The Press.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1864.

The Foreign Policy of the United States.

Foreign intervention has been from the first the hope of the rebellion. The leaders of the South would never have dared this war had they not believed that European recognition would establish the independence of the Confederacy. This was for years the phantom that dismayed the Union. In the beginning of the war, when the energy of the South astonished the world, when we had no navy, when our army was mismanaged, when our campaigns had no results, when Europe laughed to scorn the idea of the conquest of the South, then the intervention of France or England was a perpetual threat. It was more; it was a danger. The policy of interference was discussed in the Imperial Cabinet; rebel agents had secret interviews with French Ministers. Every steamer brought rumors that our enemies were successful, and we sent back the news of the rout of Bull Run and the disastrous campaign of the Peninsula with anxety and fear. The apparent failure of the war for the Union invited interference, and was the main argument of our foes. What could Mr. DAYTON say at the Tuilleries or Mr. ADAMS at the Court of St. James? Not that we were crushing the rebellion, but that we would crush it. Our success was merely a prophecy, almost universally disbelieved. *Still, the European Governments did not interfere.* What prevented intervention? It was not slavery alone, for it is known that to gain England and France for allies the Confederacy would have nominally abolished slavery. It was not merely the danger of interference, for the powerful coalition of England, France, and the Confederacy, if it had been established in 1863, would have made the magnificent campaigns of 1864 impossible. Intervention was prevented by the masterly foreign policy of the Government of the United States—a policy never excelled in prudence, firmness, and fidelity to the American idea, and vindicated so thoroughly by its success, and the present proud and almost domineering attitude of the Union, that to question its wisdom is equivalent to the denial of our triumph.

It was perhaps more from a desire to assert the theory of the authority of Congress than from dissatisfaction with our present foreign relations that the House of Representatives has passed resolutions which virtually affirm that the United States can have no foreign policy that Congress has not predetermined. We do not believe that such resolutions serve any good purpose. No matter what may be their intention, they are used as instruments to injure the credit of the Administration, in proof of which we cite the important fact that every member of the Opposition voted for them. Nor are these resolutions demanded by any violation of the National precedents by the Executive branch of the Government. The Constitution does not recognize the House of Representatives as a part of the treaty-making power—a power vested exclusively in the President and Senate. The House, as the popular branch of Congress, may be expected to express the immediate feeling of the people, but it does not follow that because we are all, from the President down to the teamster in the army, earnest in our resolution that the Monroe doctrine shall never be surrendered, we should go to war with NAPOLEON at once, because his bayonets established MAXIMILIAN in Mexico. It is significant, too, that while the majority of Senators are supposed to be decidedly opposed to Mr. SEWARD on important subjects, the Senate has sustained his foreign policy. Mr. SUMNER, who may be yielded the honor of being the leader of the Senate in all questions of foreign policy, has, with the true spirit of a statesman, recognized the necessity of avoiding foreign war, so long as it can be avoided with honor, while we have this great rebellion to combat. The judgment of the country sustains the policy that has thwarted MASON and SLIDELL, prevented war with Europe, and at the same time kept the honor of the nation stainless, and exalted its power in Christendom.

We have the right to assume our peaceful relations with Europe as the results of Mr. SEWARD's policy, for, if it had been either weak or rash, nothing could have prevented foreign interference. Had he shown a disposition to yield the rights of America, they would have been wrested from a hand too feeble to hold them. But what have we yielded? Nothing but what our treaties exacted: MASON and SLIDELL to England, courtesy to Brazil, and to all Governments justice. The Monroe doctrine has been reaffirmed by Congress, and repeated by Mr. SEWARD in the very assurance he gave to France that our foreign policy was not to be changed. On the other hand, had he asserted one unjust principle, the act would have been emphatically resented. But for Mr. SEWARD's moderation and firmness the whole Canadian border would now be reddened with fire and blood. The St. Albans raids were not made for the sake of plunder or revenge. They were expressly ordered by the rebel leaders, and intended to create international complications, and bring sudden and important aid to the rebellion. For a moment the North was deceived, and rose as if to resent the wrong. But Mr. SEWARD was not deceived. He did not put a navy on the lakes, and thus break one of the most important stipulations in our compact with Great Britain, but he did establish the passport system, of which no foreign Power can complain. This policy is vindicated by the prompt action of the Canadian authorities, which has already resulted in the re-arrest of several of the raiders, and more than this, concedes the great principle claimed by our Government. And everywhere we triumph. We fight no French or English armies, but all our forces are concentrated on our domestic enemies. In the government of the world we have our full share, and if foreign intervention be still a danger, it lurks in the dark background, wherein it will finally vanish, unless summoned forth by our own folly. Have we the moral right to criticise on mere grounds of technicality a policy which has had these gigantic triumphs? Can we substitute one safer and more upright? If it is possible, let it be, but it is yet to be revealed. It is not too much to say that to Mr. SEWARD we owe it that we are at peace with the whole world, and are now bringing to an end the greatest war of the century, to the astonishment of Europe, and without the interference of her Powers.

The Draft.

The President's call for three hundred thousand men should be regarded, not as an absolute demand for that number of soldiers, but as what might be considered a deficiency call. The operation of the last draft was imperfect. Instead of obtaining our full quota, by reason of some derangement the real results are far below what were expected. At no time has there been a more imperative necessity for soldiers than now. All the signs indicate the speedy suppression of the rebellion; at every point our armies are victorious. THOMAS is crumbling up HOOD; SHERMAN has shattered the rebel power in Georgia; SHERIDAN has cleaned the valley; BUTLER is about to reorganize the Carolinas; CANBY is quietly exterminating the rebel power in the trans-Mississippi regions; while GRANT holds LEE at bay, ready, when the moment comes, to end the rebellion by taking Richmond. We have now reached what might be called the high agony and effort in the prosecution of this vast war. If we fail now, then all that we have done before will be vain, and our labors will be like those of SISYPHUS, for the stone which is now near the top of the hill will roll down again. We therefore would press upon the minds of our readers the great necessity of making every effort to raise Pennsylvania's quota for this draft. There is no time to be lost. Every man should be enrolled; and in order that we should have a just quota, every man who is exempt by reason of age or infirmity should have his name stricken from the enrolment books. By energy and harmony now, by throwing ourselves upon the South in this period of its despair and desolation, we may so utterly crush it before spring that the war will be over. Is it not better to make a sacrifice now of time and purpose, and thus end this thing at once?

Death's Doings Abroad.

Within a single week we have heard of the death of six persons who, more or less, were celebrities in Europe. These are Mr. DAYTON, American Minister at Paris; CONSTANT MOCQUARD, private Secretary to the Emperor of the French; the Earl of CARLISLE, lately Viceroy of Ireland; DAVID ROBERTS, the great painter; LOUIS PERRIN, the Irish judge, and WILLIAM WILLIAMS, M. P. for Lambeth, one of the London metropolitan boroughs.

The career of Mr. DAYTON was so lately sketched in this journal that we need not go into its particulars now. Mr. DAYTON might be truly described as

"Good without effort, great without a foe,"

and it has not surprised us to learn that, among the mourning crowd who attended his obsequies on the 6th inst., at the American church in Paris, several Southern gentlemen were noticed. He would not have completed his fifty-seventh year until next February, and his appearance as well as his habits gave every promise of long life.

M. MOCQUARD, who died at the more advanced age of 73, commenced his public career over forty years ago in the diplomatic service, under the first NAPOLEON. When the Empire fell, he practiced at the bar for over ten years, until his health broke down, always showing liberal tendencies. The Revolution of 1830 drew him from retirement to office, in which he continued until 1839, when his friendly relations with the BONAPARTE family drew him into the circle of Prince LOUIS NAPOLEON's friends, and in 1840 he became editor of the *Commerce*, a Napoleonic journal in Paris. In 1840, on the failure of the Boulogne invasion, he acted as one of LOUIS NAPOLEON's advocates with marked ability, steadily supported his Presidential aspirations in 1848, and was made Chief of the Cabinet on his patron's election. He was deep in the secret and action of the *coup d'état*, since which time he has acted as NAPOLEON's private Secretary, with the title of Chef de Cabinet. He had considerable ability, having written the Life of Queen HORTENSE, a book called "Nouvelles Causes Célèbres," several dramas, and some poetry. He fully possessed the confidence of his imperial master.

The Earl of Carlisle, who was Lord MORPETH when he visited the United States, in 1842, was at once one of the most wealthy and most liberal of the British nobility. After highly distinguishing himself at the University of Oxford, he entered the House of Commons, in which he continued, with little intermission, until he succeeded to the Earldom, on his father's death, in 1848. He was a fluent speaker, but his matter was superior to his manner, which was pedantic and artificial. He never was Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg, or elsewhere. His first public office was the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland, where he won the approbation of O'CONNELL. He subsequently occupied various Cabinet offices, and became Viceroy of Ireland in 1855, continuing in that office until a few months ago, with the exception of the sixteen months (1858–1859) of the second Derby-Disraeli Government. He was deservedly popular in Ireland. He died in his sixty-third year. Lord CARLISLE was brother of the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland.

DAVID ROBERTS, who was elected Royal Academician in 1841, was a native of Scotland, and commenced life as a house-painter. In London, he painted scenery for the theatres, as CLARKSON STANFIELD was doing at the same time and place, studied oil-painting with great success, and obtained high reputation by sketches and pictures made during a visit to Spain, which was much augmented by subsequent sketches in the East. He was the best architectural painter of his day. His interiors have never been surpassed. He was 68 years old when he died.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS, for nearly thirty years a member of the House of Commons, was a wealthy London merchant, who held the most extreme Radical views—including what are called "the five points of the Charter." An indifferent speaker, he yet was, to some extent, a power in the legislature, for he devoted himself, from the death of Mr. JOSEPH HUME, to advocate of the strictest retrenchment in the public expenditure, carefully examining every item in each money-vote, and thus acting as a check upon ministerial extravagance. Mr. WILLIAMS had reached an advanced age.

LOUIS PERRIN, whose life also had far exceeded the "three score years and ten" allotted by the Psalmist—he was born in 1788—has passed away. His father, a teacher of languages in Dublin, compiled the excellent French Dictionary which bears his name. Called to the bar in 1806, Mr. PERRIN soon obtained extensive practice, and SHEIL declared, in 1831, in his Sketches, that he was "universally admitted to be the best common-law lawyer at the Irish bar." He sat in Parliament from 1832 to 1835, when, having become Attorney General of Ireland, he accepted a seat on the Bench. In the O'Connell trials of 1844, held in the Court of Queen's Bench, he was the only Judge who declared that the defendant's objections to the legality of some of the proceedings were well-founded, but his three colleagues out-voted him. After having held the judicial office for nearly the fourth of a century, Mr. Justice PERRIN retired, upon the usual pension. Among the many able lawyers who have worn the ermine in Ireland, none was more determinedly just, more consistently liberal, or more intuitively honest.

THE action of the Governor, as specified in the opinion of Attorney General MEREDITH, published yesterday, in reference to the case of the Sixteenth Congressional district, will be applauded by all reasonable men. We should like very much to have seen General KOONTZ announced as the duly-elected candidate, but it was not in the power of Governor CURTIN to make that proclamation. If our friends made an imperfect return of their votes, they should suffer from it. The duty of the Governor is purely ministerial. He cannot amend the record; he must submit to it; and when it is imperfect he must leave to Congress the decision of the merits of the case. We have no doubt in our own mind at all that General KOONTZ has been legally elected the member from the Sixteenth district, and we think that the House of Representatives will so decide. At the same time, we must applaud the Governor for the impartiality with which he has discharged this, one of the most delicate duties of his administration.

MR. HENRY J. RAYMOND, of the New York *Times*, denies that he is a candidate for the embassy to France. In the *Times* of yesterday he says that, "so far as Mr. RAYMOND is concerned, he neither seeks, expects, nor desires this nor any other office under the Government. He has been elected to be a member of the next Congress, and intends to fulfil the duties of that position to the best of his ability, and with entire fidelity to those who placed him in it."

DO OUR READERS know that our enrolment lists are very imperfect, and that if the pending draft is to be properly conducted, all citizens who are exempt by reason of age or infirmity should have their names stricken from them? If this is done, our quota will be largely lessened, and Philadelphia will give her just proportion of troops and no more. Those who have the matter in charge must attend to this at once.

WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23.

THE POTOMAC FROZEN OVER.

The mail-boat Webster, from City Point, yesterday, is not only frozen up, but is aground a mile below Washington.

The Potomac is covered with ice, and the channel is completely closed, so that navigation is suspended. Boats do not attempt either to approach or leave Washington. The ice is at most places between two and a half and three inches thick. Several boats with troops, which left this port yesterday, are icebound below Gleshorn.

GUERILLAS CROSSING THE POTOMAC ON THE ICE.

Early this morning a party of guerillas, of WHITE's command, attempted a crossing to the Maryland shore on the ice, about Muddy Branch. They were discovered by the pickets of a battalion of the 1st New Hampshire Cavalry, and were driven back. One guerilla was shot dead. Major ANDREWS, who commands at that point, is in mightly expectation of raids, now that the canal and river are frozen, and has accordingly strengthened his picket line.

A FIGHT WITH GUERILLAS.

Several days ago a portion of an Illinois regiment of cavalry scouted as far up as White Plains, on the Manassas Gap Railroad, and, coming upon a large party of guerillas, a fight ensued. The latter were routed with the loss of one major, one lieutenant mortally wounded, and fifteen prisoners taken by our troops.

MURDER OF A NAVAL OFFICER.

The Navy Department to-day received intelligence of the death of Acting Master CHARLES THATCHER, of Maine, commanding the Gazelle, attached to the Mississippi Squadron. He was murdered by guerillas on Raccoon Island.

THE WAR.

PORTER'S FLEET OFF WILMINGTON.

DESPATCH FROM THE REBEL GENERAL BRAGG.

Great Destruction of Blockade-Runners.

REBEL RUMORS FROM SAVANNAH.

A CAPITULATION TALKED OF.

GENERAL HOOD'S ARMY STILL IN HEADLONG FLIGHT.

WILMINGTON.

ARRIVAL OF THE EXPEDITION OFF THE HARBOR—OPERATIONS NOT YET COMMENCED—BRAGG CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY TO HOLD THE POSITIONS.

NEW YORK, Dec. 23.—A special despatch to the *Tribune* says:

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22.—General Grant telegraphs that Richmond papers, just in, state that an official despatch from Wilmington, N. C., dated yesterday (Wednesday), at 10 A. M., reports the advance of the Union fleet arrived off that port during the night. Over thirty steamers are now assembling, and more following.

The *Republican* says: The Government received a despatch, latelight from General Grant, at City Point, announcing that the Richmond papers of yesterday morning (the 22d) contain an official despatch from General Bragg to Jeff. Davis, dated Fort Fisher, New Inlet, N. C., December 21st (Wednesday), reading as follows:

"The entire fleet of the enemy is in sight, but cannot operate. The weather continues bad. We are able to hold Wilmington."

DESTRUCTION OF WILMINGTON BLOCKADE-RUNNERS—FIVE MILLIONS WORTH OF PROPERTY DESTROYED IN FIFTY DAYS.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23.—Rear Admiral Porter, under date of the 16th inst., informs the Navy Department of the destruction of the blockade-runner Petrel, driven ashore by the gun-boats at New Inlet, Cape Fear river. She was fired upon and sunk, and was finally totally destroyed by a northeast gale. She had on board a large cargo of arms and munitions of war. Admiral Porter reports that within the last fifty days the fleet has captured and destroyed $5,500,000 worth of the enemy's property in blockade runners.

SHERMAN.

REBEL REPORTS FROM CHARLESTON OF THE CAPITULATION OF SAVANNAH—THE EXCHANGE CONCLUDED.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 23.—The Associated Press letter from Fortress Monroe, says the Charleston *Courier* of the 15th, contains the following:

"A flag-of-truce boat brought up on Thursday 104 paroled Confederate officers from Fort Pulaski.

"The Yankee officers in the fleet report that General Sherman and staff have arrived at Hilton Head. Also, that it was rumored that Savannah was to capitulate at 12 o'clock, M., on Thursday.

"They had learned of the fall of Fort Mcallister, but give no particulars.

"Another thousand of Yankee prisoners will be taken down this morning. This completes the exchange, and makes the number turned over by Col. Hatch 11,000."

DEPARTMENT OF THE TENNESSEE.

THE DEFEAT OF HOOD'S ARMY—HOOD'S ORDER TO HIS MEN—"SAUVE QUI PEUT"—HALF HIS FORCE LOST.

NEW YORK, Dec. 23.—The *Times* has received a special despatch from Franklin, Tennessee, dated yesterday, which says:

The rebel retreat from Franklin to Duck river bargars all description. Hood told his corps commanders to get off the best way they could with their commands.

The rebel army is now beyond Columbia. The railroad is but little impaired, and trains run to Spring Hill. The telegraphic communication is still kept in active action. Johnsonville was not destroyed.

The rebel loss during the battle of Franklin, Dec. 30, in cannon and its general officers. Killed at Franklin, 1,405; wounded, 3,800, and 1,000 prisoners. Before Nashville and on the retreat to Columbia, 3,000 killed and wounded and 3,000 prisoners.

The Union loss at Franklin was 2,000, and before Nashville less than 4,000. The total Union loss will not exceed 7,000, with two generals slightly wounded.

Hood has a pontoon bridge over the shoals on the Tennessee river, where our gunboats cannot reach them.

Hood marched on Franklin with 40,000 man and sixty-five pieces of artillery. He will have lost nearly half his men.

LATEST ACCOUNTS FROM THE REBEL FORCE AT SOUTH OF COLUMBIA—THE REBEL FORCE AT PULASKI.

NASHVILLE, Dec. 23.—The latest accounts from the front locate General Thomas' headquarters at Rutherford Hill yesterday morning, eight miles this side of Columbia. Since that time our cavalry have crossed Duck river, and have moved to a point south of Columbia. Our cavalry forces crossed Harter's Ford, below Columbia, and dashed into the town, the enemy meanwhile retreating without firing a shot. We captured about thirty straggler.

The rebel force were at last accounts at Pulaski yesterday morning, and are probably some distance south of that place to day. They are closely followed by our cavalry.

No particular damage to the town of Columbia was done by the passage of the two armies through it.

At least one-third of Hood's army are without arms or equipments, everything which could impede their flight having been thrown away.

Rebel deserters and prisoners report that the only effective corps of Hood's army is S. D. Lee's. Forrest effected a junction with Hood at Columbia on Tuesday evening.

The river is at a stand, with fifteen feet on the shoals.

GENERAL GRANT'S ARMY.

OFFICERS GOING HOME ON FURLOUGH—DESERTERS TO BE HUNG.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Dec. 22.—Quiet continues to prevail here. The bad weather is such as to prevent any movements, if intended. A large number of officers are going North on furlough. Among those who left this morning were Generals Gregg, Potter, Ayres, Bragg, and McAlister, with members of their staffs. General Mott went North yesterday to attend the funeral of a brother.

Lieut. Col. Osborne, division inspector on General Crawford's staff, a valuable and efficient officer, goes home to-day, having been mustered out, after serving over three years.

Three more deserters are to be hung to-morrow. Their names are John Smith, William Miller, and Geo. Bradley, all of the 5th New Hampshire Volunteers.

THE FIRING ON DUTCH GAP—UNION DESERTERS.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, Dec. 23.—There is nothing of interest transpiring in this department. The enemy keep up their fire, but not so persistently as formerly on the Dutch Gap canal. Very few casualties occur, owing to precautions taken to avoid the shells. For the week ending December 18th, one hundred and eighty deserters had reached Richmond from the Union armies, and would be forwarded to the border to start for their homes on blockade-runners.

REBEL NEWS.

OUR FORCES NEAR MOBILE—DAVIDSON'S RAIDERS EN ROUTE FOR THE CITY—WARM WORK EXPECTED OFF WILMINGTON—BEAUREGARD'S DEPARTMENT EXTENDED.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23.—The Richmond *Whig*, of the 21st, contains the following, under date of Meridian, Miss., December 18th, but this is probably a mistake of date, and should be much earlier.

"Authentic information has been received that the advance of General Davidson's raiding column from Baton Rouge passed through Augusta, Perry county, Miss., yesterday for Mobile. Scott and others are in the right place. Warm work is expected on Monday and Tuesday next."

The Richmond *Whig* of the the 21st, in reference to the appearance of the fleet off New Inlet, North Carolina, says:

"This despatch foreshadows warm work off Wilmington. The defences of the place against a naval attack are very strong, and Admiral Porter will doubtless discover that he has undertaken an impracticable job if he attempts the reduction of Wilmington."

The *Whig* further says:

"By recent orders, the department under General Beauregard has been extended so as to include South Carolina and the Atlantic seaboard of Georgia."

CAIRO.

A TAX ON COTTON.

CAIRO, Dec. 23.—General Dana has ordered that all cotton now in Memphis which may be brought here shall pay $2 per bale, and all tobacco $1 per hogshead. The fund so collected is to be appropriated to defray the expenses of the militia of the District of West Tennessee.

CALIFORNIA.

BUSINESS AND EARNINGS OF THE CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 22.—The report of the Central Pacific Railroad Company is published. The California end of the road shows the earnings of thirty-one miles of the road for seven months, during which time it has been in operation, to be $103,060 in gold, of which $48,000 in gold was net profit. The road is graded twelve miles further into the mountains. The treasury received at this place for the last ten days amounts to nearly $1,750,000. Currency and coin bills on Atlantic cities are offering at about previous rates. Money is easy, with a tendency to lower rates.

TEXAS.

MISERABLE CONDITION OF OUR PRISONERS IN TEXAS—THE WAR AROUND BROWNSVILLE.

CAIRO, Dec. 22.—The steamer Pauline Carroll, from New Orleans on the 15th inst., arrived at this port today, with a few bales of cotton.

The steam transport Clinton, from Galveston on the 12th, has arrived at New Orleans, with 523 exchanged prisoners from Camp Grace, Texas. The men, who were in the most wretched condition, have been supplied with the necessary articles for their comfort by the agent of the Sanitary Commission. Gen. Hamilton and family also arrived at Brazos on the steamer Clinton.

Late Matamoros papers state that reinforcements, which had arrived at Brazos Santiago, are swelling our force there to three thousand, fifteen hundred of whom were negroes. The rebels make frequent sallies from Brownsville, which is not fortified, and have numerous skirmishes with the Federal troops. There is no change to report in the New Orleans markets.

Conviction of a Murderer.

ALBANY, Dec. 23.—George E. Gordon, whose trial for the murder of Owen Thompson, a New York cattle buyer, has been in progress here this week, was to-day found guilty of murder by the jury. The murder was committed at the West Albany cattle yard, on the evening of September 16th.

Release of Criminals.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 23.—Mrs. Hutchins, recently sentenced to five years' imprisonment in the Fitchburg House of Correction, in Massachusetts, for attempting to send a sword to the rebel Major Gilmor, has been released by order of the President, and arrived here today.

Wm. S. Fish, of the 1st Connecticut Cavalry, lately provost marshal of this city, who was sentenced to the Albany Penitentiary for one year, and to pay a fine of $5,000, has also been released.

Execution of Deserters.

INDIANAPOLIS, Dec. 23.—At a court martial recently convened here, Charles Gillingsley, John Murray, Thomas Ryan, and Thomas Lenni were found guilty of desertion, and were sentenced to be shot. To-day the sentences were carried into effect at Camp Burnside, near this city, on the three first named. The fourth has been reepited by the President for ten days.

Troops for the Canada Frontier.

BOSTON, Dec. 23.—Company A, of the Heavy Artillery, left Fort Warren to-day for frontier service. Their destination is Plattsburg, New York.

NEW YORK CITY.

NEW YORK, Dec. 23.

EXPLOSION OF A BOILER.

The propeller Ashuwalt exploded her steam chest this morning, severely injuring the engineer and fireman, and doing much damage to the boat.

ARRIVAL FROM NEW-ORLEANS.

The steamer Thomas A. Scott has arrived with New Orleans advices of the 14th inst.

Colonels Sherman, Baker, and Bowen, and Captains Nicholson, Loring, and Adams, of the navy, are passengers by her.

THE EVENING STOCK BOARD.

10 P. M.—Stocks still dull. Gold active, and not very strong at 221¼, selling after the call at 220¾. New York Central 114, Erie 86¾, Hudson River 115¾. Reading 114¾; Michigan Southern 70, Illinois Central 134¾. Pittsburg and Cleveland 93, Rock Island and Chicago 103, Northwestern 40¾; do preferred 70¾, Fort Wayne 101¼. Ohio and Mississippi certificates 33, Quicksilver 34¾.

GREAT FIRE.

MIDNIGHT.—A great fire is now raging in this city. The buildings Nos. 51, 53, 55, 57, and 59 Beekman street, running through to Ann street, have thus far been consumed. The loss will be very heavy.

Public Amusements.

CHESTNUT-STREET THEATRE.—It is to be regretted that the beautiful drama of "The Octoroon" will be withdrawn after the two performances of to-day. We have already praised the scenery with which this piece is presented and spoken favorably of the acting. This is, indeed, unusually meritorious. Mrs. Sophy Gimber Kuhn, as *Zoe*, is a very interesting heroine, and plays the part with pathos and grace. As a contrast, she presents an impulsive Southern girl, somewhat coquettish, but with a true heart, is given by Miss Annie Ward, who plays the part of *Dora Sunnyside* in a charming manner. We have before spoken in terms of praise of other characters in this piece, which no one who admires good sensational plays should omit to see.

NATIONAL CIRCUS.—The matinee at the Circus should not be forgotten this afternoon. Young Nicolo and the entire troupe will appear. There will be three performances on Monday, as a pleasant means of celebrating Christmas.

SIGNOR BLITZ.—This great artist has long been considered one of the institutions of Philadelphia. The arrangements which he has made to please the public during the Christmas holidays are most ample. It will be entirely fashionable to pay at least one visit to the Signor during the holidays, and we feel assured that no one visitor will go away disappointed, but will be gratified with having passed an afternoon or evening with him. In his art he has no peer; his address is always pleasing, and some of his performance is so funny that irresistible shouts of laughter convulse the auditors with delight. His learned canary birds are very attractive. Their wonderful performance is decidedly pleasing. The entire entertainment is worth double the price of admission. On Christmas day there will be many happy children presented to see the Signor.

MR. AND MRS. H. WATKINS.—This evening, at the Assembly Rooms, corner of Chestnut and Tenth streets, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Watkins give their first dramatic performance. They represent a baker's dozen of very dissimilar characters, in a remarkably Protean manner. They play during next week, and no longer.

SALE OF CARPETINGS, &c., &c., THIS DAY.—The attention of purchasers is requested to the desirable assortment of superfine ingrain, list, cottage, rag, and Dutch hemp carpets, to be peremptorily sold by catalogue, on four months' credit, commencing this morning, at 11 o'clock precisely, by John B. Myers & Co., auctioneers, Nos. 232 and 234 Market street.

THE CITY.

[FOR ADDITIONAL CITY NEWS SEE FOURTH PAGE.]

PLATE PRESENTATION AT CONCERT HALL.—A fine silver pitcher, goblet, and salver were presented last night, at the fair now being held at Concert Hall, to Col. Wagner, of Champ Ward's Battery. The presentation speech was made by Col. John W. Forney, and was gracefully responded to by the recipient. Other addresses were then made by Judge Kelley, Col. Thos. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Purves. The occasion attracted an unusually large assemblage to the room.

CHURCH MUSIC ON SUNDAY.—The preparations made by the choirs of the principal Catholic Churches in the city for the celebration of Christmas day have been quite extensive, and some excellent music may surely be expected at the results. Some of the compositions sung will be as follows: At St. Augustine's, Mass No. 12; at St. Mary's, Mass in No. 1; at St. Peter's, Hummel's Mass No. 2; and at St. John's church the celebrated mass by Rossini will be sung. The latter is a dramatic composer of great merit, inferior only to Rossini. He was born in Naples in 1793, and studied music under Zingarelli, the great master. He composed eight operas, one grand cantata, and this mass, which has always been considered his chef d'œuvre.

OPENING OF A NEW ORGAN.—The new organ of St. Stephen's Church was opened last evening, and discovered some very fine music, under the guidance of Organists Whiting, Messiter, Wood, and Thunder. The organ is very powerful and sweet in tone, and gave great satisfaction to a large audience who had assembled to listen to its first notes in the church. The performance consisted of choice selections from the great master, played upon the fine instrument, and was varied by some excellent solos, a fine duet, and a very good trio, all given by amateurs.

INTERESTING LECTURES.—An instructive lecture upon the Rahmkorff Coil and Electric Light" was delivered at the Central High School last night by Albert R. Leeds, a graduate of the school, and now Acting Professor of Chemistry there. The lecture was illustrated by numerous experiments, all of which were very complete and successful.

SERIOUS CASUALTY.—A man named Walter Tobin, aged about thirty-five years, was severely injured about the hand on board of one of the New York steamers lying off Delaware avenue, near Race street, by the tackle and block falling upon him. He was taken to the Pennsylvania Hospital.

DOMESTIC MARKETS.—There are but few arrivals to report in the prices in the markets this week. Of course, on the occasion of the approaching festivities there is a greater demand for poultry and all sorts of choice eatables for the festival, but as the supply is necessarily greater, the price should not be permitted to increase. Turkeys, which are now the great article of demand, are held at from 25 to 35 cents per pound, and for unusually fine ones the prices range still higher.

CITY ITEMS.

A Graceful and Valuable Present.

HUSBANDS.

As a gift from a husband to a wife, there could be nothing so appropriate as a Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine.

FATHERS.

As a gift from a father to a daughter, the Wheeler & Wilson Sewing Machine would come like a paternal benediction. Try it, ye kind-hearted fathers, and your children's children will bless you forever.

BROTHERS.

Nothing could be more acceptable as a present from a brother to a sister than one of these admirable machines, admitted to be the best in the world.

FRIENDS.

As a token of esteem from friend to friend, nothing could be more elegant than this world-renowned Sewing Machine.

PHILANTHROPISTS.

Those who have a desire to do a great amount of good at a small cost should send a Wheeler & Wilson Machine to some poor struggling woman, and thereby enable her to support herself and family, and lay up something for the future. Those who have a Wheeler & Wilson Machine are sure of plenty of work at good prices.

To show the immense and growing popularity of the Wheeler & Wilson Machines, it would state that over 50,000 of them will have been manufactured this year, and nearly 6,000 have been sold in Philadelphia alone. Every machine warranted, and the money returned if not entirely satisfactory. We advise all to go to the elegant salesrooms of Wheeler & Wilson, No. 704 Chestnut street, and see these wonderful machines in operation. Send for a circular and specimen of work. No charge. Call early and make your selection.

An Institution of Philadelphia.

A WINTRY AFTERNOON—HOW TO SPEND IT—WHERE TO VISIT—AMERICAN VS. ENGLISH MANUFACTURES—A SCHOOL FOR GIRLS—SUCCESS OF AN AMERICAN INVENTION.—There is a praiseworthy disposition manifested by a few of the prominent business men of the present day to make labor useful to itself as well as profitable to the capitalist. This effort to render the very dumb implements of Toil significant in the language they utter—singing songs of Hope, Competence, Happiness, instead of carking Care and Discontent, is a feature of our age, of Northern civilization—standing out in broad contrast to the effete labor systems of Europe or the South.

One day this week—a pleasant, frosty, merry day—when Philadelphia glittered in the wintry sun, passing through Chestnut street, we were attracted by the windows of No. 730, and curiosity induced us to enter. Stepping into the handsomely-furnished and carpeted spacious reception room, we found many persons of either sex examining the beautiful and ingeniously-industrious instruments which the Grover & Baker Sewing Machine Company, so widely and favorably known, not only manufacture by countless thousands—the product of American invention and American skill—but through their branch houses are able to sell at home, without the aid of paid puffs from that arch enemy of our nation, the London *Times*.

As a rule, the appearance of any firm's place of business indicates something as to their prosperity; and a flashily-furnished salesroom proves nothing but the proprietor's vanity. Now, everything about the Grover & Baker Company's rooms, like the machines themselves, is solid, neat, durable. Taste, simplicity, and economy in the use of thread are characteristic of each and all of their patterns, and the new style, especially adapted to tailors, shoemakers, carriage-trimmers, and tradesmen generally, is the *ne plus ultra* of invention.

The double-lock elastic stitch of the machine of this Company will outwear the fabric itself. Every stich is self-fastening, and is too well and favorably known to the many housewives in the land to require further notice. Either of the machines of this Company will execute either fine or heavy work, from quilting the finest opera cloak, embroidering the baby's sweetest robes, or sewing the soldier's overcoat of stoutest blue.

Purchasers or non-purchasers can learn on either or all machines, and *every inducement is offered to poor girls to become owners of these invaluable aids to labor.* There are women to-day in all our large cities than owe their present independence, as compared with their former struggles for subsistence, to these invaluable aids to labor.

We see that this Company has prepared a spacious and elegant apartment, fitted up as a school of instruction, where all are taught free of charge, and where every poor girl can be taught the complete working of these machines, undisturbed by the Babel of politicians, and fearless of St. Albans raiders or conspirators now safely landed in Fort Delaware or elsewhere.

The Grover & Baker machine hems, fells, binds, embroiders, cords, quilts, tucks, and in fact does everything; sews every fabric the hand can do, save putting on buttons and making button-holes. Of course it cannot cut clothes like a scissors. In fact, it is the only machine in the market that will sew the bolting cloths of a flour mill so as to stand the test. In fact, this machine is equally useful in binding the heaviest Brussels or Turkey carpet, sewing the heaviest leather, or hemming or embroidering the finest Swiss muslin or gauze silk.

Between the Grover & Baker machine of the present day and the first crude instruments of Elias Howe there is scarcely a vestige of likeness, and persons who have become wearied of the continual waste of thread and perpetual breaking of inferior machines, should visit the rooms of this Company, for they will be able to best appreciate the wide line of demarcation between a poor and a superior article.

A great advantage of patronizing an established firm like the Grover & Baker Company is that you know on whom to rely—where to go, if by an accident a machine gets out of repair, or you require a lost piece, or need a hemmer, quilter, or any detail of the machine. The politeness of the Philadelphia agency, the number of people of either sex they employ, the quiet that prevails through their vast rooms, even when dozens of machines are in operation, and scores of visitors are thronging their magnificent salesrooms, all point this out as the model Sewing Machine establishment of the metropolis of the Keystone State, and a model institution of the city, that no stranger who has a wife, daughter, sister, or friend to whom he desires to make a valuable and lasting Christmas present will leave Philadelphia without visiting.

DO YOU WISH A SEWING MACHINE? If you do, buy the "Florence," sold at No. 630 Chestnut street. Every Machine sold is warranted to give entire satisfaction, or the money will be returned to the purchaser. Besides, the company, through their agent, keep every Machine they sell in perfect order, and give instructions free of charge. Go and see them in operation. An examination of fifteen minutes will satisfy the most skeptical that the "Florence" is *the* Sewing Machine of the age.

GENTLEMEN REPLENISHING THEIR WARDROBES should visit the famous old house of Messrs. C. Somers & Son, No. 625 Chestnut street, under Jayne's Hall. Their stock of ready-made garments is large, and their prices have been greatly reduced in anticipation of the close of the season. They import most of their fabrics direct, and can sell on more favorable terms on that account. In their Customer Department, also, their facilities for gratifying gentlemen of taste are not equalled in this city.

A GRACEFUL, COMFORTABLE, AND BECOMING HAT is indispensable to the perfection of a gentleman's wardrobe. The place to get it is at Warburton's, 432 Chestnut street. For style, adaptation to all tastes, and quality, Mr. Warburton's Hats have the widest reputation. His Hats are the most comfortable and easy-fitting that are manufactured.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ALBUMS.—Mr. F. Gutekunst, Nos. 702, 704, and 706 Arch street, has just issued, in his usual excellent style of the Photographic Art, Pictures of various sizes of Generals Nagle, Hancock, and Meade; also, of Jas. E. Murdoch and other celebrities. His Book of Albums, Frames, and *Carte de Visite* of distinguished persons is very rich, and the same is true of his life-size Crayons and Photo-miniatures. His fine new series of Views of the *great Oil Regions* is a popular novelty, and is having a large sale.

THE STOCK OF GENTLEMEN'S FURNISHING GOODS offered by Mr. George Grant, No. 610 Chestnut street, is the finest in the city, and his celebrated "Prize Medal Shirts," invented by Mr. J. F. Taggart, are unsurpassed by any others in the world in fit, comfort, and durability.

MESSRS. WOOD & CARY, 725 Chestnut street, have made a large reduction in the prices of all their Bonnets, Fancy Hats, and other novelties, to which we would direct the special attention of purchasers.

BUT ONE MORE DAY REMAINS for the ladies to select presents for their gentlemen friends. We advise all to go to Walborn's, Nos. 5 and 7 North Sixth street, and look through his magnificent stock of Morning Wrappers (of which he has the largest assortment in the city), Gloves, elegant articles for the Neck, best quality Under Clothing, and a thousand other articles of taste, utility, and comfort.

A COSTLY SUIT.—A Georgia newspaper says: "The sub-clerks of the House of Representatives, during the late session of the Legislature, ordered a handsome suit of clothes, at the cost of fifteen hundred dollars, for L. Carrington, Esq., the principal clerk." The Georgians had better have staid in the Union, enjoyed the general prosperity, and have been able to buy their garments at a fair price at the Brown Stone Clothing Hall of Rockhill & Wilson, Nos. 603 and 605 Chestnut street, above Sixth.

WINTER CLOTHING.
Winter Clothing.
At reduced prices.
Ready-made.
Ready-made.
At Charles Stokes & Co.'s One-price, under the Continental.
At Charles Stokes & Co.'s One-price, under the Continental.

A TIMELY INVESTMENT.—The Hartford *Evening Press* says: The Travellers' Insur