly time that the bad feelings excited by the war had died out sufficiently to permit Congress to deal with such a subject as this in a proper spirit, and Senator Revels was right when he said that while cotton was no longer king, its commercial influence upon the material interests and prosperity of the country demands that all proper measures should be taken to foster it. There may be excellent reasons why the Government should not extend the assistance asked for the rebuilding of the Mississippi levees, but if such assistance is refused the refusal should be based upon some better grounds than the participation of the people of the State in the Rebellion.

THE SILVER DOLLAR.

ALL legislation appertaining to the management of our national mints, and especially that affecting the coinage of the country, should be examined with care by our representatives, and only permitted to become law after searching examination and mature deliberation. But few of our public men have any of that critical information on the subject that would enable them to form an independent judgment. They must, therefore, depend almost solely upon the judgment of one or more of their legislative brethren who have, or are supposed to have, given the subject special consideration, and may therefore be relied upon as possessing the requisite information upon which to base intelligent legislation. These gentlemen are, however, very often overburdened by other weighty public matters, and cannot give that thorough examination the subject requires; or, on the other hand, however well informed, may err as to ulterior results arising in a direction they had not anticipated or examined. These observations are made in view of a radical change in our system of coinage proposed in the bill which passed the Senate on Tuesday last. and which, in a commercial point of view, is of some importance to American merchants engaged in the Chinese and West India island trade. From a copy of the bill, transmitted by our Washington correspondent, we observe that it is proposed to abolish the coinage of the silver dollar-an American coin

one of the most beautiful coins ever issued | that enable them to jump at conclusions withby authority of the Government. To those who have taken any interest in numismatics, the old American silver dollar, first coined in 1794, is one of peculiar interest. The device on the obverse of the first coinage was a beautiful head of liberty, with classical lineaments and flowing tresses. From that early day until the discovery of gold in California, it remained as the representative of the American unit in our monetary system. In 1849 an act was passed authorizing the coinage of the gold dollar, and in 1853 the silver dollar became practically obsolete as a coin for general circulation, for the reason that whilst the legislation of that year reduced the fractions of the silver dollar to what is equivalent to about seven per cent., the dollar was kept at the old weight. The reasons that influenced this apparently singular legislation were perfectly satisfactory in theory at that time, and have since been fully sustained by practical results. They may be briefly stated as follows:-First, convenience to those desiring bullion for manufacturing and mechanical purposes; and, secondly, accommodation to our merchants engaged in the trade with China and the West India Islands. In these countries the most acceptable coin to the reople was and is the American, Mexican, and Spanish silver dollar, all of about equal weight and fineness. It was feared that any change in the standard weight of our dollar would not only inconvenience our merchants but entail expense upon them, besides driving our coin out of circulation and injuring our trade with those countries. This view of the case has been thoroughly vindicated, as far as relates to China, in the simple change of device on the Mexican dollar after the accession of Maximilian and since the Republic has been established. The dollar of the "Empire" and the "Republic" are of equal value with the old dollar, but the Chinese refuse to accept them in place of the old "pillar dollar" with which they were familiar. As a result, the Mexican mints are about returning to the old device, after having expended many thousand dollars in preparing the new.

Congress would therefore seem to have acted wisely in 1853 in refusing not only to abolish the issue of the silver dollar, but also in declining to reduce its weight to a conformity with the half, quarter, etc., which were reduced for good and sufficient reasons.

With one stroke of the legislative pen it is proposed to cut off the dollar from the list of American coins, without perhaps a dozen men in Congress being aware of the fact. This radical removal of one of the time-honored landmarks of the country is attempted to be justified by two reasons, both theoretical, viz .: - First. That it is a ridiculous anomaly to have a coin that purports to be a unit of value in our system, when it is not. In other words, that the silver dollar sets up the pretense of being one hundred cents, equal to two half dollars, four quarters, etc., when in point of fact, taking the half and quarter dollars as representing fifty and twenty-five cents, it is really worth one hundred and eight cents, and is therefore not the unit of its fractional parts, but in fact a coin claiming on its face to be of a certain value, which its weight and fineness would contradict when tested by that of the other silver coins issued, in conformity with the law. The second reason is, that gold is, or should be, the one standard of value, and that the gold dollar should represent the unit of our monetary system. Against both these reasons-perhaps plausible enough in theory, but which were of as much weight in 1853 as now-should be set up the practical fact that this American coin is of large commercial value, as may be inferred from the number coined at three of our national mints since 1853, at which time the difference between the relative value of the dollar and its fractions was made by act of Congress. From the report of the Director of the Mint, and by personal application at that institution, we are informed that there was coined at New Orleans, San Francisco, and Philadelphia, between June 30, 1853, and June 30, 1870, \$2,778,750, equal to 162,747.77 pounds, or over 81 tons of standard silver.

The silver dollar has long been recognized as nothing more nor less than silver bullion, of convenient bulk, with beautiful device, and of commercial importance in our trade with the countries named. If we must send bullion instead of other products abroad, why should it not go bearing the name and device of the republic, as a beautiful though silent messenger, announcing to all peoples wherever it circulates that our free institutions still stand as a refuge to the oppressed of all lands, and that the nation is rich enough to supply the world with silver and gold, although her own people may be denied the coveted blessing?

How much better thus to send the eagles of the republic abroad than to send clamsy bars, with weight and fineness stamped thereon, as is proposed! The silver dollar is one of the beautiful shining links that connect us with the past. Shall it be severed? It is of domestic and commercial value—it performs a valuable office in our foreign trade-let it not be interdicted, unless after mature and intelligent consideration.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS. A BEVY of Women's Rightists yesterday assailed the Judiciary Committee of the National House of Representatives, demanding the right of suffrage for women under the fifteenth amendment. Exactly what line of argument the fair would-be voters adopted we are not informed, but from the previous performances of the same ladies we can imagine that they ask for the right of suffrage Lecause they think they ought to have it; and because they think they ought to have, therefore the fifteenth amendment says they have it, or if it does not it ought to. The advocates of the rights of women are generally fain to admit that the sex are weak in the matter of logic, and although they cannot reason out a subject on a basis of fact, they have nevertheless been endowed familiar to almost every one, and certainly by heaven with intuitive perceptions in which position he served for some time.

out going through the laborious process of thinking them out. That the Mrs. Woodhulls, Miss Anthonys, Mrs. Cady Stautons, and other distinguished champions of the sex feminine do jump at conclusions we are all aware, but we are very far from admitting that their conclusions are always, or even often, the right ones; and the Judiciary Committee will require something more substantial than glittering generalities about the rights of women before they will feel authorized to take the action that Mrs. Woodhull and Miss Anthony desire. The great trouble is that the vast majority of intelligent women, as well as intelligent men, are very strongly convinced that female suffrage will confer very few benefits, if any, upon the women of the country, while it will in all probability prove an evil of the first magnitude, by sending to the polls a mass of ignorant voters who will aid in making politics more corrupt than they are at present. It will be the intelligent women of the country who will remain away from the polls, while the ignorant and vicious will be sure to east their votes at every election and in favor of the most obiectionable candidates. The women who believe that the suffrage is their right, and that it will benefit their sex, are entitled to a respectful hearing; but the matter is one of considerable importance, and it ought not to be acted upon definitely until it has been thoroughly discussed in all its bearings and its consequences well understood.

THE SAN DOMINGO resolution, as amended by the House, passed the Senate yesterday, and a vigorous effort will be made to send the Commission off at once to the sunny shores of our proposed new sable sister, so that a report may speedily be made, and that she may be incorporated in the American family, before the next Congress meets, so that the naughty Democrats and impracticable Sumnerites may not be too strongly reinforced. It remains to be seen whether the San Domingo project can be run through on time after this fashion. Newspaper prophets predict that it cannot.

## THE FINE ARTS.

Simmons' Bust of President Grant. A colossal bust of President Grant is now on private exhibition at the Union League House, where it has received many warm encomiums from those who have seen it. This fine work was executed in marble in Rome by a young American sculptor named Franklin Simmons, from a model in clay of the size of life for which the President gave the artist a number of sittings. The bust is not only a very beautiful piece of work, but it is an admirable likeness, and we have no hesitation in pronouncing it decidedly the best sculpturesque portrait of the President that has yet been made. Not only are Grant's features modelled with remarkable fidelity, but the peculiar imperturbable expression which is one of the most marked characteristics of his countenance is most admirably rendered. Mr. Simmons' idea of the President is that of a man who says little, but who revolves deep schemes behind an impassive mask that does not permit the outside world to gather any hints of what the brain is conceiving. The President's reputation as a deep thinker has been somewhat dissipated since he has occupied his present high position: and while he certainly treats the people of the United States and the rest of mankind to occasional surprises, the results of his thinking are not always of such a remarkable character as to command universal admiration. That the President has to some extent lost caste among the Sphynxes does not affect the merits of Mr. Simmons' bust, which is really a work of art that its possessor (J. Gillingham Fell, Esq.) may feel proud of.

Apropos of the Union League House, it may not be amiss to mention that the arrangements for the next art reception, to be held about the middle of February, are progressing favorably, and the exhibition promises to be superior to the one held last month. All the artists of the United States will be invited to contribute to this reception, and the arrangements will be such that the visitors will have ample opportunities to inspect the various works of art. Only a limited number of tickets will be issued. so that the rooms will not be liable to be crowded at any time, and other measures will be taken to render the affair a success both as a reception and as an exhibition.

## OBITUARY.

Hon. Alexander King. Hon. Alexander King, President Judge of the Sixteenth Judicial district of Pennsylvania, died at his residence in Bedford at noon on Tuesday, after an illness of a few weeks. Judge King was born about the year 1805, received a classical education, and studied law with William Allison, Esq., of Huntingdon. Soon after being admitted to the bar he removed to St. Louis, Mo., where he practiced law for some years. He returned from St. Louis to his native county of Bedford, and speedily took front rank in his profession. He was a close student and grounded in all the great fundamental principles of the law. He loved his profession as a science, and did not degrade it into a mere mercenary pursuit.

In 1847 he was elected by the Whig party to the State Senate for the district composed of the counties of Huntingdon and Bedford, and served three years. In the first session he took an active part in the election of ex-Governor William F. Johnston to the Speakership of the Senate, which resulted in the election of Mr. Johnston to the gubernatorial chair on the death of Francis R. Shunk. After the expfration of his term in the Senate he pursued his profession industriously, associating with himself Hon. F. Jordan, the present Secretary of the Commonwealth, until he was elected judge of the Sixteenth Judicial district in 1864.

Perry Fuller. Colonel Perry Fuller, a man widely known throughout the country, died suddenly yesterday morning at his residence in Washington, D. C. He was born in Illinois, and was fortyfour years old at the time of his death. In 1854 he moved to Kansas, and took an active and efficient part in the work of making Kansas a free State. His great energy peculiarly fitted him for the resolute work required of the freesoilers in Kansas in its early settlement, and he proved a valuable auxiliary to the cause. He held official positions for several years in the West, as Indian agent, etc., and in 1868 was appointed Collector of the port of New Orleans,

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