CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM POTTSVILLE.

(Correspondence of the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.)

The Dry Spell.

POTTSVILLE, Sept. 23, 1870.—This is very beautiful and delightful weather, and the thoughtless ones are enjoying it greatly; but the wise heads are beginning to inquire "Are we not having a little too much of it?" Throughout the county, there is a universal cry for rain. Springs are drying up, streams shrinking to a mere thread, and the dust in the highways is a fearful thing to encounter. The Pottsville water company is urging citizens to be sparing in their use of the liquid element; and many of them, with that public spirit for which Pottsvillians are noted, have abandoned its use almost entirely, and continue themselves to lager and kindred fluids, to quench their thirst. Truth, however, compels the admission that these persons belong, principally, to the class concerning which the company felt the least uneasiness.

It was expected that the equinoctial storm would end the drought, and give us a plentiful supply of water: and when the sky, last Saturday, was overcast, and an occasional shower fell, people said, "Behold the equinoctial! It has come four days ahead of time, to oblige the moon and the farmers!" But the days passed away, and the clouds passed with it, without more rain than was sufficient to settle the dust for a few hours. The 21st, the day on which it was predicted by the almanacs, came and went without the equinoctial, and at the present writing it is still in the future—"postponed on account of the weather."

An Ornamental Humbug.

Everything is quiescent except business, which shows a little more briskness than formerly. Even politics is a subject too uninteresting to be heard very frequently on the street. The campaign, though formally opened by the nominating conventions, appears to have closed again from the utter lack of something to fry it. Picnics are still in vogue; one held at Tamanua this week, for the benefit of the widows and orphans of German soldiers, is said to have netted $1,000, which will at least be something, though it does not seem to drop in the ocean of money that will be needed. Court is quietly occupying itself in disposing of "short causes," (two days was the length of the last one tried), and will probably close next week on "long cause" list. The following week, the new Criminal Court will hold its regular session, and the criminal business of the old Court of Quarter Sessions having been formally transferred, it will be the District Attorney. This looks like—and doubtless is—an abandonment of the conflict on the part of the old court, and a happy relief on the part of think it must be to that tribunal; and to a Judge whose list of civil cases is longer than he can possibly get through with. The next thing we want is the abolition of that purely ornamental humbug—the office of "Associate Judge—and, in its place, an additional Law Judge, with full authority and ability to hear and determine cases with or without the concurrence of the present Law Judge. (Governor Geary's objection that this would give Schuylkill county three law Judges, could easily be overcome by appointing the Judge of the Criminal Court, or combining that with the Court of Common Pleas.

Coal Matters.

Coal items are scarce. The joint committee to fix the rate of wages for September will meet to-morrow afternoon, and at or about the same time the representatives of the W. B. A. will hold their regular monthly meeting, and on the action of these two bodies the peace and quiet of the country for the coming month will, in a great measure, depend.

The mine inspectors are at last appointed and commissioned. The examination of candidates for the position took place on the 9th and 10th inst., and the three successful applicants having been recommended to the governor by a committee appointed for the purpose, and were duly sworn in yesterday. Their names and districts are as follows:

First District—Frank Snedden, of Girardville. This district includes all collieries south of the Broad Mountain, between the west branch of the Schuylkill and the eastern line of the county, including the New Boston field.

Second District—John Etringham, of Ashland, who has charge of all the collieries north of the Broad Mountain in the Schuylkill county and all in Columbia county.

Third District—David R. Edmunds, of New Philadelphia. In this district are included all collieries in Schuylkill county, west of the West Branch of the Schuylkill, and also all in Dauphin and Northumberland counties.

These inspectors are appointed under the "mine inspection act" of March 3, 1870, and are to have general oversight of all the collieries within their jurisdiction, with power to see that they are worked with the greatest possible regard to the health and comfort of their employes. The bill was gotten up by the miners themselves; so if the mines are not hereafter kept in a state of absolute perfection, they alone are to blame.

For the week we have three men reported killed—two by cars and one by a fall of coal; two men severely burned by an explosion of fire damp, and two or three injured by being in wagons, through carelessness, in getting in the way of the engine. WECO.

OUR WILMINGTON LETTER.

(Correspondence of the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin.)

A Paid Fire Department.

WILMINGTON, Sept. 22.—Hang! into the very camp of the "Domnickies" went a red hot shell, from City Council, last evening. The new fire committee took up the work where the old one left off, and did it with none the less gusto, on account of the fact that a quiet effort was made at the last City election to slaughter the Republican party by the Volunteer Fire Department. Not that the effort to establish a Paid Department is a purely Republican measure, but the members of the old department rightly calculated that they could help the Democrats into defeating it more easily than they could the Republicans. Well, the Republicans retained their majority, and the thing is likely to be tried. Last night Captain Gallagher, of the Committee on Fire Companies, introduced an ordinance providing for the establishment of a Paid Fire Department, under the control of commissioners elected by City Council, and to consist of a Chief Engineer, two Assistant Engineers, three fire companies and one hook and ladder company. Each fire company is to consist of a foreman, one engineman, a fireman, a hostler, and nine extra men, and the hook and ladder company is to have a foreman, a hostler, and nine men. The ordinance defines the duties of the various persons to be appointed under its provisions, and requires the Chief Engineer of the Department, and the engineemen, firemen and hostler of each company to devote their time exclusively to the duties of their positions. The ordinance has not passed yet, of course, but those who have it in charge feel confident of its passage. If it does, the three steamers are enough for a city like this, when Baltimore gets along with six or seven since the establishment of a Paid Department.

At present, under the volunteer system, we have six steamers and one hand engine, besides a hose company, which has not yet got an engine. Each of these engineers draws a thousand dollars a year from the city, and each of the others $500 a year, these sums being in addition to the donations made them for hose. As to the sums they raised by contributions from insurance companies and business men they are, of course, large, but no one can obtain an estimate of the amount. Certain it is that by subscription and appropriations, eight fire companies, six of them with steamers, are now supported here; and, if four, with three steamers, will even do the work as well, there must be a decided saving, even if the cost does fall on the city more directly, while the advantage to public security will be immense. Our fire companies are nothing like so bad—as those of your city, and scrape fights are exceedingly rare, but the many of the engine-houses are schools of vice for growing boys the most respectable firemen are adult, and many of this class are ready to consent to the change. Some of the companies will sell their apparatus and change their organizations into clubs of a social—and even gaudy literary character; while others will, doubtless, divide their receipts, if they have any, and drink them up, after which, to the gratification of all decent people, as organizations, they will cease to exist.

Fatal Railroad Accident.

Another of those fatal accidents that happen so frequently in the western part of the city occurred this week. The trains on the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad run pretty rapidly there, and several years since at a good speed on the double track several times in the day. The Delaware trains shift pass over these tracks to the junction, a mile out of town, and the tracks of the Wilmington and Reading, (one, and for a mile out of town double), lie directly alongside the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore tracks, and both railroads are flanked by sidelings pretty constantly used. It is such a place as this that a large number of people, living in the southwestern part of the town, deliberately choose in preference to paved streets, because it is a short cut to their homes by which they save from three to five squares. Every once in a while some of them pay the penalty of their lives for the few minutes thus saved, but nobody stops walking there but the unfortunate or injured. The victim this week was a little beggar girl, living just beyond the city limits.

An Exciting Stampede.

Last evening we had a profound sensation, which drew half the city there—viz., a drove of Texas cattle, were being driven into a drove-yard down the town, about 7 or 8 o'clock P. M., when one of them, a powerful and vicious steer, broke away from the drove, and charged on the drivers, cleaving the way before him like a whirlwind. He ran in a circuitous course for a mile and a half through the thickly built up portions of the city, and then, being headed off by a fence, on a wolver, he charged furiously back over a portion of the route he had already traveled, and finally escaped over Third street bridge to the marshes beyond, where he still was at last accounts. In his mad course he gored everything that came in his way, and knocked down, it is said, eleven persons, injuring some of them quite seriously. An old man, who is a flagman at Market street and the railroad, was knocked in air, goring one of his hands and leaving him badly wounded in a gutter. In the same neighborhood he knocked down and trampled a boy severely injuring him. Several squares further on he rushed at a two-horse coach and attacked a lady. In his haste he fell on her and nearly crushed her to death. As it was, she was picked up insensible, with her and one of her ribs broken, and badly cut and bruised. She is also injured internally, so that a fatal result is feared. Shortly afterwards he attacked a boy and cruelly cut him about the head and shoulders with his hoofs, and on his way back he tossed an old man, hurting him severely, and breaking one arm. He knocked down and hurt less seriously several others. People are indignant that such vicious brutes should be driven through the streets at this time, but their indignation will soon cool and die out until another event calls it forth.

The Horticultural Fair.

The Horticultural Fair, in Institute Hall, is a brilliant success in every respect except as a horticultural one. The display of fruits and flowers is not as great as at Boston, but the display of youth and beauty marching around the hall to the inspiring music furnished by Beck's Band, is all that could be wished for.

Local news is plentiful, but I doubt if it is of a character to be interesting thirty miles away. One boy fell off a ladder and nearly killed himself. Another got run over by a cart, with like result. Uncle Sam is making important alterations and improvements in the Post-office and Custom-house buildings. The corner-stone of the soldiers' monument is to be laid in October. A lot of the bones of the chicken victims of 1776 have just been unearthed in digging a cellar. Another locomotive has been smashed on the Wilmington and Reading Railroad—and so on. To crown all, we have as delightful weather as Heaven ever vouchsafed unto us.

THE CREAM OF THE NEW BOOKS.

Some Fresh Lights on Voltaire.

Two new studies—*Studies*—on the piquant and paradoxical Voltaire have appeared in Europe. One, by a Parisian, Gustave Desnoiresterres, is entitled "Voltaire et Frederic," and is almost Boswellian in its minute account of the relations between the French skeptic and his Prussian patron. The other, perhaps more philosophical, is by no less an author than Strauss, of the "Life of Jesus."

To the French memoir we allude principally for the sake of an extraneous consideration. The *Saturday Review's* notice of it contains several allusions to Carlyle's history, of which the Voltaire episode is so marked a chapter; it lets us see what is the contemporary opinion of Carlyle held by the acutest critical organ of his own country.

CARLYLE, FREDERICK AND VOLTAIRE—CARLYLE'S CONTRIBUTIONS.

The story has been told with admirable humor, but with far from perfect fairness, by Mr. Carlyle. Indulgent as he is to the foibles and shortcomings of all who are not stupid and second-rate, he obviously finds it difficult to make the facts of Frederick's literary career fit in with the idea which his biography has in the present of him as a hero; and he struggles hard to weaken the effect of failures which would seem to reflect the King to a place in Dunciad, and of the coarse and brutal manners which would seem to imply utter lack of, contrasting his magnanimous and long-suffering forbearance with the incorrigible tricks and sly gibes of Voltaire, he (Carlyle) is constantly saying, "Vigil much misunderstood," he says, "Frederick and England owe it to him, and probably the wisest, chief of all the sections of Frederick's History."

Voltaire is drawn as he was; from the facts, Frederic is drawn as Mr. Carlyle thinks he must have been, in spite of the facts—a soldier, jury, high-equal, rather sad-hearted hero, full of sympathy for Voltaire's brightness, and for the sake of that sympathy pardoning the excesses of his monkey nature. The attempt vitiates the truth of Mr. Carlyle's representation.

After reading M. Desnoiresterres's somewhat prolix, but very distinct and fair, examination of the evidence relating to the arrest at Frankfort, it is hard to understand how even Mr. Carlyle could have made a hero of a man who could so long tolerate, or his own amusement, such glaring moral worthlessness, and who could, after having endured it so long, at last profit of Mr. Carlyle's representation.

Mr. Desnoiresterres's account, though