The Press

PHILADELPHIA: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1857.

FIRST PAGE.—CHARLES DICKENS' Christmas Story; New Publications; Letter from one of the Sailors of the steam-frigate Minnesota; Remarks of Senator DOUGLAS in reply to Senator FITCH, in Senate, December 23d; Important from Kansas; A Visit from St. Nicholas; General News; City Police. FOURTH PAGE.—Christmas Hymn.

☞ It is not our intention to issue "THE PRESS" to-morrow. We have an idea that those employed upon a newspaper should enjoy their Christmas as well as other people, which they could not do if they were "at case," and "at press" as usual.

RECEPTION OF SENATOR DOUGLAS.

Late last night Senator DOUGLAS, and his accomplished and estimable wife, arrived at the Girard House, from Washington, and no sooner was the fact known, than an excellent military band serenaded him.

The area in Chestnut street in front of the Girard House was crowded, and a loud call for Mr. DOUGLAS having been made, DANIEL DOUGHERTY, Esq., in a few appropriate sentences, introduced the Senator to the enthusiastic multitude.

Senator DOUGLAS then appeared on the balcony, and, amid loud applause, stated the broad principles of the Constitution, upon which his conduct, as regards the Kansas question, had been based. He enunciated the opinion that the will of the majority should rule, and his declaration was received with great cheering. A compliment having been paid to him as "author of the Nebraska bill," he declared that he was not author of the great principle upon which that measure was founded—that principle was coeval with, and was part of, the Constitution of the United States. He deprecated the idea of hostility to the President, or to his Administration, and expressed his belief that Mr. BUCHANAN would prove eminently worthy of the high opinion formed of him by the Democracy of Pennsylvania, which had elected him to the high office he now held.

Senator DOUGLAS retired, amid great applause, and then arose a loud call for Colonel FORNEY, editor of THE PRESS, who responded in a brief speech, declaring his inviolable adherence to the great principle of the ascendancy of the majority. He concluded by stating that Mr. DOUGLAS would remain in the city (at the Girard House) this day, and would be happy to see every citizen who felt disposed to call upon him.

These agreeable proceedings terminated at one o'clock this morning, and we therefore can only give this rapid sketch of them.

JUDGE DOUGLAS.

The short, pertinent, and eloquent speech of Judge DOUGLAS, which we print this morning, is the best political offering we could lay before our readers to-day. Assailed as he is, rear and flank, it is a proud spectacle to see how boldly and how bravely he bears himself. One would suppose, from the manner in which he is attacked and misrepresented, that he was advocating some monstrous treason—some revolutionary dogma. It is almost inconceivable that, for simply standing forth as the champion of the right of the people to manage their own affairs—as the defender of "the will of the majority"—he should be traduced by men calling themselves Democrats, and consigned to a room reserved for deserters only. It is, however, a great satisfaction to the friends of Judge DOUGLAS and to the great cause of which he is the embodiment, that he speaks FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE MASS—for those who, unawed by denunciations, and unseduced by ambition, dare to speak out their honest feelings, utterly regardless of consequences.

SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

We understand that Hon. WILLIAM M. HIESTER, of Berks county, has been offered the important place of Secretary of the Commonwealth, under the coming Administration of Governor PACKER, and we are authorized to say that he has accepted the offer. Mr. HIESTER is in every way deserving of, and equal to, this high position. He is a native of Pennsylvania, a Berks county man, and the grandson of the renowned PETER MUHLENBERG, who fought through the Revolutionary war with such memorable courage,—and one of the best types of Pennsylvania character. Mr. HIESTER has served with distinction in the State Legislature, and is remembered with pleasure for his ability, courtesy, and gentlemanly bearing while a State Senator. A modest, able, and conscientious legislator, a sincere Democrat, and a perfectly upright man, he cannot fail to prove a most efficient and popular Secretary of the Commonwealth to our new Governor. We congratulate General PACKER upon this auspicious beginning of his Guberna torial career.

CHRISTMAS.

There is one occasion upon which, most happily, every Christian denomination may share a common sympathy, and rejoice in mutual joy. That is the annual recurrence of that memorable day when, taking our infirmities upon Him, the Son of God became incarnate, and commenced that human life, which he finally offered up as a sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. Wherever Revealed Religion has spread herself, with Civilization as her handmaid—wherever the blessed Gospel of Salvation is accepted—wherever Faith, Hope, and Charity have sprung up, under her holy influences—wherever the sinless example and the pure precepts of the Saviour, who took our nature upon Him, are held in respect and reverence, the Festival of Christmas is honored as an occasion not only for praise and prayer, but also for gratitude and joy. It is indeed, and in the fullest sense of the word, a holyday—variously celebrated, in different places, but always commemorated with genial as well as religious feelings.

It seems to have been so accepted, appointed, and celebrated from the very commencement of Christianity—from the time when, hunted down by persecution and martyred by pagan cruelty, the early believers in that faith worshipped by stealth, even in the catacombs of Rome, to the triumphal period when the Truth of such belief having conquered Doubt, the pomp and splendor of the Catholic Church were employed to celebrate, in the most magnificent manner, the Anniversary of Christmas. To this day, that Church particularly delights in honoring this great Festival. Most solemn and splendid is the ritual with which, at this especial season, she honorably and devotedly celebrates the earthly birth of the Redeemer. So has it been for centuries: the same, the unchanged.

In the other Christian Churches there is far less splendor, but certainly not less devotion and thanksgiving. For Christmas is accepted by all, as a season to be especially honored.

In Catholic countries, Christmas Day, once that the religious celebration is ended, is held as a joyful and genial holiday. In England, it is honored by public worship of God, and also by family and social gatherings around all the firesides in the land. On that day, at least, every man, woman, and child, has a good dinner. The inmates of the poor-houses are well fed, on that happy day; prisoners are also treated to an ample supply of better food than the usual hard diet which is allotted to Sin where it finds its penalty in Captivity. Public and private charities abound on this day, and an universal feeling of home enjoyment covers the land from palace to cottage, almost like a visible atmosphere. In city and in country it is a close holiday in one respect—business is suspended, and theatrical performances are wholly suspended on that evening. But there is no ascetic celebration any where. Dance, song, merriment, good cheer, and innocent sociality prevail. Forfeits greatly circulate. Round games are in request. And, above all, the mistletoe hangs suspended from the ceiling, inviting eager swains and not reluctant damsels to stand under it and give and take the expected kiss.

What Christmas is in English country places may be gathered from DICKENS, who, in his sketch of Pickwickian and other performances at Dingley Dell, on that happy holiday, has given a lively and faithful picture of the present mode of welcoming old Christmas. What Christmas was, may be found in WASHINGTON IRVING'S Sketch Book. He describes Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with the Yule log and Christmas candles, and the kiss under the mistletoe, as follows:

"Then the great room of the castle was cleared for the dance. The ancient tapestry was rolled up, and the musicians placed in a gallery at the end of the hall. The Baronet led out the first dance, a venerable minuet, in which he figured with a middle aged lady, who, I was informed, was a distant relative, and the heiress of the family. The rest of the company then formed themselves into a long country dance, headed by the younger branches of the family. The Squire was a jolly, old bachelor, who had evidently been a gay cavalier in his youth, and was still a lover of the ladies. He was, therefore, in his element, bustling about, and ready to dance with every lady, young and old, but more especially with the ladies who were the most ancient and most solitary. He was, in fact, a kind of Sir Roger de Coverly, and I was in hopes that we should have a country dance, in which I might see the whole of his manor, but I was disappointed. Perhaps it was just as well, for I was but a lukewarm spectator, and, to tell the truth, I was a little jealous of the Squire's attentions to the ladies, and should have been vexed to see him dance with any one but my mistress. I was, however, well repaid for my complaisance, when I was presented to her as the partner with whom I was to open the dance. I felt a thrill of pride on leading out such a partner, and we did ample justice to the music. We had been well drilled by the Squire, who was a cunning dancer, and had been a gallant in his time, and we had the satisfaction of being pronounced by the Squire and his partner, the best dancers in the room. We danced a Scotch reel, to the great astonishment of the Scotch gardener, who, it seems, had never before found anybody in the neighborhood who could dance it, and who had, moreover, been in great doubt whether any one here could even play the music. We concluded the ceremony with a country dance, in which the Squire and his partner led off the whole company, to the great satisfaction of the tenantry, who had crowded into the hall to look on, and who, I doubt not, will long remember the festivities of their landlord's daughter.

"Supper was served up about midnight, in the great baronial hall, where a long table was spread with the substantials, and groaned with the venerable beverages, that formed the cheer of the olden time. The Squire, as he sat at the head of his table, with the ruddy glow of the wassail bowl upon his countenance, and surrounded by his ruddy guests and children, and dependants, and tenantry, was a worthy representative of the old English country gentleman, such as we read of in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and such as we flatter himself, there still exist in the remote counties, but who, alas! are not to be met with in these times of ours, except, perhaps, in some of the most secluded and old fashioned parts of England. The Squire, however, is but little versed in the fashions of the times, and lives so much in the olden time, that he is almost a stranger to the present. He is a great admirer of the ancient English writers, and has a library chiefly composed of their works, which he has been all his life collecting. He is, moreover, a great admirer of the old English country life, and of the old English country gentlemen, of which last he is a specimen. He laments the degeneracy of the times, and the degeneracy of his tenantry, who, he assures us, are not what their fathers were, who used to be the stay and support of their landlords in the days of adversity, who would have shed their blood in their defence, and who, at all events, would have thrown a bumper of their ale to their health, and drunk to their prosperity, on every Christmas Eve, for time immemorial. The first, which is the evident growth of the religious sentiment of the occasion, is that family differences and failings out of friends, unless more than usually serious, are generally made up about this time. A second peculiarity of the season, which greatly endears it to young people, is the circulation of Christmas boxes. In England, these gifts are very numerous. So on the Continent—except that, in France, they are kept back until New Year's Day, there commonly called *le jour de l'an*. In Germany, however, the Christmas custom of making presents is much more prevalent than in any other place—except the United States. From Germany, in particular, comes the Christmas tree, hung all round with gifts of all sorts, interspersed with crowds of small tapers, which illuminate the tree, and excite general admiration. German, also, is the legend of St. Nicholas, (contracted in this country into Santa Claus,) the munificent donor of toys, books, *et cetera*, to children of all sorts and sizes. German, too, is the custom of hanging up a child's stocking on Christmas Eve, the owner's full faith that good Santa Claus will plenish it with toys being rarely unfulfilled.

We need scarcely do more than hint that one inevitable and pleasant result of Christmas social enjoyments, is the extent to which love-making is practised, followed, of course, by a vast increase in marriages. The truth of this may be tested by reference to church registers, which will show more matrimonial entries in the commencement of the year than at any other time, except in particular localities.

In this country, as might be expected from our mixed population, each nationality bringing over many of its own customs, which gradually amalgamate with others, we have a sort of mixed or composite manner of celebrating Christmas. Like the English, we have our stores closed, and the customary celebration of divine worship in the different churches; but here we stop, for our theatres and such places of public amusement are opened on this day, (usually in the afternoon as well as at night,) and are well attended. We have something, but not very much, of the English Christmas family dinners, where two or three generations often meet at the same social board. We have the roast-beef, plum pudding, and mince pie, with the addition of turkeys of a stupendous size, wholly unknown to John Bull. We are naturalizing the Christmas tree, and we long have been under the protection of the good and bountiful Santa Claus, the gift-bearer, who delights to scatter presents for good boys and girls, greatly to the advantage of the gift-venders.

Such is Christmas—so is it celebrated and honored in various climes. It is a cheering thought that, upon this day, all over the world, prayers of thankfulness to the Giver of all Good will arise from the hearts and lips of millions upon millions of Christians who, whatever their differences on points of doctrine and discipline, unite in the same undoubted and unwavering belief in the gracious mercy of Him, who descended into our humanity, "that he might save our souls alive." This is a consoling thought, and we ought to rejoice in it. Meanwhile, with all sincerity of heart, we wish to all "a Happy Christmas and a merry New Year."

POSTAL MONEY-ORDERS.

Postmaster General BROWN, in his recent report, informs us that last winter his predecessor in office submitted to Congress a plan by which he considered that a system of postal money-orders might be safely engrafted upon our present post office arrangements. This is good news, even though the distinguished gentleman in question does not commit himself in favor of such a system, and we trust that the matter will not be allowed to slumber until it is resolutely pushed through. That its introduction is environed with difficulties is easily seen, and we do not wonder that the Department has always objected to it. The man who undertakes to perfect the details of such a plan, and to carry them into practical effect, will have a task to try the clearest head and the most dogged industry; but it must come, and intelligent ambition should be glad of the opportunity of thus distinguishing itself.

The insecurity attendant upon the transmission of valuable letters through the mails is yearly becoming greater. The causes of this may be found in the enormously expanding mail business of the country, and the utter impossibility of securing incorruptibility amid temptation on the part of every member in the vast array of postmasters, assistants, clerks, route-agents, railway officials, and carriers. The honest and earnest efforts of the heads of Department to fulfil their onerous duties to the public satisfaction, are rendered nugatory by the opportunities afforded to dishonesty by the inherent defects of the present arrangements; and all business men prefer paying the heavy charges of the express companies on valuable matters to accessible points, on account of the responsibility as well as the security afforded by private enterprise.

It is scarcely worth while even to allude to the registry system. It was a well-meaning attempt, which has resulted in a miserable failure, and it may already be regarded as forgotten. Something, however, must be done, and that speedily. The business of the country is rapidly expanding, and constantly demanding new facilities for its unfettered transaction, while it is, in this respect, as constantly subject to increasing trammels. The vast circulation which our popular systems of education have given to the periodical press in its varied issues, daily, weekly, and monthly, has made it a matter of interest to every intelligent citizen of the Republic, and the people demand that the Government shall place itself on a level with the wants of the age, and recognise the necessities constantly arising in the progress of improvement. Congress has repeatedly shown its sense of the importance to a free and educated people of the prompt and unrestricted diffusion of information, by the liberal rates of postage assessed upon printed matter, and the exceptions made in favor of periodicals mailed to subscribers. Nevertheless, its servants commit depredations upon those periodicals with almost acknowledged impunity.

The principal objection to the money-order system arises from the pecuniary responsibility which it confers on postmasters, who may, in many instances, prove themselves unworthy of the trust. To this it may be replied that a moderate commission, which the people would gladly pay, would serve as a guarantee fund to protect the interests of the Department, while a portion of that commission reserved to postmasters would increase the inadequate pay of those officials—in return for which, security might be demanded from the incumbents, placing the Government out of the reach of risk. No one who has had any experience in the mailing of money-letters would hesitate to pay, for the safety thus afforded, a percentage which would shortly render this branch of the service a source of considerable revenue. Fraudulent issues for illegitimate purposes might be prevented by making the orders good at the office drawn against, for a limited time only. A check would thus be kept upon officials disposed to expand upon the public credit, by preventing the orders from becoming a paper currency useful for other purposes than prompt remittance.

Outside of the Department, the only opposition that we apprehend to the measure will arise from the banks. Interior institutions, whose profits are made by forcing their irresponsible paper upon the community, will naturally object to any improvement that deprives them of the benefits arising from sending their circulation to a distance, with the chances of being lost in transmission, of being kept out for a length of time, or of being bought up at a heavy discount by their agents in the commercial centres. The interested opposition of these concerns will doubtless be brought to bear vigorously against the system, and will prove to be the most formidable difficulty to be encountered. Of course, however, the measure should not be allowed to interfere with legitimate banking and dealing in exchange, and this could readily be accomplished by limiting orders to sums under twenty-five dollars.

The recent movement, so rapidly acquiring consistence, to restrict issues of bank paper to amounts larger than our coins, will, if successful, render money-orders indispensable to the convenience of the public, and many of the objections to this purification of our currency would be removed by the adoption of the system.

It has scarcely seemed worth while to allude to the well-known eminent success which has attended the introduction of money-orders in the English post office, where the plan has worked for many years to the great satisfaction of the people; but we cannot conclude without calling attention to the vast benefit which would arise from the removal of temptation from those having access to the mails. What, for instance, would have been the inducement to TUCKERMAN to commit his gigantic robberies, if he had had in view only the possibility of obtaining un-negotiable drafts and money-orders that could only be cashed by the parties in whose favor they were drawn? During the last fiscal year the Department spent over $65,000 in endeavors, for the most part unavailing, to ferret out depredations. With a system of money-orders the saving on this point alone would more than pay all the expenses of the arrangement—honest men would no longer incur unjust suspicion, defaulters would at once be detected, and their sureties made to pay, and the result of the measure would be an immense convenience to the public, a steady revenue to the Department, and a removal of the heavy disgrace which the insecurity of the mails now inflicts upon the national character.

A POLITICAL CHRISTMAS GIFT.

[From the Newton (N. J.) Herald, Morris R. Hamilton, Editor.]

WHO ARE TRUE DEMOCRATS?—As the Washington *Union*, the Richmond *South*, the New York *News*, and some other prominent journals, have assumed the prerogative of "reading out of the party" all those who do not agree with them, in their mad onslaught on Democratic principles, it becomes us to inquire "who are true Democrats?" According to our own homespun, country notion, a true Democrat is one who adheres firmly to the doctrines of the party, as announced in the resolutions of our conventions, the speeches of our leaders, the columns of our presses, and the measures of our representatives. Let us apply this, as a test of position in the present crisis.

We—and when we say "we," it includes such noble champions as Douglas and Walker, who have never faltered, almost the whole Democratic press of Pennsylvania, the entire Democratic press of Illinois, every Democratic paper in Iowa, except the Dubuque *Northwest*, every Democratic paper in Wisconsin, and in Michigan and Indiana, and Ohio; the leading Democratic papers of Missouri, Kentucky, and Virginia, and nearly the entire Democratic press of New Jersey; we are all pronounced traitors to the party, because we adhere to the following landmarks:

1st. "It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the *people thereof* PERFECTLY FREE to *form* and *regulate* their *domestic institutions* in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."—*Nebraska Act.*

2d. "*Resolved*, That the Democrats of New Jersey do unhesitatingly declare their approval of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which restores to the *people* of the territories the right to determine upon their own *local institutions*, without the assumed authority of Congressional legislation."—*Res. N. J. Dem. Convention.*

3d. "*Resolved*, That we recognize the right of the people of all the Territories, including Kansas and Nebraska, acting *through the fairly-expressed will of the majority of actual residents*, and whenever the number of their inhabitants justifies it, to *form a Constitution* with or without domestic slavery, and to be admitted into the Union upon terms of perfect equality with the other States."—*Cincinnati Platform.*

4th. "It is the imperative and indispensable duty of the Government of the United States to secure to every resident inhabitant the free and independent expression of his opinion *by his vote. This sacred right of each individual must be preserved*; and that being accomplished, nothing can be fairer than to leave the people of a Territory, free from all foreign interference to *decide their own destiny* for themselves, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."—*Buchanan's Inaugural.*

5th. "When such a Constitution shall be submitted to the people of this Territory, they must be protected in the exercise of their right of voting *for or against that instrument*, and the fair expression of the popular will must not be interrupted by fraud or violence."—*Instructions to Mr. Walker.*

6th. "Under these circumstances there can be no such thing as ascertaining clearly, and without doubt, the will of the people in any way except their own direct expression *at the polls*. *A Constitution not subject to that test*, no matter what its points, would never be acknowledged by his opponents to be anything but a fraud.—*Washington Union, July 7, 1857.*

7th. "I understand that you and all your Cabinet cordially concur in the opinion expressed by you, that the actual bona fide resident of the Territory of Kansas, by a fair and regular vote, unaffected by fraud or violence, MUST *be permitted in adopting their State Constitution, to decide for themselves what shall be their social institutions.* I contemplate a peaceful settlement of this question by an appeal to the patriotism of the whole people of Kansas *who should all participate, freely and fully*, in this election, and by a majority of those votes the Constitution must be made, as the only proper and Constitutional mode of adjustment."—*Walker's Letter of Acceptance.*

8th. "I repeat, then, as my earnest conviction, that unless the Constitution submitted for ratification to the vote of all the actual resident settlers of Kansas, and the election be fairly and justly conducted, the Constitution *will and ought to be rejected by Congress*."—*Walker's first speech in Kansas.*

9th. "A Constitution wisely framed and properly, fairly and honestly *approved by the true citizens of Kansas*, will settle the Kansas question that surround us, and that have been surrounding us, and will at once restore harmony to the Union." The high and responsible duty, therefore, devolves upon us to take in our hands the organic act of this Territory, and, acting upon its principles, to present to the Congress of the United States a Constitution framed in such a manner, and *having such an endorsement* as that we may not merely petition for admission to the Union, but demand that we shall be admitted.—*Address of Calhoun to the Kansas Constitutional Convention.*

10th. "I trust, however, the example set by the last Congress, requiring the admission of Minnesota 'should be subject to the approval and ratification of the people of the proposed State,' may be followed on future occasions. I took it for granted that the convention of Minnesota would act in accordance with this example, founded, as it is, on correct principles, and hence my instructions to Governor Walker, in favor of submitting the Constitution to the people, were expressed in general, unqualified terms."—*Buchanan's Message.*

BY MIDNIGHT MAIL.

FROM WASHINGTON.

Despatch Offices in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston to be Abolished—Negotiations between the United States and Great Britain—Utah Question—Kansas Affairs, &c., &c.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, 1857.

I learn from the highest authority that the Postmaster General will, under the authority given him by the acts of 3d March, 1845, and 3d March, 1851, declare the streets of Philadelphia, New York, and Boston post routes. This proclamation, it will be at once perceived aims to abolish the various penny-post offices in those cities under the control of private individuals.

It is said in support of this measure that it will ultimately have the effect to reduce the charge for city delivery of mailed letters from two cents to one. There is no charge, under the system of sub-offices recently established, for taking letters to the main office, whereas the despatch companies charge one cent for this service.

The negotiations between the United States and England in regard to Central American affairs, are at a stand-still. Orators in Parliament, the London *Times*, and the other British ministerial press, and Palmerston himself, in *words*, express their willingness that the United States should have in the affairs of neighboring States the superior weight of influence to which she is entitled by her position amongst the nations of the earth, but more especially by their contiguity and power for good or evil over her commercial and national interests.

But the British Government do not net up to their fine expressions of good-will. General Cass says, "Well, Lord Napier, neither the United States nor England desires possessions in Central America, and why not abrogate all that has been done previously, and say so in a few plain words in a new treaty." "Ah!" replies the wily diplomat, and then he goes off into the old story about Honduras and the Bay Islands.

The truth is that Great Britain endeavors to secure a foothold in Central America, and I know that the Administration are fully satisfied of this fact, and determined also to prevent it. The treaty with Nicaragua was one step in that direction, and the further proper steps will be taken in due time, I am confident, to wipe out every vestige of English claim there, and inaugurate upon a sure basis a healthy and just American policy, the animating principle of which will be that so celebrated under the name of the Monroe doctrine.

Lieut. General Scott has been ordered here to confer with the Cabinet upon Utah affairs. In opposition somewhat to his opinion as expressed when transmitting Col. Johnston's despatches, the Administration are at this time inclined to favor an expedition of volunteers from the Pacific slope against Brigham Young.

This seems to be a pet measure with Californians, and indeed with many officers of the Army who are acquainted with the country to be traversed. It is said that the dry season commences in April, and that the hardy miners of that region will then be unemployed; that they are, by their mode of life, inured to perils and hardships, and would make the most efficient force which could be assembled for the character of service required, and that they could be mustered under army regulations, at a small cost to the Government.

This whole question, it is supposed, will be brought soon before Congress in a special message from the President, transmitting a report from the War Department.

General Denver's commission as Governor of Kansas was mailed to him, and it is stated in high quarters that the belief is that he has not yet received it.

Accessions are each day made to the ranks of the conservative Democrats who stand with Douglas, Walker and THE PRESS upon the platform of popular sovereignty. Even those who favored the Lecompton contrivance, from interest of one kind or another, begin to admit that a departure from principle in this instance has entailed the evil consequences which others saw were inevitable, and that after all Congress must pass promptly an enabling act. In view of the troubles now existing in the unfortunate Territory of Kansas, and the necessity of a speedy solution of a problem which has vexed our Government and people for four years, it is not improbable that Mr. Buchanan may arrive at the conclusion that, after all, a properly guarded Enabling Bill is the only sure measure of relief. There is no strong effort to bolster up the Lecompton Constitution; it is a pregnant fact that its warm supporters of a few days ago spoke not a word for, and will not depend on further developments.

The Treasurer's weekly statement furnishes us with the following important figures:

Amount on deposit	$8,271,453 83
Drafts drawn but not paid	2,553,803 98
Amount subject to draft	5,717,651 85
Reduction from last week	494,052 96
Receipts	472,036 95
Drafts paid	473,044 65
Drafts issued	967,351 61

I am informed that the treasury-notes recently authorized by Congress will be issued in about two weeks. The Secretary of the Treasury has determined that the denomination of these promises to pay shall be $100, $500, and $1,000.

The contract for engraving the plates has been given to Rawdon, Hatch, & Co., of New York, and to Toppan, Carpenter, & Co., of Philadelphia—the former firm having the execution of the notes of $100 and $500, and the latter the notes of $1,000.

The Secretary is very anxious that these notes shall be executed in the best style of American art.

X. Y.

THE LATEST NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

FURTHER FROM KANSAS.

Battle at Fort Scott—Five Pro-Slavery Men Killed.

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 24.—A Kansas letter received by the *Democrat* says that on the evening of the 16th inst., a battle occurred at Fort Scott between the pro-slavery and the free-State men, in which five of the former were killed, including Bleke Little, a member of the recent Lecompton Convention. Several were wounded on both sides, and twenty free-states were taken prisoners and confined in the fort. The difficulties grew out of Clark, said to be notorious as the murderer of Barber, two years since, going about accompanied by a sheriff's officer collecting taxes from the free-State men, seizing property in default of the payment of taxes, and making prosecutions under the Territorial rebellion law.

The Missourians are said to be assembled in strong force along the border, and mere fighting is apprehended.

The Territorial executive committee has issued a call for re-assembling of the delegate Convention, held at Lawrence on the 24 instant, to take place on the 23d, for the purpose of considering the best course to pursue in consequence of the Legislature having failed to submit the Topeka Constitution, along with the Lecompton Constitution, to a vote of the people.

Washington Affairs—The Treasury Notes—The Bombardment of Greytown.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.—A requisition has been made on the Treasury for $630,000, for the pay of members of Congress from the 4th of March last, under the joint resolution recently passed. Of this amount over $120,000 have already been disbursed in gold.

In addition to the Pawnee delegation of Indians, a delegation of the Poncahs, from Nebraska, have arrived, both on business with the President.

The President has issued a proclamation setting apart the 15th of February for taking the sense of the voters of the District of Columbia on the new code of laws.

The contracts for engraving the plates of the treasury notes have been made, and the latter will be issued in about two weeks. They will be of the denominations of one hundred, five hundred, and one thousand dollars.

The President, in reply to the resolution of the Senate, transmitted to that body the correspondence which took place nearly a year ago, in reference to the bombardment of Greytown. Count Sartiges, it appears, asked an indemnity for the actual losses sustained by French subjects, who, he says, found it physically impossible to remove their goods from the conflagration caused by the movements of the commander of the sloop of war Cyane. Mr. Marcy, in his reply, informed the Count that the President had not been able to find the right or even the equity upon which the reclamation can be sustained, and in a long despatch expounds to him the international law. Count Sartiges acknowledges its receipt and says he will not fail to send Mr. Marcy's communication to the French Government. No response to the letter is embraced in the documents. Although the resolution calling for the information included any correspondence with Great Britain, none was transmitted to the Senate.

Error in General Cass's Letter to Governor Walker Corrected.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.—The time allowed for copying General Cass's letter accepting the resignation of Governor Walker was so short that several errors were made. One sentence in particular should read:

"He (the President) never entertained nor expressed the opinion that the Convention were bound to submit any portion of the Constitution to the people except the question of slavery, much less that the other portion of the Constitution would be invalid without such a submission."

United States Supreme Court.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.—No. 46 of December Term, 1856.—Augustus Hernonway, claimant of ship Independence, *vs.* W. B. Fisher: Chief Justice Taney delivered the opinion of the court, overruling the motion for damages.

No. 1.—White, Stevens, & Co. *vs.* Paschal Roe's administrator. Judgment of the Supreme Court of the Eastern District of Louisiana affirmed, with costs.

No. 222.—The United States *vs.* James Noe. On motion the case was docketed and dismissed.

Adjourned to meet on Tuesday next.

The Georgia Banks.

MILLEDGEVILLE, Ga., Dec. 23.—On Tuesday night the Governor vetoed the act recently passed by the Legislature, providing for the legalization of the suspension of specie payments by the banks, but the bill was passed over the veto, by the Legislature, by a two-third vote.

Election Affray in Canada.

TORONTO, Dec. 24.—A serious affray occurred at the election held at Fergus to-day. One man was killed by a shot fired, and another was stabbed.

Markets.

CINCINNATI, Dec. 24.—Flour is unchanged; there is a moderate demand at $3.50 for good brands to superfine. Whiskey has declined to 25½ cents. Hogs are dull and rather lower; sellers are plenty but buyers few. The provision market continues dull, and declining; 300 Green Hams sold at 6½ cents, and 250 bbls of Lard at 8½ cents.

CHARLESTON, Dec. 23.—Cotton—Sales of 500 bales at 10a10½ cents.

SAVANNAH, Dec. 23.—Cotton—1,200 bales sold to-day at 9½a10½ for middling.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 23.—Sales of 10,500 bales of cotton to-day. Prices are irregular, and show a declining, holders pressing upon the market. Middlings are quoted at 9½a9¾. Sugar buoyant at 4½a4¾; fhour steady at $4.50a$4.60; corn declining—sales at 59c mass prk $14; lard in kegs $9. Other articles unchanged.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 24,—Sales of cotton to-day, 11,500 bales; prices continue irregular and nominal; sales at 9a9½. Sugar is irregular at 4½a5. Flour is dull at a decline of 5c. Yellow corn 65c. Sterling exchange 10¼a106. Exchange on New York ¼ discount.

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENTS.

The managers of the different places of public amusement appear to be "spreading themselves" on their Christmas entertainments.

"The Golden Horse," followed by a deadly lively farce called "John Jones," and the second scene from Cesare Cecchetti's new ballet of "L'Alloggio Militare," will be produced at the Academy of Music this evening. To-morrow, (the last night of the performance of the Ronzani Ballet troupe, and for their especial benefit,) "The Golden Horse" and the lively farce of "a Double-Bedded Room" will be played.

There will be an afternoon performance at Arch-street Theatre, this day. It will consist of three dramas. In the evening, the spectacle, founded on and named after Bulwer's "Last Days of Pompeii," which has not been played in this city for many years, will be performed. *Asbaces*, Mr. Davenport; *Sydon*, Mr. Wheatley; *Lydia*, the blind girl, *Mrs. Davenport*; and *Ione*, Miss Emma Taylor. A magnificent show is promised.

AT WALNUT-STREET THEATRE, there also will be afternoon as well as evening performances. A farce and la melo-drama at half-past two P. M. At night, two farces, and (for the first time) a new two-act "grand romantic mystic Legend" called "The King of the Mist, or the Miller of the Hartz Mountains."

AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE, (whence the quadrupeds have departed) the melo-drama of "Putnam," gymnastics, and the ballet pantomime of "Santa Claus." On Monday evening, those sterling performers, Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Conway, will appear here as *Camille* and *Armand*.

AT SANFORD'S, besides a variety of Ethiopian performances, with new dances by the Sanford Children, there will be presented a new pantomime, entitled the "Shoemaker of Kensington."

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM BOSTON.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

BOSTON, Dec. 16, 1857.

This, my first letter, will assure you that you are still held in lively remembrance. Flowers fade in their season, and then blossom again. Not so with true friendship, for that endures throughout all seasons.

Letters must always be a beginning to every thing; to mail, I, diffidently, make an attempt to send you an occasional epistle, in which will be expressed frank, and honest sentiments upon various topics, and a gist of such news, collected in this modern city of Athens, as may possibly be acceptable to yourself and readers.

We are now, all over the country, reaping the fruits the seeds of excess and luxury have garnered up for us; and if this harvest of bankruptcy was distributed alike amongst the cultivators of it, it would be well enough. But, alas! this is not so. The now motionless water-wheels, the silent spinning looms, and the general inactivity of business in all our workshops, tell us too plainly and truthfully of the real sufferers that must wait the abatement of the great financial storm which has been raging with such disastrous tempestuousness, before permanent relief can be afforded them.

The wailings of the distressed that will be heard from many a hungry and cheerless abode the present winter, are, indeed, such to contemplate. Those factory managers, stock jobbers, and others who have brought innocent victims to the brink of poverty, in order to enrich themselves—those who have lived in costly manner, and have not paid for, and who have revelled in luxury at the expense of defrauding honest tradesmen and mechanics out of their just dues, that they might for a while move in fashionable society—those banks that have been conducting their business to such a prodigal extent that they cannot guaranty to the poor holders of their rags a dollar to be worth a dollar, can ask themselves, the honest question, *what have we gained?*

And how have they answered the question? By going into genteel insolvency! The charters of all banks that suspend specie payment are virtually vitiated and annulled.

Our banks, with perhaps few exceptions, have been conducted recklessly, dishonorably, and entirely regardless of the wants of the hard-working and worthy portion of the community. In fact, they have proved nothing more nor less than speculative institutions for the sole profit of the directors. The bank directors have employed their capital especially for trading purposes, making money a merchantable article, and employing, under cover, street agents to take from the honest tradesmen all their profits, in stringent times, by forcing them to pay, in order to maintain their credit, ruinous and illegal rates of interest.

A merchantable article fluctuates in price accordingly to the wants of purchasers and the changes of the market; and that article may be bought at one price to-day, and at another to-morrow. Not so with bank bills when legitimately dealt out by chartered banks. They are a government chargeable rate fixed upon them when they are given to their respective customers for satisfactory paper. And when an officer of a bank employs the funds of that bank to violate the law, viz: to receive more interest than the law legally allows, he is a dishonest man, and amenable to the bar of justice. And yet, how numerous have been such cases! They have so often taken place in this old Puritan Commonwealth as to be a part of the country. This usurious interest is taken either by the way of circulation, or, as I have before indicated, through *street* agencies.

Now, in support of these last positions, and to show how little our banks adhere to the purposes for which are chartered, let me cite, in brief, a striking illustration. Here is a bank chartered in Brighton or Cambridge. The petitioners for this bank were, as is usual, the residents of the place. It is fair to suppose that their wants should be first supplied before yielding to *outside* temptations, for they are the home, life, and sinew of the place; and very reasonably expect that their own bank should first attend to their pecuniary wants, to advance the trade and prosperity in their different branches of business in their own locality, before accommodating *outsiders*. But, instead of applying its capital to these legitimate ends, the bank will, especially in stringent times, send packages of its bills into State street, and other places, there to be disposed of through *street* agencies, at illegal rates of interest, accompanied with a guarantee that the bills shall be disposed of in such a way as shall secure a *good circulation*. This is one mode officers of a bank adopt in appropriating its funds to illegal purposes; and another is, to allow their depositors to go begging during a stringent money market. Our bank directors and private money houses may have a right to negotiate bank bills as a merchantable article; but for regular chartered banking institutions to embark in such traffic, is disreputable, and cannot be too severely condemned by the honest trading community, to whose entire benefit their capital should be devoted. Until a radical change shall have taken place in our banking system—such as to require, beyond *any contingency*, to the holders of bills, their redemption, at *any* moment, with the legitimate coin of the realm (specie); to accommodate the honest tradesmen, farmers and mechanics with discounts, at lawful rates, and in preference to *outsiders* or men of wealth; every bank to be held to a strict accountability which allows a *fraction* of illegal interest to be taken for discounts; not to frown upon the hard-working mechanic who may appear in humble garb and apply for a small discount to enable him to facilitate his little business, but to remember that the mechanics are the bulwarks of our nation, and there is not a public structure in our broad land that does not bear unspeakable evidence of their skill, intelligence, and ingenuity;—until some such wholesome measures as these are inaugurated, banks will be of but very little value to the industrious portion of our common country.

Upon this subject of banks, which I have herein very feebly sketched, I write from personal experience, and after reading the following sentence in the splendid message of the President of the United States: "The existence of banks and the circulation of bank paper are so identified with the habits of our people, that they cannot at this time be suddenly abolished without producing immediate injury to the country. If we would confine them to their appropriate sphere, and prevent them from administering to the spirit of wild and reckless speculation by extravagant loans and issues, they might be continued with advantage to the public. But this I say after long and much reflection: If experience shall prove it to be impossible to confine the facilities which well regulated banks might afford, without at the same time suffering the calamities which the excesses of the banks have hitherto inflicted upon the country, it would then be far the lesser evil to deprive them altogether of the power to issue any paper currency and confine them to the functions of banks of deposite and discount."

In the election for Mayor of New Bedford, the 7th instant, Hon. A. H. Howland came within ten votes of an election over the Republican candidate. This is an unmistakable evidence of the great popularity of Mr. Howland, for, independent of *eight hundred and sixty* rank negro votes (many of them fugitives from justice,) out of about two thousand votes thrown, New Bedford is otherwise deeply imbued with Republicanism. As it is, I have been informed by parties that Mr. Howland would have been elected, but for certain members of his own party using most strenuous efforts to defeat him. This opposition emanated from the New Bedford custom house, who would seek to cast a blemish upon Mr. Howland's political reputation, for the furtherance of ungenerous aims.

There is not a more sound, reliable, and national Democrat in the country than Hon. A. H. Howland. From the beginning he was the