The Altoona Tribune.

ALTOONA, PA.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1860.

UNITED DELEGATION.—We notice that the Opposition papers of this State are now agitating the subject of the selection of delegates to the Chicago National Convention, some favoring their appointment by the State Convention which meets on Wednesday next, and others demanding that they be selected by Congressional Conferences. In the event of the selection of the delegates by the State Convention, Pennsylvania will send a united delegation, while their selection by conferences would result in sending a divided delegation. We do not profess to be very well booked up in the politics of the present day, (nor does it much concern us as to who are the candidates of the different parties, further than that they be good men,) yet we can easily foresee the result to Pennsylvania, should her delegation be divided, as it might be, unless selected by the State Convention. It cannot reasonably be expected that the delegates of other States would support a man from Pennsylvania, for either office, should he not receive the united support of the delegates from his State. The only hope of Pennsylvania is in sending a united delegation, and the surest plan of securing such a delegation is to allow the State Convention to select it.

PAYMENT OF STATE TAXES.—An effort is being made in certain quarters to secure the enactment of a law, by the present Legislature which, if passed, will be an advantage to the people in the payment of their State taxes. According to the present law, if the Revenue Commissioners fix the amount of State tax to be paid by a county, say at $10,000, and the Assessors of the county should assess $12,000 State tax, the State will claim the 2,000 excess. The law proposed will give the State no more than the amount fixed by the Revenue Commissioners, and certainly that is all she is entitled to, the excess to go into the county fund, to be used for county purposes. It is impossible for the county assessors to assess an amount exactly equal to that fixed by the Revenue Commissioners as the quota to be paid by the county; sometimes it may be too high—if too low, the county must make up the deficiency, and if too high, of course the county ought to get the excess. The law proposed is a just one, and we hope it may pass.

CAPTURE OF A SLAVER.—The barque Orion, Capt. Morgan, was captured off the coast of Africa by the British war steamer Pluto, and found to have on board 1023 slaves, bound to Cuba. The Orion was sailing under American colors, and hailed from New York. The steamer took her to St. Helena and gave her into the charge of the U. S. steamea Mystic. One hundred and twenty-five of the slaves died on the passage. The vessel is supposed to be the property of parties in Cuba.

☞ It has been decided lately in the Supreme Court at Pittsburg, that a loss by the stealing of goods that are insured, at a fire, is recoverable against an insurance company as a loss occasioned by fire. A fire policy, therefore, not only covers losses by the removal of goods from a building actually on fire, although the goods may not have been burnt, but, in fact, are injured by water or by breakage in the act of saving, but also all goods lost or stolen in consequence of such removal.

☞ The trial of Stevens, one of the Harper's Ferry insurgents, was concluded on the 4th inst. No new evidence was adduced. The speeches were mostly of a political character—Mr. Sennott, counsel for the prisoner, going into a history of the rise and progress of the Republican party. The Jury was out fifteen minutes, and returned with a verdict of guilty on all the counts. The prisoner was unaffected by the announcement.

Letter from Harrisburg.

Correspondence of the Tribune.

HARRISBURG, Feb. 14, 1860.

Gentlemen:—There must be important work of some kind on hand, for during yesterday the accessions to the floating population were numerous, and among them I noticed some very old stagers in the *boring* profession, who make their first appearance here this session.

The State Editorial Convention meets to-morrow, and I look for a large turn-out of the quill-driving fraternity. As usual, I presume those editors whose editorial labors are comprised in the onerous duty of setting up half a column of original matter weekly, will figure most conspicuously, as heretofore.

The political cauldron is seething and bubbling at a terrible rate. Gov. Reeder has declined in a letter which was received here on Friday last. This gives Curtin an unexpected accession of eight votes. He has also gained within a week past three delegates in Montgomery, and two in Lancaster, which places his nomination beyond the possibility of a doubt, unless something should transpire between this and the 22d inst, of which nothing is known.—Mr. Covode is here, but I think he gives up all hops of getting the nomination. Like Townsend Haines, Samuel Calvin, and Mr. Kline, he will probably be satisfied with a complimentary vote this time, in hopes of better luck next time.

On the other side, there is no telling who will get the nomination. Many contradictory rumors are afloat—among others which I regard as very vague, is one that President Buchanan indicates a preference for Arnold Plummer. It does not follow that the action of the Reading Convention should be governed by such preference, but if it is, and Plummer is nominated, I thus early predict his defeat by a larger majority than that party has ever sustained in this State.

Yesterday in the Senate Mr. Landon read a bill in place an act to prevent the sale of adulterated vinous, fermented, or spirituous liquors. The act provides for such penalties for adulterated lixuors as must put a kibbeck to that unholy traffic, if it does not destroy it altogether.

On Friday last Mr. Bell called up the following bill in the Senate, which was passed to a second reading, and laid over for the present:—

An Act to authorize the appointment of boards of visitors to the several houses of employment, and for the support of the poor of this Commonwealth.

SEC. 1. *Be it enacted, &c.*, That in such counties of this Commonwealth in which have been or may hereafter be established and erected houses for the employment and support of the poor, it shall be the duty of the judges of the court of common pleas of the proper county to appoint annually, at the first term of the court, a board of visitors, to consist of three citizens of the county, one of whom shall be a practicing physician.

SEC. 2. That the duties of the said board of visitors shall be to visit, as soon as practicable after their appointment, the house of employment and support of their proper county, to carefully inspect the same, and report in writing to the court its state and condition, the manner in which its government is administered, the defects observable therein, with suggestions for its improvement that may present themselves to the board, and generally such facts, observations and recommendations, as the said board may think necessary, to the due government of the said house of employment and support, and the improvement of the system of public relief to the poor, and particularly as it relates to and affects pauper lunatics; and the said report shall be published in the newspapers of the proper county, for public information, at the expense of the county.

I regard this as a very important bill, and hope that it will become a law. The real condition of a poor-house and its unfortunate inmates can be better ascertained than by a steward's annual statement.

The charter of the Newry Railroad Company still remains unlifted, and if not taken up within a year after its passage, it becomes null and void.

I suppose you noticed that a supplement to the act incorporating the Pennsylvania Rail Road Company was introduced into the Senate last week. The principal object contemplated by this supplement is to compel Mr. Thompson to resign the Presidency of the Pennsylvania Railroad. To accomplish this, the supplement enacts that the President of the Road shall not hold the office of President of any other Railroad Company. It is well known that the office of President of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company pays but a nominal salary, but that Mr. Thompson is President of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which Company rewards his services with the liberal salary of $25,000 per annum.—The defeated candidates for Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad have thus raised a question of dollars and cents in order to force the management of the Road out of the hands of the present Board. But such an object can not be accomplished by any such underhanded measures. Under the management of Mr. Thompson, the Pennsylvania Railroad has attained a name and reputation second to none in the world. His services are appreciated by the travelling public as well as the stockholders and there is therefore no danger whatever that this supplement will pass.

I believe I spoke in my last of the Colleges of the Commonwealth asking for an annual appropriation. A bill has been reported—with a negative recommendation, however—prefaced with the following preamble:—

WHEREAS, It is the duty of the government to extend its fostering protection to the colleges of the State, as well as to the common schools, both being essential to a complete system of public instruction:

AND WHEREAS, It has been the policy of this State, from time to time, to afford pecuniary aid to colleges and universities, incorporated by act of the Legislature, which have fully complied with the requirements of their charters, and are in successful operation, with the usual regular college classes and permanently established professorships:

AND WHEREAS, The causes for the temporary withdrawal of the support and encouragement thus formerly extended, have been removed by the improved financial condition of the Commonwealth, and a return to the ancient policy of the State is demanded alike by considerations of public duty and the necessities of our leading institutions of learning, these institutions being organized on a basis so liberal as to render them practically free schools, and which are now struggling with embarrassments from which the aid of the Commonwealth may appropriately relieve them, conferring upon them that position of influence and usefulness to which they are entitled.

It is no doubt the duty of the Government, as well as sound policy, to extend its fostering protection to schools accessible to all, but not to Colleges, which are only open to the sons of rich men. The sacrifice of the the State Improvements, and a heavy taxation upon the people has reduced the State debt a few millions but not sufficiently so to justify the Legislature in giving $2,000 per annum for ten years, or a total of $150,000 in that time to nine Colleges, as the bill contemplates. The bill has been recommitted to the Committee, but it cannot pass even if reported favorably.

A large number of bills of a local character passed both Houses to-day, but they possess no general interest. Yours, LOGAN.

☞ The ladies of New York have organized a "hearthstone club" for discussing domestic matters and bringing about necessary reforms in housekeeping. They meet once a month, and at the last meeting, among other important discussions, an argument on dolls took place. One thought a rag-baby as good as a doll; and another, that as the doll was the child's idea of the human, it should be beautiful so as not to vitiate the child's taste; while the President suggested that it should be artistic in form, and denounced the shapeless commodities found in the market. After these important decisions, the ladies adjourned. As advocates of the rights of our own sex, we insist that they devote some attention to masculine as well as feminine toys, and at the next meeting we hope to hear what they have got to say on hobby-horses, tin-whistles and pop-guns.

PEN AND SCISSORS.

☞ Distressingly Scarce—local items this week.

☞ Admirably plenty—the job work rolled in upon us.

☞ Thanks to the editor of the *Standard* for his good wishes in our behalf as candidates.

☞ Do all the good you can in the world, and make little noise about it as possible.

☞ Killed—Geo. Atchison, at Xenia, Ohio, by the bursting of a grindstone, lately.

☞ The reason why so many business men burst now-a-days, is because their wives wear all the hoops.

☞ The month of December, 1859, is regarded as one of the coldest Decembers on record.

☞ Samuel Woodman, near Dayton, Ohio, died of hydrophobia, recently. He was bitten by a dog last September.

☞ Gen. Cass has given to the Board of Education of Detroit, a lot of land valued at $15,000, for a Union School-house.

☞ A Fat Office.—From statistics published, it is inferred that the income of the Sheriff of New York is at least $60,000 a year!

☞ The total dead of the Lawrence calamity is 205; badly and dangerously wounded, 109; total killed and wounded 314 persons.

☞ This (Wednesday) morning we have quite a smart sprinkle of snow, and more on the fall. The prospects for sleighing are fine.

☞ The *Standard* of last week urges the nomination of Hon. John Cresswell as the Democratic candidate for Governor.

☞ A hard blow—that on Thursday evening last. We have not heard of any damage occasioned by it, in this neighborhood.

☞ The scholars of the Methodist Sunday School, of Hollidaysburg, give an exhibition in the Court House, in that place, this evening.

☞ The ladies connected with the M. E. Church, at Williamsburg, in this county, intend holding a grand festival, commencing on Wednesday the 22d inst.

☞ There is a chap in jail in Chicago who is awaiting trial for having married and deserted eleven wives—trials enough without any extra one, says the Boston *Post*.

☞ Salmon P. Chase, Republican, was elected U. S. Senator by the Ohio Legislature, on the 3d inst., for six years from the 4th day of March, in place of Mr. Pugh.

☞ The Grand Trunk Railway company uses for the transportation of freight about 6,000 box platform cars, which, if placed in a line, would reach nearly 20 miles.

☞ A young man named Alonzo Rose, of Curwensville, Clearfield county, while laboring under mental aberration, committed suicide on the 4th inst., by cutting his throat with a razor.

☞ A child of Mr. Shearer, of Scotch Valley, in this county, fell into a tub of scalding water, on the 31st ult., and was so severely injured that it died in five or six hours afterwards.

☞ Always on the go—our little jobber. Call in and see her run, gents, if you have cards, circulars, bill-heads, or anything in that line which you wish executed neatly, cheaply and expeditiously.

☞ Tuesday last was St. Valentine's day. We are pleased to note that there was a decided decrease in the number of obscene missives forwarded, much to the disappointment of the venders of these articles.

☞ The "Local" of the State Journal thinks the Independent Order of Sons of Malta is an "unadulterated, ground down humbug, got up for the purpose of hoodwinking honest citizens into undignified and ludicrous contingencies." Guess he's "bin thar."

☞ The Fashion form a circle, in which the old ones are constantly recurring as new. Even the Quakers are in fashion a number of times in a century. Would it not be well for others to imitate their example in standing still, where the difficulty is so great in keeping up in the race.

☞ Henry Ward Beecher is delivering his lecture on "How to save the Union." After careful medical examination, he finds that the organs of the Union are sound, and attributes its slight indisposition to the fact that it "has eaten too many politicians, and they set hard on its stomach."

☞ Know too much.—"Come here my little man," said a gentleman to a youngster of five years, while sitting in a parlor where a large company was assembled, "Do you know me?" "Yeth, thir." "Who am I, let me hear?" "You is the man who kithed mamma when papa was away at Philamadelphy."

☞ It is a well-known fact that the bodies of Chinese who die in California are taken back to their native land for interment. Large quantities of dead rats are exported from the Celestial Empire to John Chinaman in America. This gives rise to a singular trade. Ships take live Chinamen and dead rats to California, and carry back to Asia dead Chinamen and live rats.

TWO GIRLS RESCUED FROM AUSTRALIAN SAVAGES.—The Sydney *Herald* gives an account of the rescue of two European girls from Frazer Island, believed to be the only survivors out of all the passengers wrecked in the Sea Belle.—They were taken from the natives of the island on the 22d of October—were found sixty miles inland. The *Herald* says, "the girls appear to be about the respective ages of fifteen and six years; their appearance is heart-rending; their bodies, emaciated from long suffering and exposure to the weather, are covered with a coating of hair; the skin, stained by their tormentors to assimilate with their own has become spotted and wrinkled, as if from old age; the nose has been flattened by force, the limbs distorted, and the vacant stare of idiocy has left these poor creatures scarcely in appearance human, and although enabled gradually to recognize such things as they must have been in the habit of seeing hourly before they fell into the hands of the natives their acquaintance with their mother tongue is, as yet, apparently quite gone." Other Europeans are believed to be prisoners of the blacks on Frazer Island.

FIGHT WITH A MAD DOG.—A few nights ago Mr. Owen Hamilton, of Chester county, was aroused by his dog going mad in the room occupied by himself and family. Lighting a candle as quick as possible, he saw the dog coming towards him as if to make battle. Not knowing in the moment of excitement what to do, he jumped upon the bed; but seeing the danger of his wife and children, and having no weapon at hand to kill him with, he made an effort and succeeded in catching him back of the neck.—After a desperate struggle, we might say for life or death, he overpowered the dog. Then came the trouble to dispatch him—being almost overcome in the struggle. The gun was brought, but it was unloaded; the axe, but both hands were required to hold the dog. Finally a rope was procured, and the wife tied him. He was then killed. Mr. Hamilton fortunately received no injury; but one hand was completely paralyzed for a time from the effects of the struggle.

EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGE.—Capt. Travis publishes in the Memphis papers a pistol challenge, for $500 or $1,000 a side, to be shot as follows:—With pistols, thirty shots a side, at ten paces distance, the target to be shot at a copper cent; my opponent to shoot at deliberate aim, with one hand only,—string measurement, from centre to centre. I ask that my opponent shall give me five hit cents out of thirty shots; or in other words, I will shoot twenty-five shots to his thirty. I shall require him to shoot his shots by daylight; I will shoot my shots in any dark night he may select, or in a dark room devoid of light. The match to take place in the city of New York, in New Orleans, Memphis or Nashville, within thirty days after it is made.

POOR SOUTH CAROLINA.—It would appear that South Carolina has given up the expectation of her Disunion Convention which she hoped would come of Mr. Memminger's mission to Virginia. *The Orangeburg Southern Rusticator*, ruefully concludes:—"When Virginia, after the raid of John Brown, refuses to meet us in friendly debate, we confess that our hopes of a Southern Confederacy are almost destroyed."

The Pennsylvania Railroad.

We made allusion, yesterday, to the fact that the stockholders of the Pennsylvania Railroad had held their usual annual meeting in Philadelphia, on Saturday, and that the reports submitted on the occasion showed the road to be in a highly prosperous condition. From a complete report of the proceedings now before us, we learn that the receipts of the road for the year were $5,362,355, the expenses $3,230,738, and the net earnings $2,231,617.—The earnings show an increase of $177,024 as compared with 1858. The earnings for first-class passengers show an increase of $63,355, while the earnings from imigrant business show a decrease of $21,681, leaving as an increase of passenger business $48,674.—The increase of travel has been large between Harrisburg and Philadelphia, in spite of the competition with the Reading Railroad and its Lebanon Valley Branch. The entire number of passengers transported during the year was 1,459,110, and the miles traveled amounted to 54,830,791, or an average of 37½ miles per passenger. Not a single life has been lost of the immense number of passengers carried. The freight earnings of the year amounted to $119,904 more than was derived from this source in 1858. The increase is mainly local.

The whole tonnage of the road in 1850, was 1,170,240 tons, exclusive of 80,875 tons of wood, coal, lumber, &c., for the use of the Company. The total carriage of coal, in the cars of the company, and of individuals, was 421,625 tons, being an increase of 81,087 tons over last year. The earnings of the canals owned by the Company were $197,549; expenses $175,452; net earnings $22,097. The company during the year paid two semi-annual dividends of three per cent each. The funds set aside as a sinking fund for the redemption of the second mortgage bonds, have been invested in shares of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, and to an amount of more than one-half of the capital stock of that Company The exhibit seems quite full and the report was generally well received.—*Pitts. Chronicle.*

Oil in Western Pennsylvania.

A correspondent of the Sunbury *American*, writing from Warren county, says:—"The recent discovery of the oil springs in the western part of Pennsylvania is more important than many are aware of. In a conversation with an intelligent gentleman from Warran, Pa., he informed me that one of the wells recently dug in that vicinity, the production of oil was about thirty casks, of forty gallons each, daily. The well is about seventy feet deep, and is bored through about thirty feet of a kind of soapstone, after which it penetrates in sandstone formation, from the crivices of which the oil is forced upwards to the surface. A small engine is used to pump up the liquid, about twenty-five per cent of which is oil. It is received in a large vessel, from the top of which the oil flows, while the water is run off at a point below the oil. In this simple manner the oil is separated from the water, and is worth there forty cents a gallon, At present the crude oil is taken to Buffalo, and by a little refining is there sold at ninety cents per gallon. There are now about thirty wells being dug and in operation in the western part of Warren county.

THRILLING ADVENTURE.—*A Party carried off upon the Ice.*—On Monday last a party of gentlemen visited the bay for the purpose of seeing the Indians and others fish for trout. About two o'clock some of the party observed a singular motion of the ice. It appeared that there was a strong current in the water, but an examination disclosed the fact that the ice upon which they were standing had parted between them and the shore, and that they were rapidly floating into Lake Huron. They at once put their horses in motion to find some point where they could get to the main land, but could find no such place. In the mean time they were going very rapidly, the wind blowing a gale from the shore. Their situation was very dangerous, both as regards the danger of the breaking up of the ice upon which they were, and the severe cold. Great excitement existed at Bay City amongs the inhabits generally, and many plans for their relief were talked of and canvassed. They floated some fourteen miles, when one end of the ice fortunately grounded on Squaw Point. They made a rush for the shore, after first getting off their horses and sleighs. The ice was much broken, and they had to travel some distance over separate cakes to reach the shore.—*East Saginaw Cour., Feb. 3.*

A FAT COUPLE.—Mr. and Mrs. Annin, residing near the High Bridge of the N. J. Central Railroad, are supposed to be the largest couple in this country. The gentleman's weight is 700 and the lady's 500. Mr. Annin's age is 45, and Mrs. Annin's 40. It requires six yards of cassimere for Mr. A.'s pants and nine yards of cloth for a coat. He and his wife keep a public house at a house called Peg's Pebble. It is said that Barnum, of the New York Museum, offered the couple $1500 per year and their expenses, if they would come to New York, but they refused telling him they did not wish to be looked at so much. They began to increase in size about seventeen years ago.

A MEAN TRICK.—Two Italian organ grinders were recently tarred and feathered, and ridden on a rail, in Alabama, victims of a cruel practical joke. Being on their way from Mobile into the interior, they asked for a direction, and were given a paper which, they not understanding English, innocently accepted. The paper read as follows: "To the Knowing Ones—Pass my Italian friends. All right. Mum's the word. (Signed) John Brown, of Ossawatomie." Reaching the next town faint and weary, they showed this note at the hotel, and the mob soon gathered and administered a dose of southern chivalry, almost killing the poor vagrants.

A RAILROAD ACCIDENT.—A terrible accident happened on Monday to Mr. Kelly, foreman of the Railroad machine shop at York, on the arrival of the train from Baltimore. He was standing between the wood shed, at the station-house, and the track, when the train came along. The entire train passed him without injury, except the last car, which being wider than the rest, caught him and rolled him along with it, breaking a number of ribs and his collar bone. Surgical aid was immediately summoned, and the unfortunate man now lies in an extremely critical condition.

☞ The Jury who investigated the Elm street calamity returned a verdict censuring Mr. Waring, the owner of the tenement building for omitting to construct an iron staircase, or otherwise provide for the safety of the inmates, in case of fire, and called upon the Legislature to stringently enact that no building to be occupied by a number of families shall be over five stories in height, and that all of them be provided with outside iron stairways, with doors opening upon them from each story.

☞ The Boston friends of Charles Sumner, sent him a beautiful present on New Year's day. It was a set of knives, forks and spoons, which formerly belonged to Batthyany, the Hungarian patriot, who was shot by the Austrians a few years ago. His property was confiscated and sold at auction, and these articles were purchased by an American who happened to be in Austria at the time. They are very magnificent, made of gold, with handles of onyx, set with turquoises.

AN EVENTFUL LIFE.—Mr. Darius Nash, who was rescued from the ruins of the Pemberton Mill after several hours of great suffering, has passed through as many imminent dangers as usually fall to the lot of one man. On the stormy night in which Minot's Ledge Lighthouse was carried away, he was on a vessel some fifty miles from New York, and was wrecked. The whole crew lashed themselves to the wreck, and out of nine only four survived.—They were picked out by the crew of a vessel from Salem, after four days and three nights of suffering, and Nash was among those saved. At another time he fell from the main topsail yard and saved his life by catching at a reefing bit. At one time in his life he had accumulated $4,000 by his own industry and frugality, and he invested it in a bark. The bark was wrecked on the Florida Reefs, and the insurance had expired two days before. Last spring he had a long and painful siege of the bilious fever, which was followed by the typhoid fever in the summer, and on the night of the terrible calamity of the Pemberton Mill he was among those covered beneath the ruins. His thrilling narrative of his imprisonment with Miss Lizzie Flint, who perished, we have given before. Mr. Nash's father was killed by falling from a load of hay. His brother was killed under the ruins. Mr. Nash is still in good courage, and says that all he desires is good health.—*Boston Journal.*

HORRIBLE MURDER.—*A Master Killed and Burned by his Slaves.*—On Monday last, Dr. W. Croxton, a highly intelligent citizen of Essex county, Va., had occasion to correct a servant woman for some offence, but did so in a mild and gentle manner. This fact enraged a negro man, who vowed to have revenge, but at the time gave his master no intimation of his intention. On Wednesday last, whilst one of the servants was engaged in grinding a cutting knife, Dr. Croxton walked to where he was, and whilst looking on, without suspecting danger, another servant stepped behind him, gave him a violent blow upon the back of the head, which felled him to the ground, and then dispatched him. The two then dragged him behind the barn, and kindling a fire placed his body on it and burned it. They next cut the skirts of the saddle upon his riding horse, and then turned the horse loose, expecting to create the impression that he had been attacked on the road and murdered. When the doctor was missing his friends instituted a search for him, and in the pile of ashes near the barn discovered two or three of his fingers and a portion of one of his feet. The murder has caused great excitement in the neighborhood in which it was committed.—*Richmond Dispatch.*