The Press

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1859.

FIRST PAGE.—The Ko-ton; To Texas and Back—No. 14; A Page of Natural History; Personal and Political. FOURTH PAGE—The Courts; Letter from Lake Superior; Marine Intelligence.

Medicine-dispensers.

Shutting the stable-door after the steed has been stolen is by no means an unusual operation. There is a way of acting, however, with a little variation, which makes quite a different process of it. That is to use *prevention* when it really can be of use. For example, a human life was sacrificed in this city, last week, through the ignorance, or carelessness, or blunder of a druggist's assistant, who, in making up a prescription, substituted Morphine, which is poisonous, for Quinine, which is harmless. This, however unfortunate, cannot be considered other than an accident, fatal and not blameable; but the one thing wanted now is to take a lesson from it, and to provide means against its recurrence. Such accidents ought to be guarded against—ought to be prevented; and they may be, almost positively.

It is no exaggeration to say that deaths from mistakes in compounding or administration of medicine are more numerous than the public generally believe. The compounding of a prescription, the dispensing of the medicine, (compound or single,) is the department of the Druggist in this country—where such a grade in the medical profession as the Apothecary really does not exist. *Here*, whoever pleases may open a drug store, and compound and sell medicine, *ad libitum*, without the slightest check or control. In most parts of Europe, on the contrary, the sale of medicines and the making up of prescriptions is restricted to a class who have regularly been taught how to do it, and have been tested by a severe examination as to their knowledge of pharmacy.

In England, prior to 1812, any and every person could perform the duties of an apothecary. In that year, *the Apothecaries' Company* was elevated above ordinary commercial confederations by receiving a Royal Charter of incorporation, which gave the power regulating the education, ascertaining the knowledge, and regulating the duty of those whom it admitted, under the name of Licentiates. Thirty-nine out of every forty medical men in England are what is called "general practitioners"—attending the sick and prescribing for them as Doctors, and making up and dispensing the medicines as Apothecaries. In fact, nearly every English surgeon is also a licentiate of the Apothecaries' Hall, after submitting to a very severe examination, and, on the license thus obtained, administers medicines to his patients.

In Ireland, as far back as 1796, when that country had its own Parliament, a statute was passed incorporating the Apothecaries into a regular School or College of Pharmacy. This was done in a manner much more complete than that adopted in England, sixteen years later. For example, the Irish Apothecaries' Act provided that, before a lad should be apprenticed to learn the business of an Apothecary, he should be subjected to an examination as to his knowledge in Latin and Greek—the former being the language in which prescriptions are written. The test was not too severe, generally going only as far as the ability to translate a few passages, taken at hap-hazard, from Virgil and the Greek Testament. This was sufficient, at any rate, to enable him to do a great deal more than guess out the meaning of the labels upon the bottles, drawers, and gallipot in the apothecary's shop. At the end of seven years (the term of apprenticeship fixed by the law) the apprentice has to place himself, with his first certificate of education, and his indentures duly endorsed by his late master, before an Examining Council of Apothecaries in Dublin, who ascertain his knowledge of pharmacy, and give him either a diploma as full Apothecary, or a minor one to practice as Assistant, or, from deficiency in knowledge, send him back to improve himself before he again comes before them.

Another great advantage secured to Ireland by its Apothecaries' act was, that it became illegal, and punishable with a heavy fine, one half of which goes to the informer, for any *druggist* to carry on the business of an *apothecary*. That is, though the druggist might sell simple drugs, wholesale or retail, he is liable to a heavy fine, if not also being a regularly educated, examined, and licensed apothecary, he presumed to compound a prescription. In England, on the other hand, any person may sell drugs, any person may mix and dispense medicines. The difference in the Irish and the English systems leads, then, to these several results: In Ireland there is no such thing as a prescription being made up by any but a regularly educated and duly accredited person; while in England, though the apothecary is as well educated as in Ireland, any person not an apothecary may make up prescriptions. Hence such things as poisoning by accident, which are uncommonly rare in Ireland, are of frequent recurrence in England, which really has as little check, even with its chartered Apothecaries' Company, as Pennsylvania has without it.

In Continental Europe, since the middle ages, the apothecaries have been organized as a privileged body, and duly regulated by law. In France, this body, lately reconstructed, as the corporation of *pharmaciens*, are situated exactly like their fellows in Ireland, and have the exclusive privilege of preparing medicines and making up prescriptions, without any legal right to practice as physicians. It is just the same in Germany, where the *apotheker* alone mixes medicines, and where death, from ignorance in preparing them, scarcely ever occurs.

In this country, the Legislature of each State has a plain course to pursue. It must legalize means by which those who dispense medicines shall be thoroughly instructed in a knowledge of their qualities and effects, and whereby every person who opens a *corner* shop, with blue and red, and yellow bottles in the window, shall not be allowed to dispense medicines unless the public have undeniable legal assurance that he knows what he is about.

The first step is to have no ignorant person selling medicines. The next is to take care that each apprentice and assistant has a certain amount of education to start with. We have a College of Pharmacy here—its powers might easily be extended so as to become an examining and governing body for the profession.

Physicians themselves, it may be added, can do a great deal towards preventing per-adventure deaths by mistakes at the druggists. Every prescription should be plainly written—so distinctly indeed, that no fatality can reasonably occur from the druggist mistaking one word for another. Ignorant persons protest against the use of what they call "Latin gibberish" in physicians' prescriptions. They do so because they *are ignorant*. The Latin language is employed in designating the ingredients to be used, because the Latin names for medicines and chemicals are the same, or nearly so, in the United States and in Europe, whereas the vernacular name differs for each nation—nay, sometimes for each State and Province. Besides, Latin professional terms are concise and definite. The part of the prescription which indicates to the dispenser the names and qualities of the medicines, and the manner in which they should be mixed, is always written in Latin. The directions for the patient, (how, when, and in what quantities to take or apply the medicine,) are always in English, because they are intended for the use of the patient and his attendant. As for the abbreviations in prescriptions, they should be charily used as regards the active ingredients: yet abbreviations, of which there are about three hundred, are found very useful. Legibility is the great point. It is as necessary for a medical man to write legibly as to see distinctly. RUFUS CHOATE, who wrote an execrable scrawl, could never have been a physician—unless he had some one else to write his prescriptions.

We should be glad to know that the facts which we have here stated and the hints which we have thrown out may induce influential persons to take efficient steps for preventing death by mistakes in druggists' shops. It can be done, and it *ought* to be.

THE GREAT WOOL-SALE.—To-morrow, punctually at noon, Messrs. Thomas will submit to public competition a peremptory sale of wool, at their auction rooms, South Fourth street. The quantity and high qualities of this wool are very considerable, and the sale will be without reserve. Some of the single lots weigh 8,000 pounds. This is by far the most important and varied first-class wool sale we have had in this city for years, and takes place in the lower auction rooms. It is by order of Messrs. Thomas Hilsen & Co.

Slavery, in the Government of the Union.

The elements of domestic discord which have been at work among us during the last seventy years may be divided into two great classes—those which have sectional interests and sentiments for their support, and those which have no sectional or geographic bearings or involvements. All that are strictly of the latter class are settled and disposed of—they are such as the National Bank question; the internal improvement system; the fiscal agency of the Federal Government; and the acquisition of contiguous territory, by purchase or otherwise, from independent nations. Between the inauguration of JEFFERSON and the retirement of JACKSON, all questions of this class received their final settlement. But the troubles and disputes of the geographic class are all upon us now, in all their force. Since the date of the Missouri Compromise, the quarrels of the latitudes have been settled and opened, quieted and revived, like so many ague fits and intermissions, till they have grown chronic and proportionately inveterate. Just now, they are all in the field, with all their accompaniments and threatenings, in their fullest possible array. The worst thing in the subsisting controversy is, that it is a strife of policies which grow out of the characters and institutions of the antagonist parties, and that it has every ingredient in it which enters into the wars of hostile civilizations, except the religious element. Happily, and most hopefully for the issue, there is nothing of the diabolism of religious rancor in it. It is bad enough as a question of North and South, progressivism and conservatism, without the mixture of heaven and hell in the fight. From that horror of horrors the nineteenth century is well relieved, and this world's strifes have got leave to be settled or fought out by the forces which really belong to it, and must at last determine its destiny. Wars of faiths have been displaced by wars of interests, and reason and experience are admitted as legitimate rulers of national and social conduct. So, there is hope at the bottom of this pandora-box, and the future, however dark and doubtful, may be looked at without despair.

Under the happy influence of our confederate system, all the questions that are in their nature wholly distinct and separate from the negro question are safely put to rest, but this fountain of mischief has of late grown into such magnitude that it bids fair either to swallow up all other interests or draw them into its train, and employ them in its service. The political majority of the North for some years has effectively merged all its issues in this one; for, whatever prominence it has given to economical questions, and other governmental movements, they have been in effect subordinated to the anti-slavery sentiment; and the South seems lately to have cast aside all policies and principles which could not be pressed into the service of her domestic institution, until at last the struggle upon the ground of difference has risen to the stature of an "irrepressible conflict," and the object of the strife is declared to be "all slave States or all free States;" and this mutual invasion of opinion has actually taken the shape of an invasion of Kansas by the guerillas of the one party, and of Virginia by those of the other. The violence of force has given expression to the violence of sentiment, and the zealots of both parties are arrayed against each other in the spirit of civil war.

The time for wiser counsels and better conduct has fully arrived, and we are happy to believe that the felt necessity will bring with it the required action. We are even as well convinced that the remedy is already in promising operation, and that it will in due time work its way to the adjustment of the differences and the pacification of the parties engaged in the strife. The principles of the Federal Constitution, carried out in a conformable policy by the National Administration, are entirely adequate to the happiest settlement of all this trouble. There may be discord between the States, but there cannot be a dissolution of the Union. Its permanency does not rest simply in the consent of its members, and their passions and caprices cannot destroy it. There is an inherent force in a highest and best policy which compels its adoption and maintenance; for, if human wisdom is not quite perfect, so human folly and wickedness are also limited. The unreasoning instincts of birds and beasts oblige them to adopt the best order of their social existence, and there is a proper power in motives which men cannot altogether disobey. The rational conviction and the happy experience of the benefits and blessings of the Federal Union are ample securities for its indefinite continuance. The absurdity, the virtual impossibility, of a severance of the Union stands out in the obvious fact that a dissolution could really make no change in the relations of the sister States, which would relieve or remove any of the complaints against the common Government. Under the Constitution not one of the States can interfere with the concerns of another, more, or even as much as it could or would if the Federal bond were broken; and no one of them is any more responsible for the institutions of another than if that other were a foreign, or even a hostile, State. Burn the Constitution and sink Washington city into a Virginia township, the States will stand to each other just as they stand now. This point is not sufficiently understood. It is by some supposed that the powers granted to the Federal Government are surrenderings of State sovereignty in exchange for the advantages of political union. An intelligent examination will show that nothing is given up by the compact which would not necessarily be put upon the same or a similar basis by treaty between any separate and independent States lying in each other's vicinity. The German Kingdoms and States are just as much compelled by the sympathies, interests, and necessities of contiguity to "guaranty to each other their respective forms of government, to protect each other from invasion, and, on application of the Legislature or Executive, against domestic violence," as we are by the fourth section of the fourth article.

So far as internal order and institutions are concerned, no change can be made to exempt from interference, or to relieve from responsibility, any party to the compact; for it nowhere touches in any degree the independence or separateness of any State which its uncompromised individuality and sovereignty could maintain in the midst of surrounding Commonwealths. The Germanic Diet embraces thirty-nine or forty sovereignties, ranging in rank and power from Austria, Russia, Saxony, Bavaria and Hanover, down to Lubeck, Bremen and Hamburg, and from populations of twelve millions down to five hundred. States as diverse in magnitude as New York and Rhode Island, but being conterminous, and kindred in blood and interest, they are of necessity *United States*, to the extent required for preserving the external and internal security of Germany, as well as the independence and safety of its particular States. The economical policy of the most of the States belonging to the Diet is as closely united by the operation of the Prussian League, or Zoll-verein, as our several States are by the Constitution which gives Congress the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and to lay and collect duties and imposts upon importations. There is nothing in our Union beyond that which was and is inevitable that can in any wise affect the question over which we are now quarreling. Nothing, at least, in the bond of connection between the *States* which constitute it; for the Constitution, rightly interpreted by its intention, its provisions, and practical uses, turns out to be nothing but a permanent treaty of amity between sovereignties; and there can scarcely arise the least risk of conflict or dispute about its construction or application now, since the first class of questions, of which we have spoken, has been disposed of, if it were not for the joint management of the Territories committed to the General Government by the Federal compact.

It is here that the consciences and interests of the respective parties get entangled, and here lies the only open ground for dispute and difference. Let us look at the state of the case as it stands compressed within these limits.

The unsettled regions claimed by Virginia, Georgia, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, North Carolina, and South Carolina, at the time the Confederacy was formed, were surrendered to the use of the Union, partly because of the difficulty of governing and retaining them, partly on account of the uncertainty of title by which they held them, and largely, no doubt, for the sake of removing the jealousy and fears of the other States, and equalizing the burden of the war debt upon all the States. Whatever the motives may have been that induced the surrender, it is plain enough that there could be no sound policy in *retaining them*, and they became of necessity open to the settlement and occupancy of the industrious adventurers who should give these wild lands all their value, and of right frame the institutions that must govern them. Other Territories have since been acquired—that is, the titles of other claimants have been extinguished, and as Federal domain, have been in like manner thrown open to the only true title—that of occupancy and improvement. For there is nothing in the ownership of a wilderness by a Government, however derived, that can take away the original right of the labor which subdues it, to hold it as property, and exercise political domain over it. And if there were any such legal or prerogative right, it could not, in this country, be enforced, nor could its violation be remedied. Could Virginia hold and govern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, by right of a royal charter? Could Georgia maintain her pretence to all the lands lying west of her "to the Mississippi or South Sea," by gift of a King whose sovereignty over them had to be wrenched from him by the common blood and treasure of the united colonies in arms? What then becomes of the title of the several States to these Territories, either as property or as political provinces? There was nothing in it but a fiction of feudalism at first. The lands were free by divine charter, and their settlers are so by the same authority—free of Kings, and Colonies, and Congresses alike; and the only question that remains is, what are the common rights and responsibilities of the States in the Union, in respect to the chances of their settlement, and of the character of their institutions?

They are contiguous to the old States, and they must come into the Union; for, besides the provision of the Constitution, we cannot allow alien or hostile nations to grow up around us and in our midst. The laws that really govern civil societies are not conventional. Contracts may ratify, or they may slightly vary them, but they are founded in the nature of things, and are operative and absolute by their own proper power. Not because the nation holds some legal claim to the domain, nor even because the Constitution binds us "to guaranty to every State in this Union a republican form of Government," but because of the original right of every nation to protect itself, its institutions, and its peace and general welfare from the contagion and the aggressions of repugnant and hostile institutions, we hold any natural right of supervision and intervention in the affairs of our Territories; and, therefore, it is only to the extent that such natural rights are endangered that we are warranted in so interfering. All differences short of dangerous or destructive invasions of our own policy are entirely out of the range of our rightful interference. Their law of divorce, of intestacy, of enforcing the payment of debts, of common-school education, of parental authority, criminal punishment, or of chattel slavery, are no such invasions of our rights as can warrant interference, and especially, no differences in such things in their internal polity involves us in any moral or political responsibility. If Pennsylvania had nothing to do with slavery in Virginia, she has just as little in Texas; and if there was any reason why Virginia consented that her citizens should not hold their slaves as property in Pennsylvania at the time of the original compact, there is the same reason for allowing Kansas and Nebraska to deny the right now. So well grounded in reason and the nature of things is this right of every government to regulate its domestic concerns in its own way, that no power, however exerted, or in whatever circumstances, has ever, in the history of this country, been able to prevent a single State or Territory from doing just what it willed to do in the premises.

In respect to this question of slavery in the Territories, the parties at war about it will find, upon investigation, that the Union can neither be charged or credited with anything that has happened in this respect in any Territory which has entered the Union since its formation. The settlers of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and all west and northwest of them, could and would found nothing but free States; and those of Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, and all west and southwest of them, went into the Territories as slave-holders; they built the Territories into States on the same principle, and no force or influence of the Federal Government either had, or could have, a particle of influence upon the result in either case. It was not the ordinance of 1787 that banished slavery from the Northwest Territory, but the people, the climate, and the products, which did the same thing for Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise exposed Kansas to the even chance of slavery or freedom, and a strenuous effort was made to overrule and override the natural law of the case; but the Free-soilers have lost no inch of ground by the removal of the prohibition, nor will they ever in all time to come, for the very sufficient reason that they never gained an inch of ground anywhere by its existence upon the statute-book. They took possession, and they keep their hold of California, where there was no legal restriction, nor anti-slavery sentiment either, to guard the Territory; and they lost Texas just because the laws of nature were not in their favor there, although the laws of Congress interposed no hindrance whatever, any more than they did in California.

Whether we look to the Northwest Territory as balanced against the Louisiana and Florida purchases; to California, against whatever may happen to the rest of the Mexican conquest and the Texan annexation; or to all that must be free in all the Northwest region, bounded by the Pacific ocean and foreign dominions to the northward of us, against all that may, perchance, become slave territory in the South and Southwest of our extended and extending domain, will any one undertake to charge the Confederacy with mischief to either of the antagonist interests, which could have been prevented under it, or which would not as certainly have happened if no union of the States had been effected?

Unfortunately for the peace of the Union in after times, the ordinance of 1787 unadvisedly and unavailingly set the precedent of Congressional intervention in the domestic concerns of the Territories. The Congress of the Confederacy in that, the first exercise of a power which then, of course, had no constitutional authority, put the prohibition of domestic slavery, which nature and the will of the citizens legitimately ordained, into the form of a Congressional restriction, which in effect, and in fact, was no more than a gratuitous endorsement or sanction of a law, or rather a necessity which no act of Congress can either make or repeal. Subsequent Congresses following this example, have in long succession, and for like reasons, added similar restrictions, which had no necessity and no effect, in the organization of other Territories, with similar geographic and climatic conditions, and citizens governed by similar policy. But that the General Government never, even from the first, committed itself to any principle which could conflict in any case with the right of self-government by the people of the Territories in respect to the slavery question, is apparent from the fact that in 1791 Kentucky was admitted into the Union with slavery in her Constitution. Here was Territory not put under the restriction, which was ceded to us by the same State and the same deed that gave us the Northwest. An act for the organization of Tennessee, a Territory ceded by North Carolina, was passed on the 26th May, 1790, without the prohibitory clause. In 1804 the Territories of Louisiana and Missouri, formed out of the purchase made from France, were erected without the restriction, though the latter lay well up in the region dedicated to freedom by the ordinance of 1787. Alabama, part of the French purchase, was erected into a Territory in 1817, and admitted in 1819, without the restriction. Mississippi, ceded by South Carolina and Georgia, became a Territory, free from the restriction, in 1798, and in 1820 Missouri herself, although lying all above the line 36 deg. 30 min., was admitted into the Union in like manner. The voice of her own people prevailed against all the force of the precedent, and all the resistance its supporters could offer. The precedent lacked governmental principles; it had never obtained below a certain geographical line, nor above it either, in any contested case. The people north of that line made no objection to a merely gratuitous re-enactment by Congress of their own ordinances; and the States having an opposite policy and interest were under no temptation to resist a provision which was mere surplusage in the ordinances of Congress touching this subject in the States dedicated by the legitimate authorities to freedom.

But the North set the example of intervention in the case of Missouri, and failed; the South forgetting its own most solemn commitments, have followed it in the case of Kansas, and have failed.

Thus the principle of Popular Sovereignty, as applied to the Territories in the formation of their organic laws, is vindicated alike by reason, justice, and history. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the reversal of the precedent of restriction of 1787, was nothing but the expunging of a statutory authority which never had, or could have, any force for the purpose intended, and lay there only as a sanction for a dispute which could do nothing but mischief.

We had some reason, we think, to congratulate ourselves when this bone of contention was taken out of the way. We did not look upon it as a submission or a sacrifice to the adverse interest. Nor could we imagine that the party, or any formidable number of the party, which opposed it as an unwarranted intervention, would forthwith advocate an equally unwarranted and even more mischievous intervention of the Federal authority in their own behalf. As yet, this pretence of right to intrusion and independence, or mastery, in the Territories, is limited to the time previous to their admission into the Union as sovereign States, beyond which it is not asserted with any show of confidence. But until the right of eminent domain can be shown to include the government of the *inhabitants* of the national territory, or to exclude their government of themselves, the claim is clearly no better founded than if it were urged by the citizens of New York against the people and the polity of South Carolina. Anything that a State after admission into the Union may do, touching this question of slavery, it may do as a Territory before admission; for, it cannot be an invasion of any right reserved to the separate States of the Confederacy, and is clearly in the spirit, and within the provisions, of the compact.

The remedy, which we have spoken of in the beginning of this article as hopefully at work to settle the dispute as it relates to the organization of the Territories, the establishment of their institutions and laws, and the question of their admission into the Union, is the plain, simple, just, and inevitable one of allowing them to regulate all their institutions as the Constitution secures the right to the States, in their own way.

To-morrow we will give our views upon the slavery issue as it stands among us, outside of constitutions and local laws, but exceedingly and fearfully active in its operation upon the politics and peace of the nation.

Question of Authorship.

In reference to an article which has lately appeared in THE PRESS, touching the authorship of the Life of Mr. Buchanan, in Appleton's New American Cyclopædia, Mr. GRUND has addressed the following communication to this paper, which we publish on the principle of fair play:

I have just been shown *The Press* of the 11th instant, in which you refer to me as falsely claiming the authorship of the "Life of Mr. Buchanan," in Appleton's Encyclopædia. You then assert that the Hon. Judge Black is the author of it, and accompany that statement with some remarks injurious to my character. For this reason alone, I would now state, for your information, that I am the author of that article in Appleton's Encyclopædia, and that Judge Black never *did* claim its authorship, though it was ascribed to him by the publishers.

The Hon. Judge Black is so able a gentleman, and has a reputation so wide-spread, that it is no small flattery to me to have my poor essays pass for his own. It is no doubt the name of the supposed author of the article, and not its literary merit, which has won for it the favorable notice of the press, among which I include your own.

You will no doubt give this an insertion in *The Press*, of which I understand you are the literary editor and oblige, very respectfully, your obedient servant, FRANCIS J. GRUND.

Having thus given Mr. GRUND's positive statement, which is distinct and precise, we can only say that we were deceived by the published list in the Cyclopædia itself, which positively affiliated the biography upon Mr. BLACK. It is palpable that the Cyclopædia, which misled us, was itself misinformed, and its conductors have also to make the *amende* to Mr. GRUND.

Lecture by Dr. Mackenzie at Germantown last evening.

The third lecture of the course before the Young Men's Christian Association of Germantown was delivered in the Town Hall of Germantown last evening, the lecturer being Dr. R. Shelton Mackenzie, of this city, and his subject, "The Lights and Shades of Irish Character." The audience was unusually large, the hall having been almost filled. The lecturer appeared upon the platform, attended by the officers of the association, at 8 o'clock, and was greeted with applause.

The Doctor's introduction to his lecture was happily conceived, and was in itself no mean illustration of Irish humor, and was admirably calculated to prepare his hearers for the good things to come.

The lecture itself was in all respects what it professed to be—an artistic portraiture of Irish character, in which not only the light and dark shades, but all the finer and more subtle tints, were finely rendered. The key-note of Irish character was said to be *intensity*. While the nobler traits of that interesting people, whose antiquity was traced back fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, were dwelt upon, the less flattering characteristics were not overlooked. Thus, the lecturer felt bound, in honesty to admit that an Irishman was always happy in a row.

Several dramatic illustrations of the style of speaking of certain Irish worthies were given with admirable effect by the lecturer, and fairly "brought down the house." Speaking of the *religion* of the Irish, it was said to be with them as much a matter of affection as of faith. The discussion of their matrimonial proclivities was exceedingly humorous, and elicited much merriment.

The lecture was richly interspersed with illustrative anecdotes, and in keeping with its author's special prerogative, was no lessfull of witty glances *in parenthesis*. His instances of "Irish bulls" were most ludicrous, and constituted a telling feature of the lecture. His conclusion was a felicitous compliment to that feature in the American character which had made himself almost forgot that he was a native of a foreign land.

After the lecture, Dr. Mackenzie read his own celebrated legendary ballad of "Geraldine." It was read with much spirit, and constituted a fitting conclusion to the interesting evening's entertainment.

Death of John C. Rockafellow, Esq.

We regret to record the sudden death of John C. Rockafellow, which event occurred at Omits's Hotel, in Harrisburg, at eleven o'clock on Sunday night last. Mr. R. was, in his time, one of the most extensive railroad contractors in this country, having assisted in constructing the greater part of the leading public improvements in this State, as well as those of New York. Prior to his death he had a large contract in Virginia. The last work he engaged in in this State was the enlargement of the Union Canal. He was widely known as one of our most enterprising and influential citizens, and his sudden death will be mourned by a large circle of acquaintances, to whom he was endeared by his manly and noble qualities. He was unmarried, and about forty-seven years of age.

PICTORIAL JOURNALS.—From Callender & Co. we have the *Illustrated London News* of November 12th, and *Illustrated News of the World* of the same date. They were received on Saturday, and the omission in acknowledging them yesterday was entirely accidental.

LARGE SALE OF FURNITURE, PIANO-FORTES, CARPETS, &c.—This morning, at 914 Chestnut street, will be sold a large stock of superior cabinet furniture, part of the stock of a cabinet-maker declining business, also several first-class piano-fortes, household furniture of a family removing. T. Birch & Son, auctioneers. Sale to commence at ten o'clock, and to be continued in the evening.

VALUABLE STORES, HANDSOME AND PLAIN DWELLINGS, LARGE VACANT LOTS, STOCKS, &c.—Sales to-day, at twelve o'clock noon, and seven o'clock in the evening, by order of Orphans' Court, assignees, &c. See Thomas & Sons' advertisements and catalogues.

THE LARGE LOT OF WOOL to be sold to-morrow at Thomas & Sons' auction rooms is now open for examination, with catalogues. See advertisements.

INTERESTING LECTURE.—The second of the present annual course of free lectures before the Mechanics' Library and Literary Association, will be delivered this evening, by H. R. Warriner, Esq. The subject chosen by the gifted speaker is "Horolam." The last lecture before the Institute was delivered by John Goforth, Esq., on "Naples and its People." We have heard it spoken of in the highest terms of praise. The Institute, we are glad to observe, is in a thriving condition, and we trust to see it, if possible, even still more prosperous in the future.

FRATERNITY PROCEEDINGS.—The annual session of the Tau Omikron Fraternity will be held in this city on Holy Innocent's day next. This fraternity consists of young men throughout the Union, and delegates from nearly every State are expected to be in attendance. As the proceedings of all fraternities are secret, we, of course, cannot inform our readers what business will be brought before the fraternity, or the place where the session will be held.

THE WORK of tearing down the market sheds goes on rapidly. A few short days and they will be no more.

Letter from "Occasional."

[Correspondence of THE PRESS.]

WASHINGTON, November 28, 1859.

I am under obligations to you for a package of anonymous communications and several paragraphs from newspapers commenting upon and criticising this correspondence. When I began these letters I intended to render them as interesting as industry and some facilities for procuring information could make them. I anticipated not alone that they would furnish agreeable reading for the thousands who await and hail the daily appearance of *The Press*, but that they would be subjected to severe, and sometimes unjust, animadversion. My task, like yours, was to speak frankly on every great question, to expose the delinquencies of dishonest public servants, to ridicule where ridicule was appropriate, and to leave no topic untouched, great or small. Above all, I determined to apply myself to the vindication of the principles to which the Democratic party in common, North and South, had solemnly pledged itself. I feel flattered that, at this day, these effusions are copied more widely, and furnish more material for dispute and discussion, than the productions of most of the numerous scribes who illuminate the daily and weekly journals of this country, and now write from our political centre.

The Administration organs have attempted to hold a number of excellent persons responsible for my letters. They have sought to depreciate my statements, to criticise my style, and to show, in some instances, that I have not always written from Washington. Although, like others, I may have sometimes committed mistakes, and like more have not been so careful in the elegance of my rhetoric as if I had polished my paragraphs with lapidarian skill and care, yet, in the long run, I claim to have spoken mostly "by the book." Even now, in glancing over the volumes I have written, I think there is less carelessness than is usually observable in hastily prepared correspondence. Two of your anonymous commentators, however, and several newspapers, are exercised at what they call the inappropriateness of the *nom de plume* under which I write. They do not think that "Occasional" is exactly the title for letters that appear every day: I candidly admit the justice of this criticism; but you yourself are to blame. If you will remember, when I commenced to send you at intervals a short letter from Washington, I intended to write only now and then, and as the humor solved me; and accordingly I adopted the signature over which, for now nearly two years, I have filled so many columns of *The Press*. You will also recollect that I proposed taking another name, but whatever popularity this correspondence had acquired, you asserted had been acquired under the name of "Occasional," and, therefore, you insisted upon my retaining it. Besides, in looking over the lexicons, I find that the word "occasional" is susceptible of more than one meaning. It may be used to mean "incidental" letters, or "to indicate some special event." Richardson calls it "accident or incident," "opportunity," "seasonableness," "convenience," "concurrence," "urgency," and "exigency." Now, since I began to indulge my pen, I have found that there has been a series of "special events" transpiring at Washington, a series of "opportunities," and any number of "urgencies" and "exigencies." It has been so "convenient" to me to take note of these things, that from an "incidental" observer, I have become a daily chronicler of the times. There has not been a moment that subjects rare or exciting have not suggested themselves to my mind. Where others have failed to find material, I have gleaned enough to make whatever may have been sent to you by my hand agreeable to yourself and to your readers. I repeat that I do not claim to be infallible, and that I look for denunciation, invective, criticism, and censure.

"Some positive, persistent scribes, I know,
Think if once wrong I always will be so;
But when I gladly grant my errors past,
May I not make each day a *critique* on the last?"

Some surprise is occasioned by the tone of a number of the Virginia papers of all politics, in declaring their opinion that the rescue of John Brown and his associates will be attempted on Friday next. I do not believe such an event among the possibilities. When the Harper's Ferry affair broke upon the country like a thunderbolt from an unclouded sky, it touched a chord in the national heart that more than anything else was significant of the determination of the American people to frown down any and all attempts to invade the territory and assail the rights of the Southern States. The sentiment thus aroused broke the back of the incendiary spirit which then and there manifested itself; and I am sure that the fate of any body of men ambitious of running the fearful hazard of a rescue on Friday next, when the survivors of the affray are to be executed according to the Virginia law, will end in a catastrophe still more bloody than that which crowned their original work. Now, where do the Virginia papers get their authority for saying that any rescue is to be attempted? Nearly all the letters sent to Gov. Wise approising him of such a purpose, have been shown to be forgeries, and a succession of telegraphic despatches, couched in the same temper, have also been proved to be the grossest fabrications. Whether these forgeries and fabrications are the result of malignity, or whether they grow out of the too ready disposition to turn the whole of the excitement in Virginia into a vast joke, this much is certain, that the body of the Northern people continue to maintain the most friendly attitude towards their fellow-countrymen in the South; and my prediction is, that, notwithstanding all the prophecies of the Virginia newspapers, Friday, the 2d of December, will arrive, and the awful rites of the law will be executed upon Brown and his confederates without a human hand being raised in their defence. This effort on the part of these journals is, in my opinion, calculated to reflect more ridicule upon the people of the "Old Dominion" than anything that could emanate from the prolific pens of their distant, yet vigilant enemies, in the Northern States.

Hon. Carrol Spence, for nearly six years resident minister at Constantinople, has returned to his home in Maryland. His successor, Col. James Williams, of Tennessee, (a connection, I believe, of your excellent citizen, Colonel Wm. C. Patterson), has discharged the duties of the same post for more than a year past, and gives general satisfaction. Mr. Spence was always a devoted friend of Mr. Buchanan, and, I believe, was recalled at his own request. He has made one of the most efficient representatives of the American name and the American interests ever sent to the Orient. He brings back with him a vast amount of information. Present when Constantinople was a great depot of the allied armies during the war in the Crimea, and when many of the intrigues of the Austrians, French, English, and Russians were conducted in the Saracenic metropolis, he not only made many valuable acquaintances, but was frequently enabled to do justice to his own country, and to point to our peaceful progress as a happy contrast to the causeless conflicts carried on between three of the great European Powers. I remember well hearing poor Mike Walsh (whom you will recollect for his many noble qualities of head and heart, as well as for his disregard of the conventionalities of life), after his return from his most erratic tour to the field of war, on the shores of the Baltic, speak in terms of high admiration of the manner in which Carrol Spence maintained the dignity of his station amid all those troublous times. His house was neutral ground. Although, of course, no Russian was permitted to soil the sacred city with his footsteps during this warlike interval, yet it was no uncommon thing for the residence of the American embassy to be the meeting-place of citizens and travellers belonging to those nations who did not participate in the struggle, as well as for those who acted on the side of France and England. There might be seen the British and the Turkish officer, the Zouave and the Turco the Sardinian and the Irishman, meeting in friendly converse under the broad folds of the American flag. Among this motley company Mike Walsh was a welcome visiter, and if he only had employed his time on his return to the United States, he would have made a book of travels, with his rare powers of description, such as would have thrown into the shade most of those volumes which repose in ostentatious binding, covered with dust, on the groaning shelves of their unfortunate publishers.

The Charleston Convention will, it is now said be called early in April. On all hands it seems to be conceded that the opinion originally given in this correspondence, to the effect that Charleston might become unhealthy after the first of May, (an opinion violently antagonized at the time,) was correct, and prudent men in the Democratic ranks suggest that the sooner the Convention is held the better. You, of Pennsylvania, complain bitterly of the intolerance and despotism of the office-holding oligarchy in your State. You have only seen the beginning of the end, however. You hardly know the process that is now going on in the interior of your State. The appointments of deputy marshals to take the next census, which will be made early in the new year, are now being promised in every county in the north and west—constituting a source of power to the Administration which will be heavily drawn upon, and without hesitation. Some of these appointments are worth as much as eighteen hundred dollars, and others even a larger sum, and as the work can all be done within a comparative few months, this will make a bribe in itself well calculated to intoxicate the brains of needy men, and to neutralize the energies of those who, if left unfettered, would be glad to strike on the side of the right. I hope our friends in the different counties of Pennsylvania will keep their eyes upon the applicants for these places, and make a record of the promises that are now being made only to be broken. The expectation thus created, growing out of offers hinted or directly made, will account for the insane malevolence of many of the Administration editors, in your State and elsewhere.

It is in contemplation, however, to institute a rigid investigation into this new attempt to muzzle the free opinions of a free people, and those who have this patronage in their gift must take care, lest in their anxiety to serve their masters they do not embarrass themselves. To such an extent is the influence of the Federal Government being exercised that there is not a Northern and Western State in which precisely the same spirit of revolt that prevails in Pennsylvania does not exist. I have already referred to the oppressive and tyrannical system adopted and enforced in Illinois. Mr. Buchanan cared so little for the election of the Democratic candidate for Governor in New Jersey in the late November election, that when all the divisions of the Democratic party had harmonized upon General Wright, and upon a conservative platform recognising the pledge of that party, and its fundamental principles, he proceeded, in the midst of the canvass, to decapitate a number of influential Democrats, because of their supposed sympathies with Stephen A. Douglas, and thus appalled and paralyzed the whole column. In Ohio there is scarcely left a single monument of the magnanimity of the Administration towards the friends of Stephen A. Douglas. The blow aimed at Gray, of the Cleveland (Ohio) *Plaindealer*, has been followed up by the removal of the Hon. James J. Faran from the Cincinnati post office. If any man is retained in office in Ohio who is friendly to Douglas, it is only because some Administration member of Congress has interposed to save his head from the ready and reeking guillotine.

A gentleman from Massachusetts, now here, graphically describes the proceedings of the office-holders of the Federal Government in Boston. Collector Austin has carried his proscription so far that an almost universal protest, coming from the purest Democrats in the Bay State, has been made to Mr. Secretary Cobb, demanding of him to arrest his dependent before he extinguishes what little is left of the gallant Democracy of that State. Malice and revenge seem to be the inspiring emotions of his nature. He has set himself to work to dictate and control all the delegates from that State to the Charleston Convention. Men in office are threatened and warned of their fate if they dare to vote for any friend of Douglas; and notwithstanding he was badly beaten at the recent State Convention held at Worcester, as well in the organization as the election of general delegates to Charleston, he continues his career of ostracism in the several Congressional districts of the State. Violence and double-setting have resulted in more than one of these districts, and most of the custom-house officers who have refused to participate in this violence and double-setting have been removed. The course of the Collector in this respect has led to the protest to the Secretary of the Treasury to which I have referred. Among others who raise their hands and voices against the conduct of the Federal officials in Massachusetts, I am permitted to name the Hon. Benjamin F. Butler, the late Democratic candidate for Governor of that State. He and all the controlling men of the party in Massachusetts, including nearly all the delegates elected to Charleston, condemn the conduct of Collector Austin, and demand his emphatic rebuke by the proper department.

Have you ever looked over the roll of Democratic members of the last Congress from the free States, who either started out against Lecompton and fell by the way-side, or who took that dose at the beginning and died for their patriotism under the merciless fire of the people at the polls? The retrospect teaches two lessons: first, how treason to the right is rebuked by an indignant people; and second, how it is rewarded by a corrupt Administration. Let us begin in Pennsylvania. Henry M. Phillips, who "roared so loudly in the index" on your side of the question, and was defeated so badly by the people of his district, is compensated for his defection by being made the chief dictator of patronage in Pennsylvania, and is to be further honored by being sent to Charleston, (if the control of your Harrisburg Convention is cravenly surrendered to the office-holders,) as the main engineer in favor of a slave code for the Territories, and against Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois. Owen Jones, in the Montgomery district, is enough to do with. out office, but expects, with the aid of the marshal of your Eastern district, Mr. Yost, to go to Charleston on the same line. Glancy Jones, of Berks, who was so badly injured in the affectionate embrace of John Schwartz, of the same county, has been sent to the comfortable snuggery of minister