

**A STRANGE FREAK OF A CAT.**—A family cat belonging to a country friend is the heroine of a singular story. Puss recently became the mother of an interesting family of kittens. Proud of her charge, she deposited them upon the uppermost part of the haymow in the barn, access to which could only be had by a ladder. As soon as her ladyship had her change comfortably provided for, she descends the steps, makes her way to the farm-house, and, entering the kitchen, walked up to the house dog and by such means of communication as exist among the brute creation, intimated to Jack that she had something to show him. Returning to the barn, Jack following, they both went up the steps, and, proceeding to the nest, puss spread her little family before her companion, and, with true motherly pride, called for an expression of Jack's admiration. Jack, after viewing the progeny for a few minutes, placed his paws upon them, and, licking them all over in the most affectionate manner, departed down the steps with the gravity of a patriarch.

**SALES OF PUBLIC LANDS.**—During the month of November 62,256 acres of the public lands were disposed of at the Minnasha (Wisconsin) and Booneville (Missouri) offices, the greater portion having been taken for actual settlement and cultivation, and will add about three hundred and fifty farms to those States.

Returms from Oregon for the month of October show that 23,150 acres of the public lands were disposed of at the following local offices: Traverse City, Michigan, 23,055 acres.

The greater portion of the lands were taken, under the Homestead law, for actual settlement and cultivation.

**Dobbins' Electric Soap**, for sale at Stebbins'. It is recommended as the best article in use. Try it.

**A FATAL DISEASE** is prevailing among the cattle and poultry in the vicinity of Millburg, Union county. Cattle die within a few hours after being attacked by the disease.

**NARROW ESCAPE OF JUDGE BREWSTER.**—In Philadelphia on Monday of last week, Judge F. Carroll Brewster, was listening to the arguments in a case of equity, he leaned forward for a moment to receive some information from an officer of the court, who stood in front of the bench. The movement saved his life, for instantly without the slightest pramonitory warning, a circular iron ventilator, weighing some eighty pounds, which occupied a position in the ceiling directly above, fell with tremendous force upon the back of the chair, crushing it to pieces as though it were made of the most brittle material. Not only the back of the chair but even the hindmost legs were broken. Had it not been for his momentary change of position this immense weight would have fallen upon the Judge's head, crushing it as it did the chair. Certainly a most miraculous escape.

**THE SUSQUEHANNA BOOM BILL SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR.**—Gov. Curtin has signed the Boom Bill passed by the last Legislature, conferring sundry exorbitant powers and privileges upon a few lumbermen at Williamsport. The bill was bought through the Legislature against the earnest protest of the members immediately representing the interests affected by it, and the Governor has had the most unquestionable evidence laid before him of the unqualified hostility of the people of the West Branch valley to the measure and of its utterly private character. And after several formal hearings of the parties concerned, the Governor had not the manliness to boldly face the selfish and intriguing capitalists who procured its passage through the Legislature, by means which we shall not at this time relate, but deliberately and as will be generally believed, dishonorably signed away the interests of nine-tenths of the lumbermen on the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

**CLINTON COUNTY.**—A daring burglary was committed at the Middle Ward Hotel, Lock Haven, on the night of Dec. 8th. The burglar entered the house through the sitting room window, and proceeded to the third floor where he robbed a stranger of \$25. Then he went to the room of Mr. King, proprietor of the house, and took his pants from the bed and carried them to the sitting room and riddled them of \$32. Next he went to the room occupied by a Mr. Shaffer from Sinemahoning, who demanded who was there, when the thief jerked Mr. S's pants from under the pillow and ran down stairs and into the street, where the pants were picked up, minus a pocket-book containing about \$200, and a check for \$200. No clue exists as to who the thief was.

**ANOTHER CONFESSION.**—Marvelous as it may seem it is nevertheless a fact, that the Philadelphia Age is a convert to the new faith as propounded by the Chicago Times. It even goes further, and heartily endorses the nomination and election of a negro to office as a member of the Massachusetts Legislature. It says: "For our own part we heartily endorse the nomination. We believe that the color of the skin is no badge of dishonor, and when qualified by education to hold the ballot, the man should be eligible to office. The nominee, we hear, is a man of sense and sagacity, and will do no discredit to the State." When will wonders cease?

Department reports show that the alleged ingratitude of republicans is a sin not yet fairly chargeable to this Government. As an example—the War Department has expended \$1,447,911 for the burial of 341,670 soldiers. The Cemeteries of the brave dead are scattered through seventeen Military Departments.

**True and Brave Words.**  
The fourth annual report of the Union League of Philadelphia is published, from which we copy the closing paragraphs. They are good, strong, brave words which we hope are not needed by either Congress or the people. The report concludes:

Our duties are plain before us. In the possible struggle that may at no distant day arise between Congress and that body which was once our Administration, we shall stand with the Congress of our recent choice, rather than with the men who have betrayed us, and whom we have also repudiated. Rumors come to us from the Capitol that it is the design of the Executive to seek some means of reconciliation between himself and our faithful representatives. Trust him not! The friendship of such a man is the most dangerous thing about him. The first treachery may be his crime, but the second act will be the folly of his victims. With our overwhelming majorities in both branches of Congress, we have no need for his services beyond that limit which the Constitution imposes upon him. We all know what would be the consequences of his infringement of that sacred document. Warnings are already in the air that he may heed or not, according to the measure of his wisdom. The position of the Union party during the continuance of his term of office is an assured one, from which we cannot be driven, and should not be seduced. We have had enough of compromises. The Missouri Compromise, which almost belongs to our ancient history, was a proof of the short-sightedness of those who tamper with truth and justice for the sake of temporary peace. Whenever a lie or a false principle arises in the land let us strike it down, and the sooner the blow falls and the battle is fought out "on the line," the better for all concerned in the contest. To postpone the evil day is to double the volume of its wrath.

If we Americans have not taken these truths to heart, we have fought through a long war, and gained great results in the struggle, but we have gathered little wisdom by the way. The questions between us and the people of the South should be settled but in one way, by the inflexible advancement of the principles for which we fought, and by which they fell. This is the only solution of the difficulties which our people will tolerate, and it is therefore the only adjustment that can be permanent. Let Congress stand by the time-tried principles of the Union party; let us stand by Congress in its efforts to put those principles into practice, and if that which we call "truth" be not false in its own nature, all will be well with us, and in the long result of time all will be well with our reflecting adversaries.

**Paying the National Debt.**  
The London Spectator, in alluding to the prospect of our paying our national debt ere long, remarks:

It will be the greatest deed Democracy has ever done, the one which will come most clearly home to property-holders, which will most rapidly dissipate the idea that Democracy is distinguished by "an ignorant impatience of taxation," or by an indisposition to pay its honorable claims. No despotism will be able to show such a financial account, no constitutional monarchy a better one, and successful finance tells heavily with cultivated mankind. The tide of immigration will set in with double rapidity, and the last remaining deterrent to British North America will have been removed. Meanwhile, whether the dream is fulfilled or not, America, so long as she raises this surplus, possesses a force of which it is difficult to estimate the extent, such, for example, spent without a loan as much as the whole outlay of Great Britain upon her army and navy, can waste every year without increasing her taxes as much as the loan with which Napoleon paid for his Italian campaign.

**The Democracy and Andrew Johnson.**  
Mr. Le Blond, a Democratic Representative of Ohio, took occasion, the other day, in his place in Congress, to speak of the "humble individual" as follows:  
"We have no interest in the Executive on this side of the house—not the least. [Renewed laughter.] He is not the man of our choice; we did not put him there. [Clapping of hands.] We do not claim any benefits under him and certainly we did not receive any in the late campaign. [Renewed laughter.] We never took him up, and therefore have no right to drop him; there was no necessity of our dropping that which we had never taken up. We never took him up, and he has never taken us up. It is true, whenever he ran into our line of policy we were bound to sustain him, but we never pretended to shoulder that which this Radical party has put into power. To do so would be to destroy any party in the world. [Roars of laughter.]"

—The Supreme Court of the United States have agreed upon a decision upon the constitutionality of the test oath. The question came up on the crises presented in regard to the exaction of the oath from attorneys, of which were several under consideration by the court, which were argued last summer. The court has decided by a vote of five to four against the oath.

—The Council of Columbia, Pennsylvania, have just started a movement to rebuild the bridge across the Susquehanna at that place, which was destroyed in the summer of 1863, when the rebels had possession of York, Wrightsville and the Cumberland valley. The authorities of Columbia, appointed the 13th inst., for a meeting in the town hall.

**NEW YORK.**  
Governor Fenton, in his message, gives a summary of the results of the state census. The population of the state is now 3,827,816; an increase of 361,602 over the number in 1855, or 10.43 per cent. in ten years. The increase is almost wholly in the commercial and manufacturing districts. The agricultural counties are nearly stationary, and seven of them show a diminution of population.

The native citizens number 67.84 per cent. of the whole population. The voters are 824,973, an increase of 170,551, or 26 per cent., mostly naturalized citizens. The negro population is steadily diminishing, while the number of Indians is on the increase. The latter are now, he says, nearly ready to receive their lands as individual property.

Our manufacturing capital is \$227,673,187, an increase of thirty-one per cent. in five years; while the increase of products is twenty-two per cent. As three-fourths of the people are engaged in agriculture, it is gratifying to learn of a marked advance in the rural branches of that industry.

The sum now raised by the state for schools is \$1,406,089, by the school districts, \$4,550,111; by rates and other sources, \$1,422,687; a total of \$7,378,878, of which \$4,586,211 was expended in teachers' salaries. Children between five and twenty-one years number 1,354,967, of whom 919,033, or more than two-thirds, have attended the public schools during some portion of the year. There are 11,552 schoolhouses, and 20,481 teachers have been employed, of whom 21,450 are women.

The attention of the legislature is very properly called to the large number of children who neglect the opportunities for education. Impediments should be removed by liberal and stringent legislation. The two normal schools heretofore in existence have been highly useful in furnishing qualified teachers. The Commissioners appointed to locate four new normal schools have named Potsdam, Cortlandt, Brockport and Fredonia as their sites, and have urged the establishment of six more normal schools to meet the urgent wants of the system.

If it is not presumptions in this connection, we venture to advise a more compulsory enforcement of the maintenance of adequate schools in every district, and such provision for the suppression of truancy as will secure the actual education of all the children in the state.

The Governor discusses the canal interests and policy of the state at some length. We have only space to-day to make a note of his chief conclusions. The amount of the Canal Fund on the 30th of September last was \$4,884,634.21. The revenues during the last fiscal year amounted to \$4,309,746.12; the expenses were \$1,434,909.73, leaving a surplus revenue of \$2,874,836.39, which has been transferred to the Sinking Fund, as directed by the Constitution.

The net canal debt on the 30th of September last amounted to \$15,602,976. By 1872 it is expected that the old canal debt and general fund debt will be entirely obliterated.

The subject of transportation of freight, much discussed in the northwestern states, makes the capacity of our public works and the cheapness of transit of great interest. The Erie Canal, with a tonnage capacity of four and a half millions of tons in each direction for seven and a half months, has never been used beyond seventy-five per cent of that capacity. But the slow movement of loaded boats propelled only by horse power, at a rate not exceeding from one and a half to two miles an hour, is the cause in part of the demand for increased capacity. The high prices paid for boats, wages of labor and cost of towage have combined to make transportation dear.

Governor Fenton proposes the construction of an enlarged tier of locks on the entire line of the Erie and Oswego canals, which would admit the passage of steam vessels of from five to six hundred tons burthen. This he asserts would increase the capacity of our canals to over eleven million tons and reduce the cost of transportation fifty per cent. The Governor estimates the cost of this enlargement at ten millions of dollars.

The proposition to pay the cost by an annual tax of \$5,000,000 for two years, when the aggregate annual taxation of the state for state and local purposes is about fifty millions already, Governor Fenton rejects. He is also disposed against the creation of a new debt to be paid by direct taxation.

Governor Fenton recommends the passage of the Constitutional Amendment; calls the attention of the legislature to measures needed for calling together a State Constitutional Convention; recommends that the number of delegates be increased by thirty, to be chosen at large, which we think very useful; and urges such a reform of our higher judiciary system as will increase the peace of justice, who has been halting for a number of years in this state, to the great injury of litigants. He urges strict economy upon the legislature; advises such a reform of assessors as shall make personal property bear its fair share of state taxation an excellent recommendation; and shows, from the report of the Comptroller, that we have been running behind-hand during the last two years, our expenses being greater than our income. He calls the attention of the legislature to the necessity of some measure for forcing prosecuting attorneys to do their duty in bringing criminals to justice; and urges that the prisons of the state be put in charge of capable men, not to be removed for political causes—an excellent suggestion, which we hope the legislature, if it has power, will attend to. His proposition to put the pardoning power in the hands

of a bureau or commission seems to us highly injudicious. If the Governor has not time to attend to this part of his duty, he may be authorized to appoint a clerk or secretary to examine cases for him, but the responsibility should remain with the executive head.

He makes an excellent suggestion, which should receive immediate attention, for a board of unsalaried inspectors to examine into the management and condition of the numerous charities in the state, which provide or profess to provide for invalid soldiers, or the widows or orphans of soldiers.

We are sorry that, in his remarks upon the new Capitol he did not recommend the legislature to compel the commissioners to make such offers for plans for this building as will attract the attention and draw out the efforts of the ablest architects in the country. The terms offered by the Commission so far are such that no architect of ability would find it worth his while to give time and study to plans which, even if accepted, he would not be allowed to carry out. If the state is to spend a great sum of money—ten millions, it is said—for a new Capitol, we ought at least to have a building of which we shall not be ashamed.

—The coal fields of America cover 225,000 square miles, an area equal to twenty-eight such States as Massachusetts.

—A private letter received at Montreal states that the only surviving relative of Columbus is shortly to visit America.

—Part of Dan. Rice's menagerie broke loose recently in Ohio. A stray alligator was captured, but two boa constrictors are still at large.

—The Buffalo Courier, Democratic organ in Western New York, says: "Let our colored brethren possess their souls in patience. The Democratic party will see that they have their rights"

—Connecticut, California, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Tennessee, choosing twenty-two members of Congress, are yet to elect.

—The Cincinnati, and other papers, are warning persons seeking employment, to keep out of the cities, as they are overstocked with laborers of all kinds.

—The Detroit Free Press says that the last crop of winter wheat in Michigan "may fairly challenge comparison as to quality with any that was ever grown in that country."

—The Nashville Press and Times speaks of the recent message of Andrew Johnson as an "essay on the subject of reconstruction," and thanks him for sending it.

—Hon. John W. Forney, in a letter to Senator Worthington, of Chester county, announced at once his withdrawal as a candidate for United States Senator, and his preference for Hon. Thaddeus Stevens.

—Hons. (!) John Morrissey and Ben. Wood, of New York, have been prosecuted by N. B. Odell for being concerned in sundry swindling lottery operations, whereby said Odell lost \$35,000. An order for their arrest has been issued by the Court.

—A Milwaukee wife eloped, discovered that her gallant was married, left him, tried to get employment and couldn't, repented and returned to her husband, who received her with open arms. Reconciliation.

—The Government has decided to send to the Paris Exhibition a large delegation of the Northwestern Indians. They will take with them their wigwags, war and agricultural implements, and every variety of costume.

—A nice young man went into a gambling house in Bresham, Texas, and after losing all his money, jewelry, &c., staked his clothes, and finally walked out of the den a la Adam before the fall.

—Another frightful colliery explosion has taken place in England, and it is feared that over three hundred lives have been lost. Over four hundred men and boys were in the mine at the time of the explosion.

—George Francis Train is not so much of a fool that he cannot make money. He has just received \$50,000 as an installment of \$350,000 due him for negotiations in behalf of the Kansas branch of the Pacific railroad.

—John S. Rock, Esq., the well-known colored lawyer, of Boston, died a few days since at his residence in Phillips street, of consumption. A short time ago on motion of Hon. Charles Sumner, he was admitted to practice in the United States Supreme Court at Washington, being the first colored man who ever enjoyed that privilege.

—Mr. McCulloch's statement of the public debt on December 1, shows that, deducting \$135,364,637 in the Treasury, the total is \$2,549,831,238. The report does not compare these figures with those of last year. November 30, 1865, less cash in the Treasury, the debt was \$2,714,633,314, which shows a decrease of \$165,002,076.

—Senator Wade has introduced a bill for the admission of Nebraska into the Union. The bill passed at the last session and was defeated by Andrew Johnson, but the new proposition promises to meet with a better fate. His policy of excluding loyal Territories is almost as objectionable as his attempts to restore without conditions the rebel States.

—Roscoe Conkling, of New York, is a very prominent candidate for United States Senator.

—Senator B. Gratz Brown publishes a letter to the people of Missouri, recommending universal suffrage and amnesty, to take effect in 1870. He definitely declines re-election.

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**A. Stewart Stillman,**  
Dec. 11, 1864.—[7y.]

# STRANGE

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