BUSINESS NOTICES.

We Guarantee all Prices Lower Than the lowest elsewhere; also guarantee full satisfaction to every purchaser, or else refunded money refunded.
PROVIDENCE TO PATERSON—Change carry at the above business rule at the present time, we have

EMBRACE ALL PRICES. Our stock of Men's, Youths', Boys' and Children's Ready-made Clothing, which is large, complete and comprehensive enough to suit a boy of five years, size and style.

MEN AND BOYS, as LITTLE AS MANUFACTURED for that or special purpose. To insure this we intend to continue the Rule, to give all our customers

MEN'S YOUTHS' SHIRT MONEY than they can get elsewhere, under any and all circumstances. Call on us, hear our prices, and examine our goods before purchasing.

Half way between J. BENJAMIN & CO.,
Third and Sixth streets, 518 MARKET ST.,
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GRAND HANDSOME PIANOS.
GREAT SALE OF ELEGANT ROSEWOOD PIANOS AT EXTREMELY LOW PRICES FROM DECEMBER 1st, 1868, TO JANUARY 1st, 1869.
WE HAVE MADE A SELECTION FROM OUR LARGE WAREROOMS OF SPLENDID AND BEAUTIFUL ROSEWOOD PIANOS, MADE UP THIS SEASON, AND

No. 1 Grand	offer 750	No. 7 Grand	offer for $875
No. 2 do	offer 775	No. 8 do	offer for 925
No. 3 do	offer 775	No. 9 do	offer for 975
No. 4 do	offer 775	No. 10 do	offer for 1,000
No. 5 do	offer 775	Square Grand	offer for 600
No. 6 do	offer 875	Square Grand	offer for 650

We offer the above great inducements to those wishing to purchase at the present time, as we shall not be able to offer as favorable inducements on hand that we have purchased at a great sacrifice, which we can offer at present large, which will not be offered hereafter. Every instrument is warranted to give satisfaction, or money refunded. Call and examine for yourselves, and be convinced of the great saving to purchasers.
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Manufacturer of the celebrated Iron Frame Pianos, have received the Highest Premium at the World's Great Exhibition, London, 1862. The highest prizes awarded at the American Institute, New York, 1864 and 1867. Establishment 914 North Second street.

NO WONDER SO MANY worthless medicines are offered to the public when it is known that when a cure is effected it proves a loss to the sick. Health is the greatest blessing of life, and the Establishment of WHEELER'S BALSAM OF WILD CHERRY, is ever ready, cheap, safe, and a sure cure for Consumption.

STEINWAY PIANOS RECEIVED THE HIGHEST PREMIUM at the Paris Exhibition, 1867. See Official Report. At Warerooms of STEINWAY & SONS, No. 104 Grand street, N. Y.

THE CHICKERING PIANOS RECEIVED THE HIGHEST HONOR—the Medal of Honor, at the Paris Exposition. Warerooms, 652 Chestnut street.

DUTTON'S Warerooms, 914 Chestnut street.

EVENING BULLETIN.

Wednesday, December 9, 1868.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

There is not much in the final annual message of Andrew Johnson that will commend it to the people of the United States. The opening passages are but a reiteration of his own views in opposition to those of Congress, which is in singularly bad taste, now that the people have solemnly expressed their approval of the acts of Congress. There is the usual sweeping assertion that the reconstruction acts are unconstitutional, which will not do us much as usual, as an impertinent assumption that is not warranted by anything decided by the only tribunal that has a right to decide constitutional questions—the Supreme Court of the United States.

In regard to the important matter of the national finances, the President tries to put the burden of their unfavorable condition upon Congress; while all sensible people see that it is owing to his stubbornness in fostering the rebellious spirit of the South that the expenditures of the Government have been so enormous. The frauds committed by his army of office-holders, and the gamblers of the whiskey ring, gold ring and other combinations tolerated by his Secretary of the Treasury, have also deprived the Government of a large amount of revenue. These and many other matters of importance may be reached upon, if Congress does its duty. At all events, the administration of President Grant will be able to reform many abuses, and bring economy as well peace.

The foreign relations of the Government are alluded to by the President with a good deal of complacency; but the people have the right to ask why is nothing said about the Alabama claims, and the negotiations with Great Britain for their settlement? This most important subject is not alluded to in the most remote way. This is an important omission that ought to be explained. Nor is there any allusion made to our Fenian difficulties, nor to the fact that a Presidential election has occurred. How are these omissions to be explained? But it is hardly worth while to bring to account a man whose official days are numbered, and who is about to retire to the obscurity from which he ought never to have emerged.

ROYAL ENGLISH.

If there were a royal road to learning, it might be expected that the royal family of England would at least be able to "pay their way" upon it, when it comes to speaking English royalty in connection with English literature, one ought to remember that English royalty is of German blood and that, therefore, the Queen's, or the King's, or the Prince's English, of the present day, can hardly be expected to be the finest in composition or the most elegant in form. When that cleverest of gossips and sublimest of sonnetes, Horace Walpole, wrote his Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, no sovereign of his country had challenged criticism by formal publication to the world at large of a couple of volumes of personal experiences. Queen Victoria, however has given to the world within the last two years. How the latter of Strawberry Hill would have glossed over the title of a Queen Regnant, as part of his catalogue, even while his hypercritical taste in letters shivered at some of the faults in style of the good Victoria. For, with all possible respect for Her Majesty, as a Queen, a woman, a wife and a mother, it is not possible to say that the Queen's English, as written by her, is half as good as the English of her ancestors, subjects, and that of a good many free and independent Americans.

One of the Queen's sons, Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, has lately ventured to imitate his mother by appearing before the public as an author. If he and his brother were to imitate her in all other respects, it would be a pleasant and a good thing for England. The Duke of Edinburgh is considered the cleverest of the Queen's sons. His conversation is a rather, his adventurous life, and especially his escape from death by the hands of an assassin in Australia, have made him an object of unusual interest with his mother's subjects. His book, describing part of his travels, has been looked for with something more than mere curiosity; for somehow people fancied that the Crichton-like qualities that might be, but do not, distinguish the Prince of Wales might be found in the younger brother, and that the bright young sailor, who had gone round the world, charming all the Queen's distant subjects, going through all kinds of romantic adventures, and even defying a pistol-ball sent into his own body, ought to be a genius also in literature. But it appears, from the few English notices of the Prince's book that have been published, that it is not at all a remarkable work. In fact, it can hardly be English, the Duke of Edinburgh has lished a narrative no better than that of Prince Alfred's, it would have been passed by contemptuously by the critics, or have been sarcastically condemned. The book has not been reprinted in America, so that no impartial or unprejudiced opinion can yet be formed of it. Its author has set out on a new voyage, intending to go around the world, and perhaps he may develop into a tolerable writer when he grows older; for it must be remembered that he is only twenty-four years of age, and there are not many of even the most intelligent young American gentlemen, that can point a respectable figure in literature before they are twenty-five years old.

While the Queen's second son has ventured into the sea of letters, no one has heard of any literary essays by the Prince of Wales.

"The expectancy and rose of the fair state."

This young gentleman, who in America eight years ago, used to recite nice little speeches prepared for him by his "governor," and since his father's death a member of others have been reported as his, delivered on some momentous occasion like the annual meeting of the Royal Boot-Black Society, assisting at the corner-stone laying of the Royal Society of Flunkies. But he is not positively known to have ventured further into either letters or art. He is known to patronize the drama to the extent of loving the ballet; and his enthusiasm for music is shown by his passionate admiration for the sublime works of Offenbach. But the Prince of Wales is not likely to figure in any future Horace Walpole's catalogue of royal authors. Still he might be induced to make literary effort. Tennyson, the laureate, as in duty bound, has tried to celebrate him several times. Did not, also, some honest, loyal Englishman of Pickwick, address to him in 1860 an original stanza, which was sung to him in our opera house as an appendix to "God save the Queen?" Have not the publishers of London treated this song to "God save the Prince of Wales!" and to "God save the Princess Tool!" and to God save the Princes and Princesses too, for aught I know, as the emergency demanded? Was there not sung at Windsor, the other day, by the choir of St. George's Chapel, an original "ode," as it is called by the London papers, addressed to the Prince of Wales on his twenty-seventh birthday? This "ode" has not been printed in the American papers, and we therefore treat our readers to it, venturing to hope that the Poet Laureate had nothing to do with its composition. Here it is:

Bright may the sun shine o'er thee,
Gladden thine ev'ry way;
Joy to you, Prince of Wales!
Shedding its welcome ray.

Chorus.—Year by year, and day by day,
All English hearts join for thee pray—
Britannia's hope, Old England's heir,
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

Bright may the sun shine o'er them,
Whose lives are dear to thee:
May all be happy, as before them,
Bright every memory.

Chorus.—Year by year, &c.

Our Queen, beloved and glorious,
In England's heart enshrined,
By Faithful Victoria,
By beauteous form and mind.

Hurrah! then, for the Prince of Wales,
Hurrah! then, for our Queen,
The Princess Alexandra,
And each Princess fair and weak.

Chorus.—Year by year, and day by day,
All English hearts join for thee pray—
God shield them from sorrow, pain and care,
Britannia's hope, Old England's heir,
Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

If not positively an English royalty, this precious "ode" was inspired by it. No such production could have passed muster among our republican royalty. Fenian sympathizers, nor to the fact that a Presidential election has occurred. How are these omissions to be explained? But it is hardly worth while to bring to account a man whose official days are numbered, and who is about to retire to the obscurity from which he ought never to have emerged.

FETISH WORSHIP.

The Democratic propagandists, North and South, are publishing horrible stories of the Voodooism, or Fetish worship, practised in some sections of the South among the negroes. These reports furnish texts from which the enemies of the freedman plainly prove, to their own satisfaction, that he is very rapidly relapsing into his original condition of barbarism. But there is another side to the question. In the first place, it is quite certain that Fetish worship is not, by any means, common among the negro population of this country. The very eagerness with which the Democratic press seize upon every story, sandwiched in between accounts of such demonstrations, is a sufficient assurance of the unfrequency of the practice. But, even admitting that most of these stories are true, does not the time and disgrace belong entirely to the white people, among whom these negroes have been born and bred? It devolved upon the Southern people to educate the blacks, and to instruct them in Christianity, for the most rabid fire-eater admits that negroes have souls to be saved, albeit they may believe that the children of Ham will go to a snug little colored people's Heaven of their own when they die. The existence of Voodooism among the negroes proves that the "superior race" has not done its duty, either through incapacity or sheer neglect, probably both. The negroes are not to blame if a few superstitious exists among them. It is hardly fair to deny men the privilege of learning to read, and to make possession of a Bible a crime, and then to condemn them because they are not thoroughbred Christians. We know, many men would know anything of puns and undefiled religion if they were always excluded from the only source. It is very doubtful if the mass of the "poor whites," even with their great opportunity, are much better than the negroes, in language and that the bright young sailor, who had gone round the world, charming all the opinion of the Christian religion. Naturally they might have looked upon the whites by whom they were surrounded as exemplars of the virtues of Christianity, and living illustrations of its good or bad effects upon its disciples. The result, then, could not have been the creation of a higher reverence for the true faith. These believers hold the blacks in cruel bondage, sold the wives and children of their fellow pilgrims Zionward, whipped, cursed, drank deeply, used the bowie knife and revolver freely, and then attempted to destroy the government of the country. Even an unintelligent negro, judging this religion by its fruits, might conclude that any other form of faith was better and more seemly. Even Voodooism did not teach its believers such wickedness. We could not blame a benighted negro if he decided in his blindness to seek salvation by the directly opposite route. Simple instinct might teach him this.

But the whole theory of the religious degradation of the negro is a falsehood and a libel. It libels in any one characteristic which peculiarly distinguishes the blacks, it is an earnest, trustful, unaffected piety. The very wrongs which have been heaped upon them have helped to develope and confirm this trait, and despite the cruel, cruel, and compelled ignorance of the alphabet, the negro race has displayed a depth of religious fervor which puts to shame the pretensions of the whites. It is not denied that they have superstitions; but these are not more objectionable generally, than many which exist among even better educated persons in the lower classes. And Voodooism, with all its monstrous theories of demoniacal supremacy, is not a possible more degrading than atheism, spiritualism, or any other of the infidelities which find favor with educated white men.

It would be very much better if the Democratic press and people, instead of ridiculing the superstition of these poor creatures, would help to educate them for admission to the privileges of education, and strive to let in the light of higher religious intelligence upon whatever heathenism they may still cling to. Even Voodooism does not object to pulling converts of any class. It will be time enough for Southern Christians to cavil at it when they advance as far in anxiety to proselyte unbelievers.

THE TAX RATE.

Select Council yesterday fixed $2 00 as the tax rate, while Common Council adhered to the rate of $2 80, as reported by the majority of its Finance Committee. Col. Page, of the opposition, deserves great credit for his determined efforts to make the taxes equal to the expenses, and although he failed in carrying his amendment to make the rate $2 20, he succeeded in advancing it to $2 00. We have yet to hear the first real argument in answer to the clear and business-like report of the minority of the Finance Committee of Common Council, and we do not believe that the people of Philadelphia desire the adoption of this mistaken policy of paying part of their debts and allowing the remainder to accumulate to form worse burdens in the future. The true policy is a very plain and direct one. Cut down the expenses to the lowest reasonable point. Exact a rigorously economical administration of every public office, and then fix the tax rate at a figure that will meet the necessary expenses of the city.

The idea of covering this deficiency, which all admit must ensue if the rate is fixed at $1 80, by special legislation permitting the passage of loan bills by a majority vote, is a malicious one. No municipal credit is secure, could stand such a principle, and we trust that, if it is seriously entertained, it will be abandoned as most dangerous expedient. If Councils are determined not to fix the rate at $2 20, which has been so conclusively proved to be the lowest that will meet the expenses, we trust that Common Council will at least accede to the rate of $2 00, as agreed upon in Select Council. In doing so, the public will sustain and approve their action.

DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL.

Martha was played in German last evening before a somewhat large audience at Concert Hall. Mme. Hotter and Selig and Messrs. Habelmann and Wilhelmsen were the principal parts. In the most respects the performance was good, Mr. Habelmann seeming delighted all by his fine voice and medical, and his intelligent acting. Mr. Wilhelmsen was a good deal too serious for one to his distinguished brother in the part of "Plunkett," for which the voice is adapted to both and high. The chorus was good, but the orchestra was unusually ill-regulated, showing a want of sufficient rehearsal. This evening *Wilhelm Tell* is produced, the parts, with Mme. Lagrange, Mme. McCulloch, Hoetti and Amoroso in the principal parts. To-morrow evening *Un Ballo in Maschera*.

—The Kellogg concert for the benefit of the Lincoln Institute, at the Academy, Dec. 22nd, is looked for with much interest. Tickets are selling at Trumpler's, 935 Chestnut street. The prices of reserved seats range from 25 cents up to $1. Early application should be made by those wishing good seats.

—At Fox's American Theatre a miscellaneous performance will be given to-night.

—On Tuesday evening, the 15th inst, at the Academy of Music, the Handel & Haydn Society, under the direction of Mr. L. Eugelke, will sing Mendelssohn's magnificent oratorio *Elijah*. The following persons will appear in the cast: Dr. Guilmette, of Boston, as the Prophet; Mrs. Rice, tenor, soprano; Mrs. H. J. Davis, contralto, and Mr. J. Graham, tenor. A full orchestra and entire chorus will be present.

—The Chestnut Street Theatre announces for this evening an unusually attractive and efficient cross company. Mr. James Robinson, the well-known Irish comedian, Mr. James Magnan, and other performers will appear.

—At the Arch Street Theatre this evening the drama *Riches at Bay* will be given.

—At the Walnut Street Theatre this evening the drama *Riches at Bay* will be given.

—At the Arch Street Theatre this evening the comedy *A Scrap of Paper* will appear.

—Bryant's Minstrels will appear at Talma Hall to-night in *The Lady of Lyons*, after which the comedy *A Scrap of Paper* will be given.

—Professor Wyman will give attractive entertainments at the Theatre Comique, Seventh street, below Vine, this evening. Matinees are given every Wednesday and Saturday afternoons.

—Prof. Rufus Adams' "Readings" last evening, at Concert Hall, for the Young Men's Christian Association, attracted one of the largest audiences of the season. Every piece was highly appreciated and applauded. The scene from the *Merchant of Venice* was admirably read, and so was the scene from *Hamlet*. Mr. Adams's delineations of character show a great amount of fairly claim to be one of the most accomplished elocutionists in the country.

—There are said to be numbers of lawyers in New York, who make it their business to hunt up persons injured by railway and other disasters, and offer to take charge of these cases, if they get the lion's share of the "damages" for pay.

Ancient Notice—Great Sale of Horses and Stock.—We would call the early attention of the trade to the large and valuable assortment of Horses and Stock to be sold by catalogue, for cash, on to-morrow (Thursday) morning, Dec. 10th, commencing at 10 o'clock, at C. D. Mellott & Co.'s Auctioneers, at their store, No. 1012 Chestnut street.

EXTRA.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AT THE

Commencement of the Second Regular Session

OF THE

FORTIETH CONGRESS.

Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

Upon the reassembling of Congress, it again becomes my duty to call your attention to the state of the Union, and to its continued disturbed condition since the last session, which have been passed upon the subject of reconstruction.

It may be safely assumed, as an axiom in the government of States, that the greatest wrongs inflicted upon a people are caused by unjust and arbitrary legislation, or by the unchecked decrees of despotic rulers, and that the timely repeal of such legislation and suppression of such decrees is the greatest good that can be conferred upon a nation. The legislator or ruler who has the wisdom and magnanimity to retrace his steps, when convinced of error, will sooner or later be rewarded with the respect and gratitude of an intelligent and patriotic people.

Our form of government, embracing a period less than a century—affords abundant proof that, while it has been established without precedent, it rectify treatable to violations of the organic law and the rights of the people. The most striking illustrations of this fact are furnished by the events of the past four years upon the question of reconstruction. After a fair trial, they have demonstrated the necessity of a change in their results, and there seems to be no good reason why they should longer remain upon the statute book. States to which the Constitution guarantees a republican form of government have been reduced to military dependencies, and the rights of the people have been made subject to the arbitrary will of military commanders. Although the Constitution requires that each State shall have representatives in Congress, Virginia, Mississippi and Texas are yet excluded from the two Houses, notwithstanding the requirements of the clauses of that instrument, were denied participation in the recent elections for President and Vice President of the United States. The authority of the United States has been made under the domination of persons of color in the South has imparted, if not destroyed, the kindly relations that had previously existed between them, and serious apprehensions are engendered a feeling of animosity which, leading to strife and bloodshed, has prevented the country from enjoying that co-operation between the two races so essential to the success of industrial enterprises in the Southern States. Nor have the inhabitants of those States alone suffered from the disturbed condition of affairs growing out of these congressional enactments. The entire Union has been agitated by fears and apprehensions of evils which might again involve the peace of the nation. The business of the country has suffered,