Lancaster Intelligencer.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEB. 14, 1883

Gowen on Discriminations.

No man living is better able to command attention than Franklin B. Gowen, who always says something in a vigorous way that is worth hearing. The entire honesty of his convictions is recognized, and his frankness and sincerity command the respect of even those who differ with him. He appears afresh to-day before the people as the president of a great corporation, demanding legislation that will compel corporations to just dealing with the people; complaining that he is injured, not only as a citizen, but as a railroad president, by the unjust conduct of other railroad presidents. Mr. Gowen's position in hostility to the Pennsylvania railroad has never been concealed, and it is a natural one for him to maintain as the president of a rival corporation. Few other men in his place would obtain credit for any better animus for his assaults upon the Pennsylvania's management than that arising from jealousy and clashing interests; yet Mr. Gowen is credited with the ability and disposition to look at the encroachments of this corporation from the popular standpoint and to be really in sympathy with the people in their demand that the carrying companies shall be just in their charges for their service.

He appears before the Legislature to ask for legislation against discrimination, but opposes the bill of Mr. Hulings, prepared for that purpose. His objections are plausible and generally sound. But whether the bill he has framed is a proper substitute may be doubted. Substantially it forbids unjust discrimination in these charges by common carriers, but leaves the decision of the injustice to the court or the jury called upon to decide each complaint. The courts may be appealed to to command an unjust carrier to do justice immediately: and that would be a good law. Juries may be called on to give triple the damages suffered by the unjust acts of a carrier, but the juries are to determine in any case whether the injustice has been perpetrated; and that would be a good law. But both courts and juries are left without sufficient chart to decide as to whether an injustice has been committed: consequently courts and juries in different places and at different times will decide differently, and there will be no certainty and consistency in the law's adjudications. What the Legislature needs to do is to decide what will constitute an unjust discrimination in carriage, then it will be the province of courts and juries to enforce the Legislature's idea. The common law forbids the treatment of one customer by a common carrier differently from another. Probably a properly animated judiciary might, under the common law, give the people all the relief they require. But it has not been given; and the need of a statute defining the rights of the people to a just rate of freight has been abundantly demonstrated. We agree that a railroad official ought not to be imprisoned for a failure of judgment, when the question of points in his discrimination in rates of freight is left open. It is necessary to close that question if railroad officials are to be held criminally liable. What they may do and what they may not do must be sharply defined, so that they cannot honestly err in their decisions. There Mr. Gowen's objection to holding a railroad president criminally liable falls; for an honest railroad president could never go astray; and that is the only kind he is interested in protecting.

We sympathize with him, too, in his objection to informers. They are properly odious people whom only dire necessity would create. No necessity exists for them in this case. Those who are aggrieved by a railroad company's action have sufficient motive to cause its correction in the courts if they are afforded a way.

They do not require a very elaborate law. What they need is that every common carrier shall be compelled to take all the business offered from any source, at a like price, to all who offer a team load, a car-load or part of a car load, of like goods, for a like distance, in a like direction; and to publish their scale of charges, being prohibited from varying from it, or giving special and private rates for any reason whatever. With such a law the function of a court or jury summoned to decide between the carrier and the customer would be simple. The company's duty would be plainly indicated, and it would only need to be determined whether it had done what it was commanded to do, and if not whether it had sufficient excuse to mitigate damages or to cause the court to withhold its mandamus: in provision for which possible excuse, the courts and jury should be endowed with some degree of discretion to accommodate their finding thereto—for instance, an unexpected rush of business might find the carrier unprovided with transportation facilities. That excuse should avail for a reasonable period; but it should not excuse the carrier who did not use the utmost endeavor to meet the emergency as promptly as possible. It would not excuse the Pennsylvania railroad, for example, for its failure, for the past year or more, to provide the Clearfield coal operators with cars to move their coal to market.

The County Tax Rate.

A year ago the INTELLIGENCER took issue with the county commissioners upon the propriety of their levy of a three mill county tax and demonstrated to the satisfaction of everybody that it was an unnecessarily high rate, that with the proceeds from it all the likely expenses of the county could be met, all the maturing debt paid and an idle surplus of $50,000 or $60,00 be left on hand at the end of the year. We felt certain of this because it was easily calculable that with an income, from the taxes, of $220,000—which a 2½ mill rate would have raised—all the expenses of the county could be met and the $7,750 of loan matured could be paid. The result has proved the entire correctness of this estimate. The commissioners' orders for last year amounted to considerably less than the lower rate of taxation would have brought in, and they started in the new year with ninety thousand dollars in bank and over sixty thousand of county taxes outstanding. With all their "ifs" and "buts" and speculations of what expenses they may yet have to meet, the naked fact remains that they collected at the least $50,000 more from the people than the county had any occasion for, and the whole of which must remain idle during all of the coming year to await the payment of loans not maturing until 1884.

In the face of this experience and these facts the commissioners have laid another three mill tax for the coming year, for which they offer no justitification except the accumulation of $50,000 more surplus, so that by April 1, 1884, they can pay off $100,000 of the county debt. There is no special demand for the payment of a third of the county debt in one year, nor for the accumulation of a surplus so long ahead. The tax payers furnish the means for its liquidation sooner or later, and there is no reason why their money should be taken from them—and given to the county depositories—two years before it is needed to pay the county debt.

The last board of county commissioners paid off $40,000 of the bonded debt and $20,000 of floating debt with a tax rate of three mills one year and two and a-half mills in each of the other two years of their term, besides incurring special expenses for rebuilding the almshouse barn, reindexing the records and unusual repairs and improvements at the prison and court-house. The discharge of $10,000 or $15,000 per year of the county debt is quite as rapidly as it needs to be paid. There is no occasion for the county expenses to run over $200,000 a year, and while the valuation is at its present figure of eighty-eight millions, a two and a-half mill rate will produce enough revenue to meet all expenses and adequately reduce the bonded debt of the county every year. Any rate over that raises an unnecessary surplus, which tempts to extravagance and which, if not expended, is in the treasury simply for the benefit of the county treasurer or his favored depositories, at the expense of the taxpayers.

BOSTON is to be lighted by electric light.

OUR petroleum exportations now amount to about forty-five millions, but show a decline from 1881.

OAKES AMES' friends will move to expunge from the congressional record the vote of censure passed upon him.

CONSTITUTIONAL prohibition makes steady progress in the Maine Legislature; Massachusetts rejects the project of biennial elections and legislative sessions.

THE central council of the Irish national Land League at Buffalo, has issued a circular calling upon all Irish men and women and the descendants of such in America, to contribute a special fund of one dollar each for the relief of the famine sufferers in Ireland. The contributions are to be sent before St. Patrick's day to the treasurers of the different Land League branches. This is not perhaps the most certain nor reliable way to raise necessary funds. A more popular system of subscriptions would raise more money.

IT strikes the *North American*—and a good many others—as eminently absurd that a military detachment of United States troops should still be assigned to duty at President Garfield's grave. "Even if there were any miscreants who entertained felonious designs upon the remains which are thus protected—which there is no reason to believe—the manner of the burial would in itself be sufficient to frustrate such intentions. It would be difficult to assign any good reasons for the further continuance of the guard, which is in danger of becoming preposterous."

IT is reported that the season of 1883 will see more baseball clubs in existence at one time than ever before, and the demands for the various articles necessary to the pastime will create a boom in these goods that manufacturers will not be slow to take advantage of. Even during last season, not particularly remarkable for the extent to which the game was played, over that of preceding seasons, more than 5,000,000 baseballs were in use, and nearly an equal number of bats were sold. The exclusive nationality of this entertaining game is a subject for consideration. While a very few of the forms, and perhaps some of the principles, of it where embodied in a game said to have existed centuries ago in ancient countries, this country can claim the baseball game as distinctly its own as were the Olympic games those of the Greeks, the secular games those of the early Romans or the cricket that of England. The perfection it has reached here, the perceptible incorporation of it, in late years, into American means of amusement, and the recent advantages it offers for a certain degree of notoriety and an agreeable income to professional players, indicate it as an institution of pleasure that, with perhaps some future improvements, will long remain to incite the emulation of the player and the enthusiasm of the spectator. As a game its excellence is fast becoming recognized and its excitement enjoyed in foreign lands, since Australia and even Japan receive from this country the supplies and rules necessary to its indulgence.

A Strike Preferred to Labor.

Last November, the axe factory of Hubbard, Bakewell & Co., at Pittsburgh, was shut down, the firm giving the employees no other reason for their action than a dullness in trade, but finally, after weeks of idleness, came a proposition for a reduction of wages. Numerous meetings were held and last night when another meeting was held, the firm submitted a proposition for a reduction of 20 per cent. and a bonus of 5 per cent. at the end of the year. The men offered to accept 12½ per cent. and their offer was refused, and a strike was at once inaugurated.

Revolver and Axe.

At Ennis, Texas, Alfred Bastine, formerly of Kankakee, Ill., was shot and killed by Wm. Davis. Bastine was advancing on Davis with an axe.

GOWEN'S GATLING GUN.

FIRING DOUBLE-SHOTTED CHARGES.

A Brilliant Speech on a Vital Issue—Discussing Freight Discrimination—Cutting out Work for Cassidy.

Franklin B. Gowen caused a sensation in the hall of the House of Representatives last night. The senators and representatives were there to be addressed by him upon the Hulings anti-freight discrimination bill. The public galleries were thronged, and many women, unable to get seats in the gallery, were provided for in the passage-ways among the legislators. No place where a person could sit or stand was vacant. Mr. Gowen spoke from the clerk's desk. Before reaching the sensational part of his speech he pointed out what he favored and opposed in Hulings' bill. His main complaint was that the bill provided no adequate remedy for the injured. Punish the guilty officers of the corporation, he said, and do not make the innocent share-holders suffer. There are three great and growing evils in corporate management—first, corrupt control of political power by officers, and second, unjust acquisition of wealth by such officers. The bill makes no provision against either of these. The third evil is unjust discrimination, which the bill forbids, although it offers no adequate security for it.

Objections to the Bill.

The bill goes too far in some respects. For instance, it does not take into account that it costs, in some cases, three times as much to transport freight up mountain grades as down the other side. The Reading can't deliver coal as cheaply in the heart of the city, where single cars must be shifted around, as it can at Port Richmond. The Pennsylvania railroad, carrying full train loads of coal three hundred miles without a break, can make more money at five dollars a ton in moving single car loads. Anyhow, the Legislature cannot make tolls. This is a contract right of the companies subject to the common law. He had serious objection to the bill's provision for a penalty of $1,000, one-half to be paid to the informer. It was beneath the dignity of the commonwealth to pay such spies for nosing around railroad offices. Let tenfold damages be given to the aggrieved, but nothing to these chevaliers of industry, who can't make money any other way. He also objected, as a lawyer, to giving the jurisdiction to an equity court. Hulings' object was to compel witnesses to testify, but the common pleas had all the power necessary for this purpose. He objected to making unjust discrimination a criminal offense. He didn't care to get into the penitentiary because some subordinate had done wrong or made a mistake.

Damages no Remedy.

Having said this for the railways he would now, he remarked, take the side of the reformers and put in two more objections. The bill would prevent suit against the railway company after the lapse of two years. "Why," he said, "it took me two or three years to find out how my company was injured by another, and I assure you I don't propose to let the thing drop." Secondly, the bill provided no remedy for the great evil. Damages were no remedy. A company would often pay damages rather than do what the public good required. If a company did not move freight except for its own chosen friends it must be compelled by a mandamus of court to move it and be punished for disobedience. Drawing a paper from his pocket, he said it was a bill which he had prepared to be offered as a substitute for the Hulings measure. It covered the points that he was making in his speech. He read it and then continued his address. The Reading company, he said, had suffered gross injustice by another company's unjust discrimination. It legislators had properly cared for the two great staples of Pennsylvania—oil and coal—this would have placed her on a pinnacle of greatness that could not be reached by any other state. The greatest railroad of the state had closed its doors against transportation of these great staples, except to a few favored friends. Of the twenty two million barrels of crude petroleum exported last year all were controlled by the Standard oil company except the two millions. This the Tidewater pipe line got. This monopoly would not exist but for the fostering of the Standard company by railroads of this state and one or two in New York.

An Attack on the Standard.

The Standard company was continuing by unjust discrimination to work against the Tidewater company. The latter company required the use of other railroads besides its own, the Reading, to transport its products from the refineries. To show how it was treated when it applied for transportation Mr. Gowen read letters to the Chester oil refining company from Agent Wilson, of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore railroad, one of the lines controlled by the Pennsylvania railroad. In one instance the oil company were informed that it would be charged 50 cents a barrel for oil from Thurlow, a short distance below Chester, to Washington, 125 miles, while Mr. Gowen said not more than that was charged for the 380 miles from Pittsburgh to Washington, by way of Harrisburg and Baltimore. Another letter from Mr. Wilson told the company that the railroad would carry oil from Thurlow to Lock Haven for 25 cents per hundred pounds, but would not allow empty cars to be brought for the oil.

Who Owns the State.

"The cars," said Mr. Gowen, exciting laughter, "must be brought on a wheelbarrow or on a canal boat or in a balloon. Now, if I saw my friend, the attorney general of this commonwealth, I would like to show him these letters."

The laugh caused by this quickly stopped when the speaker, firing up and looking like a lion ready to spring, added: "If I were attorney general and saw these letters I'd see who owned this commonwealth."

Stamping of feet and clapping of hands among Democrats and Republicans were excited by this declaration.

"The Standard Oil Company," the speaker almost hissed, "looks on all this 'like a vulture on the battle-field' waiting for a corpse. If the Standard people succeed in crippling its little struggling rival, it will take two years before any other competing line can reach the country and meanwhile the Standard company will grind out of the people an additional two hundred millions of dollars. Give me this bill and I won't need the aid of the attorney general of the commonwealth. [Applause.] A man named Patterson in the oil country filed a bill in equity against us, representing that he was a stockholder of the Tidewater pipe line. We believe that the Standard had paid him to do this and we forced out of him a confession that such was the fact. During his proceedings against the Tidewater company he said he had been employed to gather testimony for the commonwealth in its suit against the Standard company to make it pay its taxes. He confessed that the Standard company had paid him $7,500 to suppress that testimony. He suppressed it, and with the $7,500 he bought the stock in our company. If there's any cause for our attorney general to institute proceedings it's this here. I am prepared to testify and now before the Legislature of this commonwealth I charge that the Standard oil company bribed a witness with $7,500 to suppress testimony.

A Startling Statement.

Senators and representatives were startled as much by Gowen's manner of making the accusation as by the charge itself. They whispered to one another that there would soon be music in the air. Mr. Gowen said if such a bill he now offered had been passed ten years ago this curse of the commonwealth fostered by railroad companies could not have grown. Besides, with a revenue of not more than fifty cents from a barrel of oil the commonwealth would have been $1,000,000 richer to-day. No country in Europe or Asia in which such a statement should be heard as he now made would delay to overturn the strongest dynasty that ever sat on a throne. But the patience with which the American people subject themselves to outrage was proverbial. He, for one, however, was not going to try to submit to it any longer. "I have felt oftentimes," he said, "that if I could only leave my other duties I would begin with all the zeal and determination of Peter the Hermit when he undertook the crusade and all over this great state, from Lake Erie to the Delaware, strive to raise up such a power as would teach these people that

'When once the slumbering passions wake,
The peaceful are the strong.'"

Another Complaint.

Mr. Gowen's next complaint was that, although the Reading was the largest owner of anthracite coal lands, yet none of its coal would be transported over the Pennsylvania unless sold to one or more of three certain parties. Only these three were given such low rates that they could afford to take the coal, but the Reading was not going to throw off thirty or forty cents a ton to make that arrangement work. The speaker proposed to change this should the bill pass. He sarcastically told why he had no reason to attack the Pennsylvania. To it was due the many recent improvements made by Reading. "Our company," he added, "is about building a road from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh. Then if you move the Legislature to Philadelphia we can buy your capitol grounds for a depot and build up an industry here that will do as much good as the Legislature. [Laughter.] The traffic the Pennsylvania has given us will amount to millions in a few years." He had, however, one grievance against the Pennsylvania. It was for what it had done to David W. Sellers. The speaker differed from Sellers in having been a Democrat since birth, although never having a chance to vote for any one who was elected. Sellers was some years ago turned to Democracy by conviction—how, it passed the speaker's comprehension. He did not see how a state's rights Jeffersonian Democrat by conviction could come before the House railroad committee and in his argument for the Pennsylvania railroad against the Hulings bill say that the state of Pennsylvania has no power over its corporations and that the nation only can control them.

The Gowen Bill.

The laughter grew into a great roar when Mr. Gowen added: "There must be a great deal wrong in a corporation that could lead such a good man as Sellers so far astray." Mr. Gowen's concluding words were that the passage of his bill would be the dawn of a pure and good day for the commonwealth.

Crawford, of Philadelphia, chairman of the railroad committee, who had introduced Mr. Gowen and presided, now called his committee away for private deliberation. Before the lapse of ten minutes, after the crowd had dispersed, the committee unanimously decided to report the Hulings bill favorably, although a majority of the committeemen really want to see it killed in the House. Such committeemen now regret that they delayed so long to act on the bill, for they do not like Gowen's Gatling gun at all. They feel that they might have prevented it. Hulings approves the Gowen bill and says he will support it as a substitute for his own. Speaker Faunce is understood to regard the Democratic bill as an excellent Democratic measure and other Democratic leaders agree with him. Uncle Jake Ziegler will introduce the Gowen bill and Faulk, of Philadelphia, will follow with a motion that it or its principles be adopted as an amendment to the Hulings bill.

MINE TRAGEDIES.

Accidents and Crimes Reported by the Morning Mails.

A freight train going east on the Lehigh Valley railroad, struck and instantly killed Cornelius Mellhaney, the watchman, at Glendale station.

James Andrews, of Cornish, Me., has died from hydrophobia. He was bitten last spring and the dog was killed.

The house of John Kennedy, near Edgerton, Wis., was destroyed by fire and his daughter (about 14 years old) and a young son were burned to death.

The Globe rubber jewelry factory, 219 and 221 Canal street, New York, occupied by several firms, was half burned out yesterday afternoon. The loss is estimated at $100,000.

The Austrian ship Imperatrice Elisabetta, from Cadiz for New Orleans in ballast, was destroyed by fire on Monday night off the passes of the Mississippi. Her crew were saved by a pilot.

John Luke, aged 19, was burned to death at Shamburg, a few miles from Titusville. He was engaged as engineer at some eleven or twelve wells owned by Mr. J. J. Goodwin, all of which were worked from one boiler. It is supposed an explosion of gas took place, which knocked him down and set fire to the boiler house. His body was found, terribly charred, a few feet from the building.

THE SUNKEN CIMBRIA.

Too Water Tight Compartments Subject to no Special Regulations.

At the sitting Tuesday of the court of inquiry, at Hamburg, concerning the Cimbria disaster, the wreckage of the Cimbria, which had been left an board the Sultan after the vessels drew apart, was submitted for inspection. Experts deposed that the collision occurred while the Cimbria was turning to the right and the Sultan to the left. The manager of the Hamburg-American steamship company gave formal evidence relative to the company's rules concerning their vessels. The company's machinery inspector deposed that the company enjoined no special regulations in regard to shutting the water-tight doors upon starting upon a voyage, or when in fog; the matter was left to the discretion of the captains. The witness was unable to say whether or not the doors of the Cimbria's water-tight compartment had been tested before she started on her fatal voyage. Experts testified that the damage the Sultan had sustained was really considerable and that it would have been dangerous to turn her head to the sea.

DISCOVERING NATURAL GAS.

It Bursts From the Ground, Causing a Fire, and Saves $80,000 a Year.

Early yesterday, while several men were drilling the ground in a ravine, near the New York city plate glass works, Creighton station, they encountered a flow of natural gas. The drill had penetrated the well to the depth of over 1,000 feet, when there was an enormous flow of gas, which caught fire at the engine and in a short time enveloped the derrick, completely destroying it. The discovery is considered very fortunate. The gas will be used by the company for heating purposes, and will be equal to a saving of $80,000 a year.

Ten Years of Crime.

At Chicago in the trial of John Kudlic, a Monmouth, Ill., merchant, for conspiracy with the employees of Phelps, Dodge & Palmer, to steal the firm's goods, the testimony to-day developed the fact that Henry Spaulding, storekeeper of the firm had been stealing from them for ten years. Spaulding could not say how many thousand dollars the thefts amounted to in the aggregate. He has been promised immunity.

THE TERRIBLE FLOODS.

THE SITUATION IN LOUISVILLE.

The Loss of Life in Cincinnati Greatly Exaggerated—The Ohio River on the Rampage.

When the break of the embankments along the Ohio river at Louisville came on Sunday night, and the cut off dam overcome by the terrific weight of water from above gave way instantly with a loud roar the flood rushed over. It may be imagined with what force the waters came when they had a fall of from fifteen to eighteen feet to the low ground beneath. In less time than it takes to tell, the yellow tide was sweeping in from all parts. The unfortunate people were surprised in their houses. With a mighty rush the waters swept from square to square, rapidly rising in the houses and swerving many from their foundations. The scene was awful. The roar of the water could not drown the screams of the terrified ones escaping from the doomed dwellings. Skiffs shot about from window to window; men, women and children waded through the advancing water, each with whatever household goods they could lay hands on. Bonfires glimmered from the high ground which the poor outcasts had gained. Hundreds of people shivered in wet clothing about the smoky fires. To an observer, who stands at the foot of Jackson, Shelby or Clay streets, it is impossible to understand why the loss of life was not much larger. The scene beggared description. People who were blissfully sleeping in the foolish confidence that the embankments would shelter them, were rudely awakened by the flood coming into their houses. Some were even surprised in bed. When the stroke came it was like lightning; in the darkness and cold they fled the watery death, half clothed, and carrying nothing with them save their children and helpless ones. No scene of a broken dyke in Holland can be more terrible or more thrilling.

The panic was indescribable, coupled with the awful roar of the waters and the shrieks of the terror stricken people as they hurried to higher ground, leaving their furniture and homes, and everything to the mercy of the water. A large part of the city has constituted itself into a relief committee with the mayor at its head, and all that can be done is being done. The entire northeastern part of the city is a picture of utter destruction. Thirty-five squares are inundated. The situation may be briefly summed up as follows: All the point is under water and the country beyond the cut off, comprising 150 houses, and known as Brownville, is flooded. Half of Portland and all of the shipping part are in waves.

All day long yesterday a stream of people passed up and down the Shore Line track to look at the ruin wrought by the swollen river. The outlook is appalling. Houses are overturned, some on their side and some almost on their roofs. Other buildings are crushed to pieces. Most of the houses are small cottages of frail construction, and, perhaps, one-third of those in the flooded locality have been swept from their foundations. In the lower hollows of the bottom lands, the water is within a foot or two of the roofs of the houses. The entire neighborhood is doing all it can for the succor of the sufferers. Several persons were rescued along the wharf. The river continued to rise slowly all day and yesterday was about 66½ feet at the foot of the canal and 41 feet at the head. The weather was warmer and a light rain falling, with indications of an increase during the night. The rise is now an inch above the flood of 1847 and eight inches below that of 1832. On the point where the disaster occurred the flood extends over a space more than a quarter of a mile wide and more than a mile in length. Over 250 houses are either under water or else floating about. The fact that the water was comparatively still prevented most of the houses from floating away, and most are tied with cables.

A gratifying feature of the flood is that comparatively few persons are thought to have lost their lives. Many occupants of houses in the submerged districts had moved away and thus escaped. The fact that survivors are scattered over the city the renders it impossible to make a definite statement as to who are lost and who saved, and it is sufficient to say that the death rate is smaller than the circumstances indicate. Those known to be lost are John Finch and his son, a small boy, George Lynch, Edward Harris, George Bell, Harry Browning. A lieutenant of police and his family, consisting of his wife and three children, are missing, but it is hoped that they have moved out. So far as heard of all those yet alive have been removed from the houses. A man, whose name was not learned, was seen frantically calling for help from the door of a house floating down the river this afternoon, and was rescued with a skiff. He had been in the house all night and all day.

Mayor Jacob chartered the steamer Mattie Hays, with a corps of men, and traversed the submerged districts, taking off a number of persons and supplying food. Many were in this way succored, as not all the houses are entirely submerged, the upper stories of some being habitable and the owners still remaining. One man was found clinging to a tree. As the men approached he cried out, "Go over to that house. There is a woman and several small children over there. I will hold on until you save them." The house was 50 yards away. The men shouted, but before they reached it the house turned over and was carried away in the rush of the waters. No noise was heard from the house, and nothing is known as to whether the people were rescued or not. The man clinging to the tree was rescued, and declared that a woman and several children were in the house when it turned over. He did not know their names. On Point Shippingsport and Portland one thousand houses are under water, the vast majority of them owned by poor people. The authorities have taken steps to provide food and lodging. The board of trade is raising a fund and individuals are subscribing liberally. Entertainments for the benefit of the sufferers will be held.

THE CINCINNATI DISASTER.

The Loss of Life Not So Great as Reported.

The situation in Cincinnati last night was one of great terror. It is thus described in a dispatch from that city: "There is a tremendous amount of water above, and the indications are that the rain storm is about to enter the Ohio Valley. There is therefore no hope of the water receding for two or three days and the prediction is frequently heard that it will go from eight to twelve inches higher. The river is now eleven inches higher than has ever before been known. To night there is a light rain falling, and except where electric lights have been put up the city is enveloped in inky darkness. The militia are doing police duty. There is but one railroad track entering the city that can be used and that one is two feet under water at one point. The trains which have arrived and gone out are furnished with another engine after running through the water, as the fire in the first engine is put out and barely steam enough remains to pull the train to dry ground."

Thousands of people trudged along the water's edge yesterday to gaze upon the mighty Ohio, which bids fair to reach a point higher than any attained for fifty-one years. Men, women and children, most of whom never before saw such a river and will probably never witness such a waste of waters again, flocked to the scene of the great flood and, with the activity of the business men engaged in the removal of goods to places of safety, presented a picture which Cincinnati has never looked upon before in its history. No words can describe the vast extent of waters. It is a great inland sea, extending for miles on either side of the rushing Ohio, and thousands of buildings are buried beneath the almost unprecedented flood. The largest ocean steamer could ride on the Ohio now with perfect ease and there is enough water in Millcreek Bottoms to float the entire United States navy. Yet the great river continued to mount higher all day and the down-town merchants who thought the crisis had been reached felt sick at heart and became alarmed lest the rise would never cease.

The damage by the floods is incalculable, for the most careful precautions could not have prevented the serious destruction of property which is certain to follow the booming river. There is nothing poetical in the appearance of the river, for whatever majesty has accompanied the high water is robbed of its charm by the squares of submerged builings for miles along the banks and the fact that hundreds of people are rendered homeless and thousands of workingmen and women in the big factories are thrown out of employment, for, no one can tell, how long. There is strong ground for hope that the disaster at the Southern railroad depot was not attended with so great a loss of life as reported. The matter has been investigated and but for the positive statement of one man it would be difficult to say that any lives were lost. That man is a baggage master. He says there was a great number of people on the platform, and that he thinks at least twenty-five went down into the water. This statement he repeats. All the others present saw no one in the water and believe no one was lost. But they all admit there was great alarm and hurried flight so that people might have been engulfed and not seen by those fleeing. Lothman the cashier had sufficient warning to enable him to secure $2,000 cash, but not enough to save all the money in the safe; $200 or $300 was lost. With the exception of four members of Coup's circus who are reported missing nothing like a definite statement can be made as to the loss. Two employees of the railroad company are missing. The company shows enough confidence in the stability of the remaining portion of the depot to use it. Trains arrive and depart regularly, but access to the freight depot is cut off.

PERSONAL.

LOTTA has just loaned $100,000 and Mary Anderson has $75,000 seeking investment. Both are single.

PROFESSOR CHANDLER, of Lehigh university, has been appointed by the president a member of the assay commission.

SAMUEL WILLITS, whose will has just been admitted to probate in New York, left $600,000 for education and charity, including $100,000 for Swarthmore college.

OLIVER P. FORESMAN, proprietor of the City hotel, Williamsport, died yesterday, after a short illness, at the age of 33 years.

DANIEL S. LORTHROP, a car wheel manufacturer of Albany, New York, and brother-in-law of ex Governor Stanford, of California, died yesterday at the age of 58 years.

HANS VON BULOW, the pianist and composer, has been at death's door, but he is reported to be recovering, and to have resumed work with his orchestra in Meiningen.

CONGRESSMAN ELECT KNUTE NELSON who represents a very large district in Minnesota, was born in Norway. He is slight of frame and of medium height, but strong of muscle. His blonde beard is full and long. He is a lawyer, but not a fascinating orator although he is known for his strength and wit in debate.

REV. CHARLES NAGEL who since 1876 has been the pastor of the Moravian church at Lititz, has received an official invitation to become the successor of Rev. E. T. Kluge in the Bethlehem pastorate, whom he succeeded at Lititz. The reverend gentleman hesitates to accept the call and may submit it to the lot, in vogue among the Moravians for decision in that way.

RICHARD WAGNER, the eminent composer, died in Venice at 4 p. m. yesterday. He was the son of an actuary of police and was born in Leipsig, May 22, 1813. His early education was imperfect, his father dying when he was but a few months old, but he wrote plays when twelve years of age, and at fifteen decided on music as his art. He attained the highest rank and death ends his works of genius at a time when his extraordinary powers had not begun to show any signs of exhaustion.

SENATOR ELECT BOWEN of Colorado, takes no stock in official simplicity. When he got back to his town of Del Norte after his successful campaign he rode from the railway station in a coach drawn by six horses, plumed and bedecked as if for a festival, in the rear of the Del Norte fire department and a cavalcade of mounted men. Bells were rung, flags unfurled, and anvils and giant powder were shot off. Having shot off the anvils, the town then did the same with champagne bottles, and so on.

Gambling House for "Gilded Youth" Raided.

Several days ago Dr. Howard Crosby received an anonymous note informing him that a fashionable gambling house was in full operation on Fifth avenue, opposite the Hotel Brunswick, New York. This was turned over to Captain Williams, who, single handed, raided the place yesterday. He found an elegantly furnished suite of rooms fully stocked with first-class gambling paraphernalia. The only person in the rooms was Frank A. Jones, the dealer. He was locked up. Later the proprietor of the establishment, Rob't H. Diedrich, was also arrested. It is said that the place was a popular resort for the "gilded youth" of the avenue.

A War of Rates Threatened.

The Ohio and Mississippi and the Indianapolis and St. Louis railroad companies are accused of cutting rates on grain to seaboard ports, and Commissioner Fink has telegraphed to St. Louis, stating that unless something is speedily done to prevent it there will be a sharp war of rates, and he asks for a meeting of the general managers with a joint executive committee on the 21st instant to see if the trouble cannot be averted.

The Versatile Small Boy.

A young woman living near Williamsport recently swallowed a pin, which lodged crosswise in her throat. After the physicians had given up the case as hopeless, the young woman's little brother persuaded her to swallow a button, to which was attached a string. When the button was swallowed the boy jerked the string and dislodged the pin. The young woman's throat was somewhat torn, but not seriously injured.

Incendiary and Death.

Two weeks ago John Sheffield, a disso to character living near Madison, Wis., quarreled with his family and left them. On Tuesday their house was set on fire and two of his daughters, one aged 14 years and the other an infant, were burned to death. Mrs. Sheffield barely escaped in her night clothes. Great excitement prevails, as it is the universal belief that Sheffield set fire to the house.

Sale of Bonds.

Jacob B. Long, broker, sold yesterday at private sale one $1,000 Quarryville R. R. 7 per cent bond at $117.

LIGHT WANTED.

ON THE SUBJECT OF COUNTY FINANCES

The Three Mill Tax Inquired Into—What it Costs to Run the County—Laying Up for a Rainy Day.

EDITORS INTELLIGENCER: In looking over the financial statement of the county commissioners, as published, we find a balance in the hands of the treasurer (we give round numbers) of $90,400.00, with outstanding taxes amounting to $67,600.00. We learn that the commissioners have levied three mill tax for the present year, which, on a valuation of $88,000,000, will raise an additional sum of $264,000.00, making a total of $422,000.00. According to the report, the total expenditures of the county for the past year, including $25,000.00 for loans and interest paid, were $214,000.00. We understand that there is no part of the county loan which will mature during the present year. Nor are there any extraordinary expenses to be provided for which will be likely to swell the expenses to a larger sum than those of the past year.

We, therefore, as a tax payer, and in behalf of the tax payers of the county, ask, why is it that this very large excess of $198,000.00 over the actual needs of the treasury is required? or in other words, whether a tax of two mills would not have been ample to meet the wants of the treasury and leave a sufficient margin for all contingencies.

GEO. W. HENSEL.

QUARRYVILLE, Feb. 12, 1883.

THE COMMISSIONERS INTERVIEWED

Why They Levied a Three Mill Tax.

A representative of the INTELLIGENCER who waited upon the county commissioners to inquire regarding the matters touched upon in the foregoing correspondence found all three commissioners at their post of duty and willing and anxious to enlighten the public with respect to their administration. It is true, they admit, that they have levied a three mill county tax for the coming year, that the average annual expenses of the county, exclusive of loans paid, are not more than about $200,000, that a three mill levy on the taxable property of the county will raise $264,000 and that no county bonds fall due before April 1, 1884.

In explanation of the queries of our correspondent and of the enormous surplus which he points out will lie idle in the county treasury during the coming year the commissioners say that the $90,457.16 on hand Dec. 31, 1882, has been materially reduced since then by payments out of the county treasury in excess of receipts; that a considerable portion of the balance in the treasury and the outstanding taxes yet to come in will be absorbed by necessary payments to be made before the taxes of the new year are collected; that from the $67,000 tax outstanding are to be deducted all the commissions, abatements and exonerations; extraordinary expenses for bridges, street damages, &c., may be incurred this year, and that as the times are good and the people generally satisfied to bear a three mill tax, it is deemed prudent to accumulate a large surplus, so that by April 1, 1884, when a large portion of the county debt is payable, at the option of the county, $100,000 of it can be paid off, interest on that amount stopped, and if the times are hard the tax rate can then be reduced to 2 mills or 2½ at the most.

To the inquiry whether in their judgment it was good policy to tax the people for the accumulation so long ahead, of an idle surplus to pay a debt not due until April 1, 1884, Mr. Summy, of the board, answered affirmatively. He thought that was good housekeeping. Mr. Hildebrand seemed to be of the opinion that an unnecessarily large surplus was accumulating and referred to the fact that he had opposed the abatement of 4 per cent. offered last year for prompt payment of taxes, because there was no occasion to hurry this money into the county treasury, this year the abatement had been reduced to 3 per cent., though he thought it might have been made 2 per cent., and the time for the payment of the tax was extended to July. The commissioners all agreed that at the present rate of taxation it would be possible to pay of $100,000 of the county debt on April 1, 1884.

They further think the public ought to be enlightened upon the fact that the commissioners have no control over the expenditure of large amount of the money for which they have to draw orders. The charitable institutions, magistrates, court expenses, elections and road damages constitute the bulk of the county's expenses and in the payment of these bills, contracted by the legal authority of others than themselves, the commissioners have little or no discretion.

Inquiry at the treasurer's office as to the balance now on hand was answered by the information that the county balance at present is about $68 000.

St. Valentine's Day.

This is the day on which lads and lasses chose their sweet hearts, and the birds choose their mates. The former use Uncle Sam's mail for carrying their amorous messages to and fro, and the small boy and the jealous rival use the same conveyance for venting their spleen or poking fun at the "spooners." Ordinarily the pretty birds do their billing and cooing and singing and chatting openly and in the face of all the world but to day the inexorable groundhog, the most ancient, the most distinguished and the most reliable of weather prophets, has driven the little twitterers into the friendly shelter of hedge-rows, or under the eaves of houses and barns. It is even dangerous for an ardent lover to venture to carry his tender missive to the post-office, for the pavements are as slippery as greased glass, and more than one poor fellow has sat down where and when he didn't want to. Let us hope none of them may "slip up" in their prospective engagements.

Postmaster Marshall informs us that the number of letters dropped for city delivery yesterday and to day, was not so large as on some preceding Valentine days but that among them were more fine and apparently valuable ones; and that the number sent out of town is larger than usual and of a finer quality.

STRASBURG NEWS.

The Events of Interest in That Borough.

On Saturday evening, Feb 17, 1883, a meeting of the citizens of Strasburg borough will be held in Massasoit hall for the purpose of settling a citizens' ticket to be voted for on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 1883. All citizens without distinction of party, who are in favor of an honest, progressive borough government, have been invited to attend. The meeting will be called to order at 7 o'clock.

Mr. Chas. Greiner, is the possessor of two old Spanish coins, with the following upon their respective sides: "Hispan. et Ind. Rex. m. Q. R. T. H.," and crown on one side. The date, "1805, Carolus, III, Di. Gratia," and the emperor's head on the other side. The second coin is similar to the first, with the exception of the date which is 1784.

A lively debate is expected next Monday evening in Massasoit hall, Feb. 19th, on the question, "that the statesmen of to day are retrograding."