AMERICAN VOLUNTEER.

JOHN B. BRATTON, Editor & Proprietor.

CARLISLE, PA., DEC. 20, 1860.

NO PAPER NEXT WEEK.

In compliance with the usual custom, and for the purpose of giving the hands employed on the *Volunteer* a few days recreation, no paper will be issued from this office next week.

☞ The two Banks of this place will be closed on Christmas day.

MORE FINE APPLES.—Our enterprising townsman, Maj. A. A. LINE, has just received another lot of those beautiful and unsurpassed New York apples, which he will dispose of at moderate rates. Give him a call.

REDUCTION IN THE PRICE OF CLOTHING!—By reference to our advertising columns it will be seen that Mr. LIVINGSTON has reduced the price of Clothing, and now offers great inducements to those in want of good, substantial, and fashionable clothes. His assortment is large, of the best material, and made up in a workmanlike manner.

UNION MEETING.

The community has been suddenly startled by the cry of disunion; and public sentiment in the South seems to give sanction to it. There are elements of trouble which are really threatening in their aspect, and the vast importance of peace and quiet, and the enjoyment of civil liberty under the banner of those Institutions which our fathers formed for us, is so dear to us all, that it behooves every community to meet and consult together about what is best to be done. Let us put off, for a moment, the armor of political warfare, and counsel together whether there is any better Government on the earth than that which we enjoy, and whether we can do anything and what, to save the Union from its threatened destruction.

The citizens of Carlisle and vicinity, without distinction of political opinions, are requested to meet together at the Court House, in Carlisle, on:

Saturday Evening, December 22,

at 7 o'clock, p. m., and express their opinions of the value of that Constitution which has so long protected us.

Fred'k Watts,	J. H. Graham,
W. H. Miller,	Sam'l Ensminger,
Leidich, Sawyer & Miller,	R. M. Henderson,
John Williamson,	Wm. H. Henderson,
Henry Newsham,	Charles Ogilby,
Sam'l C. Huyett,	James Mullin,
John B. Bratton,	R. M'Cartney,
W. M. Beetem,	E. M. Biddle,
Jno. B. Parker,	Wm. A. Miles,
J. S. Colwell,	E. Beatty,
H. S. Ritter,	Jas. Hamilton,
Philip Arnold,	R. Moore,
J. W. Smiley,	N. Hantch,
W. F. Wise,	Joseph Wilson,
Jas. R. Weaver,	John Halbert,
W. M. Penrose,	Woodward & Schmidt,
J. W. D. Gillelen,	Wm. Addams,
Henry Saxton,	Armstrong & Hoffer,
Robert Irvine,	Henderson & Reed,
John Irvine,	S. M. Hoover,
Peter Monyer,	Jacob F. Hoover,
Tho's D. Mahon,	J. B. Duncan,
C. E. Maglaughlin,	J. R. Nonemaker,
W. D. A. Naugle,	J. W. Marshall,
J. A. Humrich,	J. & D. Rhoads,
Geo. S. Smith,	Wm. Bentz,
J. P. Lyne & Son,	N. W. Woods,
Isaac Livingston,	R. A. Noble,
S. W. Haverstick,	Michael Sheaffer,
James Raymond,	C. J. Carmony,
Jacob Boas,	R. E. Shapley,
J. M. Masonheimer,	David Scobey,
Henry Glass,	Peter Gutshall,
P. A. Ahl,	James Loudon,
Jacob Bixler,	J. W. Eby,
John Hays,	John Hyer,
Thomas Conlyn,	W. W. Dale,
A. W. Bentz,	James Bentz,
S. Elliott,	J. K. Bender,
A. L. Sponsler,	C. Inhoff,
George Foote,	I. R. Egbert,
Jas. R. Irvine,	A. A. Line,
Wm. M. Porter,	Fred'k. Cornman,
A. S. Sener,	Sam'l V. Ruby,
Jacob Sener,	Benj. Duke,
Edward Shower,	Sam'l N. Eminger,
J. Hannon,	D. S. Croft,
Wm. J. Shearer,	John Floyd,
Black & Delancy,	S. B. Kieffer,
A. Senseman,	E. A. Brady,
S. H. Gould,	N. H. Eckles,
David Smith,	J. Goodyear,
J. Armstrong,	Geo. Miller,
J. H. Waggoner,	J. Rheem,
	E. Cornman.

The President's Proclamation to the People of the U. States---A Recommendation.

Numerous appeals have been made to me by pious and patriotic associations and citizens, in view of the present distracted and dangerous condition of our country, to recommend that a day be set apart for Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer throughout the Union.

In compliance with their request and my own sense of duty, I designate Friday, the 4th day of January, 1861, for this purpose, and recommend that the people assemble on that day, according to their several forms of worship, to keep it as a solemn fast.

The Union of the States is at the present moment threatened with alarming and immediate danger; panic and distress of a fearful character prevail throughout the land; our laboring population are without employment, and consequently deprived of the means of earning their bread. Indeed, hope seems to have deserted the minds of men. All classes are in a state of confusion and dismay, and the wisest councils of our best and purest men are wholly disregarded.

In this the hour of our calamity and peril to whom shall we resort for relief but to the God of our fathers? His omnipotent arm only can save us from the awful effects of our own crimes and follies—our own ingratitude and guilt towards our Heavenly Father.

Let us, then, with deep contrition and penitent sorrow, unite in humbling ourselves before the Most High, in confessing our individual and national sins, and in acknowledging the justice of our punishment. Let us implore Him to remove from our hearts the false pride of opinion which would impel us to persevere in wrong for the sake of consistency, rather than yield a just submission to the unforseen exigencies by which we are now surrounded. Let us with deep reverence beseech Him to restore the friendship and good will which prevailed in former days among the people of the several States; and, above all, to save us from the horrors of civil war and "blood-guiltiness." Let our fervent prayers ascend to His Throne that He would not desert us in this hour of extreme peril, but remember us as He did our fathers in the darkest days of the revolution, and preserve our Constitution and our Union, the works of their hands, for ages yet to come.

An Omnipotent Providence may overrule existing evils for permanent good. He can make the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath he can restrain. Let me invoke every individual, in whatever sphere of life he may be placed, to feel a personal responsibility to God and his country for keeping this day holy, and for contributing all his power to remove our actual and impending calamities. JAMES BUCHANAN.

Washington, Dec. 14, 1860.

"TOO LATE! TOO LATE!"

When the exasperated people of France, not many years since, assembled by thousands in front of the royal castle, and demanded the head of the then reigning sovereign, an attempt was made to pacify them by assuring them that their prayers would be listened to, the policy of the government changed, and their demands acceded to. "*Too late! too late!*" was the response from the crowd.—Again the friends of the sovereign attempted to appease the anger of his subjects, by informing them that the ruling prince was ready to resign his place, but he asked the poor privilege of naming his successor and investing him with power. "Too late! too late!" again resounded from thousands of hoarse throats.

We fear our own people—those of the South, particularly—who have so long and so patiently suffered from Abolition encroachments, are in about the same condition of mind the French people were in when they cried "too late!" For years and years have the Abolitionists of the Northern States assailed, with fiendish malignity, the people and institutions of the South. But, the influence of these desperate and devlish men was limited, for, all told, they amounted to but a few thousand in each Northern State. Some five years ago, however, the fragments of the broken-up Whig and Know-Nothing parties—feeling about, in the dark, as it were, for some resting-place—took shelter in the Abolition camp and under Abolition leaders. A new name (Republicans,) was given to the conglomerated mass, but the principles of the old Abolition party were to be adhered to and carried out. Owing to the popularity of Mr. BUCHANAN, this new party was defeated, after a desperate struggle, in 1856; but in 1860 the Republicans triumphed, and elected two Northern men President and Vice President. We predicted before the election, that a dissolution of the Union would follow should LINCOLN be elected; we predicted, too, that a smash up of banks and of business would also follow. But our fears were laughed at by wise Wide Awakes, and by Republican scribblers, and our predictions scoffed at by unprincipled, corrupt, and ignorant stump speakers. The people, now that our Union is on the verge of dissolution, our banks and factories closed, and tens of thousands of men out of work, are being brought to their senses, and are devising means to quell the storm that a Republican victory brought about.—"Union Meetings" are being held in all sections of the North, and this is right. Let us all unite in a common effort to save the country. Men of the North have produced the mischief—let them propose the remedy if they can. It may be "*too late*," but we have high authority for saying "it is never too late to do good." Let the effort be made to save the Union! Let politics and politicians be forgotten for a time, and let all join hands and hearts for the preservation of the United States!

WEEK OF PRAYER.—Immediately after the suppression of the awful insurrection in India, the Missionaries of the Presbyterian Board at Lodiana, in that country, proposed, that the second week of January, annually, should be observed as a week of prayer for the conversion of the world. This proposition endorsed by Christian men of various denominations throughout the world, was, the last year, acted upon quite generally, with great interest and with beneficial results. For the coming year, the following subjects have been *suggested*, as topics for thought, prayer and exhortation, viz:

Sunday, January 6th, The promise of the Holy Spirit.

Monday, January 7th, An especial blessing on all the services of the week, and the promotion of brotherly kindness among all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Tuesday, January 8th, The attainment of a higher standard of holiness by the children of God.

Wednesday, January 9th, A large increase of true conversions, especially in the families of the believers.

Thursday, January 10th, The free circulation of the word of God and a blessing upon Christian literature.

Friday, January 11th, A large outporing of the Holy Spirit upon all bishops, pastors, and ruling elders of the churches, upon all seminaries of Christian learning, and upon every Protestant Missionary among Jews or Gentiles, upon the converts of his station, and upon his field of labor.

Saturday, January 12th, The speedy overthrow of all false religions, and the full accomplishment of the prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come."

Sunday, January 13th, Thanksgiving for past revival, and the enforcement of the solemn responsibility resting on every Christian, to spend and be spent in making known the name of Jesus at home and abroad.

We understand that, in Carlisle, these suggestions will be acted upon, by a union of the ministers, in the following order, on Sunday, January 6, each minister will preach in his own pulpit, on the topic proposed. And afterward, through the week, there will be a sermon each morning, in some one Church, with a union prayer meeting, in the evening, in the same Church, as follows: On Monday, in the English Lutheran Church; Tuesday, in the Second Presbyterian Church; Wednesday, in the First Presbyterian Church; Thursday, in the German Reformed Church; Friday, in the Methodist Church; Saturday, Emory Chapel, with a mutual interchange of pulpits among the ministers, which will be the case also on Sunday morning, January 13. It is hoped that this christian community will appreciate the movement and cordially sustain it.

URMY'S MOWER AND REAPER.—Our friend, Mr. CHARLES FRANCISCUS, of this place, has been appointed agent for the sale of County and Shop Rights for this State of "Urmy's Improved Mower and Reaper, with Self-Raker." Judging from the opinions of hundreds of farmers, this is one of the best machines yet invented. It is simple in construction, and not liable to get out of order. Its durability, simplicity, perfect cutting, and ease of operating on all kinds of grass and land, must recommend it to all. Every farmer should have one of these machines.

A REGULAR MORMON.—Dr. Hunter, who has served a term in the New Jersey State Prison for having thirteen wives, has been arrested in Brooklyn for marrying the fourteenth!

CHRISTMAS!

The season of merry making and Presents is at hand, when joy and hilarity should fill every heart, and men should rejoice and feel peace and good will towards one another, as the Angels did when the Stars of the morning sang together and announced that a Savior was born in Bethlehem.

The term *Christmas* is synonymous with gifts, and we presume the practice of making presents on that day, was originated by the wise men of the East, who brought frankinsence and myrrh and other presents to the infant Redeemer. Like all the beautiful precepts and practices of the new dispensation of love inaugurated on the birth of Christ, that of Present-making has descended from generation unto generation through the long vista of centuries, impressing upon the youthful mind, and recalling annually to maturer hearts, the anniversary of the birth of Christ, and the scenes immediately attendant thereupon, and practically illustrating the "good will" and kindness which should control the children of one family, and one common Great Father, in the making of presents, which of themselves, though trifling, speak the language of the heart in acts of love and tokens of remembrance.

To the juveniles more especially, is this season one looked for with anxiety and anticipation, but those of more mature years, might with beneficial results practice gift making, which would tend to soften the asperities of our degenerate nature, and introduce into communities and towards one another, that "peace and good will" which the birth of a Savior proclaimed, and which is annually celebrated by the observance of the 25th day of December, as the anniversary of the time when "God became man."

At this season of the year, more than any other, the better feelings of our nature predominate, and there scarcely exists in civilization, or under the ægis of christianity, any one so humble in position, or so hardened in crime, who does not, during this season, look about for a trifling memento to present some loved one, as a small token of remembrance and manifestation that all of the God-like nature has not yet forsaken the humble in circumstances, or the steeped in wickedness.—The bonds of friendship, social and christian—the ties of kindred and family are renewed during this festive season—old acrimonies and heart-burnings are forgiven and forgotten under the mellowing influence which distributed by some unseen, unknown power, seems to pervade all hearts, and causes humanity to approximate nearer unto the Author of Love, who "spared not his only son to redeem a lost and fallen race."

Perhaps, few of the millions who will give and receive gifts on Christmas-day, and observe it as a holiday, will call to remembrance the scenes which transpired upon that morning, eighteen hundred and sixty years ago, and fewer still will be ready to adopt and practice in life, the teachings of Him whose birth they annually celebrate. The mind wandering back through the lapse of thousands of years, wonders what effect such an announcement as was *then* made, would have upon humanity now. Could we be waked from our slumbers on next Tuesday morning before the god of day commenced his diurnal carer, and behold the "stars of the morning singing together" and hear a convoy of Angels with rejoicings and songs proclaiming the advent of some long-looked-for Messiah, with what wonder and astonishment would we regard the scene, and how few would follow the Star of the East, in its guidings to where the Savior might be found and worshipped! The star of the Gospel, and the story of the Cross, remind us daily of the mission of Him who was born on Christmas, and yet how few are lured by the truth of the one or the brightness of the other, to "lay up their treasures in heaven," and obtain an interest in that "land of rest," purchased by the blood of Him whose birth inaugurated the Christmas festival, commemorated by Christians ever since the glorious morn when it was first proclaimed that a Savior was born.

Upon Christmas-day, we should all look around and see if there are no hearts we might make glad by some token of remembrance. How many firesides can be made cheerful—how many widows comforted—how many gleams of sunshine may be shed in Orphan hearts, unused to acts of kindness? How many families may be supplied with the necessaries of life, if not some of the luxuries, and as there is more true joy in giving than receiving, how much real pleasure might be enjoyed on Christmas-day, as well as all other days, if we would all practice the golden rule, and "Do unto others as we would that they should do unto us!"

A DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER.—President Buchanan, in answer to numerous appeals which have been made to him by pious and patriotic associations and citizens, and in view of the present distracted and dangerous condition of our country, has appointed Friday, the 4th day of January, 1861, a day of Fasting, Humiliation, and prayer, and recommends all people, according to their several forms of worship, to keep it as a solemn fast. In the message making this recommendation, the President draws a graphic picture of the alarming and imminent danger which threatens the Union. Hope seems to have deserted the minds of men, and, the only resource we have left is an humble appeal to the God of our Fathers. He invokes every individual to feel a personal responsibility to God for keeping the day holy, and doing all in his power to remove our actual and impending calamities.

☞ Hon. Herschel V. Johnson, of Georgia, late Democratic candidate for the Vice Presidency of the United States, has written a letter to A. Belmont, Esq., of New York, on the present aspect of affairs. He thinks the Southern people are aroused and exasperated, and that South Carolina will be out of the Union before the New Year comes in. She will be sustained, if not followed, by Florida, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. Something must be done to gain time for reflection.

☞ Mr. Buchanan has announced that he will collect the revenues at all hazards if any Southern State attempt to assume the power of the Federal Government in this respect.—When asked if he would use force, he answered, "I will obey the laws. I am no warrior—I am a man of peace—but I will obey the laws!"

THE REALITY.

The fearful crisis which is now impending, and momentarily threatens to overturn the fair fabric of our National Government, has not taken *us* by surprise. We apprehended and predicted it, as the certain consequence of the sectional and aggressive teachings of the Republican party. But now, that the worst has come, we would be recreant to every impulse and sentiment of patriotism, did we seek to add fuel to the fierce flame, by resorting to criminations and recriminations. If our Republican brethren have at last been made to see and feel their error, and are willing to frankly acknowledge it, and to retrace their wandering steps into that older, safer, and better path of national and constitutional precedent, in which both political parties of the country were formerly proud to walk, we would not be among the last to take them by the hand, and bid them God speed! It may not yet be too late to repair the evil that has been done.

When Webster, in his memorable reply to Hayne, drew that graphic picture of dissolution which will live as long as our language lasts, no one dreamed that it would ever become a dread reality. Men admired it—they could not do otherwise—as a sublime burst of oratory—a brilliant flight of the imagination—nothing more. But how swiftly has it assumed the substantial shape of prophecy fulfilled. Do we not now see "States disseverd, discordant, belligerent—a land rent with civil feuds"—not yet, indeed, "drenched in fraternal blood," but God only knows how soon that horror may be super-added! Webster's prayer was granted. When his eyes "were turned to behold for the last time the sun in Heaven," he did not "see it shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union." A merciful Providence spared him the sight of so ghastly a spectacle. May we, our children, and our children's children, never live to see it!

UNION MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA.—The citizens of Philadelphia, to the number of nearly ten thousand, assembled on Thursday in Independence square for the purpose of testifying their unalterable affection for the Union of these States, and their firm determination to stand by the federal constitution and the laws. Without distinction of party, people of all classes flocked to the meeting, and seemed deeply impressed with the importance of the occasion. Mayor Henry presided, and after an impressive prayer by Bishop Potter, speeches were made by the President, Joseph R. Ingersoll, Judge Woodward, Charles E. Lex, Theodore Cuyler and Isaac Hazelhurst. Resolutions were adopted, proclaiming attachment to the constitution and the Union, recognizing the binding force of the Fugitive Slave law, and the rights of slave owners in the Territories; recommending a general convention of all the States, and appealing to the South for consideration and forbearance in the present crisis of the Union.

PROPOSITIONS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE OF 33.—The Committee of 33 on the state of the Union, appointed by Speaker PENNINGTON, has had several sessions, and sundry propositions have been discussed.

One proposes a division of the territory between the North and South, providing that any State preventing the return of fugitive slaves shall pay double the value of the fugitive.

Another proposes that the Constitution shall provide that the President and Vice President be elected by districts—one of them shall always be chosen by the North and the other by the South, and they shall alternate, so that one term the Vice President shall be from the North and the President from the South, and the next term the President shall be chosen from the North, and the Vice President from the South.

Another proposes to elect the President and Vice President for eight years.

Another proposes to limit the term of Judges of the Supreme Court to twelve years, and provides that one half shall be selected from the North and the other half from the South.

MELANCHOLY DROWNING OF A PHILADELPHIA LADY IN MARYLAND.—Miss Susan Needles, a young lady of Philadelphia, was drowned in St. Michael's river, Eastern Shore of Maryland on the 6th inst., while on a visit to her relatives at that place. She was missed from her room in the morning, and a search having been instituted, traces of her footsteps were discovered leading down the lawn at the rear of the house, and entering the water. Her body was soon after found near the spot, and sent to her friends in this city. The only reason that can be assigned for this melancholy circumstance is somnambulism. It is supposed that she arose, dreaming that she was going to bathe, as she had often done in the summer time, at this same place, and at an early hour. She was partially clothed, when found, and she had a shawl thrown around her as if for a bath. She was a most estimable young lady, and never subject to aberration of mind. On the preceding day she had given evidences of her usual cheerfulness and happy disposition.

DON'T TAKE THEM.—The notes of the following Pennsylvania Banks are quoted no sale in Philadelphia. They have gone under in the financial crisis which is now sweeping the country:

Bank of Commerce, Erie.
Bank of Crawford, Meadville.
Bank of Lawrence Co., New Castle.
Bank of New Castle, "
Erie City Bank, Erie.
McKean Co. Bank, Smethport.
Monongahela Valley Bank, McKeesport.
North Western Bank, Warren.
Tioga County Bank, Tioga.

The Corn Exchange Bank, Philadelphia, gives notice that the notes of the Shamokin Bank will be no longer redeemed at that Bank.

THE STATE TREASURY.—We are indebted to Auditor General Cochran for a statement of the receipts and expenditures of the State Treasury for the year ending the 30th of November, 1860. The receipts from all sources were $3,479,257 31, which, with an available balance in the Treasury December 1, 1859, of $839,323 09, and $41,032 of depreciated funds, make a total of $4,359,612 40. The expenditures of the year have been $3,637,107 32, leaving an available balance in the Treasury on the 1st of December, 1860, of $681,432 08, in addition to $41,032 of depreciated and unavailable funds.

The Troubles of the Laboring Classes.

Every succeeding day witnesses the closing of large manufacturing and mercantile establishments in our Northern cities, and the discharge of numerous employees, who have before them the dismal prospect of a hard winter, no work, and no money. What is to become of them and their families? It is melancholy to think. Among these are hundreds and thousands of industrious females, who in many instances support their families. They and their families will now be destitute. The *Journal of Commerce*, of Saturday, mentions the discharge of fifteen hundred hands from one clothing establishment. The sinfulness and folly of trifling with the blessings we enjoyed, and the Government under which the North was prosperous and happy, begin now to be seriously felt. The policy of starving the honest working classes of the free States, in order to ameliorate the condition of the negro, who in the South is well fed, well clothed and happy, will not turn out so well as was expected.

All these things are the FRUITS of BLACK REPUBLICANISM, and the people begin to see it. It begins indeed, to be feared that popular resentment will break out in demonstrations of a somewhat rough character.

The following, from the *Freeman's* (N. Y. City) *Journal*, is an ugly sign. Says that newspaper:

"LOOK IT IN THE FACE.—Let the leaders of Northern fanaticism look to themselves. The breaking up of an Abolition meeting on the 3d inst., in Boston—the hot-bed of fanaticism—is a faint indication of what is to come. *The continuance of this political excitement will turn into our streets tens of thousands of men, without work, without money, and fierce with want.* Where are the leaders of the fanaticism that has brought this woe on the working classes to hide themselves from the fury of the hungry mob. Are not the names of these leaders already bye-words? Will it need a prompter to tell the maddened crowds who have been their tormentors? Beware! you have thought you were only exciting the blacks of the South against their masters. You will find the discharged white laborers of our Northern cities a far more instant and uncontrollable element, and you will be the victims of their fury. Quell the storm in time, if you can."

A BAG OF WHEAT TO TRAITOR KELLY.—The following letter, addressed to that prince of humbugs and traitors, Judge KELLY, of Philadelphia, explains itself. It is from the home of the Rail-splitter:

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois, Dec. 1, 1860.

Hon. Wm. D. Kelly, Philadelphia—Dear Sir:—You may possibly recollect, that in a speech delivered by you in our State House, on the evening succeeding the nomination of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency of the United States at Chicago, you offered to wager a barrel of Pennsylvania apples against a barrel of Illinois wheat, that Pennsylvania would give Mr. Lincoln a larger majority at the November election, than Illinois would. The crowd took the bet; it is needless to say that we lost; we acknowledge the corn; we give up the wheat.

Enclosed, I have the honor on behalf of the Republicans of this city, to hand you Express receipt for the barrel of wheat, which we hope will come to hand in good order.

We think that you will find the grain worthy even of your own great State.

Allow me, dear sir, in behalf of the Republicans of this city, to return to you and through you to your gallant State, our grateful thanks for the noble support which you have given to our illustrious townsmen.

I am sir, yours, truly,
B. A. WATSON.

At the time KELLY delivered his speech "in our State House," at Springfield, wheat commanded at that place $1 20 per bushel. Now, under the "LINCOLN times," it is selling in Springfield for 50 cents. Are not the Republican neighbors of the Rail-splitter bound to make up the difference in the price of wheat to Judge KELLY? KELLY is certainly entitled to about four additional bushels of wheat, which we hope will be sent him at once, that he may render assistance to the thousands of starving Wide-Awakes who were deceived by him and other demagogues.

"A LITTLE PREVIOUS."—Somebody has sent us a marked copy of the prospectus of the Missouri *Democrat*, the leading Republican newspaper of St. Louis, which commences with the following words:

"Now that the great Republican party has REDEEMED the country and a LONG ERA OF NATURAL PROSPERITY and GLORY may be expected to set in with the inauguration of the new President, &c."

God save the country from such redemption as the Republicans have achieved, and from the experiment we are having of its "natural prosperity."

VISIT OF OLD SANTA CLAUS.—"'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house," is so old that everybody will like to have something newer and better on that topic. Here it is, published by request of some of our juvenile readers:

"Awake, dear mamma! and do come and see
What Santa Claus left in my stocking for me;
I've a doll, and a sofa, and many fine things;
What beautiful presents old Santa Claus brings!
There's a whip and a horse for dear Johnny, and more,
It moves like a live one, all over the floor;
The eyes of my dolly, they shut'and they open,
Much better, you see, than the old one that's broken.
Do, dearest Mamma! do wake up and see!
How strange that on Christmas you sleepy can be!"
And sissy pulled out from her own little stocking
A tiny bit chair, all cushioned and rocking.
"Last night, when old nursey had put us to bed,
And bid us "good night" when our prayers were all said,
I thought I would listen, for I wanted to hear
Old Santa Claus come with his tiny reindeer.
I tried very hard my eyes open to keep,
At the funny Old Man to steal a sly peep;
So I looked at the chimney as hard as I could,
To watch till the fire had burned up the wood;
For I wondered, mamma! how it ever could be,
From the soot and the fire he'd keep the things froo;
So I looked and looked as hard as I could—
For nursey had told us, if we would be good,
He'd come down the chimney, as sure as he came,
And fill up each stocking, for he well knows the name
Of every good child, and the house where he lives,
And to all that he loves pretty presents he gives.
So I tried *very hard to keep* open one eye,
But it kept shutting up as fast as I'd try;
And the first that I knew was Johnny's loud call,
"Merry Christmas! dear sisters, dear nursey and all."
Then I ran to my stocking as fast as could be,
And found it filled up with nice things as you see.
I am very sorry! indeed I am so!
For I wanted to see them all dash through the snow;
Little Dasher and Dancer, and Prancer and Vixen,
Little Comet and Cupid, and Donder and Blixen.
Oh! nursey has told me such wonderful things
Of the sleigh and the door, and the presents he brings;
Of old Santy Claus, too, and his funny fur clothes—
His cherry red cheeks, and his pipe, and red nose—
Where he places his finger, with a blink of his eyes,
And away up the chimney in a moment he flies.
Oh, dear! don't you think, when I'm older next year,
I can keep *wide awake* to see the reindeer?

☞ Gen. Tom Thumb has commenced another tour, and is now giving exhibitions in Philadelphia.

☞ Gov. Packer has commissioned George A. C. Seiler, Esq., and Maj. John W. Brown, as Notaries Public for the city of Harrisburg.

For the American Volunteer.

"The Signs of the Times."

Mr. Editor.—Our country has fallen into evil times, such as have not been experienced since the Revolution of our fathers, and, unless our great men—politicians, editors of public journals, and ministers of the Gospel—will cease their sectional tirade and abuse of each other with respect to slavery in the South, and seek to cultivate a spirit of reconciliation and fraternal intercourse, as it once existed, our national glory and greatness may depart from us as it did from the Jews of old.

Among all classes of professional men, there are none that can wield more influence for good among the masses of the people than the faithful minister of the Gospel and editors controlling the public press; and on the other hand there is no class of public men who can, through the power they hold on the masses of the people, do more to disturb the peace and quiet of the country. Fearful indeed is the responsibility of these men, and well may they tremble as watchmen at the doors of our glorious temple of national pride, lest they may be the means of placing upon its dome the burning epitaph *Ichabod*. The dissemination of maddened abolition views has undoubtedly done more towards the bitter feeling now existing between the North and South of our land, than any thing else we know of; and when the watchman upon the walls of Zion departs from the sanctity of his clerical character to sow the seeds of discord by which deadly strife between brethren will be brought to pass, he should be held up to the gaze of the world as a wolf in sheep's clothing; for such an one is ready to sell his birth-right for a mess of pottage, or thirty pieces of silver. God's pulpit and the minister of reconciliation are one thing, and the politician and stump orator another. Their vocations are entirely separate and should always act as checks upon each other. Both are necessary in their proper spheres, but out of them they are a curse morally and politically considered. X.

Attorney General Black on the Crisis.

Judge Black, Attorney General of the United States, has written a long letter to the President, giving his opinion upon the right and expediency of coercing a seceding State. As the Judge occupies the position of law expounder for the position of the National Government, his opinion is a matter of much interest. The following abstract gives its tenor and leading points:

The Attorney General of the United States has furnished the President with his official opinion upon the questions of law involved in the present state of affairs in the South, and the course of action to be pursued by the President in the event of a collision on the part of the Central Government with the authorities of South Carolina or any other State.—The opinion is elaborate. The Attorney General does not think that the will of a State can absolve its people from allegiance to the just and constitutional requirements of a Central Government, nor can any act of the Central Government displace the jurisdiction of a State. Its laws are supreme and binding only so far as they are passed in pursuance of the Consitution. The duty of the President is only to execute the law to the letter as it is written. We have no common law to fall back upon when the written law is defective. In the collection of customs or revenues, he has a particular method pointed out for him to adopt, and if the machinery furnished by Congress for the collection of duties should become so deranged or broken up that it could not be used, there would be no legal reason for substituting a different kind of machinery in its place. The Government is the owner of the public lands and national property, and the Attorney General thinks the President will be justified in taking such measures as he may deem necessary for their protection. It had the right of keeping exclusive possession and repelling intrusion, and could take its property from any power by force, as was the case at Harper's Ferry, in 1859, when the United States forces took the arsenal from John Brown. By the act of 1807 the President is empowered to employ such parts of the land and naval force as he shall judge necessary for the purpose of causing the laws to be duly executed. On the President alone devolves the responsibility of deciding whether the exigency demands the use of military force, and in the exercise of this power he should be careful not to overstep his authority. A military force can only be called into the field when other means are found to be useless. Even then its operation must be purely defensive, and can only be used to repel an assault on the public property, and aid the courts in the performance of their duty. In the event of the retirement of a State from the Union, the action of the President must not depend upon the rightfulness of the cause upon which such declaration is based. He cannot recognize her independence or absolve her from her Federal obligations. That is a matter for Congress or a Convention of the States. He must see that the laws are duly executed, acting generally upon the assumption that the present constitutional relations between the State and the Federal Government still exist. War, therefore, is only necessary to execute the laws, suppress insurrections, against the States, and to repel the invasion of a State by enemies. It was never calculated "to form a *more perfect union*, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Military force would be pernicious as a means of holding the States together. The right of the Government to protect its property does not warrant it in punishing the political misdeeds of a people.—The States are colleagues, and to conquer or subjugate one of them would be to destroy the theory of our Union. The Attorney General thinks that the Union must utterly perish at the moment when Congress shall arm one part of the people against another for any purpose beyond that of merely protecting the General Government in the exercise of its proper constitutional unctions.

John Bell on the Crisis.

John Bell, of Tennessee, has written a letter on the present state of affairs, from which we make an extract:

1st. Mr. Lincoln, it is well known, does not hold extreme opinions on the subject of slavery. It is certain that he has expressed a decided opinion that the South has a constitutional right to demand the faithful execution of the fugitive slave law; and that under certain circumstances he would feel it his duty not to oppose the admission of a new slave State into the Union.

Upon the whole, if Mr. Lincoln's public declarations upon the subject of slavery are to be considered as the true exponents of his future policy, and if he possesses the moral courage to adhere to them in opposition to the counsels of the extreme men of his party, (and it is just and fair to presume that he does possess that virtue,) no serious mischief can be apprehended during his administration, except the usual evils attending the perpetual agitation of the slavery issues.

2d. That it is assumed by some that Mr. Lincoln has disguised his true sentiments; that his true character has not been understood; and that he will be under the control of the worst men of his party. I do not think so. I have every confidence that his future policy will be found to be in strict conformity with his past declarations. But, apart from this, it is now generally known that he will be powerless for mischief, except to a very limited extent, during the first two years of his Administration, unless the Southern Senators and Representatives elected to the next Congress should rashly, and, as I think, inexcusably resign their seats, or retire from Congress, and thus voluntarily surrender the control in both houses to the Republican party, which surely they will not do. With both Houses opposed to him, Mr. Lincoln cannot appoint his Cabinet Ministers to fill any offices of high grade without the assent of the Senate, or, indeed, of any inferior grade above that of a clerk or petty deputy postmaster. He will be able to carry no measure connected with the subject of slavery which does not commend itself to the South and the conservative members from the North.

3d. As to any apprehensions that the Republican party, encouraged and stimulated to further effects by their late success, may be so strengthened in the result of the election of Senators and Representatives, in the meantime, as to obtain a majority in both houses of the Thirty-eighth Congress, that in, during the last two years of Mr. Lincoln's Administration—while it may be well to regard such an event as possible, the strongest reasoner is not for the confident belief that no such unfortunate result will attend the elections in the North, which are to decide the complexion of the Thirty-eighth Congress.

Of the whole number of votes cast for Mr. Lincoln in the recent election, from my own personal knowledge, and from information received from other sources, of the sentiments of the South, and those of the Middle States, and the States north of the Ohio, I am sure I hazard nothing in stating that a large number—at least one-third—are devoted to the Union, and, although opposed to slavery in the abstract, have but little sympathy with the Republican party.

I am, also, satisfied that not more than one third part of Mr. Lincoln's supporters are as extreme in their anti-slavery sentiments as to be wholly indifferent as to the effect upon the Union of the policy of the Republican party.

Of the remaining third of Mr. Lincoln's supporters, I think I am warranted in saying that they are attached to the Union, but anti-slavery in their sentiments. I feel confident that the Thirty-eighth Congress will exhibit a falling off in the strength of the Republican party, instead of an increase.

4th. All of the existing grievances of which the South may justly complain, could be redressed in the Union. As to the indignity, not to say insult, offered to the South, of nominating and electing the candidates for the two highest offices of the Government, by a sectional party, on principles which practically excluded the Southern States from a vote in the election, contrary to established usage, and in violation of the spirit of the Constitution, they may be pardoned for the sake of peace and harmony, and in consideration that the South has not been guiltless of having contributed, and that in no small degree, to increase the violence and asperities of the slavery controversy between the two sections.

GEN. CASS RESIGNED!

Gen. Cass, the venerable Secretary of State, tendered his resignation to the President on Friday last. We see it stated that at the last meeting of the Cabinet (before he resigned) he wept like a child, and gave it as his opinion that it was too late now to save the Union. "Lost! lost!" he muttered to himself as he left the Presidential mansion for the last time.

The Washington *Constitution* of Saturday states the reasons that impelled Gen. Cass to resign. That paper says:

To avoid all misconstruction or misstatement of the reasons which caused this event, we have taken pains to ascertain the true cause. It is not that General Cass differed from the President in regard to any portion of his late message. On the great question of coercing a State to remain in the Union by military force, the President and General Cass were perfectly united in opinion. The difficulty arose from the fact that General Cass insisted that a naval and military force should be sent immediately to Charleston, to reinforce the forts in that harbor, and that the President was of opinion that there was no necessity for any such measure in order to secure the fort against attack. This being the President's conviction, he would not sanction a movement which might lead to collision and bloodshed in the present excited state of feeling in South Carolina and other Southern States, and at a time when every friend of the Union is using his best efforts to prevent its dissolution, or, if that be not possible, to avert the adoption of any measure which would render its reconstruction hopeless.

We understand that the President has resolved to appoint Attorney General Black to the vacant Secretaryship of State, and that the nomination will be sent to the Senate on Monday.

[*From the Washington Constitution*]

The Resignation of Hon. Howell Cobb.

We are authorized to announce the resignation by the Hon. Howell Cobb of the important and responsible office of Secretary of the Treasury, which he has held since the formation of President Buchanan's Cabinet, and the President's acceptance of the same.

The following are Mr. Cobb's letter tendering his resignation, and the President's reply:

WASHINGTON CITY, Dec. 8, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR: A sense of duty to the State of Georgia requires me to take a step which makes it proper that I should no longer continue to be a member of your Cabinet.

In the troubles of the country consequent upon the late Presidential election, the honor and safety of my State are involved. The people so regard it, and in their opinion almost all concur. They are engaged in a struggle where the issue is life or death. My friends ask for my views and counsel. Not to respond would be degrading to myself and unjust to them. I have accordingly prepared and must now issue to them, an address which contains the calm and solemn convictions of my heart and judgment.

The views which I sincerely entertain, and which, therefore, I am bound to express, differ in some respects from your own. The existence of this difference would expose me, if I should remain in my present place, to unjust suspicions, and put you in a false position. The first of these consequences I could bear well enough, but I will not subject you to the last.

My withdrawal has not been occasioned by anything you have said or done. Whilst differing from your message upon some of the theoretical doctrines, as well as from the hope so earnestly expressed that the Union can be preserved, there was no practical step likely to follow which required me to retire from your Administration. That necessity created by what I feel it my duty to do, rests the responsibility of the act, therefore, entirely alone upon myself.

To say that I regret—deeply regret—this necessity, but feebly expresses the feeling with which I pen this communication. For nearly four years I have been associated with you as one of your Cabinet officers, and during that period nothing has occurred to impair even for a moment, our personal and official relations. In the policy and measures of your Administration I have cordially concurred, and shall ever feel proud of the honorable place which my name may occupy in your history. If your wise counsels and patriotic warnings had been heeded by your countrymen, the fourth of March next would have found our country happy, prosperous, and united. That it will not be so, is no fault of yours.

The evil has now passed beyond our control, and must be met by each and all of us in the light of our responsibility to God and our country. If, as I believe, history will have to record that yours as the last Administration of our Government Union, it will also place it side by side with the purest and