GAZETTE—CITY DEPARTMENT.

# PITTSBURGH:

TUESDAY MORNING, DEC. 18, 1855.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT LECTURES AND LECTURERS.—For several years past, thanks to an energetic Association, our citizens have been favored with lectures of various degrees of merit from many of the *literati* of our land. We have had specimens of the transcendentalism of Massachusetts, the wit and satire of Vermont, the poetic brilliancy of the Empire State, the historic research and the philosophic acumen of old Connecticut, and in truth we have enjoyed the lecturial ministrations of most of the High Priests of Literature of that very respectable but most over-reaching and money-grabbing portion of our confederacy known as *New England*.

The lecture system was by no means native to Pittsburgh: Much as we pride ourselves on our rolling mills and our manufactories, we could scarcely aspire to the distinction of having originated the idea of bringing the big guns of the East out here into our crude, unpolished "backwoods"—your Bostonian would say: *comparatives* backwoods we'll admit. The brawny arm and the hammer are more appropriate emblems of the Smoky City than the pen and the lyre. But with all our practicality we boast a certain intelligence—nay, we pride ourselves on something more than a splendid Common School System—we make claim to some taste and judgment in matters appertaining to letters—we profess to have that glorious gift of discrimination between the false and the true, between the real coin and the counterfeit—we make bold, in fine, to be as fully capable and as nicely discriminative as the good folks of other sections who are disposed to "run to speech" and most extravagantly boast. We are but imitative, we confess, in our lecture system. Other western cities employed, paid, (well paid,) and patiently listened to, Parker, Emerson, Wendell Phillips, Mrs. Oakes Smith, *et id omne genus*. We did the same. Other western cities have sat an hour or two of a winter evening every week and listened attentively, and, loth to say, with some expressed degree of gratification, to the merest platitudes or at least to stale common places, interspersed here and then with a gem

"Of purest ray serene,"

—which said gem or two were surely the only points of which any admiration ought to have been expressed. And we have done the same.

We mean no reflection on the Young Men's Mercantile Library Association, in these remarks. We award them all praise and credit for their exertions. Nor would we speak of all lectures delivered here as failures. By no means. Many of them have been literary feasts, "fit for the gods." But our great objection to the system is the employment of only such lecturers as come from the East and have received the effectual baptism of a Bostonian, or a New York approbation. We hate this toadyism to the East. The west has a mind of its own; and it ought to have, and must have a literature of its own.

The idea is heterodox to many, so completely have these New England demi-gods fascinated and conquered us. But, nevertheless, we must declare ourselves infidel to the belief that the community or any individual thereof is benefited in the shape of new truths, ideas or fancies, by the whole tribe of poets, philosophers, reformists, transcendentalists, satirists or historians who annually visit us—correspondingly benefited, at least, in proportion to the time, trouble and expense necessarily involved.

There is a vast deal of humbug in the present lecture system and we believe it will decline, or at least undergo a very essential modification. We notice the western press are agitating the matter. The Sandusky *Register*, for example, says:

"Eastern scholars and divines and poets have chiefly filled our lecture rooms for the last three years. During that time we have paid them many thousands of dollars;—what we have received in return the public well know. It is fair to say that the most pleasant agreeable lectures have not been listened to—that lectures of less real social profit could hardly have been given. The speaker, generally, is some person of notoriety, who draws a large house—for what? To deeply interest in some important subject? to instruct in some valuable branch of moral, physical or political science? Not so; but as a beautiful speaker, who deals in pretty conceits, admirable rhetoric, charming narrative, witty or witless poetry, he gives his hearers a "treat;" and, pocketing $50 or $75 for his service, he leaves town to give place to some other notable, who proposes to talk for a like sum. And thus through the winter, the public is treated—from $300 to $1000 is expended in every lecture city, what possible benefit has accured from the service we surmise it would be hard to detect. As a consequence, the public becomes rather suspicious of the word *lecture*, displeasure is felt by many, and a good book and an evening at home is determined upon rather than a profitless and expensive discourse in some crowded public room."

We say, as the great remedy, let this system of foreign lectures be utterly abolished. Let us invoke the Genius of the West to our lecture desks! Let us look to ourselves for the intellectual attractions of the lecture rooms! Let us seek to draw out and foster the latent powers of the Western Mind. It may not possess the polish of Boston, or the flippancy of New York, but it will surely make the lecture room what it should be—the source of information and the forum of intellectual improvement. Employ home talent—Western talent; that is the motto; and we commend it to the attention of the Association. We have only hinted at the many thoughts which the subject suggests. Each mind may reflect and enlarge for itself. But we submit that Pittsburgh, Allegheny, and vicinity where the professions are so ably and numerously represented, where so many seminaries of learning exist, and where so many individual great minds are found, may readily rely on their own native talent for all the attractions and instructions of the lecture room. We have already taken too much space to enunciate this suggestion. We hope it will meet with favorable regard, and may refer to it again.

WOMAN DROWNED—SUSPICION OF FOUL PLAY—ARREST.—On Saturday evening between six and 7 o'clock, a woman named Mary Curry, well known in this city, where she has resided, pursuing a vagrant and licentious life, was drowned off the steamer Philadelphia, about 18 miles above Wheeling, on the upward trip of the boat under circumstances which lead to the belief that she was pushed overboard by an Irishman named Peter Murphy, with whom she had been living for some time, at a house on Webster street. The woman was washing a shirt for Murphy on the guard of the boat and was near her engaged as he says, in drawing a bucket of water. He says he heard the splash but was so terrified that he could give no alarm, and altogether he gave a confused and contradictory account of the affair. A short time before he had struck her and knocked her over, and there is little doubt in the minds of the officers of the boat, and those who were on board, that he pushed her overboard. She was an English woman, between 25 and 30 years of age, and he an Irishman about the same age. He was a deck hand on the boat, and had engaged to pay the woman's passage. He did not say anything about the matter until more than a quarter of an hour after its occurrence, and then he pretended to be wild and crazy and would give no intelligible account of it. He was arrested on the boat on Sunday morning and lodged in the tombs. A Mrs. Potts, who left the boat at Steubenville, is said to have been a witness to the affair; and we learn that she will be sent for as a witness. When arrested he was very cool about the matter, and the officers state that after the occurrence he went to bed and slept soundly till morning. Altogether the affair is a mysterious one, and will be shortly investied.

On Monday morning Murphy was committed to prison for 20 days in order to give the police a full opportunity to investigate the matter. Murphy went by the name of James, on the boat when arrested he said his name was Peter, and when brought before the Mayor he called himself Philip.

HEAVY ROBBERY IN EAST BIRMINGHAM.—Early on Saturday morning the store of Messrs. Cunningham & Co., glass manufacturers, in the borough of East Birmingham, was broken into, and from three to five hundred dollars worth of dry goods stolen therefrom. The entrance was effected by cutting a hole about two feet square through the side of the building, which was a wooden one. A single clap board was first cut off with a large knife or some sharp instrument, and then the opening was made with a pick. A large dog was kept in the store, which was found there as usual in the morning. Diligent search was instituted for the goods, and on Sunday six or eight umbrellas; part of the stolen property, were found in the woods on the hill above the borough, and from traces obtained it appear that the goods were carried away in that direction. On Saturday night another robbery was committed in the same vicinity, supposed to have been by the same parties. The particulars of the latter have not transpired, as the magistrate, Esquire Symmes of Birmingham, appears to think it may further the ends of justice to have the matter kept quiet for a few days.

A GRAND CONCERT AND FESTIVAL for the benefit of the Second German Lutheran Church, is to be held at Masonic Hall on Thursday evening next, Dec. 20th. We hereby give all our friends and the public in general a hearty invitation to be present, and beg for a liberal patronage of our Festival and Concert. We have secured one of the best musical bands in the city; also, two eminent pianists and excellent singing choir. We hope to see our room filled with immense crowds of spectators, as we entertain the hope of giving entire satisfaction to our assembly. Tickets for Concert and Festival 50 cents—Concert without Festival, 25 cents, and can be obtained at No. 120, Market street, or at the door.

DISTRICT COURT.—Before Judge Williams.
MONDAY, Dec. 17th.

The jury, in the case of Sainger vs. Drs. Hoffman and Taudte, having been out over Sunday, and not having been able to agree, came into Court this morning and were discharged. They stood 7 for damages and 5 against.

The Prothonotary issued attachments for thirteen jurors who were not in attendance in obedience to summons, and they were fined $20 each.

Singer Hartman & Co. vs. Thomas Creighton. Rule to show cause on Saturday next why judgement should not be entered on plaintiff's answer of garnishee.

Noble D. Lovely vs. Adam Wagoner and Samuel Foster. Execution attachment sur judgement. On motion of J. P. Penny Esq., Court order judgment to be entered against S. N. Picking garnishee.

Mary Smith vs. James Neill and Hester Murphy. Jury sworn and withdrawn.

Charles Keap et al. vs. Guy Jackson. On motion of A. W. Loomis the Court ordered a cautionary judgment to be entered against the defendant on the verdict.

David Ramaley vs. William Maguill. This was an action to recover the value of a stock of goods sold by Sheriff Magaill as the property of Jonathan Ramaley on an execution against him, but claimed by David Ramaley, the plaintiff in this case. Shaler and Todd for plaintiff, Geo. P. Hamalton for defence. On trial.

THE Citizens Insurance Company held their annual election on Monday and chose the following named gentlemen to be Directors for the ensuing year.

| | |
|---|---|
| Wm. Bagaley, | Samuel Rea, |
| Robert Dunlap, Jr. | S. Harbaugh, |
| Isaac M. Pennock, | Walter Bryant, |
| Capt. Mark Sterling, | Samuel M. Kier, |
| William Bingham, | John S. Dilworth, |
| Francis Sellers, | J. Schoonmaker, |
| William B. Hays, | John Shipton, |
| James Thompson. | |

The secretary of the company is Mr. Samuel L. Marshall.

FESTIVAL FOR THE INFIRMARY.—Our readers will not forget that the annual festival for the benefit of this Institution commences *this afternoon* in Masonic Hall 5th street and will be continued this evening and to-morrow afternoon and evening. The beauty and fashion of the city will be there in all its force, and we hope, for the good of the Institution, and the encouragement of the ladies who have exerted themselves so nobly in its behalf, the substantial results may prove all that could be desired.

DECLINED.—We are informed that Mr. J. H. Scott, the present high constable, and alderman Abram Hays have both declined the contest for the Mayoralty of Allegheny city.

BUSINESS.—We never saw business so brisk at this time of year as at the present time. Yesterday the wharf was piled with freight, and everything appears busily. The weather is like April.

JOHN. BRADY was committed to prison by Alderman Major for disturbing the Welsh congregation on Ross street on Sunday.

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CONGRESSIONAL.

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Mr. Foote presented a petition from Capt. Graham, of Brooklyn setting forth his services and sufferings in behalf of the country and complaining of the action of the Naval Board.

Mr. Foote said it was not his purpose to pass strictures on its action, still less to impugn its motives, but it was not to be disguised or denied, nor had it escaped public observation that in some instances at least, it had sadly misjudged; grievous mistakes were made and gross wrong was inflicted on meritorious officers. In what manner or what measure of relief Congress should extend to the aggrieved he did not consider it its province to indicate, but he regarded it as a proper subject for the consideration of the Committee on Naval affairs.

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Mr. Dunn distinctly stated that he did not do so, out he was opposed to him (Banks) on other grounds relating to the course pending on the Nebraska bill. He said, he would surrender that opposition the moment that all the Anti-Nebraskaites come together. Mr. Banks resumed repeating that he is independent of the New York press on all respects, and further in reply, he insisted that he had never yielded a particle on the Nebraska bill; meeting his constituents face to face they gave him the last election by 7000 majority, the largest known in the political history of Massachusetts. (Applause) he had acted as he thought right regarding the Nebraska bill, and they sustained him.

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Mr. Dunn suggested a modification of the resolution; providing for a repeal of the Kansas Nebraska Bill as destroys the Missouri compromise, (Laughter.)

Mr. Houston. Only a slight modification! (Merriment.)

Mr. Mullen could not think the gentleman from Indiana made the suggestion in good faith in adopting the Resolution. All could return to the people on that very issue.

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The Stevens spoke on the 2d inst. the steamer Honora, bound up, with New York passengers which left on the 20th Nov. All were well.

The following are the consignees of the specie: —Drexel & Co. $340,000; Wm. Hoge & Co. $140,000; Metropolitan Bank $140,000; Wells, Fargo & Co. $300,000.

There is nothing important from the Isthmus. The revolutionary movement at Bolivia, under Gen. Avila had been put down.

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CINCINNATI, Dec. 17.—The sales of flour today confined to 116 bbls at $7,62½ and 70 bbls at $7,75; 500 and 100 bbls at $7,50. There seemed to be a fair demand at $7,50, but holders asked more, still it was much more difficult to sell at anything over $7,50 than to buy at that price. In grain the only sales heard of was 200 bush of rye at 75c. This is an extreme price and even at 70c there are not many buyers. Wheat dull at $1,50 for prime red. Oats dull at 30c. Corn is freely offered; and the market is heavy at 40c.; received since Saturday 1221 bushels. Whiskey, market has advanced ½ cts to-day, with sales 700 bbls from the river and railroads at 30½; and 150 bbls from wagons at 30½. Hogs are steady to-day at $6,25, closed heavy; sales included 400 head.

MILWAUKIE Dec. 17th.—The board of canvassers at Madison to-day declared Mr. Barstow re-elected Governor by 169 majority. The decision has caused much excitement and the election will be contested by Mr. Bashford.

WASHINGTON CITY, Dec. 17.—It is rumored that the President is having his message put in type at the White House being afraid to trust it in the hands of the printers.

## COMMERCIAL.

COMMITTEE OF ARBITRATION, FOR DECEMBER.—GEO. W. CASS, V. P.—JOHN GRAFF, HENRY LEMBERT, JOHN S. COCHRAN, JAMES O'HARA.

### PITTSBURGH MARKETS.

PITTSBURGH GAZETTE OFFICE,
Tuesday Morning, December 18, 1855.

Business was extremely dull yesterday. The river was up to over 12 feet, affording a fine coal boat stage, and there was a good deal of activity on the wharf but else where there was nothing doing.

FLOUR—very dull, and nothing done from first hands; from store, 70 bbls superfine at $7,87@$8,00, and no disposition to buy beyond present wants.

GRAIN—sales at depot of 100 bus Rye at 82 and 175 do from wagon at 85c, on wharf, 100 bus Oats at 32 and 200 do at 33.

### MONETARY AND COMMERCIAL.

COFFEE—The inquiry for Coffee this week has again been active, and the market has been firm at the advance noted in our last report. The operations of the week reach about 2,500 bags. The sales reported by the brokers embrace 500 bags prime, Rio at 10c cash, 600 bags do at 10¼c, 500 bags do rejected do at 11¾@12c, 500 bags fair do at 11¾@11¾c, 2,300 bags good fair do at 11¾@12c, and this evening and to-morrow afternoon and evening. The beauty and fashion of the city will be there in all its force, and we hope, for the good of the Institution, and the encouragement of the ladies who have exerted themselves so nobly in its behalf, the substantial results may prove all that could be desired.

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IMPORTS BY RIVER.

ALLEGHENY RIVER, by Flat Boats—1457 bbls salt, 350 kgs do.

MONONGAHELA RIVER BOATS—20 bbls cement, 32 do flour, 25 sks oats, 10 bbls whiskey, 225 kgs glass, sundry coal shutes.

WHEELING, by Diurnal—15 dcs brooms, Jones & Cooper; 81 bbls flour, sast; 60 do M'Bane & Anger; 71 sks wheat, 24 do Wilmarth & co; 25 bbls paper, 30 sks rye, sundry consignees.

NASHVILLE, by Flora—39 bales cotton, 1030 sks wheat, 6 bbls lard, 6 do oil, 2 do tobacco, 2 do feathers, 1 do beeswax, 10 do, 3 do ginseng, 2 do wool, 43 sks dried fruit, 2 bbls whiskey, 2 sks & 2 do, 23 do, 2 do, 2 do, 2