

INTERESTING HOME LETTERS.

Our Albany Correspondence.

Excitement as to the Albany Postmaster's Appointment—The Merits of the Respective Candidates Discussed in Detail, &c., &c. As you are generally posted up in matters which not only have transpired, but those in prospect, pray tell me what is the prospect in regard to the Albany Postmaster. I don't suppose there is another office in the gift of the federal powers which has created so much excitement, so much interest, so much betting, so much cursing, and so much swearing, as this Albany Postmaster. It is generally supposed that the two candidates most strongly pressed by the two sections of the great democratic party are French and Johnson. They are a pretty couple, to be sure, and pity 'tis they both can't have it. It would be a blessed thing for the party. What the result will be if neither of them get it, or even one of them, the Lord only knows. The influence each of these men possess in his section of the party is beyond comprehension, much less expression. I have heard it whispered by those upon whom the utmost reliance can be placed, as speaking the true sentiment, that unless Johnson is appointed the democratic party in this State, and consequently in the Union, "will go to—" (that is the expression). And I have heard the same expression in regard to French not being appointed. Now, if this is the case, is it any wonder that there should be excitement, interest, betting, cursing and swearing? Is it any wonder that Johnson should be running to the telegraph office forty times a day to see if there had been a despatch received announcing his appointment? Is it any wonder that Hastings, of the Knickerbocker should call on "free light," and "go in" with all his might on Johnson's side? Is it any wonder that another whig concern here should one day denounce Peckham, our Congressman, charge him with "going over to the softs and betraying Johnson," and next retract on the authority of the Knickerbocker? All these parties have the stability of the democratic party at heart, and it is, I ask, any wonder that they take such a deep interest in the matter? On the other hand, there appears to be no interest taken in the matter by those who would have democratic principles at heart. No outsiders join in the cry for him, consequently it must be that he is not the popular candidate. While the Kilkenny cat is going on, others, it is said, are working like mischief for themselves. Watson, one of the former postmasters in this city, and one of those long-headed men who have looked on and seen just enough of rights to know where the advantage lies. Watson, one of those men in admirable style, while Blanchard is doing likewise. These are a couple of well-trained wire-pullers. They have worked in the same traces, side by side, with Cozwell, for a number of years, and know just where to run the knife in to draw blood. With them it is a neck and neck business. For either of them to get ahead of the other would be the hardest work in creation, and to see either of them appointed would be less surprising than to see a man in his own right in his own right. It would come so natural. They both have enjoyed office all their lives, until within the few past years, and some people say they have only been resting for the purpose of refreshing themselves, and waiting for duties upon the incoming of a democratic administration, which they seemed from afar. I do wish, Mr. HERRICK, that you would inform us of the names of our postmaster, and when he will be appointed, this year or next. The present incumbent is a pretty fellow, and perhaps the retaining of him would do about as well as to appoint a democratic successor. Nothing could irritate the Seaward whigs more, and many of the democrats would like him as well as some of the candidates I have named. INDEX.

ALBANY, MAY 9, 1853.

The Enlargement of the Canals—The West Plan and the Vanderbilt Scheme—The Proposed Impairment of Mr. Mather—Split in the Democratic Party—Synopsis of the Report of the Committee against Mr. Mather—The Canal Fraud of 1845—The Proceedings against Mr. Mather's Political Maneuvers. During the legislative recess, the principal topics of political discussion throughout the State, and especially in this city—the head quarters of all party movements—are the plans for the enlargement of the canals, and the accusation against Canal Commissioner Mather.

The former question is simply a choice between two loan projects. Each proposes to raise money upon the most advantageous terms, but differs from the other as to the most advantageous method of repayment. The West plan, brought forward in the Assembly, proposes to tax real and personal property to repay the money borrowed; while the Vanderbilt scheme, which has passed the Senate, pledges to lenders the surplus canal revenues, without other recourse, and refuses to levy a cent of tax. The battle will be vigorously waged upon the resemblance of the Legislature; but it is scarcely doubted that the Vanderbilt plan will succeed in the end. The proposed impairment of Mr. Mather has elicited a discussion which smacks more of the old fashioned hunker and barnburner warfare than anything since 1849. The two factions of the democratic party are quarrelling over this lone of contention with a hearty good will. The whig papers are silent, enjoying the fun; while most of the neutral press follow the example of the HERALD in denouncing the manner in which the impeachment was attempted, at a late hour of the session, and without notice to the accused, and in commenting upon the frivolous character of the charges. The report of the committee has now been published, and the accusations contained in it have generally been noticed and responded to by the hunker presses, so that the indictment and plea are already virtually before the public.

A short synopsis will show impartially the nature of the charges and denials. The special committee charge Mr. Mather— 1st. With paying illegally certain money to laborers on the job of contractor M. Caughlin. 2d. With expending money at the junction of the Hudson river and Erie Canal, not properly within the precincts of the canal. 3d. With retaining two superintendents after charges of misconduct had been brought against them. 4th. With extravagant expenditures at the West Troy dock, &c. 5th. With not visiting the canals as often as required by law. 6th. With extravagant outlay for repairs on the canal.

To which Mr. Mather and the presses which support him, reply— 1st. That he acted as the agent of, and under the direction of the Canal Board, which had ordered the money to be paid to M. Caughlin's men, the contractor having absconded, and left them unpaid. 2d. That the expenditures on the Hudson river, were within the line of the Canal, according to the State laws. 3d. That the superintendents were tried and acquitted of all misconduct by the Canal Board, the only competent tribunal. 4th. That the expenditures have been investigated by the Canal Board, and approved. 5th. That the law provides for the visitation by another officer in case of the inability of the Commissioner, and that such inability existed. 6th. That the committee's figures do not allow for certain materials purchased for repairs, and not used from some reason, and which are now in possession of the State. That this amount, if deducted, would reduce the expenditure to a very moderate and average sum.

As an evidence that all these magniloquent charges against Mr. Mather are likely to end in smoke, I may refer your readers to the celebrated investigation ordered by the Legislature, in 1847, and the alleged misconduct of canal officers, and especially of Mr. Bissell, then Canal Commissioner upon the Western Division. The whole matter is familiar enough to such old politicians as then trod the political stage, and is not many of them still surviving. Politicians are a short lived race, and six years is a generation to them. During the year 1846 certain charges of fraud were brought before the Canal Board to be investigated, implicating the Superintendent of the Green Valley Canal, and by consequence, as was supposed, the Canal Commissioner having charge of that section. The matter as to the inferior officers of the system was given up before the Board, and the body took the matter in hand, and five members of the Assembly were appointed a select committee to investigate the whole affair, and of course particularly the culpability of the Commissioner. This committee occupied the time from the adjournment of the session of 1846 up to the middle of February, 1847, at which time they made their report, in taking testimony, in the course of which they ordered by the Legislature, in 1847, and the alleged misconduct of canal officers, and especially of Mr. Bissell, then Canal Commissioner upon the Western Division. The whole matter is familiar enough to such old politicians as then trod the political stage, and is not many of them still surviving. Politicians are a short lived race, and six years is a generation to them.

held among the Assembly documents of the 70th session, is comprised in a bulky volume of nearly nine hundred pages, and embodies in itself a not only against the subordinates of Commissioner Bissell's division, but also against himself. The committee in this case alleged that under the Commissioner's directions, and without the aid of the State, a large quantity of stone was excavated and completed near Black Rock quarry, at Buffalo, the cost of which to the State amounted to over seven thousand dollars. They charge the engineer, Mr. John H. Fay, with complicity in this violation of the law, and to him an almost equal share of the blame. Stronger language could scarcely have been used than is employed by the committee towards these functionaries.

In the course of this investigation it appeared that the Canal Commissioners of that day "passed over the canals not more than two or three times during each season, and then only in a cursory manner." It was shown that the quality of the work had been pursued by the superintendents, and that the amount paid for it by the State had considerably exceeded the value of the farm upon which it was done.

It was maintained that large quantities of lumber purchased for the Genesee division, had been sold only to persons in the neighborhood of the work, &c., &c. Now here were materials enough sure for almost any amount of punishment; and, from the serious nature of the allegations, "it will be supposed, that the offending Commissioner was at once impeached and put upon his trial. Quite the contrary. Mr. Bissell was a decided and active barnburner, and the investigating committee brought no recommendations against him. Whatever were their motives they were right.

Doubtless this Commissioner exceeded his powers in several instances; but it was evident that in most of the cases he had merely been misled by the superior ability of others, who were acting upon the skirts. As a member of the Canal Board, the Commissioner is obliged to be at Albany almost continually; and he was exempt from that attendance, he must possess a power of ubiquity who could overlook every structure and repair upon his division often than once in eight weeks. Every circumstance connected with the attempted impeachment of Mr. Mather is contributing to show that your correspondent was right in speaking of the beginning as a political manoeuvre, designed much more to have effect upon the next Democratic State Convention, than upon the present Senate and Assembly.

Our New England Correspondence.

BOSTON, MAY 14, 1853. Changes in Boston—The Constitutional Convention—The Standing Committee—Their Character—Discussion on the Berlin Vacancy Question—Report on the Reconstruction of the Senate—Country Appointments—Lynn Gloucester—Salem—Waltham—Fitchburg—Boston—Coalitionists Talked—The Maine Law—Power of its Opponents—The Boston Post Office, &c. Boston is one of the liveliest places in the world just at this time. Everything "is being" torn down, and everything else "is being" built up. You cannot go through a street without finding it more or less blocked because of the work of destruction that is going on, or the work of renovation that is going up. A few years must see everything that is old removed, and a good deal of the comparatively new as well. The demand for "business accommodations" is such that a man of even tolerable means cannot afford to live here much longer. In a short time none but the very rich and the very poor will remain in the city. What has happened to State Street must soon befall the greater part of the town—its conversion into a vast mart, when man shall be too busy to merely live. Whether the change is to be for the better is "a great moral question," which need not be discussed.

The Convention has done next to nothing, except to talk on subjects, the discussion of which do not tend to advance its business, and which relate rather to its organization than its action. Some fifteen standing committees have been appointed by the President. They are far from being satisfactory, though it is understood that they are much better than they were when first formed, when they were in such a state that their publication would have excited "luxuriating laughter" throughout the community. It is understood that more than forty important changes were made in them, and there is room enough to make eighty more. Of the chairmen of these committees but ten are whigs, though that party has the largest number of delegates, and those ten are not on committees of a political character. The free-soilers are largely favored, both in having chairmen, and in the further construction of the committees. Messrs. Charles Sumner, Charles Allen, Henry Wilson, Marcus Morton, and Amasa Walker are at the head of the five most important committees, and they are supported by their faithful vassals on those bodies. Mr. Davis, of Worcester, who is only a nominal democrat, and really a free-soiler, is head of the committee on so much of the constitution as relates to the Governor, while Mr. Knowlton, of the same place, is at the head of the Committee on the University at Cambridge. Mr. M. Knowlton has never had much to do with colleges, while Mr. Davis has been concerned with them all his life. The ludicrous impropriety of the two appointments is apparent to all, while nothing could have been better than an exchange of places between the two gentlemen; but, as some say, Mr. Banks has no idea of appointing men to places where they are best calculated to figure. His idea of the fitness of men for their places does not go beyond the selection of competent persons for presiding officers in large bodies. My opinion is that his blunders in this respect spring from his entire and unqualified ignorance of men and his indolence, which latter falling prevents him from giving the attention which he should give to his business, nowhere except in the chair, and effective only when on his feet. The latter position he very rarely obtains now-a-days, and that is just what suits him. The only one of the "old line" democrats who leads the committee having the comparatively unimportant subject of the Executive Council in charge, Mr. Griswold, to whom the subject of the House of Representatives has been referred, is a truly prominent democrat, who has been appointed to an important place, and this is attributed to the fact that he is too far west to be in the President's way. People will be uncharitable, and are always ready to find fault with others, and are always the real causes lying right before their eyes, and therefore are not seen.

There has been any amount of talk, and some of it very eloquent, on the question of filling the vacancy in the Senate, which was made by the death of Mr. Boutwell out of that body, it being well understood that he is to be elected from Berlin under freed patronage. The report has been referred to an important place, and this is attributed to the fact that he is too far west to be in the President's way. People will be uncharitable, and are always ready to find fault with others, and are always the real causes lying right before their eyes, and therefore are not seen.

The appointment of Mr. Stickney to the place of postmaster of Lynn has a decidedly hunkerish look, in the opinion of some worthy people. Mr. Stickney has been for years quite a prominent man among the hunker politicians in Lynn, and for Congress ten years ago. When the "old Feners," or hunker "struck" against the coalition two years ago, he was one of their most effective leaders. But the hunker themselves split there into two parties, and Mr. Stickney was chosen one of the latter party. He has never, though tolerably familiar with Massachusetts politics, been able to understand what were the grounds of this particular quarrel. The abolitionists and the "old Feners" were the "opponents." It would seem that Mr. Stickney, who what he was about, judging by his success, and though the public generally will not care a straw about the matter, some of the politicians will be any day. There has always been a queer state of things in Essex county among the democracy. Dr. Loring, who has received the place of postmaster of Salem, though now a hunker of the impure water, was formerly one of the "old Feners," and was a strong supporter of Mr. Boutwell when that gentleman was run for Congress by free-soilers as well as democrats. They were very intimate personal friends. He was a member of the democratic convention at Boston, in 1848, and acted in consideration of the elevation of Mr. Sumner to the place of United States Senator. His coalition was of proof until last summer, when, to the great astonishment of the "old Feners," he was elected to Congress on the opposite side. An address from the hunker

democrats in favor of the fugitive slave law as written by him. He is a small, thin, under the nose, or something of the kind, by Governor Boutwell, to visit some place on Cape Cod, to ascertain how deep the water was, or the physical condition of the fish, principally of cod fish, and to let the brethren of the angle there can indeed be no finer place than this. A gentleman told me that he and a friend, at the last fishing season, took on one occasion a very large cod fish, most of which weighed from half a pound to two pounds each. The pickled are equally complainant.

The general appearance of Pepprell is very pleasing. The scenery is more regular than at Groton. Pepprell is a man of high standing, and is very busy, and all appear to be prosperous, and unquestionably they are so. During the summer numerous strangers visit the place, many of whom remain throughout the season, captivated by its attractions. The facilities which it affords for an indulgence in moral amusements.

There is a private lunatic asylum here, under the charge of Dr. J. S. Howe, who has been very successful in the treatment of the mentally diseased. Pepprell is a man of high standing, and is very busy, and all appear to be prosperous, and unquestionably they are so. During the summer numerous strangers visit the place, many of whom remain throughout the season, captivated by its attractions. The facilities which it affords for an indulgence in moral amusements.

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