Erie Weekly Observer.

ERIE, PA.

SATURDAY MORNING, DEC. 17, 18[illegible]

Important from the [illegible] Governor.

The following [illegible] dispatch from Gov. BIGLER was receiv[illegible] in [illegible]ed by us on Monday evening. It is [illegible]nswer to a letter we had written him the Friday previous; and it shows at once that his Excellency fully appreciates, and sympathizes with Erie in her struggle with the monster corporation of Ohio and New York. It has proved a cooler to the hopes of our opponents; it must also convince every unprejudiced mind that Erie has been grossly, foully and maliciously slandered by the hirling press of Cleveland and Buffalo. The Governor sees that there is a question far more important than a mere change of gauge, or a change of cars. He sees that there is a grave question of State policy—of State rights—of municipal supremacy—of right struggling against banded wealth and arrogant monopoly seeking to accomplish its purpose, regardless alike of justice to the county of Erie and our great commonwealth. Hence he sympathizes with us, and regardless alike of denunciation or censure, will stand by us to the last:

Harrisburg, Dec. 12.

B. F SLOAN, Esq.

Editor of the Erie Observer.

Your Letter is this moment received, and it is the first reliable information I have had.—The Attorney General has been directed to get an injuction against the Franklin Canal Company at the earliest day possible. My sympathies are with the people of Erie, and whatever my duties and the laws will permit shall be done for them If my presence can be of any service I will cheerfully come out to your place. Let me hear from you by telegraph.

WILLIAM BIGLER.

Our city Councils being in session the evening the above was received, we immediately laid it before them, when a resolution was unanimously adopted inviting the Governor to visit Erie.—This was immediately telegraphed him, and we have the almost certain assurance, since he has received it, that he will respond favorably to the invitation. We shall know, perhaps, before this paper is issued; at all events as soon as we receive definite information of time, &c., we will take means to let the people all over the county know it.

The Affair in Harborcreek.

Much misrepresentation has gone abroad in regard to the action of the people of Harborcreek last week in removing the Railroad from the public high-ways in that township; and hence we deem a true statement of the controversy important at this time. In locating the Erie and North East Road through that town, its Directors took possession of nearly eighty rods of the public highway, known as the stage road between Erie and Buffalo. The road Commissioners of the township then protested against such occupancy; they declaring it then, as they do now, a nuisance, and steadily refused to give the company the required permission to occupy it. The Company however persevered and did occupy it, and had done so until the present time, although their charter expressly declares that they shall not obstruct any public high-way. Their occupancy of this road in the manner they have is an "obstruction" of the most grievous character; an intollerable nuisance that it has long been the duty of the road Commissioners of Harborcreek to abate. Many accidents, though fortunately none fatal, have already occurred there, and those who use the road, and it is a great public high-way, as we before said, over which the people are constantly traveling at all hours of the day and night, run imminent hazard of life and limb. Under these circumstances it was resolved by the people of that township that if the Company took up the track, no matter for what purpose, it should not be replaced; hence they instructed their Road Commissioners to notify the Company of that determination. The Company disregarded the warning, took up the track, and put down another. The Road Commissioners, true to their word, and backed by the people, immediately removed it. The Company again put it down, and the road Commissioners again removed it; and thus it remains at the present writing. That the Company possess no legal rights upon the high-way at the point named is evident, not only because of the express language of its charter, but because the track, as laid down, very materially obstructs the free and safe travel of the road. It is evident, too, that the Directors themselves have no faith in their rights, for instead of immediately resorting to legal proceedings to establish those rights, one of the Directors, DEAN RICHMOND, of Buffalo, went before the Road Commissioners and begged to have the track remain, offering to compromise with the township with any sum the Commissioners, or the citizens, might name.—This they very properly, and very indignantly refused, at the same time giving him to understand that it was not for *money* they were contending. They told him that nothing short of the full recognition of their rights, and the rights of Erie, could or would be received as a compromise. This he refused, and there the matter rests. And yet such a movement as this, backed by an entire community, composed of law-abiding and law fearing men of all classes to be found in an agricultural district, is styled a "lawless mob," and their *legal* efforts to abate a great public nuisance, a "riot." Such slanders however, will only recoil upon the heads of those who propogate them, and in the end serve to render stronger the determination of the people to maintain their position.

Its Days are numbered!

The "tall boy" of Ohio has played one too many cards; he has been check-mated by the "sourkrouts" of the old Keystone; and his "bastared" railroad, called the Franklin Canal, will be the penal y. On Tuesday last, in the Supreme Court of this State, now in session in Philadelphia, on motion of the Attorney General, a rule was granted citing the Franklin Canal Company—i. e. the road from Erie to the Ohio line—to show cause within ten days why an injunction should not be declared against it. As the merits of this case were fully argued before the Court at a previous trial, and the Court then decided that the Company had no legal existance, we *have the extreme pleasure of informing* the Forest City *Democrat*, and all others concerned, that within ten days the "nut and candy venders of Erie" will have to move up to the Ohio line, if they wish to pursue their business of administering to the wants of the *whey*-fed gents of the Western Reserve!

☞ As the people have have taken the *Constitution* newspaper, and its paid Editor in hand, as per resolutions at Harborcreek and Wattsburg, we deem it quite unnecessary that we should refer at all to its article of last week upon us.

Should we Submit Longer?

From Maine to Georgia, from one extent of this broad Union to the other, our citizens, together with our city authorities, are just now receiving the curses of a misled and excited press. We say misled, because, outside of the county of Erie and the railroad men themselves, very few people understand, or can comprehend, in the absence of reliable data, the true merits of the question at issue between us and the railroad monopolies. They see a railroad passing through our town, and they find that road broken up, its bridges destroyed, and its track taken up across our streets, and they at once conclude we are a lawless and frenzied mob. They do not stop to consider that the streets of the City of Erie are like the streets of every other city, common highways, the property of the public, and cannot be obstructed by a railroad corporation any more than they can be by an individual. They forget that, if a private or a corporate body should build a bridge across a street in New York or Buffalo, thereby obstructing the free passage of that street, it would be the duty of the City authorities to remove such obstruction immediately.—They would be public nuisances, subject to be abated at any time without resource to the slow process of legal proceedings. This proposition is so plain that it requires neither law nor argument to sustain it. The only position antagonistic to it, that is at all tenable, must be founded on that obsolete dogma that the King can do no wrong—i. e., that railroad corporations are above the municipal, and can commit no crime, but are omnipotent. However popular this idea may be when railroads *are building*, it soon becomes as unpopular when the work is completed, and the corporation, having no more favors to ask from the people, become tyrannical and oppressive.—But we wander from our purpose. We have said that the press all over the country, seeing our position, and not understanding the facts, have traduced our city in no measured terms.—We cannot blame them; it is natural; but it is also natural that our citizens, who are the innocent subjects of these attacks, and are made to suffer from them, should begin to enquire upon whose shoulders the blame rests. It is time, we repeat, to look about us and see who, in our own city, is to blame for the odium just now heaped upon us. Any one present at the meeting at Brown's Hotel on Saturday night last, will readily point his finger to the *man or men*, and if we have not positive proof of the reasons which have governed those who have betrayed us, we have at least strong circumstantial evidence pointing to it. Not to be ambiguous, Erie owes all her troubles to the Directors of the Erie and North East road! Upon their shoulders let the blame rest; and while we are assailed from abroad, ought we to longer treat them as our neighbors? They have been false to every interest that Erie holds dear; they have attempted to barter her welfare, to sacrifice her fair name for—what?—We will not say what for that might be libelous. We may, however, be allowed to hint that the days of *unrewarded* martyrs have passed. Very few can be found who will cast themselves into such a fiery furnace of public odium as these men have, without some great and controlling *motive*. What that *motive* has been in their case we will not pretend to say. We judge no man; we leave that to God and *public opinion*! That the directors of the Erie and North East road will have judgement passed upon them in that quarter, we doubt not; and it will be a righteous one. It cannot be otherwise. Look at their course. Ever since the project of sacrificing Erie and the Sunbury road entered their minds—ever since Kelly and Richmond whispered to them in the *language* Judas was whispered to—their constant endeavor has been to stir up bickering and contention among our citizens, hoping thereby to create a division in our ranks, and thus, when the hour of trial came, array one portion of the community against the other. The plan was well conceived, but it failed—utterly and hopelessly *failed*. The people are united as one man, and in that union they should resolve to submit to this constant abuse from abroad no longer.—They should retaliate; not upon the press abroad, but upon the Directors of the Erie and North East railroad, who are the instigators of that press. These men have for months been industriously engaged in creating, what they called "public opinion against Erie," because Erie would not submit to their scheme; and it is no more than just that the "public opinion" of their neighbors should now be turned against them. We would not hurt one hair of their heads, but we would put an embargo upon all social intercourse with them; we would treat them as strangers, as aliens, as *apostates*.

The Voice of the People.

It has been said that the voice of the people is omnipotent; if this is so, then the schemes of the Railroad men to ride down Erie county must fail, for no question has ever yet arose upon which a whole community were so united as that of determined, unyielding, never ending hostility to a break of gauge being established between us and market. Upon this question Erie county is united as one man. Our people will never yield it, *never*. The proceedings of the public meetings in another column proclaim this in unmistakable language; and these meetings are being held every day. In fact, the entire community is being aroused, and we should not wonder if the whole State did not soon array itself antagonistic to the schemes of our opponents.

☞ We are glad to see our neighbor of the *Gazette* so well pleased with the report of Judge CAMPBELL, the Post Master General. We ourself have glanced over it, although necessarily a very long document, with pride and pleasure.—Pride that its talented author is a Pennsylvanian, and pleasure, that one who has been so vindictively assailed, has proved hisself as an administrative officer, of which the Report gives ample evidence, so capable and popular.

☞ The Buffalo *Courier*, a paper, by the by, that has cut our exchange because we would not allow it to abuse us personally with impunity, asserts that the Erie "mob" was headed by the Mayor and the Presbyterian clergyman—referring of course to our friend Dr. LYON. A queer kind of a "mob" that must have been which found a leader in such a pious and exemplary christian as Dr. Lyon! Is'nt the *Courier* ashamed of itself?

☞ We owe our friend of the Buffalo *Rough Notes* one for that most admirable defense of our character, which he so kindly volunteered against the attacks of the Buffalo *Courier*. We hope we may never have a chance to repay it in kind, but if we do, here is our ☞!

The Buffalo *Weekly Visiter* is dead. Sorry.

Railroads and the Mails.

We are glad to see the Post Master General, in his report just submitted to Congress, rebuke the railroad monopolies of this country for their unjust and exorbitant demands upon the purse of the nation for mail service. It shows that the powers-that-be are waking up to the wrongs and injustice these monster railroad corporations are inflicting upon the public; and that, while the Government may be powerless to apply a remedy directly to the part affected, it has full reliance that the people in the end will apply one sure and effectual. Judge CAMPBELL tells Congress that on the 30th of September last there were in operation within the United States 202 railroad routes; their aggregate length was 13,410¾ miles; and the cost of mail transportation thereon $1,645,432 33—being at the rate of $120 26 7-10 per mile. Include the pay of mail messengers, route and local agents, the whole expense of this service is increased to $1,869,264 78, or $139 38 6-10 per mile. On estimating other kinds of service in the same manner upon the aggregate length of routes, it is discovered that the average cost of steamboat service is $34 45 per mile; coach service, $22 86 per mile; and of modes not specified $7 86 per mile. This shows a most astonishing disproportion between the pay demanded by railroads and that demanded by all other kinds of conveyances; and this disproportion—these exorbitant rates—the *people* are compelled to pay. We have heard a good deal of complaint in certain quarters about postage being a "tax upon knowledge," but we never knew before into whose pockets more than two-thirds of this immense "tax upon knowledge"—nearly six millions of dollars—found its way. Neither could we conceive why the cheap postage system had run the Department in debt. Our reason taught us that low postage, like a low tariff, ought to yield more revenue than a system of exorbitant rates, which like a high tariff, acted as a prohibition; but facts, the actual receipts and expenditures of the Department told a different tale. Judge CAMPBELL, however, has explained the mystery. Railroad monopolies have eaten up the revenues of the Department, and not satisfied with that, like the leach they cry for more. Was this the banquet to which the people were invited when they surrendered their rights into the hands of these companies? We think not. We were told when these monopolies first sought their franchise from our Legislatures that the construction of their roads all over the Union would give us increased and cheap mail facilities—that they would be the means of spreading among the people light and knowledge by cheapening the transportation of the mails, and the general facilities they would afford for commerce between the States. When those engaged in their construction passed among our farmers, invoking their aid, and haggling with them for the right of way through their farms, the same story was upon their lips upon every occasion.—In this particular, then, their promises have been profuse, but how they have been fulfilled can be seen by Judge CAMPBELL's figures. They show that these railroad cormorants have fairly eaten up the revenues of the Department—that because of their extortion *cheap postage* is a failure, so far as the Department, supporting itself is concerned. And what is worse, the Report of Judge CAMPBELL further shows that while these railroads have actually absorbed one-third of the entire revenues of the department—the *people's money*—the actual transportation of the mails at all is at the mercy of these same soulless corporations. Says the Post Master General:

"In a table attached to the report of the Second Assistant Postmaster General, marked *D*, the length of railroad service will be seen, and the prices respectfully paid to each company. The sums paid to these railroad companies are fixed under the acts of 7th July, 1838, January 25, 1839, and 3d March, 1845. Under the last-mentioned act it is made the duty of the Postmaster General to arrange and divide the railroad routes into three classes, and to pay them according to the size of the mails, the speed with which they are conveyed, and the importance of the service. Considerable difficulty has always existed with this branch of the service. *Sums are demanded from the department, which, in justice to great public interests it cannot consent to pay.* The importance of the service to the public is the great question of consideration for the head of the department; but if he, and the Presidents and managers of the railroad companies, do not view its importance alike, *the mail is thrown down, and the public caused thereby most grievously to suffer.* This is done sometimes, too, in the most summary manner, without any notice being given by which the department could be prepared to put on other service; and when this is done, whether designed or not, the department is sure to suffer. *The citizens of the different States are deeply interested in this question; and if they wish to continue to receive their letters and newspapers at a cheap rate of postage, they must not permit these companies to dictate to the department their own terms.* In some of the States of the Union a provision has been inserted in the charters in the railroad companies, providing for a reference, in case of a disagreement between the Postmaster General and the companies. In neither of the acts which I have cited is any power given to the Postmaster General to agree to any such reference; and if there were, I should very much doubt its policy. In England this agreement to refer has noted unfavorably to the government; and I see no reason why Congress, first giving each company a full opportunity of being heard, should not fix the sum which they are each respectively to receive.

In England, also in France, and in the other continental States, the time for arrivals and departures is so fixed by the Post Office Departments as best to suit the public interests.

In our own ordinary mail contracts, the time for arrival and departure is entirely subject to the order of this department, by which it is enabled to maintain an unbroken link of connection; but in the great majority of cases, though contracts have been drawn and submitted to railroad companies, they have not chosen to sign them. The consequence has been, that, though receiving the pay, they may be said to be entirely beyond the control of the department, and the public interests have thereby greatly suffered. After entering upon my duties as head of the department, complaints were made of the insufficiency of the mail cars, and of the want of proper accommodations; and so glaring were these defects in some instances, that the mail agents were unable properly to discharge their duties, now becoming daily more important owing to the increase of the way distribution. To remedy this evil, I had prepared a model of a mail-car, which I had transmitted to the presidents of the different railroad companies, but in very few instances have my wishes been complied with. In those cases where the contracts gave me the power to build a mail-car, when the one in use was unsuited to the purposes, I have ordered it to be done, and the cost charged to the companies; but in that class of cases in which they have declined becoming parties to any contract, I am remediless."

These facts hardly need comment. Their bearings are so plain that "he who runs may read," and there is small chance of any one being misled as to their true import. There is one remedy, and that is in the hands of the people. These monopolies must be taught their place—they must be brought under, must be made subservient to the people's wishes, and obedient to the dictates of common honesty. The Post Master General truly says "the citizens of the different States are deeply interested in the question," and if they wish the benefits of "cheap postage" "they must not permit these corporations to dictate to the Department their own terms." Their power must be broken—their influence crushed—or this can never be. The time may not have arrived to do this effectually, but the day is coming when the people in their might, as they did with that old Monster, the Bank of the United States, will rise up and trottle them. In this work Erie has struck the first blow, and in doing so has planted a seed that will germinate a club that will eventually break the back of these railroad monopolies.

Our Assailants Abroad.

A rowdy is a "riotous and turbulent fellow," and a mob an "assembly of men who do an illegal act in a tumultuous and disorderly manner." The citizens of Erie, according to the papers both East and West that are under the management of the great railroad corporations of Ohio and New York, are "rowdies," and the assembly of officers and citizens who, on the 8th inst., by order of the Mayor, and under the immediate charge and direction of the High Constable, executed the city ordinance of the 19th July last, directing the streets to be cleared of the nuisances with which they had been encumbered for the last two years (i. e. the railroad bridges and track) is called a "mob," a "disorderly mob." But worse than this, when you attempt to convince them that they are under a mistake, that they do not understand the matter in which they interest themselves so much, they still shout "mob," and will not listen. This is the sum and substance of their reasoning, and the final conclusion from which they admit of no appeal To offer facts and arguments to them is like casting pearls before swine. They will not listen, but to drown your voice, again shout "mob!" "mob!" They roll falsehood, detraction and vilification as sweet morsels under their tongues, and judging from their language we must conclude that they breathe an atmosphere deeply tainted with that moral putridity which always surrounds a hireling press, and upon which they who sell themselves to do the unholy work of monopolized wealth are compelled sooner or later to subsist. At the time Erie's slanderers first loaned their press and talents to assist these railroad corporations, we do not suppose they for a moment dreamed the length to which they would be compelled to go, or the depths of wickedness and degradation to which they must descend, else they would at once have spurned the damnable work of attempting to give a monied combination supremacy over the municipal and private rights of our citizens. But once in, there is no stopping place. The cry of their heartless task-masters is ever "onward." There is no backing out. Their hands are, and must be against every man's hand except those of their employers. Hence these papers call our citizens "rowdies," and our public meetings "mobs." Singularly constituted mobs they must be, composed, as they are, of men of all political parties and religions, among whom you may find our clergymen, judges, lawyers, doctors, merchants, artisans, and the whole community of citizens with scarcely an exception—all standing firmly together, working for the same object and endeavoring to attain the same end—the protection of our legal rights against a railroad combination extending from Boston to St. Louis. This combination seek the control of the trade that will cross the country from Oregon and California as soon as a railroad communication is opened, hence its efforts to crush us and give the business to which our position and natural advantages entitle us, to Cleveland and Buffalo, stifle the Sunbury and Erie Railroad, and secure the trade which properly belongs to that road and to Philadelphia to the New York roads and to New York city. A moment's consideration of the facts as they are known to all, should convince every reasoning man that this state of affairs could not exist without a cause. Can any man suppose for a moment that all the citizens of a law loving and law abiding community, as ours is and always has been, could be arrayed in the manner this community is, against a person or a corporation that was proceeding according to law and right? Cannot all see that it is a struggle of right, reason, and law, against oppression and wrong? What else could engage an entire community as this community is engaged? The first appearance of the matter to an unprejudiced mind brands the newspaper reports of Buffalo, Cleveland, and New York with falsehood These papers complain that it furnishes evidence "of the spirit of insubordination abroad in the land." On the contrary, it proves that the "spirit of subordination is abroad in our land" That a thousand men could be assembled on an occasion of that kind, with the feelings of wrongs suffered from, and about to be inflicted by the railroad companies, and when so assembled should conduct themselves strictly in accordance with the orders of the Mayor—that not a particle of property outside of the public streets was injured or destroyed—that the assembly peaceably and without tumult did their work and went quietly home again, is such "subordination to law and obedience to order" as cannot be shown by either Cleveland or Buffalo, with all their boasted morality

It is to be regretted that the railroad men could not be induced to forego their purpose, and allow their road to remain as it was, or carry out the arrangements entered into at the time the roads were building, to bring both of the New York railroad tracks here, and to the docks where they should be! But we had suffered from their annoyances so long that they supposed we would suffer longer and do their bidding cheerfully.—They have found their mistake. True, the annoyances of the traveling public are great and those who suffer have our sympathies, but we are confident when they learn the facts as they actually exist, we shall be exculpated from all blame. The Buffalo *Commercial*, in the lecture it furnishes for our benefit, says, "it is a maxim often quoted by lawyers, that there is no wrong done to person or property, or to the rights of citizens in respect to either, but what has an appropriate and legal remedy." To this we cheerfully assent.—Whatever has been done has been in pursuance of law, the majesty of which our slanderers are anxious to see maintained. Not a blow was struck except in accordance with the law. On the contrary, the railroad, without law, sought to run over us. Its managers sought to attain their object in violation of the rights of our citizens, hence the lecture of the *Commercial* should be studied by its pet railroad corporations—not us!

It is true, railroad men say our Ordinance was a wrong to them. They are not governed by the rules they prescribe for us. Instead of leaving the matter to be decided by the proper tribunal, they bring a force of men from a neighboring State, led by citizens of other States, and mob-like, attempt to force their way through Pennsylvania contrary to law and right. The fine spun theories of morality, of law, and order drawn by their aiders and abetters, do not apply to them. O, no! They are concocted for our benefit alone. They are at liberty to trample upon the Ordinances of the city, the laws of the State, and the rights of citizens, and why? Because they are "a thousand miles of railroad"—a mammoth combination of rich and powerful corporations. The fact that they are "a thousand miles of railroad" is one reason why they should be broke here.—Let the trade be distributed. Build the Sunbury and Erie road, the Little Vally road, and then, bring the produce of the Great West here, and here let the trade select its route to market. "A thousand miles of railroad," with a hundred millions of capital would be a more terrible monster than an absolute monarchy. With its tremendous influence it could sway the elections and policy of the whole country. No rival line could be built. Those that it could not terrify, it would if possible buy. No other line of railroad could compete with the Lake Shore line for trade and travel. The whole country would be at its mercies. When one track could not do the business another would be laid, and so on track after track as business and the purse of the corporation increased. In twenty years its iron heel would be firmly set upon our necks, and terror, bribery and corruption by railroad corporations would stalk with brazen face in the land and in the halls of Legislation. Better at once bow in meek submission to the tender mercies of the autocrat of all the Russians.

Gov. Bigler and the Railroad Press.

The newspapers of Cleveland and Buffalo do not like the tone and language of the telegraphic dispatch of his Excellency, Gov. BIGLER, to the Editor of this paper. The *Express* declares that, if it is genuine, the Governor deserves a "straight jacket;" the *Rough Notes* thinks that, in writing it, "he has succeeded in making himself as infamous as even his worst enemies could desire." The same paper also "hopes" "that he has not disgraced himself and his position by openly upholding law-breakers and law-breaking." Now all this is very fine, and no doubt passes in Buffalo and among railroad men as peculiarly severe; but we apprehend it will not deter his Excellency from fearlessly doing his duty. The citizens of Erie are his constituents; they are among those who, in the hour of trial and difficulty, he must rely. Their interests are his interests, and his interests are those of our great Commonwealth. What affects the one affects the other; hence is it wonderful that he should "sympathize" with the citizens of Erie in *their* troubles—troubles, that every railroad man knows has been brought upon them because of their firm adherence to the interests of the Sunbury and Erie Road, a work, let us add, of vital and overshadowing importance to the whole Commonwealth! In "sympathizing" with Erie; in promising her citizens that "whatever his duties and the laws will permit, shall be done for them," let us assure our friend of the *Notes*, he will not be "openly," or "secretly," or in any other way, "upholding law-breakers or law-breaking." The fact that Buffalo and Cleveland papers assert that our citizens have broken laws, are rioters, are a mob, does not make it so; and this fact Gov. BIGLER knows. As the Chief Magistrate of the State he will examine the case carefully and impartially, and if he finds, as we are confident he will find, that the *law* has been upon our side, and that we have acted for the best interests of the Commonwealth in opposing the schemes of the railroad monopolies of Ohio and New York, we have no doubt he will, as he has promised, do all and every thing consistent with the laws and his duty for us. Our friend of the *Notes* must not think that because Buffalo and Cleveland have succeeded in raising a clamor against Erie, that the Governor of the State is bound to join in that clamor, and give a helping hand in the effort to crush us. No, that is not his duty, and we know it is not his inclination. To stand between the weak and the strong, to interpose the power of the Executive between the municipal rights of our city and the arrogant assumptions of capitalists from other States, is the duty of WILLIAM BIGLER, and we have no doubt he will perform it, regardless of denunciations from any quarter.

☞ The Buffalo *Republic* of Saturday last made a great blow because the Post-Master of that city, Maj. DUCATE, stepped out of the line of his duty and accompanied the mails to this city on that day. If there had been any danger in sending the mails over this route, it would possibly have been very proper for that functionary to have accompanied them on the night run when there is no agent to protect them, but for our good friend, the Major, to take the day train, when there is a regularly appointed Route Agent to take care of Uncle Sam's property is, to say the least of it, rather "crowding the mourners." However, if the Route Agents can stand the imputations of the *Republic*, why, as the old man said by the skippers in his cheese, "we kin."—☞ P. S. The Route Agent says the Major rode in the coach all the way up, and did'nt come near the mail car! How's that? 2d P. S. With two good Route Agents, a Local Agent that never sleeps, and a Special Agent or two to wake him, and a P. M. that has the advantage of his brother official in Buffalo by two inches, we rather guess the mails, and females too for that matter, won't suffer between this and Buffalo this winter.

☞ In consequence of the press upon our columns by articles relative to our local difficulties, we are compelled to forego much general and political news that we would like to lay before our readers.

☞ A Railroad meeting is to be held at Lockport to-day for the purpose of repudiating the action of the thirty-five railroad men who assembled there a few weeks ago and denounced Erie in the name of that enterprising village.

STATEMENT!

Of the Mayor and Councils of Erie in relation to the Railroad difficulties in their City.

Great misrepresentations and many falsehoods relative to the Railroad troubles at Erie having been industriously circulated and widely scattered abroad, the Mayor and Councils of the city have deemed it a duty, which they owe as well to themselves as to an intelligent public, to submit a brief statement of affairs; confidently believing, that when the truth is laid before the public their conduct will meet with its hearty approval.

That portion of Pennsylvania known as the Triangle and composing the part of the county of Erie bordering upon Lake Erie lies between and separates the states of New York and Ohio. Its extent along the Lake is about fifty miles; and from its situation is in the direct line of the improvements extending West from the city of New York. Without passing through this territory New York could obtain no *direct* communication by railway with the Great West. Without passing through Pennsylvania she can have no *communication* whatever on the American side of the Lakes The city of Erie is situated in this triangle, on the Harbor of Presque Isle, the most capacious, safest, and most convenient harbor on Lake Erie.

In 1850 the two great rival Railroad Companies of New York—the New York & Erie, and the Central Railroad Company—were each extending or endeavoring to extend their roads West. The terminus of the Central road was then Buffalo, that of the New York & Erie Dunkirk, both situated as is well known upon Lake Erie; but the Lake being closed with ice a considerable portion of the year, it became a matter of great and manifest importance to secure a railway communication with the West in order that its great and growing trade might have a constant and uninterrupted transit to the Eastern market, thus swelling the wealth and increasing the trade of the city of New York. The two great rival Companies were each seeking this object; and each regarding the other with undisguised jealousy and hostility.

It became of course a matter of vital importance to both Companies to secure a passage through the portion of Pennsylvania which we have before described. Let us see in what position they were placed in reference to the right of way through this strip separating the states of New York and Ohio. By an act of the Legislature of Pennsylvania, passed in 1842, a company known as the Erie & North East Railroad Company was incorporated to construct a railway from the East line of North East township, (being the West line of the state of New York,) to the Borough of Erie. This, whatever may have been the design of the original passage of the act, would, if secured, form a part of the link of railway communication with the West, and carried them so far on their way as the city of Erie.

But from the city of Erie West to the Ohio line was still a distance of some 30 miles. How was this link to be completed? Was there any Charter by which New York could carry her railways West to connect with those of Ohio? By an act of the Legislature of Pennsylvania passed in 1848, a company was incorporated called the Erie & Ohio Railroad Company, with authority to construct a Railroad from Erie to the Ohio state line. Had this charter been acted upon, and properly secured, the line of communication would have been complete But Philadelphia, then engaged in the construction of her great Central road to Pittsburh, began to open her eyes, and to look around her to see what was doing upon the Lake shore. It was manifest that a Railroad passing through Erie County in this way and forming a connecting link between New York and Ohio was for the sole and exclusive benefit of New York, that Philadelphia could hope to derive no advantage from it, but on the contrary much injury; and that it would not be safe or prudent to permit it to proceed; at all events until the improvements connecting Philadelphia with the West were either completed, or in a state of greater forwardness than they then were Accordingly the Legislature of 1849, through the influence of Philadelphia and the Central Railroad of Pennsylvania, repealed the act incorporating the Erie & Ohio Railroad Company, thus breaking the link, and interposing, as was supposed, an insurmountable barrier to the present progress of the New York Railroads West Some years previous, however, an act had been passed to construct a Canal from Franklin or near Franklin, (the County seat of Venango County,) to Lake Erie. By an act passed at the same session that the other was repealed (1849) this Company was empowered to construct a Railway instead of a Canal, if deemed most expedient. Under cover of this Charter a Railroad was constructed, as we shall see hereafter, from Erie to the Ohio State Line, connecting there with the Ohio Railroad, and without going to either of its termini.

In this position, then, stood affairs in 1850. The gauge of the New York Roads was either six feet or four feet 8½ inches. No other gauge was known in the State. The New York and Erie was of the former—the Central railroad of the latter. The gauge of all the Ohio railroads including that from Cleveland East to the Pennsylvania line was 4 feet 10 inches. It was manifest then, that between the New York & Ohio roads there must somewhere be a break of gauge. It was so apparent that Erie, being as it were neutral ground, and from its location in the very place which could be desired, should be the place where this break should occur, that it was at first readily conceded by both the New York companies; and no other idea was entertained until the spring of 1851.

We have thus seen the situation of Erie, the position of the two New York roads seeking the West, and the Ohio roads. We have seen, also, that the roads of New York sought to pass through a portion of Pennsylvania without conferring any advantage upon the State—in fact drawing away trade from her own metropolis, and conferring no local advantage even upon Erie, unless there was a break of gauge. So manifestly did this appear, and so just was the claim of Erie to this trade that, as we have said before, it was at once conceded to her. We shall see hereafter that this break was a matter of vital importance to Erie, not on account of the paltry drippings of trade arrising from the transhipment of goods, but for reasons of great weight, involving the completion of a project upon which for the last 15 years her eyes have been constantly set with a steadiness worthy of a more speedy reward—the Sunbury & Erie Railroad. Why then was the break of gauge not fixed at Erie as at first conceded? In 1850 an agreement was entered into between the Erie & North East Co. and the New York and Erie, by which the New York and Erie were to extend their six foot track to the State line, there to connect with the Erie and North East, who continued the same gauge to Erie. This gave umbrage to the Central Rail Road Co. Difficulties ensued; meetings were held among the various interests, and it was finally agreed to extend both the 4 feet 8½ inches and the six feet gauges to Erie. Thus matters rested The Erie and North East Company proceeded to grade their road for a double track.—The New York roads were also progressing towards the Pennsylvania line each with its respective gauge. But in April, 1851, at the suggestion of a prominent person in the interest of the Central Railroad, the scheme was formed of running through Pennsylvania with the Ohio gauge with a great ulterior object, not then fully understood, but now open and apparent. This the Erie and North East Company resisted, and in pursuance of its original contract proceeded to lay down the six feet track. Thus it will be seen that the New York companies violated not only what was just and proper, under the circumstances, but their own solemn agreement. Had they adhered to their original agreement, there would have been but one break of gauge between the East and the West—that at Erie. By the violation of their agreement, they created two additional breaks for each road, one at the State Line, common to both, and one at Dunkirk for the N. Y & Erie, and one then at Buffalo for the Central. Much misrepresentation has been spread abroad in relation to these breaks, and the opinion has been industriously circulated that Erie was chargeable with the delay and annoyances produced by them to trade passing along the road. If what we have stated is true, and we defy a successful contradiction, it will appear that Erie is, and has been, in nowise chargeable with the breaks either at the State Line, Dunkirk or Buffalo, but that they have been wholly and solely the creation of the New Yorkers themselves.

Unfortunately the Erie & North East Railroad Co., as well we believe for their own interests, as for those of Erie, instead of constructing their road to the harbor, as was confidently expected, thus increasing the commerce and building up the business of the city, located their road more than a mile from the lake, not even extending their road to the borough of Erie, the legal terminus of their charter, and thus raising a question of very considerable magnitude as to the legality of their location. Under cover of the charter of the Franklin Canal Company, citzens of Ohio constructed a rail-way not to Lake Erie as provided by their charter, but to the terminus of the Erie & North East road more than a mile from the lake; thus ignoring the existance of the Erie harbor, and joining with the Erie & North East in forming a direct line from Buffalo to Cleveland, touching on the out-skirts of the city of Erie Here was created the joint depot of the two companies, the Erie & N. East and the Franklin Canal, both then in violation of their respective charters. Still the Directors of the Erie & N. East Railroad were Pennsylvanians, and steadfastly refused until within the last few months to entertain any proposition to change their track. Indeed, from the 11th of March, 1851 until the 11th April 1853, they were prohibited by law from so doing. This law, known as the gauge law, was intended to protect the interests of Erie and Pennsylvania, and to prevent the encroachments of New York, and enacted that all Railroads coming from the New York State line to Erie should be either of the gauge of six feet or 4 feet 8½ inches; and that any Railroad thereafter to be constructed from Erie West to the Ohio line should be of the gauge of four feet ten inches and no other. Whilst this was the law, Erie was safe; the interests of Pennsylvania were protected and the selfish aggressive scheme of the New York Companies was checked. The repeal of this law by any means, fair or foul, was determined upon by the foreign Railroad interests It was the boast of one of their prominent men that the Legislature of Pennsylvania should repeal the law if it cost $50,000. The wealth of the Central Railroad Co. of New York, and the unscrupulous conduct of those who have its management are well known. To the lasting disgrace of Pennsylvania Legislature the boast was verified. By the most corrupt practices the repeal of the law was obtained, and Erie was thus left without this great support singly and alone to contend for her interests and those of Pennsylvania, not less interested than Erie herself Still acting as the Directors of the Erie & N. East road were firm, we were safe. But, by a singular fatality just previous to the passage of the repeal of the gauge laws, they sold out the controlling interest in their road to New York interests. At the same time no doubt an arrangement was made by which either the Pennsylvania Directors should themselves to change the gauge, or remain passive whilst the work should be done by the foreign Railroad companies. Still the Erie & N. East Railroad Directors hesitated to make any move towards the change of the track until the completion of the through gauge. This was not until in July last, that serious fears were entertained that they were about to make the attempt. About four weeks ago their determination was finally announced to comply with the interests and wishes of the foreign companies.

To permit this would, in our opinion, be suicidal to the best interest of Erie; and we would have been recreant to the trust reposed in us by our fellow citizens if we had permitted it if there was a way by which it could be prevented. The break of gauge was considered of vital importance, not for the purpose of levying the drippings of trade or of levying contributions from the traveling public, as has been falsely charged upon us, but for grave and weighty reasons one or two of which we will now lay before the public:

1st. So far back as before the monetary crisis which succeeded the speculations of 1835, Nicholas Biddle, then the greatest financier of the Union, and ever watchful of the interests of his native city, Philadelphia, foresaw the importance of a railway communication from Philadelphia to the Lakes A charter for this purpose was obtained, incorporating a company to construct the Sunbury and Erie Railroad, and other previously existing charters covering the ground between Philadelphia and Erie. Owing to the revolution in the times and many other great prospects was temporarily checked But with the returning prosperity of the country many of these projects revived and among others the Sunbury and Erie. Notwithstanding all the difficulties that have been thrown in the way, there is every prospect if not an absolute certainty of the completion of that great highway, which no doubt hastened the calamity upon us by the foreign railroad monopolies.

We have not space in this article to enlarge upon the advantages of the road, or its great importance to Erie. It is enough to say that when completed it will be the shortest and speediest communication between the Seaboard and the Lakes, and if competition is offered, will be formidable to the New York roads even for the west seeking New York. If we succeed in running past the discontinuous gauge, we have [illegible] seriously retard if not entirely defeat the project. The defeat of the Sunbury and Erie project, we believe to have been the main objects which the foreign companies had in view when they determined to force the change of gauge through Erie county at the present time. If this monopoly succeeds in making an unbroken interest from Albany to Cleveland effectually and completely precludes all competition from any quarter It completely the whole trade of the Sunbury and Erie road with all the advantages of distance and grade could not for a long time compete with this great combination of capital placed on the roads of the monopoly and kept there until it reached its destination. We will not do to say that the laws of trade will control the shipment and transportation of freight. The fact is otherwise. The laws of trade are free to act are good; but what are they in the hands of a mammoth combination to control them and to set them at defiance? Under then that the Sunbury and Erie road Pennsylvania is interested may be the means of obtaining at least a portion of the trade and not be left entirely at the mercy of hostile interests, we are bound to use every of our ability to resist this monopoly.

2d. If the foreign companies succeed in their schemes, there is one great monopoly, interest from Albany to Chicago, powerful enough either to buy out or crush every rival interest, combining an influence which is without a parallel in this country. We propose making a break of this interest; and it is this which the railroad companies fear. The break of gauge would be with them a matter of protection, were it not for the break of interest in the mammoth combination. We feel certain the people of the whole Lake Shore will one day, if not now, thank us for the act, save them as well as ourselves from a monied combination.

3d Erie has always felt aggrieved at the roads, (The Franklin Canal Company in fact violation of its charter) direct the roads to our harbor, thus cutting us off—make us a mere way station on all the commerce of the Lakes between Cleveland and Buffalo. We have had we permitted the four feet six inch gauge to be laid down, our chance for the roads to the harbor was very much if not entirely taken away

These considerations with many others might be adduced, and some of them, we doubt less, suggest themselves to the intelligent reader, are sufficient to show the importance of the question to Erie and the propriety of the determination to prevent it by all legal means in our power.

Let us look for a moment at the facts in our hands. The Franklin Canal Railway, the one it will be seen connects Erie West to the Ohio line, as it was decided by a recent decision of the Supreme Court to have been done without authority of law; and that it was a gross and palpable fraud perpetrated upon Pennsylvania. An injunction then sought and obtained by us against this road, accordingly have commenced against it. But whilst this and other schemes of the Railroad men may be, at least, be triumphant, and succeed in laying down their through gauge, it is very questionable, with all the money which they could command, bear on the question whether it would be impossible or at least