

## Franklin Repository.

Wednesday, June 14, 1865.

We give in to-day's paper the discourse prepared by Rev. Joseph Clark to be delivered in the Presbyterian Church of this place, on the day set apart by the President for humiliation and prayer. It was the last of the many truly eloquent and profoundly able productions of his pen, and it will be read with saddened interest by all those who knew him as he was, and appreciated his Christian worth and rare qualities as a citizen. In the noon-tide of life and the full flush of health, he assumed the task of teaching his people the providence of an all-wise God in the removal of our chief Ruler, and before his lips pronounced his work, he too was called to the bourne whence no traveler returns. How widely he is lamented, and how keenly a bereaved community appreciates the loss of its ablest and one of its purest and best citizens, may be seen in the sadness that shadows every face as his name is lisped and his death regretted. We have known him in all the relations of life—as the companion of youth, the faithful pastor, the kind parent and husband, the constant friend; and there are few indeed who can fill his measure of the noblest virtues of mankind. He was the ablest theologian and religious and philosophical essayist of his time in his church; and but for physical infirmities which demanded his withdrawal from the sacred desk, he would ere this have been widely known as among the first of the able defenders of his faith. Proverbially unobtrusive and free from ambition as he was sincere and faithful to the right, there were many who met him in every-day life who were strangers to the inflexible virtues which ruled his every action. As he lived, so he died—untarling in his trust that He who rules the storm and numbers the hairs of our heads, ever doeth all things well. Thus calmly as he met life from day to day he sank to rest when the inexorable summons came, and another redeemed spirit swelled the anthems of praise where there is joy forever!

## REBEL VANDALS IN STATE COURTS.

Attorney General Speed has published an official opinion relating to the status of rebels who may be indicted in the State Courts for arson, robbery, murder, &c., committed while in the service of the so-called rebel government. The question arose in Kentucky where some of the paroled rebels had been arrested for crimes committed during the Morgan raid in that State, and the Attorney General was asked whether the government would interfere and protect them as prisoners of war. In answer to this Mr. Speed says that "the government of the United States ought not to prevent or interfere with the execution of such process" issued by the State Courts. Again he says—"whether such persons are guilty of robbery, or whether they have any adequate legal defence to such charge, are questions for the judicial determination of the Court before which they may be tried. The jurisdiction of the Court to decide these questions, after the parties are arrested, is unquestionable, and the government of the United States should not interfere to take the cases in question out of, or place them beyond the cognizance of the State tribunals." The opinion is also endorsed by the War Department, and may be accepted as expressing the settled purpose of the government.

Under this decision the question of the guilt of such vandals as McCausland, Gilmore, Smith and others who sacked and burned Chambersburg, is left solely to the judicial tribunals of the State, and it will be for our courts to determine whether they can be protected by the plea of belligerent rights. Such a plea would not, we apprehend, avail in any court of this State, for we are not aware of any act of this State, either judicial, legislative or of any other kind, by which the rebels have been recognized as public enemies, and in the absence of any such recognition they can have no defence other than is afforded to any other robbers or murderers who offend against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth. Early, who ordered the destruction of Chambersburg, is reported dead; but as he was not in the State we presume that he would not be amenable; but McCausland is now living comfortably on his farm in Western Virginia, and within the reach of the civil power of the State. Gilmore, who was the chief in the work of destruction, who fired a number of buildings himself, and insulted all who came in his way, is also alive, and many turn up under the persuasive appeals of a rabbi. Capt. Smith still boasts of a habitation on this subversive sphere, and is probably enjoying his father's fine home in Warrenton, Virginia, which was always carefully guarded by Union troops when they occupied that part of the State, and his family supported themselves by selling vegetables to our officers. We speak advisedly when we say that Gov. Pierpont will respond to a requisition from Gov. Curtin, and no one need be told that Gov. Curtin will perform his part whenever the cases come probably before him. If these chief actors escape the law, it must be by becoming fugitives from justice, and we are for pursuing them until some of them are brought to Chambersburg free of charge, and brought to face a Franklin county court and jury in the midst of the ruins they have so wantonly wrought. If McCausland and Gilmore run off, it might be well enough to send after one Robert E. Lee, who passed through here in 1863 and issued public orders for plundering our people generally. He was the first class highway robber in his way and would answer admirably to test the question whether because a set of perjured cut-throats see fit to attempt the overthrow of the most benevolent government of Earth by war, they can rob, and burn and murder at will within the limits of Pennsylvania without violation of her laws. There is plenty of material for Mr. Stenger to try his hand on and we presume that the August grand jury will give him plenty to do in that line.

We are indebted to T. B. Peterson and Bros. for a copy of their edition of the Life, Speeches and Services of President Johnson. It embraces 214 pages, clearly printed, and is compiled with great care and accuracy. Price 75 cts.

The Washington Chronicle authoritatively denies the statement that Secretary Stanton has resigned, and also says that the utmost good feeling exists between him and President Johnson.

## OUR RETURNED SOLDIERS.

Let every one extend a most cordial welcome to the bronzed and battle-scarred heroes, who have just returned from their victorious fields to resume their places among us as citizens. Let them be greeted as they deserve with generous hearts and considerate efforts to promote their well-being. Their heroism and achievements afford the richest material for fourth of July orations and speeches of welcome; but the true test of a just appreciation of the services of the gallant soldiers of the Republic is to make their welcome home substantial by providing them prompt employment and aiding them in every possible way to resume the arts and labors of peace. They have been absent for months and some for years, and others have filled many of their places in the various channels of industry. Many of them have families dependent upon their labor, and every true friend of the returned soldier will manifest his friendship by aiding him to attain success in the industrial pursuits of life. Many who in time of war were not conspicuous for their friendship for the soldier and his cause, now foresee social disorder as one of the fruits of a large army disbanded into peaceful pursuits. We do not fear such a result. A good soldier cannot be a bad citizen; and the history of warfare gives no instance of a more heroic and invincible soldiery than was embraced in the Union armies. They were good soldiers, because they were good citizens; and they will resume their places in society without even a ripple upon the surface. But they will need kind friends. They must have aid to procure employment, and let every faithful man see at once that the returned soldiers in his neighborhood are professedly suitable labor. It would be heartless ingratitude on the part of a people whose liberties have been preserved by the valor of our volunteers, should any soldier seek employment in vain and suffer want in the land he has rescued from the perils of treason by his sacrifices. Let one and all extend a kind hand and a generous heart to the heroes of the Republic in our midst. We owe it to them to do so, and let the debt be paid promptly and cheerfully, and all will be well.

HON. NER MIDDLESWARTH died at his residence in Snyder county on the 2d inst., at the ripe age of nearly 83 years. His parents settled in Union county in 1793, and left Ner without education or fortune to aid him in his struggle with the world. But possessing great natural abilities and tireless energy, he made his mark at an early age in the politics of his county. He was chosen to the legislature as a Democrat soon after the war of 1812, and served some seventeen sessions, during several of which he presided over the House. When the Anti-Masonic organization was attacked he was one of its first and ablest advocates. It is more than probable that he might have been the Democratic candidate for Governor had he continued to support that organization; but he not only severed his association with the party, but carried Union county around and made it one of the strongest and most reliable counties for the opposition. The chief blot upon his official career was his persistent hostility to general education. Unlike most men who have been denied the advantages of learning themselves, he did not seem to appreciate the duty of the State to give the best guarantee for the perpetuity of our free institutions by wide spread and thorough education; and his county steadily elected legislators for years after the adoption of the school law who were pledged to its repeal.

Mr. Middleswarth was chosen to the Senate in 1847 to fill the unexpired term of Dr. Waggoner, and in 1848 was the Whig candidate for Canal Commissioner on the ticket with Wm. F. Johnston for Governor. Johnston was elected by some 300 majority, but Middleswarth was beaten by Israel Painter nearly 3,000, mainly because of his determined hostility to the legislative measures designed to protect labor. In 1852 he was chosen to Congress but retired after serving a single term, and soon thereafter he was chosen Associate Judge of Snyder county. We believe that he has given more years to public position than any other man in the State, and all his official trusts were discharged with unbending integrity and consummate ability. As a presiding officer he was unsurpassed by any in the country. In 1854 he presided over the Convention that nominated John Quincy Adams for President, and in the House of this State he was confessedly the best ever called to the chair. The infirmities of age have limited his participation in public affairs for some years past, but he was still active in his private pursuits until his death. Few men of our State have exercised so much influence in their day as Ner Middleswarth, and had he been liberal and progressive as his vast intelligence would have made him, he would have filled a much higher measure of honor and usefulness.

We joyfully hear and believe that the President will speedily issue a Proclamation restoring the privilege of Habeas Corpus and ordering a general clearance of the Military Prisons. The paroling of prisoners of war on their taking the oath of allegiance is going forward rapidly, and we trust will not cease while any willing to take the oath and not accused of violating the rules of civilized warfare, remain in durance. The country is swiftly returning to the ways of Peace, Order, Thrift, and law-guarded Liberty. Let us hope that the approaching Fourth of July will see all mere prisoners of war liberated, and the Civil Law everywhere bearing unrivaled sway.

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**THE PITTSBURG COMMERCIAL** has donned a new and beautiful suit, and has just put up one of Hoe's lightning presses. It is the abieest and spicest paper of the West.

We are indebted to Hon. Jno. W. Forney for valuable public documents.

## FROM THE OIL REGION.

**The March of Improvement—Imperial City—How They Build Houses—The Value of Lots and Houses—A Visit to the Oil Wells—The Developments—The Imperial Company—The Oil Prospects—The Welling Company—The Caprices of Oil Wells—Probable Value of Oil Lands and Stocks.**

Editorial Correspondence of the Franklin Repository.

IMPERIAL, Venango County, May 30, 1865

Four years ago this place was a neglected farm, with every sign of thriflessness. It had dilapidated fences, neglected trees, buildings blackened by the pitiless storms, and ten dollars per acre would have been a high price for the farm to any one who desired to make a living therefrom for himself and family. It is known as the "Downing Farm," and is one of the valuable properties now owned by the Pennsylvania Imperial Oil Company. It is immediately opposite Oil City, on the east side of the Allegheny river, and adjoins the "Lay Farm," on which is laid out the town of Laytonia. On the 1st of April the improvements on the property consisted of a little frame office for the Imperial Company, a weather-worn stable, and several dingy houses. Now there are not less than seventy-five houses erected on the property, with regularly laid out streets, and many of the houses are already occupied. It would do our sleep-deprived Chamburgers good to visit this progressive place and learn how soon a desert plain may be transferred into a village, with all the evidences of thrift and business life. While our honest people would be planning a cellar for the Imperial prospector would have a house up and the kitchen fire smoking over their granite nests. They don't seem to wait for time, plans, weather, or anything else here when buildings are about to be erected. Three weeks is a reasonable time for the erection of a house so as to accommodate a family. They don't bother about foundation walls, or square off and frame a pile of lumber before a house is erected. A score or so of wooden or stone under-pins answer the foundation, and on them the structure is reared. If after it is up the owner ever finds time and has the cash to spare, he puts a wail under his dwelling; but if not entirely convenient to do so, it is no matter. The house will stand without it, and that is all that is necessary. Instead of squaring off and framing a building before it is "raised" as we grow it, they put the whole structure together with spikes and use heavy bolts instead of scurting. The weatherboarding and plastering are relied upon to keep the house firm, and if it does happen to tip over in a storm, they soon set it up again.

Since the 1st of April the Imperial has sold over \$75,000 worth of building lots, and fully \$25,000 more will be sold before the 1st of August, and the usual rule is for a man to buy a lot and commence his building the same day, or the next day at the farthest. The company reserve all the river front, of which it owns nearly three-fourths of a mile, and its value may be estimated by the prices paid for the mere privilege of erecting temporary buildings thereon for business purposes. One man pays \$10 per month to the company for permission to erect a line-house near the river-bank. The building is about 15 by 20 feet, and one story high. Another pays \$300 for permission to erect a warehouse, and at the expiration of three years the warehouse reverts to the company. They pay one dollar per thousand for permission to unload brick on the river-bank and re-load them on a wagon. I am not sure, but shall not be surprised that Bailey will soon adopt a tariff of rates to be charged visitors for getting into the river from the Imperial front. A very common stable belongs to the farm, as would result in Chambersburg for perhaps \$40 per annum, and here it rents for \$300 and yields a revenue of fully \$2000 to the lessor.

"Of course in a settlement where but one idea pervades every one—that of making money in fabulous sums and in the shortest possible time, the creature comforts are entirely overlooked. Strangers visiting the place for pleasure or curiosity must take oil fare and oil accommodations. To complain is to be laughed at, and to be fastidious is to ensure the pity and contempt of the restless, tireless, go-a-head citizens, if indeed they take such trouble as to notice you at all. A soft board under a friendly shade tree on the river bank I would regard as a pretty good bed—nudged, better than most that are offered. It might be a little cool, or a little damp, or a little narrow for comfort every one—of making money in fabulous sums and in the shortest possible time, the creature comforts are entirely overlooked. Strangers visiting the place for pleasure or curiosity must take oil fare and oil accommodations. To complain is to be laughed at, and to be fastidious is to ensure the pity and contempt of the restless, tireless, go-a-head citizens, if indeed they take such trouble as to notice you at all. A soft board under a friendly shade tree on the river bank I would regard as a pretty good bed—nudged, better than most that are offered. It might be a little cool, or a little damp, or a little narrow for comfort every one—

The developments of this season are mainly higher on Cherry Run, and from the Smith Farm to Plumer it is but a forest of derricks and engines. They have been detained this spring very much by the hard winter and the destructive flood of March, and not half the engines are yet on the ground. They are at Franklin fifteen miles below; but they cannot be got on. As yet the territory higher up is not well tested; but a month hence it will be known whether the oil basin is limited to the lower waters of Cherry Run. As far as developments have been carried to this time, it has yielded well. At best, however, there must be millions of money lost—utterly lost, here. It is not uncommon to see as many twenty derricks on an acre, which considering the cost of the land, makes an expenditure of as much as a quarter of a million, and some must be impoverished thereby.

The lands of the Imperial Company are so immense and so varied in their localities, that development can scarcely fail to make it a positive success. It has one hundred acres on Cherry Run, on which some twenty wells are being sunk, one of which was 540 feet deep when I was there. If one well fails, it has resources for a hundred others, and all cannot well fail. If Cherry Run oil is but one hundred acres on Cherry Tree Run, which is now yielding very largely, and it has also one hundred acres on Walnut Bend, it thus has a vast area of territory in the three best oil sections in the country, and its developments are progressing as rapidly as it can be pressed. The stock of this company is now sold, and I could have no interest in seeking to inflame it; and I express but the judgment of the most experienced oil men here when I say that its resources are second to no company in the oil region, and not one in a hundred approach it in intrinsic value and rational promise of success. In addition to the properties before named, it has the Downing farm, from which \$100,000 will be realized by the sale of lots, and six wells are being sunk by Mr. Balsley on the Allegheny bank. Two of them are about the required depth and will soon be tested; another is down nearly 300 feet, and the other three are just fairly commenced. If these six wells should yield 100 barrels of oil per day, they alone would pay over ten per cent. on the cash cost of the stock.

The Sterling was also carefully inspected by our party, as they are all large stockholders, and all returned well satisfied. Its fee simple land is on Cherry Tree Run, where it is running two engines sinking wells, and is besides boring a new well near to the old Sterling, which was drowned out last spring. It may be recorded; but that far all efforts have failed, not because there is not oil there, but because the other wells immediately about it are not all pumped, and the water cannot be drawn off to get at the oil. It is still hoped that this difficulty will be overcome. In any event I feel confident that Sterling will be a good night's rest, and left thankful that I had fared so well.

Our party consisted of some fifteen persons who were here to see oil lands generally and the Imperial and Sterling in particular. Judge Small and Mr. Appleman of Hagerstown; Messrs. Solenberger, Cauffman, Kimmel, Nill, and Reed, of Chambersburg; Davis, Quigley and Knight from Philadelphia, and Armstrong of Harrisburg, with myself, made up the visitors, and the Ast. Superintendent of the Imperial accompanied us on an inspection tour as interpreter and guide. We had to go on horse-back, as the roads are entirely impassable for light vehicles. They don't make roads in this country at all. They haven't time. They want oil, and won't think of or work for anything else. They break stones of wagon-dust and cripple horses for want of a little labor on the roads. Even the streets in Oil City are more uneven, have deeper ruts and more

impassable places in bad weather than the worst summer road in Franklin county. How they drive the streets of the city without upsetting is a mystery to me, and how any one can get over them at night even on foot without breaking a leg. I cannot comprehend. But so it is all through this region. Although the weather has been very dry for some weeks, yet the roads are thick with mud-holes of the most approved pattern where there is a stream of water to make them. They don't take the trouble to turn a stream off the road, or even to make a channel for it across the road; but they let it take its own course and every now and then the horses would plunge up to the belly in soft mud. But like the skinning of the old lady's cat, it was nothing when used to it. The horses understood it perfectly. They were not the best of blooded stock, but boasted of rings and spavins and hoves and stiff joints generally; but they were sure-footed from the necessity of self-preservation, and we all made the tour without serious accident.

We first took the direct road to Plumer, a little post-village about the head of oil operations at present on Cherry Run, and from thence we explored the ridge dividing Cherry Run from Pithole, where the valuable land of the Sheridan Company is located. It is as yet undeveloped, but promises well, as it drains into the two most prolific oil streams in the oil region—Pithole and Cherry Run. We then returned to Plumer for dinner, and came back by the Cherry Run.

Cherry Run is now the most famed of the Oil producing territory, although Pithole, Walnut Bend and Cherry Tree Run are all yielding most profitably. It is on Cherry Run however, that all the famed flowing wells of last year were developed, and many of them still produce from 100 to 500 barrels daily. Originally the Oil wells were on Oil Creek; but now that region is almost abandoned, and Cherry Run and Cherry Tree Run, both tributaries of Oil Creek, are the centres of attraction. Pithole and Walnut Bend are on Cherry Run however, that all the famed flowing wells of last year were developed, and many of them still produce from 100 to 500 barrels daily. Originally the Oil wells were on Oil Creek; but now that region is almost abandoned, and Cherry Run and Cherry Tree Run, both tributaries of Oil Creek, are the centres of attraction. 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