

The Centre Democrat.



SHUGERT & VAN ORMER, Editors.

"EQUAL AND EXACT JUSTICE TO ALL MEN, OF WHATEVER STATE OR PERSUASION, RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL."—Jefferson.

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S. T. SHUGERT & J. R. VAN ORMER, Editors.

Thursday Morning, December 21, 1882.

A GREAT fire occurred in the city of London on Thursday night last, in which the loss is estimated at over fifteen millions. No lives are reported as lost but a number of persons were seriously injured.

THINGS change sometimes very suddenly. One year ago members of Congress, particularly of the stalwart class, laughed and sneered at the very mention of civil service reform. Now it seems to be the "God of their idols" that they are now worshipping.

THE HON. H. J. M'ATEER of Huntingdon county will be presented for the chief-clerkship of the House of Representatives. He is a courteous, deserving gentleman, and if elected will make a most efficient and deserving officer.

CONGRESSMAN CARLISLE says that the report of the tariff Commission does not make a reduction of twenty per cent all around as claimed, and he expects to show to the House and the country, that the average reduction is not more than five per cent. on many of the necessities of life.

VERMONT has refused to grant individual property rights to married women. That State is still behind the age, uncertain whether King George is on the throne of England or the American Revolution is yet fought to a final conclusion. All they have learned is that they ought to vote the Federal Republican ticket.

SENATOR WARNER MILLER of New York, more familiarly known as Wood Pulp Miller, will not be particularly pleased with the report of the Tariff Commission he was so anxious to have appointed. They propose to knock off the duty on Wood-Pulp, a tax very dear to Mr. Miller, and one for which he made a very earnest and interested fight.

EX-CARPET BAG SENATOR SPENCER from Alabama, who is wanted as a witness on the trial of the Star-route thieves, to dodge the process of the court has fled to Canada. As that appears to be the common resort of all the rascals from the States who desire to escape justice, or to shield their thievish friends, the ex-Senator will doubtless find many congenial spirits.

A PROPOSITION is before Congress to purchase the building in which President Lincoln was shot. It is a three-story brick building opposite what was Ford's Theatre but is now owned and used by the Government as the Army Medical Museum. There seems to be a propriety in the Government owning both of these points directly connected with the tragic death of the martyred President.

GOV. CLEVELAND has been in consultation with Mr. Tilden, and shows his good sense in the choice of advisers in doing so. Mr. Tilden's great experience and his magnificent record in reforming the government of New York some years ago pointed to him as one peculiarly qualified to furnish facts and views of interest to one desirous of inaugurating an administration of advanced reform and economy for which he was chosen by the people.

THE annual reunion of the surviving members of the last Constitutional convention of this State is to be held at Lancaster on the 28th inst. Gov. Curtin is President of the association and Lewis C. Cassidy, Treasurer. The Convention was composed of 136 members. Of this number 36 are deceased, and in this list is embraced our own esteemed and honored representative, H. Nelson M'Allister, whose memory is still cherished with most affectionate regard by the community in which he lived and served so faithfully.

The Star Route Frauds.

The Star route trials are again before the Washington Court, a jury having been obtained last week. The defence made a hard struggle for indefinite postponement on account of the impaired health of Dorsey, who it is alleged is afflicted with disease of the eyes, but the Court overruled the motion and decided that Mr. Dorsey's presence in person was not absolutely necessary. In view of the bitterness engendered by the former trial, and subsequent events, this trial will doubtless be conducted by the prosecution with a determination to bring out every fact to prove guilt, which they claim to be overwhelming, and must lead to conviction. Many supposed that the first trial was a mere farce to permit the guilty ones to escape punishment; but it resulted otherwise, and it became necessary to corrupt the jury to prevent a verdict. This, and the attempt to throw the onus of this corruption upon the Attorney General has probably weakened the defence, and added vigor and determination to the prosecution. This trial therefore, it may be received, will be no sham, and whatever the result, will without doubt be accepted by the country as a verdict to be approved. If these men are guilty of the shameless robbery and villainies charged upon them, they ought to be severely punished—if innocent, the suspicion, indeed the conviction, in the public mind of guilt should be removed, not by subordinating the press as in the former trial, or tampering with the jury, but by such evidence as to merit acquittal.

THE House Committee favors an appropriation of \$10,000,000 annually for the next five years for educational purposes, to be distributed among the several States and territories by the secretary of the Treasury in the ratio of illiteracy. The Washington Post referring to this says: "There can be no question of the constitutional right of Congress to appropriate from the public treasury any sum of money that it may deem expedient for the purpose of aiding the States in educational work. The statistics of illiteracy, especially in the States where slavery existed twenty years ago, show how urgent is the necessity for largely increased school facilities. Much has been done already by public and private means, but the work accomplished is insignificant when compared with what remains unperformed. The most startling revelations of the census tables are the facts that there are in the thirty-eight States of our Union, four millions of adult citizens, including two millions of voters, who cannot write their names, and that out of a school population of eighteen millions, seven and a-half millions are growing up in ignorance of the alphabet. The right and duty of extinguishing a fire that threatens destruction of a great and costly edifice are not more clear and imperative than are the propriety and expediency of using the National means to insure the safety of the National structure, menaced as it is by this frightful mass of ignorance."

THERE is quite a commotion among the tobacco dealers and manufacturers of New York and elsewhere, and many petitions, numerous signed, urging early action of Congress to settle questions of taxes and duties, are being sent in. That industry in New York alone, employs 18,000 people in the manufacture of cigars and it is held that if Congress does not act promptly great suffering will result to the thousands of families dependent upon it. It is alleged as a reason for this that jobbers and retailers only purchase for immediate necessity in anticipation that the taxes will be removed or reduced, which, if effected, will cheapen both tobacco and cigars. This necessitates the working of the factories from four to ten hours a day and the balance of the time the workmen are out of employment. The tax on cigars is \$6 per thousand.

About Rivers and Harbors.

Congressman Randall wants to know something more about River and Harbor Steals, and has presented a resolution requesting the President to transmit to the House a statement showing the aggregate amount which has been expended in the improvement of rivers and harbors from the beginning of the Government to the present time; the amount annually expended and the aggregate and annual expenditure in the improvement of each river and harbor, accompanied by references to the laws authorizing each of such expenditures, and also a statement showing what benefit to commerce, if any, has resulted from each of said expenditures and stating the navigable capacity of each of said rivers and harbors before and after improvement; and also to inform the House whether any moneys have been appropriated or expended in the improvement of rivers or harbors not navigable within the legal definition of the word "navigable" as defined by the United States Supreme Court, and also to state whether any money has been appropriated or expended for the improvement of any river or harbor not within the United States.

THE new converts in Congress to civil service reform under inspiration of the late election returns, seem to be charged with what they call civil service bills most of which are certainly of a low grade. While the Senate is discussing with evident approval of the main features of Mr. Pendleton's bill, Mr. Kasson, of the House, introduces a sham partisan bill to antagonize it when it reaches the House. It is evidently the intention of these pretenders to defeat any measure of real merit to improve the civil service that might come up to them claiming Democratic paternity, or that might elevate the Federal service above its present extreme partisan and dependent standard. Kasson's bill is of this character and presented with no elevated view to improve the civil service but to provide against emergency in the anticipated defeat of his party hereafter. This system of evading a needed reform has long been practiced and with success, but the aroused public sentiment on this subject will only be satisfied with something practical and effective. This has been demanded in no uncertain tone. Pendleton's bill is not free from objectionable features, and ought to be carefully amended, but not by the substitution of a palpable fraud such as is proposed by Kasson.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Patriot says that Representative Deuzendorf, of Virginia, will at the earliest opportunity, introduce a bill prohibiting any person who holds a public trust or a government office of any kind from being a member of any central, executive or any other committee of any political organization, from being a delegate to any convention of any party, and from seeking to control the political action of his subordinates. It also prohibits any such person from taking part in any campaign as speaker or canvasser during the hours for which he is employed by the government. The penalty for violation of these provisions is dismissal from office and ineligibility for reappointment for five years.

THE Stalwarts having become very earnest reformers since the election, are making vigorous efforts to convince the Independents that they intend to be honest "next year." It is believed that they have captured Mitchell and he is prepared to serve under the lead of Cameron, provided he bosses mildly and will divide the stalwart patronage. Now, if the bosses can arrange with Wolf and Stewart and other Independent leaders, harmony may be assured for "next year." A reasonable amount of "crow diet" will prepare their stomachs for any methods that may follow.

Is It a Steal?

The Easton Sentinel, commenting on the expenses of the state government, brings to view some remarkable figures which need explanation and the incoming Legislature should not fail to apply the crucible. The Sentinel says: "Although there was no session of the Legislature, \$44,525.01 is set down as expenses of the Senate and \$153,084.28 for the House, and, in explanation of this, it is stated that this was the "back pay" of the members after the Supreme Court had decided each to be entitled to \$500 extra. But as there are only 251 members in all, this would account for but \$125,000—whereas \$197,610.38 are credited to the expenses of the Legislature. Was there also 50 per cent. addition made to the pay of the clerks, messengers, postmen, folders, doorkeepers, and janitors, and to the "contingent" fund?" There is something here very like a steal and demands attention.

FROM present indications, Harrisburg will be visited by the largest crowd of free citizens of Pennsylvania to witness and participate in the inauguration of Governor Pattison that ever congregated there on a similar occasion. No part of the expense of the demonstration will be drawn from the treasury of the State, but will be the voluntary offering of the people in their private capacity, of their sincere gratitude for the prospective rescue of the commonwealth from the control of boss management and the influence of corrupt rings and plundering miscreants.

AN attempt made on Saturday night last to burn the office and property of Mr. Merrick, the leading counsel of the Government in the prosecution of the star-route conspirators, has produced considerable excitement in Washington. This, in connection with the threatening letters of assassination and injury received by Messrs. Merrick and Bliss and Attorney General Brewster, gives rise to the suspicion of a concerted design to terrorize the trial now in progress. These suspicions may be unwarranted, but they are scarcely avoidable under the circumstances.

THE New York World, of Monday contains an expose by Stephen W. Dorsey, of Star Route fame, of the secrets of the campaign of 1880. It is quite lengthy and embraces many letters from Gen. Garfield, showing that he was in full accord and in confidential relation with Dorsey in all that was done in the conduct of that campaign of corruption in Indiana, New York and elsewhere. The expose he states, is given to the public to defend himself, and not with the view of attacking anyone.

PREPARATORY steps are being taken in Philadelphia to secure the repeal of the Recorder law which was enacted some years ago to rob the taxpayers and to fix up a soft and profitable job office for Boss Quay, who held it some time, and then returns to the office of Secretary of the Commonwealth. The emoluments of the office are large and it is believed by many that Mr. Quay and others, are not disinterested parties in the large revenue it yields to the incumbent. To abate this wrong upon the Philadelphia taxpayers should be one of the first duties of the Legislature.

APPEALS are now being made to public sympathy in favor of Mr. Jay Hubbell, whose campaign methods and agency have been so revolting to public decency, on the ground that he is no more culpable than the Senators and Representatives associated with him on the Congressional campaign committee. This is true. They were all a shabby set of robbers, and should divide the responsibility equally. "Honor among thieves" will apply in this, as in other cases.

When Rogues Fall Out.

The melancholy report comes from Harrisburg that Senate Librarian and Supply Custodian John C. Delaney has quarrelled with the contractor for state supplies and refuses to take the articles he proposes to furnish because they are not up to the standard bid for. The contractor in turn alleges that Delaney is "pinching" him because he wanted a friend of his own to get the contract. In view of the way this supply business is managed the public will be very ready to believe both stories. Fraud and peculation have nearly always honey-combed the furnishing of state supplies, and there never was more suspicion and scandal attaching to it than since Quay has been invested with the manipulation of the contracts and Delaney has received and has had charge of the supplies. Nobody will believe that Delaney would make objection to the contractor furnishing "wagon sponge at \$3 per pound" instead of "flesh sponges at \$15 per pound;" "towels at \$2 per dozen instead of Turkish towels at \$20 per dozen; soapstone dishes instead of china; small pieces chamois, instead of large skins; common plain glass, instead of cut glass tumblers; ordinary cuspidors, instead of fancy decorated inferior brushes and dust pans; 25 cent towel racks for those costing \$3.50; poor quality of damask towels and machine-made combs, for hand-made;" and otherwise making from 800 to 1,200 per cent.—if Delaney's friends will profit by the steal. On the other hand everybody will be ready to believe that the contractors for these supplies regularly swindle the state by furnishing articles of inferior quality and in quantities below their contracts. But the contracts themselves are swindles in that they call for many articles which the state should not buy at all, and many others of which there should be an ample supply on hand from the purchases of preceding years. The whole subject needs thorough ventilation and reform and the quarrel between Delaney and the contractors may help to light up the dark ways and vain tricks which have too long prevailed at Harrisburg. —Lancaster Intelligencer.

THE Harrisburg Patriot very properly calls attention to the fact that under legislation of doubtful constitutionality, and by still more doubtful construction of the statutes, the attorney general and the incumbent of the office of secretary of state have been drawing large fees in excess of their salaries; and it very sensibly suggests that "if it be possible for the Legislature to fix the salaries of the attorney general and secretary of the commonwealth before these officers shall have been sworn in that body should not hesitate in the premises. Such a course on the part of the Legislature would relieve the new administration from a very delicate position and would at the same time inaugurate a proper and necessary reform in the compensation of public officials." The pernicious system of feeing public officials, sought to be obviated by the new constitution, ought certainly to be abolished in connection with these two offices. The practice of collecting fees in the attorney general's office has led to scandal ever since it has been indulged in, and if, as the Patriot suggests, it is unlawful, the Legislature should act on this matter promptly. The salary of \$3,500 is probably not adequate to the professional standard required in the legal adviser of the state, but this had better be increased than to longer tolerate the present elastic system under which the emoluments can be swelled to \$11,000 by sometimes questionable devices.

ONE of the most intelligent writers in the country thinks that "if the national government can afford to spend five million dollars a year to improve the navigation of the Mississippi river, in defiance of the enormous extent to which the commerce of the Mississippi valley is monopolized by the railways, which have changed the whole aspect of western civilization, it certainly ought to be able to spend at least as much in building a new fleet of naval vessels for seagoing purposes, now sadly needed to look after the interests of our national commerce in the ocean highways of the world."

A MAP of Pennsylvania is still given by THE PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY PRESS to those who send \$1.50 for one year's subscription. There is no better map of this State, and it is itself worth the price asked for map and paper.

COL. M'CLURE, of the Philadelphia Times in his editorial correspondence from Washington under date of the 14, speaks thus of the subdued Chief Stalwart and his imperious Pennsylvania Lieutenant:

"There is a soft, "subdued" mellowness of tone in stalwart circles here that is as novel as it is refreshing to this city of partisan masters and dependents. The imperial power of the Stalwart leaders, that was so ostentatious in asserting itself to friend and foe, now pipes as gently as the dove, and I hear only of Republican harmony, concession and fraternal love between the Republican factions. Nor is this an idle promise to mislead the revolutionary elements of the party. For the first time since the advent of the Cameron reign in Pennsylvania the scalping-knife has been sheathed, and Senator Cameron really means not only to interpose no obstacle to the reunion of the stalwarts and Independents, but to promote it by his own efforts. It is his first lesson in that line of political education and he has studied it until he has learned it. It is only proper to say that he had a potent and probably an exacting teacher in President Arthur, who understands that 184,000 majority against one of his Cabinet officers in New York means more than a passing caprice of the people, and Arthur has called a halt on himself and on all around him. The venerable Simon Cameron has also taken a hand as a peace commissioner. He wants his son to recover for 1884, and thus secure Senator Cameron's reelection; and he knows that the Independents must be thoroughly welded back into the party lines again to make the reelection of the younger Cameron possible. He is riper in wisdom as well as in years and he calls for peace and unity at any sacrifice but that of his son."

THE result is that both President Arthur and Senator Cameron have decided to pool their issues with the Independents by welcoming back the bolting prodigals, killing the fatted calf and taking a fresh start. I repeat no idle gossip in these statements, but reflect what has been formally determined upon as the policy of the Stalwart administration and its followers. Senator Mitchell is now as welcome a visitor to the White House as is Senator Cameron, and while it is not pretended that Cameron is in any less favor than before it is known to Cameron that he is no longer the absolute dispenser of administration favors, and his use of the patronage of the President to punish those who have disobeyed his mandates is an achievement of the past. Pennsylvania expectants may therefore venture to seek the favor of Senator Mitchell again without playing the role of the suicide.

A LIVE PRINCE IN NEW YORK. Among the passengers arriving in New York the other day was his Royal Highness Prince Arisogava of Japan with an army of attendants. He is uncle of the Emperor of Japan, and is to visit the National Capital to interview the American solons.

In a hasty reading of the message we do not see the the President makes any attempt to justify his flag. Perhaps Mr. Arthur is of the opinion that this subject may as well be dropped. —Cincinnati Enquirer.

The youngest Governor, James B. Grant, of Colorado, is a Democrat, and so is the oldest, Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia. The true Jeffersonian democracy covers all ages and sizes. —Atlanta Constitution.

In China when a candidate for office under the government fails to pass examination he generally goes out and hangs himself. In this country he usually hangs himself up for the clerkship of a Congressional commission.

Noting Jay Gould's purchase of a cemetery lot at a big figure, the Chicago Times is fearful lest this is the beginning of an attempt on his part to get control of the route to the shining shore.

Mr. Grover Cleveland, of whom the public have lately heard much, it is reported, is to be married to Miss Mary Burlingame, living near Utica, N. Y.