

EVENING BULLETIN.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1866.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR. On the first, second and eleventh pages of to-day's triple sheet will be found our usual summary of the events of the year just closing. It comprises a list of the principal political and military events in the United States, Canada and Mexico, with an unusually full and accurate local chronicle. As it has been quite carefully prepared it will be well worthy of preservation.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE. As might naturally have been expected, the result of the President's prostration of the Government patronage, has been to reduce the performance of the public service to the lowest point of inefficiency. The Custom House and Post Office of Philadelphia were filled with experienced, honest and capable clerks, in whose hands the business of the community was conducted with promptness and accuracy. By a wholesale process of decapitation, this entire force of skilled clerical labor has been swept out of office, and there has been substituted a class of men who, as a body, are of the lowest grade of personal respectability and of the highest grade of political corruption. No regard has been had to the fitness of these men for the duties which they have been assigned, and the public service is being performed in the most disgraceful style of helpless inefficiency.

In the Post Office Department, the delivery of letters has become a matter of such uncertainty that no sort of dependence can any longer be placed upon it. The Postmaster is a friend of Mr. Johnson's, brought from the interior of the State to administer the business of the second Post-office in importance in the Union, perfectly ignorant of his duties and of the wants of a community like this, and his new subordinates are no better fitted for their positions than their chief.

In the Custom House matters are still worse, because the responsibilities are still greater and the opportunities and inducements for fraud and mismanagement are more numerous. A full statement of the manner in which Mr. Johnson's new appraisers and inspectors are doing or rather muddling their work every day, would be laughable, if it were not for the gravity of the interests at stake. Valuable cargoes are placed in the hands of men, as innocent of any knowledge of what is to be done with them, as an unborn babe. The business of our merchants is kept by this brilliant Swiss, or Greek guard in a state of the wildest confusion, and the delay, annoyance and loss consequent upon these wretched appointments are neither to be described nor calculated. Men who would hardly fill the post of a porter in a private store creditably, are vested with the discharge of duties of the most intricate nature, requiring quick tact, cool judgment, great activity, and trained habits of sobriety, punctuality and courtesy. Thousands and thousands of dollars' worth of goods are now placed in the hands of men, whose opportunities for plunder are almost entirely unchecked, who would not be trusted behind the counter of a retail trimming shop.

How the operations of the Mint are being conducted, there are not the same means of ascertaining. It at least is to be hoped, until evidence to the contrary is produced, that the absolute mechanical necessity which exists in that branch of the public service, for the employment of skilled labor, has preserved the Mint from the degree of disorganization and mal-administration that has become so patent elsewhere.

In the Internal Revenue Department we do not hear of the same open derangement and disorder that prevail in the Custom House and Post Office; but it is well known that many of the most important offices have been placed in the hands of men alike devoid of commercial standing, personal fitness and political respectability. In a word, the executive patronage, under Mr. Johnson has been dispensed without a particle of regard for the capabilities or integrity of the applicants, and the public is the sufferer by this abuse of Presidential power, to an extent of which the people have no conception.

It is a satisfaction to be able to believe that the evil is so notorious as to provide its own cure, and that when the Senate sweeps out this Augean stable, there will be an imperative demand that the men who take the places now so disgracefully filled, shall comply with the requisition of the better days of the Republic, and prove themselves, if they are nothing else, at least honest and capable.

WHAT IS DUE TO POSTERITY. Some blundering humorist once declared that we owed no particular duty to posterity, for posterity had never done anything for us that we had any special need to be grateful for. Without adopting this idea in all its length and breadth, it may safely be assumed that the present generation is doing a good deal for posterity without any hope of an immediate return from the latter. Secretary of the Treasury McCulloch's idea of getting rid of the National debt on short notice, brings the somewhat substantial idea of the said debt prominently to view in this discussion of the mutual relations between posterity and ourselves.

And first, as to how this national debt came about. Our somewhat remote ancestors, probably without thinking of its effect on the people of 1866, and perhaps without caring much about it, imported a lot of negroes into the then provinces, and established an institution which subsequently became a troublesome one.

The trouble to come became manifest pretty early, and away back, fully a century ago, Pennsylvania agitated the getting rid of the nuisance. But cotton became paramount, and the thing became a power in the land, and it was not to be got rid of easily, and so successive generations of statesmen, clear down to Henry Clay, brave and gallant as he was—temporized with it and compromised with it, and, in short, put off upon posterity what inevitably had to come sooner or later, and thus was put upon us, who then meant posterity, the practical solution of this great problem. Our fathers dodged the question and staved it off as long as possible, because they were more disposed to smooth over, than to rake to the bottom, and as the raking had to come, the brunt was put upon us, whether we would or not, and now the bill must be footed; and who is to foot it? The present generation has paid a pretty full instalment upon it in sacrifices upon the battle-field; in giving up its bravest and best to die that the nation might live; in its Sanitary and Christian Commissions, its bounties funds and its thousand and one responsibilities that were put upon us by the exigencies of the times. And all these sacrifices were forced upon us by an ancestry who wanted to escape the trouble themselves, and who put it off until it fell upon our shoulders.

Now posterity, as viewed from the Revolutionary stand-point, had to pay the bills incurred in the great struggle for Independence, and it was perfectly right that posterity should do so. The war of 1812 brought with it its bill of expenses, and posterity had to settle that, and served posterity right too, for it enjoyed most of the advantages of the struggle; and now the little bill of about three thousand millions of dollars, as the result of the late rebellion, has to be met, and the question is, Who is to meet it?

The present generation has paid a pretty good share of what our grandchildren and great grandchildren will enjoy the advantages of, and as our forefathers bequeathed all the "late unpleasantness" to us, there is no reason why those who have to come after us should not pay their share of the cost. We are building up great cities, taming the wilderness, webbing the land with railroads, and building the noble Pacific road that has so long been the dream of many far-seeing men. Posterity will enjoy the advantages of all these great enterprises, and it will also enjoy the fruits of four years of civil war which decreed the abolition of the curse of slavery. Let posterity pay its share of the bill of costs for the accomplishment of all these great ends, and let the Treasury authorities be content with the receipt of our taxes to meet the interest upon the public debt, without crushing the financial life out of us by exacting the payment of the principal immediately after the monetary depletion produced by the war, whilst it was in progress.

THE GOVERNOR'S APPOINTMENTS. Governor Geary has commenced his work well, in his appointments of Benjamin H. Brewster, Esq., as Attorney General and Col. Frank Jordan, of Bedford county, as Secretary of the Commonwealth. The Philadelphia bar could have furnished no able lawyer, as the official adviser of the Governor, than Mr. Brewster. Very clear in his comprehension of legal points, very thorough in his knowledge of legal precedents, very direct and lucid in the statement of his legal opinions, singularly bold and independent in all his legal positions, he has long stood almost unrivalled as an advocate and a counsellor, at the Philadelphia bar.

His appointment by the Governor as Attorney General, has taken the community somewhat by surprise, as it was known that powerful combinations had been formed to procure the position for other gentlemen who aspired to the office. The selection of Colonel Frank Jordan is equally creditable to Governor Geary's sagacity and independence. Colonel Jordan is well known throughout the State, as a gentleman whose personal and patriotic record constitutes a peculiar fitness for the preference, which Governor Geary has just declared. During the recent political campaign, Colonel Jordan won golden opinions by the singularly efficient discharge of his responsibilities as Chairman of the State Central Executive Committee. The result of the election was largely due to his untiring energy and the excellent judgment displayed by him in the organization of the Union element of the State, and the dissemination of sound Union sentiments.

If these two appointments may be taken as an earnest of the principles upon which Governor Geary intends to administer the affairs of State, recognizing ability, patriotism and real individual merit, in opposition to the demands of mere trading politicians, or the intriguing combinations of a "ring," he has before him a career which will result alike in the good of the Commonwealth and the verification of all the high hopes which his countless friends indulge in his behalf.

THE NEW YORK FIRE DEPARTMENT. The annual report of the officers of the New York Fire Department has been made public. It contains many very interesting facts and valuable suggestions. During the present year the cost to the city of maintaining the department was \$935,807 94. This seems like a very great sum; but it must be borne in mind that a large portion of it was expended in the purchase of engine houses, apparatus, horses, &c. The estimated expenditures for 1867 are \$700,000. This expense is not incurred alone for

what we understand in Philadelphia as firemen's service. There is a large daily detail of New York firemen who perform patrol duty, and who discovered and extinguished, with but little loss, no less than two hundred fires during the present year. Then there are certain properties that are considered extra dangerous, and a constant watch is kept upon them. It is a great fallacy to believe that because New York pays directly out of the city treasury twice or thrice the sum that it paid under the old volunteer system, that the paid system is twice or thrice as expensive. The fire department of a city must be supported in some way, and if it is not paid for directly out of the public funds, it will be paid for by the private contributions levied upon citizens, and by the personal sacrifices of the volunteer fireman, who gives his time and labor to the public gratuitously. It is not right that the performance of an important public service should fall upon the shoulders of a few, when the public at large is benefited by it, and taking this view of it, there is no doubt that a paid fire department in New York is no more expensive than a volunteer department was or would be; while it is at least certain that the cost of its support is distributed equitably among all who are interested in its efficiency.

The advantages of having a system that is under the direct control of the proper authorities, and that is free from the demoralizing tendencies of the volunteer system, have been so often and so fully discussed that it is not necessary to dilate upon that branch of the subject at this time.

NEW PUBLICATIONS. "The History of Byberry and Moreland" is the title of a neat volume just published by T. Elwood Zell, Nos. 17 and 19 South Sixth street. The work seems to have been "a labor of love" with its author, Dr. Joseph C. Martindale, who gives us a very interesting history of a very interesting portion of the territory now embraced within the city limits of Philadelphia. Dr. Martindale gives us a sketch of the locality from its earliest settlement, furnishes biographical sketches of well-known families, tells us amusing anecdotes of the people, past and present; copies curious old records, and, in short, has written a book that is as readable as it is a valuable contribution to our local history. As an edition of only three hundred and fifty copies has been printed, the work will have an additional attraction to collectors.

"Breathings of a Better Life" is the title of a beautifully-printed little volume, just issued by Ticknor & Fields. It is a compilation by Lucy Larcom, of choice extracts from such writers as Xavier, Zschokke, Thomas A. Kempis, Fenelon, Robertson, Trench, Faber, Taylor, Whittier, Bonar, Bernard, Krummacker, Tholuck, and many others. The utterances of these fine writers are classified under twelve heads, each illustrating one of the phases of religious life and thought. The selections, as will be seen above, are made without denominational distinction, and are all marked by a pure catholic spirit, which will make the volume welcome to all readers of religious literature. For sale by G. W. Fitcher.

Ticknor & Fields has just published Captain Mayne Reid's "Giraffe Hunters." The author brings his old characters "The Young Yagers" on to the stage again, and starts them into the interior of Africa to win a reward offered by the Consul of the Netherlands at Cape Town, for a pair of live giraffes. Their wonderful adventures are told in Captain Reid's well-known graphic style, and the juveniles will devour the narrative of the young hunters with as great avidity as they displayed in the pursuit of their coveted giraffes. For sale by G. W. Fitcher.

Mr. Eugene Comiskey has published a reprint from an English edition of a historical religious novel, called "Lydia." It is translated from the German of Herman Geiser of Munich. It is a story of the period of Marcus Aurelius, and is devoted to the early martyrs of the Christian church. The heroine, Lydia, is a Christian slave in the household of Metella, a Christian girl, who is finally converted to Christianity through her influence. The American edition is printed and bound in handsome style.

Shelly & Co., have just published "Millionaire's Leg," a tale by Emma Marshall, the authoress of "The Lost Lillies" and several other works. It is a story of English life, and the heroine, Lady Legh, is a beautiful character, and the minor actors in the story are all well drawn. A little carelessness is occasionally manifested, as in the case of a gentleman subscribing "five hundred dollars" to repair an English chapel, but the story itself is a very readable one.

"The Sapphire" is the name of the second volume of the "Gem Series," a collection of entertaining tales, essays and poems, compiled from the writings of the present century, by Eneas Sargent. "The Sapphire" contains a number of admirable selections, drawn principally from the English and French magazines, and is a very pleasant little volume for the library or drawing room table. For sale by J. B. Lipincott & Co.

Fine Arts. Within a few days a sale of fine pictures closed in New York. About the same time a sale of pictures by the same artists, and belonging to the same collection, took place in this city. The contrast between the prices at which the pictures were sold in the two cities does not elude much credit to the good taste and liberality of Philadelphia. Artists will send their pictures to the best market, and if New York will pay most liberally it will secure the finest gems of art.

CROSBY OPERA HOUSE ART ASSOCIATION.

APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS TO TAKE PLACE ON THE 21ST OF JANUARY NEXT, AT THE THEATRE OF SUBSIDIERS IN THE EASTERN STATES!!!

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The following gentlemen have kindly consented to act as delegates to the Distribution of Premiums of the Crosby Art Association, positively to take place on the 21st of January next, and will shortly proceed to Chicago, and act in conjunction with the Committee for the purpose of representing the interests of subscribers in the Eastern States. R. M. REDDEN, Cashier of the Croton National Bank, New York. R. E. DEMMON, President Howard National Bank, Boston. DAVID PULSIFER, D. Pulsifer & Payson, Boston. C. F. STOKENY, President Massachusetts Bank, Fall River. Col. W. B. THOMAS, Flour Merchant, Philadelphia. CARL H. NEEDLES, Druggist, Philadelphia. R. SMITH, L. Johnson & Co., Type Foundry, Philadelphia. R. S. ROWSE, Cavender & Rowe, Bankers, St. Louis. WALTER INGERSOLL, Cashier of the National Insurance Bank, Detroit.

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