THE EUROPEAN WAR.

Sermon by the Rev. Mr. Van Ness, of the Dutch Reformed Church.

Matthew 16: 3.—In the morning ye say it will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

One fact that invests this earth with great interest is, that careful students of prophecy have looked forward to this very period with anxious eye as pregnant with wonderful transactions in Divine Providence. We cannot conceive that the great Apocalypse given to the Apostle John, was put in the sacred canon in vain—that the times spoken of by Daniel, some of which have already been accurately fulfilled, should be without a meaning, and when the very period to which these prophecies seem to refer is marked by such peculiar changes, such mighty revolutions and such wonderful progress, it strike us, to say the least, as a remarkable coincidence. Every child of God should be in anxious expectation, and he will be as much to blame as the Jews of old, if he does not discern the signs of the times. We cannot doubt that God has some merciful designs to work out of this confusion. As we know that he is the skilful manager of the universe, so we must believe that he will carry forward his own wise and magnificent purposes amid the greatest tumults. In this humble faith we propose to enlarge our views beyond the circle of our land—to notice grand events occurring over the earth, and thus seek to discover what hope there is for the world. In the signs of the times we may find some new reasons for thanksgiving—certainly we shall find abundant reason for prayer in its behalf.

I. The first remarkable event, is the war now waged between the prominent powers of Europe. This may well be termed a great war, not only because of the immense resources of the combatants, but because of its probable long continuance and its prospective slaughters. There are already four powers engaged. France, England and Turkey on the one hand, and Russia, single handed, on the other; but it is quite probable that the rest of the continent may become involved as the contest advances. Here then we have the prospect of all the greater powers of the world engaged in the dire conflict of arms. When the result of this warfare shall be is beyond the reach of human ken. Russia is a young and vigorous power, possessed of the greatest resources in materials and money—besides, the present warfare is conducted on ground where she has the manifest advantage, and it is quite probable, as we gather from late reports, that the Czar will not only hold his own, but drive back his enemies. While then we cannot predict who shall gain final success, still we can affirm that the conflict has produced good results. War must be allowed to be an evil, a great evil; we must feel sad over every scene of blood—but it is not always an unmitigated evil, because God can overrule it for good, "He makes the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain."

One of these good results is the overthrow of the "Holy Alliance," which we hesitate not to describe as the most corrupt, unholy and abominable combination ever formed. Its only object was to sustain the powers of wickedness firmly in their places. It was a combination to exclude all light and all progress, formed expressly to keep the people under the grinding yoke of their oppressors. We thank God that this giant iniquity is torn asunder, and that there is little prospect of seeing it reunited again. In the second place, we must allow that nothing can be worse than the present state of Europe. Scarcely a single country that is not miserably misgoverned, with, perhaps, the exception of the constitutional monarchy of Great Britain. France has a wretched tyrant on the throne in the shape of "Napoleon the Little;" it is groaning under an enormous and hopeless debt, and every day its burden is increased by a most improvident administration. Prussia has no real liberty, and although its rule is nominally Protestant, still it is not a pure and healthful Protestantism and the people suffer. Austria is under the accursed control of Jesuits—a blight and a mildew wherever they go, to prosperity, and, as a consequence, it is the most poor, most despotic, most corrupt and most utterly bankrupt of all governments on the face of the earth. Spain is effete, wretched, without order, without morals—the scene of endless revolution and bloodshed. Turkey has a better, a more generous ruler than the rest, and yet, as the headquarters of the Mahometan delusion, it cannot claim a particle of our Christian sympathy. And what shall we say of unhappy Italy with the bright skies and balmy atmosphere, which hang over its fair fields, and the moral darkness which shades all its beauties, the chains of priestcraft which galt its heroic people—with its former glories and its present shame, what can we say, but unhappy Italy? And so it is with most of the smaller governments, they are despotisms. The continent of Europe is oppressed and ruined, and almost any change will be for the better. As some change, and great change must proceed from the present conflict, so we see that it is working a good result, and say, God hasten it in his own good time.

In this connection, we would remind you of the supposed friendship entertained by the Emperor Nicholas for republicanism. It is certain that his relations with our country have been of the most pleasant character, and if we remember correctly, he said to a distinguished senator, that there were only two forms of government proper for man—the one, absolute monarchy—the other, free republic. Whatever may be his sympathy in this particular, he may find it greatly to his interest (and interest is always the best argument with princes,) he may find it to his interest to court the aid of the republicans masses through Europe. If hard pressed by the army of the allies, he can, by a single word of sympathy, by a single promise of aid, rally to his rescue hosts of noble men from every country, who will again raise the generous cry of "Liberty, fraternity, equality." We know that the great liberators of Europe have hope revived in their bosoms by the signs of the times, and stand ready, whether Czar shall call them into service or whatever changes shall open the least prospect of success, stand ready to plunge at once into the thickest of the fight and do brave battle for freedom and their "fatherland." Here, then, is another good result. The war revives the hope of liberty, and opens the prospect for an uprising of the downtrodden people of Europe.

II. We should also consider what the effect of this commotion may be upon the Popish hierarchy and Mahometan powers. This is a matter of deep interest to the christian, for in them he finds that beast and false prophet who are described by the apostle John as great opponents of the church, and both must be overthrown before the peaceful and universal reign of Jesus can begin. As they had their rise nearly at the same period, so there are some Scriptures which seem to predict their downfall about the same time. It becomes, then, an object of great interest to note every event that may hasten their destruction.

First, as to Mahometanism, it has long been sinking into decay—its vigor is gone. The only prominent power that supports its faith has been growing weak for centuries, and the Turkish empire would doubtless have fallen before this date had it not been for the protection of Christian nations. Whatever may be the result of the present war, certainly it cannot repair the broken columns of the Moslem temple. But if Russia meets with any measure of success, it will be a death blow to the system of Mahomet. In either case we must conclude that the days of the false prophet are drawing to an end, and we shall soon rejoice over his total fall.

Let us now consider that other power variously designated as the beast, the man of sin and son of perdition, the mother of idolatry, Babylon and Antichrist, which we could clearly designate as the Roman hierarchy if we had no other lights than St. John's definition, "The woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Surely it can signify none other than persecuting Rome. She is also growing weaker every day. Her superstition received a stab at the time of the Reformation from which we do not believe she will ever recover. In many countries, nominally her subjects still, the people are losing confidence in her corrupt doctrines and representatives, so that she is gradually deprived of the "power to deceive the nations any more." In Italy itself, her chosen home, she is most utterly abhorred. If Rome were not protected by strong armies, exterior to her own temporal dominion, the people of Italy would at once rise and thrust out the spiritual oppressor, and St. John's words would be fulfilled, "They hate the whore and would make her desolate and burn her with fire." For the time, however, they are held in check by the forces of Austria and France. Still the day of vengeance is approaching; it does not tarry. If Russia gains success in the present contest, and especially if it is gained by republican aid, then every step she takes in advance will tend to the prostration of the Roman See. The Czar is the representative of the Eastern church, which has always contested the claims of the Popedom. In the event of any success he must humble the two powerful supporters of Rome—found in Austria and France—and thus remove the only protection that shields the beast from the violence of her own subjects.

In connection with these signs of the times we would remind you of the remarkable prophecy, both in Daniel and John, which gives the time for the reign of this power. They both state it to be 1,260 years. Now, if we could ascertain the exact period when the Romish power obtained full establishment, we might from this prophecy fix the date of its fall. It is, however, quite certain that it rose some time in the seventh century, and some have selected the year A. D 606, at which time the Emperor Phocas made a grant of supremacy to the Pope. If we take that time as its beginning, we have a right to look for its downfall in the year A. D. 1866. While the mistakes of the past teach that the prophetical dates are to be fixed with the greatest care, yet surely, if these 1,260 years mean anything, the end of Rome must be drawing near. When we observe it gradually loosing influence, its supports falling away, and a great power full of opposition sweeping with immense strides towards the seat of its supremacy, what good reason have we to hope in the correctness of this view of prophecy? And now should we hail every event that may hasten the coming of the angel whose mighty voice shall cry, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." These are some of the results and prospects of the great European war. It breaks down the "alliance" of oppressors; it will produce a change that cannot be for the worse; it awakens the hope and effort of every republican in the world; it will almost certainly cause the overthrow of Moslemism, and we have faith to believe it may hasten that prophecy of the beast being cast into the bottomless pit. For any of these results we may thank God, but most of all for the last, for that accomplished, then we may expect the peaceful reign of King Jesus to commence.

It may be said that we have shown ourselves friends of Russia. Far be it from us to defend a despotism. Neither can we affirm that government to have had a just cause in commencing the war. Still we must believe that the success of this Power will be best for humanity, best for the interests of freedom, and best for the cause of religion upon earth. Even taking the subject in its darkest view—supposing that Russia succeeds so far as to become the despot of the whole continent of Europe, (which we hold impossible,) still it would be better—far better to have one supreme magnificent despot than fifty petty godless tyrants, binding down the souls and bodies of men. Let her gain then the most splendid success, and still we may have reason to thank God.

We had intended to notice the revolution advancing in China. Here we must sorrow over another scene of woe and carnage; and yet a change in that country must be for the better, and, notwithstanding all that is said against the rebels, it may open the way for the publication of the gospel. Time will not allow us to dwell upon it, nor upon the wonderful opening of the gates of Japan—that rich island so long forbidden ground to the nations, and the prospect that among with our articles of merchandise we may carry to this people "the pearl of great price." We should also notice the interesting fact that there is scarcely any part of the world unoccupied by some missionaries of the cross, so that if our hopes of the idea of false systems are realized, God has his instruments ready without any miraculous interference, but simply by pouring out his Holy Spirit, and blessing their labors as he did on the Day of Pentecost—has instruments all furnished and ready to effect the conversion of the world. Surely these are reasons for gratitude and prayer.

But we pass on to notice another power which has exerted and will wield a wonderful influence upon the future of humanity. We allude to this great empire of the west. It does indeed require constant observation to keep up with its rapid progress and its surpassing prosperity. "Its area has increased from 820,000 square miles, in 1783, to 2,063,666 of the same, in 1854—more than a third of the area of North America, and equal to the Roman Empire or that of Alexander in their palmiest days. Our population is estimated at 26,500,000, and if it increases at the same rate as in the past, it will, in 1900, be 70,000,000. Think of 26,500,000 freemen, and of this number only 2,200,000 are foreigners, a large portion of them, too, come from Protestant countries. Its agricultural products this year are estimated at the value of $1,000,000,000. We are blessed with 38,183 buildings for religious worship, which afford accommodation for 14,000,000 of persons. The Methodists, whose warm devotion is generally admitted, own more than half of these edifices. Besides, we have an army of thirty thousand clergymen of all denominations. Surely this is a great country, and we have reached the day when it is the proudest boast to be taken upon the lips of man—"I a man American citizen." And what must be the effect of such a country upon the destiny of the world? We are vigorous, young and enterprising, possessed of almost boundless resources—men, money, metal and food. Already is the name of our nation known and respected throughout the earth; already do the sails of our ships whiten every sea; already have we established a missionary republic in Liberia; already do other nations put themselves under the shadow of our wings. The Sandwich Islands and Cuba, both speak with no doubtful voice, while Canada murmurs a wish upon our Northern borders. Already our missionaries are found in every clime and almost on every shore, and hither do the oppressed and the sorrowful come from every land, to obtain a peaceful and a generous home. What must be the effect of such a nation—a moral, intelligent nation—containing at least 20,000,000 of free Protestants, full of love to God and charity to man? The force of American character is already recognized; American workmen are employed by foreign Powers. It has been remarked by an intelligent traveller, that in a company composed of persons from different countries, he has ready always observed that the Americans will take the lead, make the most impression. So we believe it will not be long before this people will be recognized as the leaders of the great human brotherhood; and when we consider the many noble elements in their national character—especially the pure Bible influence that governs the great masses of the people—can we doubt that the impression made will be a happy one? May we not be the lover, in God's hand, that is to effect the elevation, the regeneration of humanity? We should also notice a happy circumstance in our own domestic affairs, found in the spirit that has lately been awakened against foreign influences. We say nothing in favor of secret organizations. Neither can we speak a bitter word to the poor foreigner, who comes to seek with us a hospitable retreat. Many foreigners are the best supporters of our State; yet, if there is any danger threatening this republic, it is to be found in the fact that thousands among us are the sworn subjects of a foreign prince—a prince whose principles and policy lead him to oppose freedom within church and State—and whose highest aim would be the overthrow of our national liberties. We must then rejoice that the American people, so long asleep on this subject, have now awakened to a sense of their danger, and while they will not persecute the stranger, nor refuse him the hospitality of their fireside; yet they have formed a stern and mighty resolution to keep him from an undue influence—to preserve our high offices of state from the control of a foreign despot. Thus will they avert the only serious danger that threatens our Union, and which might hinder it from accomplishing its great work of reform among the nations. Ane here we finish our study of the signs of the times. While there is much that is dark and portentous in the clouds that hover over the earth, yet there are faint glimmerings of light, there are prospects of improvement for the race, and there is a blessed hope that our own country may be the star that shall lead humanity on to a bright, glorious sunshine of truth, freedom, and of divine mercy. While, then, we thank God for own home mercies, let us not forget to praise him for his wonderful doings throughout the earth.

Law Intelligence.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, DEC. 21.—Nos 11, 12, and 13, Joseph Battin, patentee, and Samuel Battin, assignee, vs James Taggert, Robert Rateliffe, John Johnson and John G. Hewes. Errors to the Circuit Court of the United States for the eastern district of Pennsylvania. Mr. Justice McLean delivered the opinion of this court, reversing the judgment of the said Circuit Court with costs, and remanding the cases with directions to award a *venire facias de novo*. No. 25. Adam D. Stewart, plaintiff in error, vs. The United States. This cause was argued by Mr. W. S. Cox for the plaintiff in error, and by Mr. Bibb for the defendant in error. No. 28. Wm. B. and Victoire Shields et al., appellants, vs. Robert S. Barrow. Appeal from Circuit Court United States for the eastern district of Louisiana. The appellants in this cause having been called under the 19th rule, and on the motion of Mr. Janin, of counsel for the appellee, and failing to appear, this cause was dismissed with costs. No. 29. Catharine Kinns, wife of William Warrance, appellant, vs. Pierre Jorda, Jr., et al. Appeal from the Circuit Court of the United States for the eastern district of Louisiana. The appellant in this cause having been called under the 19th rule, and on the motion of Mr. Janin, of counsel for the appellees, and failing to appear, this cause was dismissed with costs. No. 31. William Foutain, appellant, vs. William Ravenel. The argument of this cause was commenced by Mr. Gerhard for the appellee. Adjourned.

The Post Office Boxes.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

I think a good many of your commercial readers would like to know what you think of this last imposition of the government in raising the rent of Post Office boxes from four to six dollars. What business has the government to charge box rent at all? Who saves the most time and money by the boxes? Because government is obliged to pay a great many more men to deliver mail matter in New York than at Snooks' corners in the country, is that any reason the people here should pay the "expense of delivery," as we are told they are expected to do? Where does the government collect the revenue that keeps the Post Office department going? Not in Snooks' corners, but in the old Dutch church in Nassau street; and if the people any where pay for and richly deserve a convenient Post Office, freely served, without delay, and without swindle, it is here in New York. If the merchants were unanimously to refuse submission to this new imposition, my word for it, the boxes would remain with little or no change, for the convenience of the Post Office itself. Viewed merely as rent, the charge, even at four dollars, is exorbitant, but as a deliberate tax on those who pay their postage honestly, and thus earn the fullest possible accommodation, it is an outrage which calls for unyielding resistance. Let the government pay its own expenses, or stop charging for what it does not do. VINDEX.

The Reciprocity Treaty.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK HERALD.

The negotiation of the above treaty is but one of a series of acts in the administration of the government, and in the legislation of Congress, that show that the agricultural interest of the country is utterly disregarded. It is distranchised, so to speak, and completely overshadowed by the paramount interest of commerce and manufactures. It is remorselessly sacrificed in any treaty, or in any act of Congress, when it conflicts in the slightest with any other interest. Even the President, in his late annual message, seems not to have deemed agriculture of sufficient prominence or interest, in a national point of view, to be entitled to any notice whatever, and does not even name it. The powerful control and influence of the commercial press of the country—and of the commercial men of the country—of the capital and numbers of the concentrated population of our large cities, seem to entirely obscure it; nay, more, when they choose they can overwhelm it; at least, they can burden it and tax it, and introduce at their pleasure new rivals to share its markets. The representatives from the rural districts in Congress seem paralyzed, and are unable, it would seem, to even protest against the sacrifices their constituents are thus called on to make.

Certain it is, that the merits of this reciprocity treaty came fully before the House of Representatives, on the bill introduced to repeal the duty imposed by the tariff on provincial produce, Canadian wheat, &c., and the passage of which was necessary to the validity and operation of the treaty. Yet the agricultural interest appears not to have had one single friend there to rise and defend it against the "hardest single blow" it ever received.

This may admit of explanation. Some legerdemain of the "rules" may account for it; but the facts are undeniable that no voice was heard in the House resisting this iniquitous suicidal British treaty—iniquitous, certainly, so far as it sold the markets of the American farmer—that the latter has been charged 30 per cent upon everything he has worn and nearly everything he has used, for the last quarter of a century to build them up, that, in the sanguine expectation of the manufacturers of New England (but in this they will probably be mistaken) he is likely to continue to be so charged, and that while the Canadian brings his wheat in to feed the artizan, the American farmer is taxed to furnish employment for him.

Whether these gentlemen from the rural districts, even those with an almost exclusive agricultural constituency, will remain as silent when the commercial press has heralded forth, with all the pomp and circumstance of long leaders, the merits of the Collins line, and the cities have been drummed up again for petitions—whether they will resist, or help to impose a further tax upon their constituents, to build up a monopoly, and vote for "protection" who never voted for protection before, I know not. But one thing is pretty certain—the country is likely to hear more about Mr. Collins' steamers—one merchant and one merchant's ships—through the press, letter writers, lobby members, reports, speeches and dinners, within the next three months, than has been heard about agriculture in Congress in three years, or in thirty years. But this is rather beside my subject.

Before examining the merits of this treaty, I wish to call attention to a passage contained in the late message of the President, in reference to it. I think it goes far towards convicting the Chief Magistrate of something very like an attempt to deceive the country. He certainly has used the technical language of the treaty as only a special pleader in a bad cause would be likely to use language, and has submitted a really false issue to the country. The basis of the treaty is not, and never was what the President in so solemn a paper as his annual message to the people would seem to represent it to be. But the farmers had charged him and his administration with having "sold their wheat fields for codfish and mackerel." Listen to the President's statement of the bargain he had made! So far from selling their wheat fields, he got both the inshore fishery and the navigation of the St. Lawrence, for the right ceded to Great Britain to sell the fish they take on the coast in our market free of duty! So he says the treaty "stipulates," and because such a fraud or fiction has been inserted into the treaty by two cunning diplomats, the President justifies himself in holding forth to the country, that it was the real and bona fide consideration, for, as he expresses it, "privileges of the highest importance and value to the United States." But not to do the President injustice let us give the passage, entire as it stands in the message:—

"So soon as it (the treaty) was ratified, Great Britain opened to our commerce the free navigation of the river St. Lawrence, and to our fishermen unmolested access to the shores and bays from which they had been frequently excluded on the coast of her North American Provinces: in return for which she asked for the introduction, free of duty, into the ports of the United States, of the fish caught on the coast by British fishermen. This being the compensation stipulated in the treaty for privileges of the highest importance and value to the United States, which were thus voluntarily yielded before it become effective, the request seemed to me a reasonable one."

Now this is all a fiction, without one fact to give it countenance, and contradicted by the history of all the diplomacy, negotiation and legislation on the subject from the time General Dix first introduced his bill into Congress in 1849.

The boon they sought, and the boon (the compensation) we gave them was flot our markets to sell fish in which fish they never caught, and probably never will—it was our grain and produce markets for the sale of their agricultural produce. It was not for markets in which to sell fish that Sir Henry Bulwer sought by every means in his power to get General Taylor's administration to negotiate, and Congress to legislate about this, so miscalled reciprocity matter, and sought in vain; it was not for this Lord Elgin came in a special mission to this country and that Washington has been made to swarm for the last two years with Canadian officials and unofficials, but it was to get our home markets for the sale of provincial produce. Everybody knows this. How absurd, and almost ridicul us then the attempt to keep the real "compensation" from view. Nobody will be deceived by it; but it is mortifying and humiliating to see men in high places, in state papers of the greatest and most solemn import, resorting to such pettifogging subterfuges, for they hardly deserve a better name. For the mutual considerations thus named by the President—the right to the inshore fisheries, and the navigation of the St. Lawrence, ceded on the one hand, and the right to sell fish in the American markets on the other, no such treaty could have been formed; not that the privileges thus respectively granted are disproportioned, or that Great Britain would consider she was parting with any real boon whatever, but she would rather keep the difficulty about the fisheries a bone of contention for ulterior ends than part with her recently asserted rights so cheaply. Indeed, this fishery title was merely revived or asserted after our free use of the disputed grounds for half a century, that it might be used as a pretext to get possession of our markets for the agricultural products of their provinces. But for the consideration really given, almost any and every disputed and unsettled matter would have been yielded up by Great Britain. Our minister at her court is understood to complain that his negotiations have been seriously embarrassed by the too early relinquishment of the only boon this wise and wily nation sought.

There is no doubt but our government has been entirely overreached in the bargain they have made. The Secretary of State seems only to have taken into view, in his statesmanship, the State of New York, or at most only the fishermen and manufacturers of New England, and the merchants and millers of New York. The interest of New York canals and railroads, the freight, storage, and commissions of New York merchants, and the grists to grind for the Rochester and Oswego millers, have been secured as far as could be done, by Mr. Marcy, who has had these interests in charge before at home, and does not seem to forget them when abroad. That his views have been so limited, and his policy so sectional and local, is a fair inference from the fact that no such treaty was ever before negotiated between two civilized nations. No instance can be found of a nation's throwing wide open its markets to another nation or people growing staples and products similar to its own, and growing them in abundance and superabundance, except in the contingency of a drought or some great national calamity. All England did was to let in one or two articles which she could not supply to her starving people. But we have thrown our markets as wide open as though these British provinces were States of this Union—markets which they will seek merely to sell in, receiving only in payment our precious metals, or exchange on England, to pay for the goods they buy of her. Everything they can grow from their soil, produce from their forests or their mines, we shall have to take on these terms.

What do they give us in return besides their river to navigate, which they can't navigate much themselves—being frozen tight six months in the year and a hazardous navigation the other six—and a right to catch fish where we had always caught them before? What real reciprocity can they offer us in the way of markets? Why, a distinguished Senator from Vermont, when Gen. Dix's bill was before the Senate, in 1849, declared that, from his own personal knowledge, living, as he did, near the line, there was nothing or next to nothing we could send to Canada. How can we expect to send any agricultural products there, when five-sixths of their population are engaged in agriculture; and these Provinces are without large cities, towns, or manufacturing villages—Great Britain taking care to do all the manufacturing for them, and to make the Colonies, as far as she can, her exclusive customers.

This reciprocity treaty, in its nakedness, and stripped of its diplomatic pretexts, is simply an assignment, transfer and coding over of our markets to be used, possessed and enjoyed in common by the farmers of the United States and the subjects of Queen Victoria in her five provinces in British North America, whereby, as it should recite, "It is expected New England manufacturers will get cheaper bread than their thirty per cent taxed customers, the farmers of the United States, can furnish them, and New York canals more freight, and New York merchants more storage and commissions." This is Mr. Marcy's treaty. This is the substance, the pith and marrow of it, and the country will soon find out it is so, and that protection has been utterly stricken down so far as our agricultural interest is concerned.

The grave question now arises, whether the farmers of the Middle States—many of whom, like the writer of this, has stood by protection for a quarter of a century—believing, among other things, that it benefitted the country generally, while the home market it furnished was a sort of equivalent for the tax it imposed. Now that this home market has been taken away, now that our interest has been deserted by the friends of protection, many of them, if not among those who have directly betrayed us, still enjoying the treason, (and many, indeed, directly participating in it,) whether, I say, we can, with due regard to our interest, or even with due regard to a proper self-respect, stand by the present tariff, is a very grave question. Another in the same category, and of equal import is, whether we can longer consent to give to our commerce a monopoly in our coast-wise trade: a monopoly worth to them, as some estimate it, not less than an average of from twenty five to fifty per cent. on the tariff of their freights, and which comes directly off from the producer, our commercial marine being allowed, in effect, under the monopoly they enjoy, to blockade the mouth of every river, bay and lake, demanding to receive in American bottoms all freight bound coast-wise, while the foreign trader, who could carry the producers' freight low, goes from one of our ports to another in ballast; in fact, goes empty away. Upon both of these last heads I have some remarks to make; but I wish first to show the probable effects of this treaty upon our agricultural interest; and this, with your consent, Mr. Editor, I will take an early opportunity to do, by the farther use of your columns.

A MIDDLE STATE FARMER.

Our Chicago Correspondence.

CHICAGO, Ill., Dec. 17, 1854.

Interesting to Beef Raisers and Eaters—The Great Western Pastures—Progress of Chicago, &c., &c.

Our season for beef pasturing is past, or is about closing up. About the usual quantity has been tierced and barrelled. The average weight of the cattle has been heavier and fatter than the past year—the facilities for the most perfect preparation and preservation of the meat, has been greatly increased this year, and I hazard nothing in saying that the already high position our beef holds in all foreign markets will be greatly increased when this "kill" shall come to the "camp kettle."

More than three fourths of the beef slaughtered this fall, has been "tierced" or "tubbed" for the English markets. Your paper has a wide circulation amongst the beef eaters of Europe, and as I was for fifteen years a practical stock raiser on our vast prairies, I am sure it will be not uninteresting to them, to give for your columns a square or so of items about our country, and mode of stock raising.

If they do not already know the fact, let me now tell them—our State, our whole State, is nine-tenths of it, as yet, in a state of nature—one vast grazing field. In the dingles and up the ravines the cattle resort in the early spring. Here they cast their calves—there "run with the cows," where stock raising is a business, and become beautiful indeed in the fall. I have often seen them killed for family use at eight months old, weighing seventy-five the quarter, and not costing the owner one hour of time or care, or one penny expense, barring its salt, from the cast to the knife. It would do you good to go out on a warm morning in June, with the herdsman, and see him "salting the cattle." The very best—the richest beef barrelled here in November, "can hardly stand alone" in May. Our winters here are "hard on cattle." The "stock" come out "awful poor in the spring." They "take to flesh wonderful," as our rich grasses advance in the summer, and as the autumn comes on they are "logy" with fat, and new made flesh, every pound of which—rich, juicy and tender—has been made from the richest food in six or seven months. Four-fifths of the beef packed in Illinois have "never worn a yoke or kicked a milk pail." The great secret with the grazier is to salt his herd "little and often," and "keep them quiet." One stampede from fright takes off a fortnight's fat. I have seen a thousand beeves in a drove, wandering in a hundred thousand acre lot of grass three feet high, without one weed to be seen; and is it any wonder we send good beef to Europe? I have with my own hands raised one hundred bushels of corn to the acre, and my hogs have often come home to me in the fall, fit for the knife, without a bite of corn; and millions of these broad acres, as rich as my own, are presently to become the property of the poor man, in fee simple, by deed from Congress, without price or money, with all the countless blessings of a free government.

Seventeen years ago I left your city "broke all to smash." On the Ohio river I bought flour at $5 per barrel, and sold it at Rock Island at $12 per barrel; then I paid at that point, $20 per barrel for mess pork. Two thousand barrels of flour are daily shipped at Rock Island for New York direct, and five hundred barrels of mess pork are packed daily. Now all we want is a good sound currency—its sure concomitant, a low rate of exchange, and all Europe will pay us tribute. We shall dictate monetary law to the end of the earth and the isles of the sea. Commerce and free trade are but the instruments in a hand higher than emperors, kings and nations, to prepare the way for the establishment of His kingdom and His entire dominion, whose reign will be everlasting. His is the silver and the gold. He covered and hid from man the vast treasures on the shores of the Pacific. He has opened them to a Christian people just as they are wanted. Who gave wisdom to Morse just at this juncture, to speak "away ahead of time," over ocean and prairie? Who to McCormick, and an hundred others just now, by which His armies are to be fed in the great coming battle day? We shall presently want another great discovery, to be moved by steam—a plough—turning over ten furrows at every revolution of its wheel, to prepare the prairie. He has garnered for the seed to feed a famishing world. We want a simple, sound, safe currency, to steadily stimulate and develope all our astonishing resources; to check the coming flood of desolating crime and corruption even now appalingly upon us. You, sir, are placed in a position where you can do much in giving such a currency to the nation. PUPIL.

Maine Law and the Legislature.

[From the Temperance Alliance, Dec. 22.]

From our extensive correspondence we gather that if the people of the districts know what to expect from their members, there will be,

Maine law men in the Assembly:—

Whigs, 63; democrats, 19—total	82
Anti-Maine law, whigs, 11; democrats, 23	34
Doubtful, whigs, 2; democrats, 2	4
No direct information from	8

At least four, if not five, of the last number, we have a right, from their locality, to expect will be in favor. So that, with a full house, the law would have more than a two-thirds vote. We are also informed that ten or twelve decided Maine law men were defeated whose election was considered as almost certain, from the well known fact that a decided majority of the voters in their respective districts were friends of prohibition. We have no doubt that if a new Legislature were now to be chosen, to consider no other subject than the Maine law, New York city would send ten delegates out of sixteen, and out of this city the movement would sweep the State almost as clean as the American movement recently swept Massachusetts.

WHARF-BOAT CAPSIZED AT CAIRO. From Capt. Cozens, who returned by railroad last evening from the Ohio, we have the particulars of an accident which occurred at Cairo on Monday evening last, by which a large amount of valuable freight, mostly for St. Louis, was either totally lost or badly damaged. It appears that the wharf-boat Patrick Henry, lying at Cairo, capsized on Monday evening, just after the steamer Michigan, from the Lower Mississippi, had discharged a valuable cargo upon her. The lurch of the boat precipitated most of the Michigan's, together with a quantity of other freight, into the river. A number of German emigrants, who had just landed, lost much of their baggage, and some narrowly escaped being drowned. No lives were lost, but a large amount of freight was of necessity badly damaged. The boat now lies at an angle of about forty-five degrees, with six or eight feet of water over her outside guards. It is a singular fact that, at two or three different times during the afternoon previous, the boat was discovered to be on fire, but, by the exertions of those on board, the flames were extinguished before much damage was done. The Ohio and its tributaries are all very low—lower than at any time in the remembrance of the "oldest inhabitant"—and freights very high. The Kate Swinney had just reached Cairo, for this port.—*St. Louis Democrat, Dec. 20.*

New Carriages for the Isthmus of Nicaragua.

A new carriage made its appearance corner of Wall street and Broadway yesterday, destined for the transportation of passengers across the Transit road on the Isthmus of Nicaragua.

The Accessory Transit Company have had carriages there since February, 1854; but the present contractor has resolved to substitute new ones in their place. The one we examined yesterday is very light, (weighing only 950 lbs.,) on fine elliptic springs, seats lengthways, stationary top, and sun and waterproof curtains to protect passengers against sun and rain. The seats have soft cushions and stuffed backs, and the wagons are made to carry eight or nine passengers, leaving twenty inches room for each, or four inches more than our Broadway omnibuses. They are provided with good breaks, and will be drawn by four mules.

It seems to have been the object to combine with lightness and comfort also a handsome appearance, and we are sure that this object has been attained.

The wagon is painted snow white, with light blue stripes, being the colors of Nicaragua, intermingled with a red stripe of our flag.

The top bears the inscription, "New York and California Steamship Line via Nicaragua;" on one of the panels, next to the door, the American shield, stars and stripes; on the other panel, the Nicaraguan coat of arms, with its five volcanoes, rising sun, and liberty cap.

A picture of a real California cabin, with some of the gold hunters just reading their letters from the Atlantic—one deeply occupied in studying the NEW YORK HERALD—is painted on one side; the other side represents the "old folks at home" receiving news from California.

An old shoemaker sitting on his bench, embraced by his wife, both listening to a letter from their son, which their daughter is reading to them. The old man holds a draft of $5,000 on Adams & Co. in his hand, and all bear the expression of intense happiness.

We are informed that twenty five of these wagons are in progress now, and all of them are to be executed in the same style. They will be ornamented with appropriate pictures of scenes on the Isthmus and California; and the owner of them has made an arrangement with O. B. Irman to go out to the Isthmus, and take sketches of the beautiful and picturesque scenery of Nicaragua, which will be copied on the wagons.

The company are taking them down to the Isthmus, on board of their steamers, as fast as they are ready.

The company have other improvements afoot. The new large steamers on the lake and river, with staterooms and sleeping apartments, will do away with all the want of comfort, and the finishing of the two wharves in San Juan del Sur and Virgin Bay, which are in good progress, will contribute greatly to the despatch of passengers, and save eight to twelve hours time each trip.

By the finish of the Panama Railroad, and a careful supervision of that road, twenty-four hours might be saved in time, and all the difficulties and delays of that land route will be avoided; but Panama cannot overcome the eight hundred and odd miles travel in the Pacific ocean south of the Nicaragua port in the Pacific.

The new arrangement of weekly communication is a great accommodation to the public, which will be felt still more if Congress should accept the offer of the Nicaragua Transit Company to carry also the mail over their route.

MARITIME INTELLIGENCE.

Movements of Ocean Steamers.

NAMES.	LEAVES	FOR	DATE.
Sarah Sands	Liverpool	Portland	Dec. 5
Washington	Southampton	New York	Dec. 6
Atlantic	Liverpool	New York	Dec. 16
City of Manchester	Liverpool	Philadelphia	Dec. 20
Asia	Liverpool	New York	Dec. 23
Cahawba	New York	Hav. and N. O.	Dec. 26
Northern Light	New York	San Juan	Dec. 27
Pacific	New York	Liverpool	Dec. 27
America	Boston	Liverpool	Jan. 3

☞ *All packages and letters intended for the* NEW YORK HERALD *should be sealed.*

ALMANAC FOR NEW YORK—THIS DAY.

SUN RISES	7 22	MOON SETS	10 28
SUN SETS	4 37	HIGH WATER	morn

Port of New York, December 23, 1854.

CLEARED.

Steamship Knoxville, Ludlow, Savannah, S L Mitchill.
Steamship Jas Adger, Turner, Charleston, Spofford, Tileston & Co.
Steamship Roanoke, Skinner, Richmond, &c, Ludlam & Pleasants.
Ship Niobe, Evans, Calcutta, W A Sale, Jr.
Ship President Fillmore, Nelson, London, Dunham & Dimon.
Ship Prince Regent (Br), Martin, London, H & F W Meyer.
Ship Sir Robert Peel, Gifford, London, C Grinnell.
Ship J A Westervelt, Austin, Liverpool, Taylor & Rich.
Ship New Hampshire, Chase, Liverpool, Zerega & Co.
Ship F A Palmer (new), Richardson, Havre, Post & Ryerson.
Ship Tropic, Smith, Sydney, R W Cameron.
Ship Windward, Smith, Melbourne, R W Cameron.
Ship Audubon, Arthur, Valparaiso, W R Rodman.
Ship Katahdin, Eustis, New Orleans, N H Brigham.
Ship Hemisphere, Harris, Key West, master, J Norton, Jr.
Ship Columbia, Mowry, Charleston, Thos Wardle.
Bark Zorgvliet (Dutch), Groot, Amsterdam, W F Schmidt & Co.
Bark Garland, Martin, Marseilles, J B Gager & Co.
Bark J B Lancaster, Somers, Brest, J W Elwell & Co.
Bark Rolla, Hayes, Sagua la Grande, Peck & Church.
Bark Almira, Hallock, Nassau, Bacon & Sargent.
Brig Sea Bell, Frost, Bermuda, H D Brookman & Co.
Brig Mary Hamilton, Briggs, Galveston, Wakeman, Dimon & Co.
Brig Volona, Lockhart, St Marys, Brett, Son & Co.
Brig St Agnes (Br), Putman, Norfolk, J S Whitney & Co.
Schr G H Townsend, Hutchinson, Gambia, M M Freeman & Co.
Schr Stag, Townsend, Franklin, Johnson & Slaght.
Schr Rodrose, Winslow, St Marks, Brodie & Pettes.
Schr Ralph Post, Conklin, Apalachicola, R Post.
Schr D B Warner, Hannore, Charleston, McCready, Mott & Co.
Schr L P Smith, Derrickson, Wilmington, Dollner & Potter.
Schr Fairfax, Mott, Alexandria, Abbott, Dodge & Co.
Schr Ann Maria, Mitchel, Baltimore, J S Merrill.
Schr F A Hawkins, Cobb, Philadelphia, J W McKee.
Schr St Stephen, Randall, Eastport, DeWolf, Starr & Co.
Schr Chieftain, Brewster, Portland, Brown & Hartland.
Schr Wolcott, Hallett, Boston, Dayton & Sprague.
Schr S Nash, Allen, Boston, S W Lewis.
Sloop E Sprague, Fish, Wareham, master.
Steamer Jackson, Layfield, Baltimore, H B Cromwell.
Steamer Piedmont, Pest, Baltimore, H B Cromwell.

ARRIVED.

Steamship Marion, Foster, Charleston, 55 hours, with mdse and passengers, to Spofford, Tileston & Co. Thursday, at 7 PM, Cape Hatteras light bearing NW, exchanged signals with steamship Nashville, hence for Charleston.
Ship Victoria, Champion, London, and Portsmouth Nov 18, with mdse and 232 passengers, to Griswold, Morgan & Wiley.
Ship Compromise, Childs, Liverpool, Oct 28, with mdse and 34 passengers, to Zerega & Co. Experienced heavy westerly gales, &c.
Ship Howard (Ham), Niemann, Hamburg, 34 days, with mdse and 317 passengers, to W F Schmidt & Co. Nov