"THAT BOY is Lost"—Such was the exclamation of a practical, observing man, as he stood with us, at our office window, a few days since, and saw a young lad pass by in the street, puffing a cigar. "I tell you, sir," said he, "that boy is lost."

We took time to think the matter over, and could only come to the same conclusion. He is permitted to lounge where profane, obscene and unprincipled men congregate.—There he breathes over their exhaled tobacco smoke and their rummy breath, learns their vocabulary and imbibes their recklessness of truth and honesty. He listens admiringly, to their self-gratulatory tales of licentious and criminal exploit. And, finally, as a badge of the school he is attending, and as a sign of proficiency, he comes forth with a cigar and practices the sire of the "flood-wood" gentry, first twirling his two cent "Havanna" scientifically in his fingers, then inserting it successively in each corner of his mouth, while he blows the smoke from the other, in the faces of ladies and grey-haired men. "O, but," says the indulgent parent, "it is only a childish freak; he will outgrow it." It is a vain hope. The young tree, broken down by a careless foot, never grows straight. No physician can purge from the system the venom of the rattle snake, or the deadly virus of the rabid dog.

It was not the bare fact that the boy was smoking which led our friend to his conclusion. But it was what is implied in that act. Boys do not take their lessons in such habits, of their mothers at home; the company of older and more depraved persons is implied. Neither does the habit of smoking go alone. The stomach, inflamed by one narcotic stimulant cries out for another, and before the down of incipient manhood appears upon his chin, he will be drinking with "fast" young men. And let it be remembered that boys and young men do not smoke and chew, and drink with the comparative impunity that their fathers and grandfathers did. The excesses which but slightly injured the last generation make speedy wreck of this.

If we would save our young men for virtuous and useful lives, we must keep their minds and bodies from pollution. We close with recommending a cure for the vile habit in question, to be applied to the boy, as soon as he commences the practice, viz. parental authority, faithfully administered, and if this does not prove effectual, give liberal doses of *birch* until there is no more smell of smoke in his garments.—*Chautauqua Messenger*

Weekly Free Press.

BURLINGTON, FRIDAY, JAN. 18, 1856.

The Politics of the Day.

The popular branch of the National Legislature remains at a dead-lock still, and now the correspondents talk of a month of speeches before organization. The New York Assembly, after two weeks of fruitless balloting, adopted the plurality rule on Monday and have probably elected a Speaker by this time. In the New Jersey House, after several days of disorganization, a democrat was chosen Speaker last week. In Ohio, where the Republicans are largely in the majority, and in Maine, where the democrats and straight whigs coalesced, the respective Houses effected their organizations and proceeded to business some days since. Thus the chaotic appearance of general politics continues, but the mingled elements are cleaving gradually and surely to their respective poles.

Such protracted triangular strifes as those at Washington and Albany result naturally from the position of parties in the campaigns of last year, but even these afford evidence that the time is near at hand when three cornered contests will be out of the question,—when two great parties will once more divide the nation throughout all its parts,—when a single issue will overshadow and absorb all minor shades and differences.

The process of absorption is now in active operation. The proceedings of Saturday, at Washington, make it sufficiently clear to the dullest observer, if it was not so before, that the Richardson and Fuller factions are but the two wings of one pro-slavery party.

In New York State, the Softs, tired of pulling against their adamantine brethren, have now tailed on to the Hard end of the tow-line. In the resolutions adopted by them at Syracuse, they surrender at discretion, and take a position, which for out and out subserviency to the Slave-power, is all that the hardest Hard can ask for.

The Slavery question is now *the* question of the day. The President acknowledges it in his Message. The debates in Congress, every political document, and every movement of every party, but make it more evident. "Things is workin." Order will come out of confusion in due season.

Positions Defined.

In the House, on Saturday, the candidates for the Speakership walked up to the rack and were put through the catechism in turn. Nothing specially new was elicited as to the positions of the several men. Mr Banks took the Republican ground; Mr. Richardson the pro-slavery; Mr. Fuller the same, with the addition of an "American" plank; and Mr. Pennington declined to be put on record at present. We subjoin the proceedings

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12.

Mr. Campbell, (rep.) of Ohio, moved that the resolution continuing debate to ten minutes, be suspended until Wednesday, unless otherwise ordered, as it would be impossible for candidates for the Speakership to define their positions, in accordance with Mr. Zollikoffer's resolution, within so short a time. He offered for the use of the candidates, a scrap-book containing all the party platforms of all the political parties of the country for the last twenty years, together with the ancient platform of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and would also refer them to the Bible, had not that book been removed from the Congressional Library, to make room for the works of Eugene Sue. [Laughter.]

Mr. Richardson, (dem.) of Ill., thought he could get through with his part of the performance within the prescribed ten minutes

Mr. Campbell consequently, withdrew his motion

Mr. Humphrey Marshall, (K. N.) of Ky., suggested that the batches of interrogatories be filed—the candidates to reply in printed publications, at their convenience.

Mr. Richardson replied to a series of written interrogatories propounded by Mr. Zollikoffer, commanding the marked attention of the members and a crowded gallery. He said that in voting for the Nebraska-Kansas bill he intended that the people of the Territories should decide the question of slavery for themselves, and he was in favor of admitting them with or without slavery. He had said that slavery would not go there, but never urged that as a reason why he voted for the bill. As to the constitutionality of the Wilmot proviso, he voted for the principle applicable to our Mexican acquisitions. In a spirit of compromise, but he thought it would be unjust to incorporate the proviso in a Territorial bill. In his judgment, the Constitution does not carry slavery into Territories, but protects both sections of the country alike.

It was decided that all the candidates should answer Mr. Zollikoffer's queries before others were propounded.

Mr. Banks was called out,

Mr. Banks, (rep.) of Mass., said he did not feel that he was obliged to answer questions. He had not solicited support—His friends, as Othello said of his wife, "had eyes, and chose me." He distinctly remarked that he did not regard the Kansas bill as promotive of the formation of free States—He believed in the constitutionality of the Wilmot proviso; and did not believe the constitution carries slavery into the territories. He recognized the right to protect property North and South alike, but not property in man. He believed the constitution to be an instrument of freedom, and that Congress was wrong in repealing the Missouri compromise. (Applause from the republicans.)

Mr. Fuller, (K. N.) of Pa., rose and said that he was ready at any time to retire from this protracted contest. He did not regard the Kansas bill as promotive of the formation of either free or slave States. He had ever advocated the constitutionality of the Wilmot proviso. Slavery exists independently of the constitution. Congress had no right to legislate slavery in or out of Territories. It only had the right to legislate so far as to protect citizens in the enjoyment of their property.

Mr. Pennington, (rep.) of N. J., was then loudly called for. He said that he had no idea that so obscure and unpromising a candidate as himself would be required to define his position. He was outside of the triangle. (Laughter.) He most respectfully declined to make a reply, but would do so when the House seriously intended to use his name in connection with the Speakership. It was of no consequence what the individual opinions of the presiding officer were.

Mr. Barksdale, (dem.) of Miss., asked Mr. Banks—Are you now a member of the Know Nothing party? Are you in favor of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia? Do you wish to promote the equality of the white and black races by legislation? Are you in favor of the entire exclusion of naturalized citizens and Catholics from office? You were in favor of a modification of the tariff at the last session—are you so now?

Mr. Kennett, (K. N.) of Mo.—I should like to know whether either of the candidates believes in a future state, and if so, whether in a free or slave State. (Excessive laughter.)

Mr. Barksdale, advancing towards Mr. Kennett excitedly—Do you intend to cast a reflection on me? I hurl it back with scorn and contempt.

Deafening calls to order ensued upon this, and nearly all the members were upon their feet.

Mr. Kennett.—No difficulty in or out of the hall shall intimidate me. I say to the House my suggestion was merely jocular.

Mr. Barksdale.—I treat it with scorn and contempt, sir.

Order was restored, when Mr Richardson replied negatively to Mr. Barksdale's queries, with the exception of the last.

Mr. Banks, in answering Mr Barksdale's interrogatories, preferred doing so in his own way, leaving gentlemen to draw inferences. He was nominated by the Democrats and Americans, and he them elected. He referred to the record of last year of his views on the tariff. He had adopted the maxim of Junius—"It is unfortunate for a man to spend any considerable portion of his time in commenting on his own work." [Laughter.] As to the equality of the white and black races, he believed, in the language of the Declaration of Independence, that all men were created equal. He had adopted the idea that the weaker race will be absorbed in the stronger—that is universal law. Whether the white or black races were the superior, and would eventually absorb the other, he would not express an opinion, but preferred to wait for a more full development of the races. [Laughter and cries of "Good."] As to the other questions propounded, they are subordinate to that prohibiting slavery in Kansas, and he would not ask any man what he thought of this or that measure, but would unite with all to interdict slavery in the Territories.

Mr. Fuller answered that he was not in favor of restoring the Missouri Compromise restriction; he was opposed to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia; did not believe in the equality of the black and white races, he thought with Washington, that it is the best policy for the government to appoint native born citizens to office in preference to those of foreign birth; to proscribe no man for his religion, but to accord to all the largest liberty of opinion. He did not desire to exclude foreigners coming hither, and would invite them to settle the public territory, and build up for themselves homes. Not in all matters pertaining to legislation and administration Americans should govern America. (Applause from the Americans.) Mr. Richardson answered various questions propounded by Mr. Bingham.

Each party seemed to be entirely satisfied with the responses of its candidate, as is seen by the following vote, which was taken immediately after the explanations had been made:—

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH BALLOT.

Mr. Banks,	94	Mr. Richardson,	69
Mr. Fuller,	24	Mr. Pennington,	7

Messrs. Williams, Henry Bennett and Porter, each one.

Necessary to a choice, 104. Adjourned.

Kansas Affairs.

The Boston Atlas publishes the following letters from one, of whom it speaks as "an intelligent and influential citizen of Kansas, who knows whereof he affirms."

LAWRENCE, K. T., Dec. 26, 1855.

A systematic effort has just been made to get up a collision in Kansas, in order that Free State men might be banished from the Territory. An organization of not less than ten thousand men, as I have reason to believe, exists in Missouri, pledged to march into Kansas, whenever the leaders shall decide, to exterminate all opposition to slavery. These leaders, thinking the present a favorable time, manufactured a series of the most remarkable falsehoods on record, and called on the legions to invade the Territory for the *professed* purpose of maintaining "law and order," but for the real purpose of butchering Free State men and women. The call was most urgent and loud, but the response was far from encouraging. It required two long weeks to drum up one thousand men, and no power in Missouri could increase their numbers without a better cause. As soon as it was known by the well disposed that the leaders had made up lies to induce them to come, they became disgusted and would have nothing to do with fighting unoffending citizens. The Governor found he had been *sold*, and was anxious to back out on any terms, while the leaders found their crimes was getting unpopular with their own men, and made the best of a disgraceful retreat, satisfied that one thousand men cannot do up the work about Lawrence, and also satisfied that Yankees will fight for their homes and families. The war, however, has not ended, although the destruction of Lawrence for the present, is abandoned. Leavenworth is now the seat of hostilities, and several outrages have been perpetrated there recently. The voting for the State Convention was forcibly stopped, and the ballots taken to Westport, and, later, the press of the Territorial Register was taken from the office and thrown into the Missouri river. As the Free State men at Leavenworth are armed and unorganized, such things are done for the present with impunity. Houses in adjoining towns have also been burned, and men killed and threatened with death recently, in a manner that shows a determination to harass free State men to keep the Territory or drive them to desperation. While this is being done here, great efforts are being made all over the South to raise men and money to settle Kansas in the Spring. Since the attempt on Lawrence, they begin to think it absolutely necessary to throw into the Territory more resident voters, that the free State men may be outnumbered at the polls, and we shall see a larger immigration from the South next season than ever before. Slavery is the most obstinate and persevering power on earth, and like the powers of darkness knows no such thing as defeat; and like Gen. Taylor, does not know when it is whipped. Anything but slavery would have given up the contest long ago; but as it is, we shall have it to contend with in Kansas another season. Ten thousand free State emigrants must settle in Kansas early next season, and five thousand Sharpe's rifles, or their equivalent, must be furnished them. The slave power knows that its destiny hangs upon its fate in Kansas, and the struggle will be desperate. With one-half the energy and perseverance on our part that is manifested on theirs, we can triumph, and judging from the past the victory will surely be ours; it will not do, however, to be caught napping.

LAWRENCE, K. T., Dec. 28, 1855.

Do the people of the United States understand what President Pierce is doing for Kansas? If not, it is about time they did. Go through the Territory and review his army of office holders, and what do you find? First, there is Gov. Shannon, who is substituted for Gov. Reeder, a true man, and what is he?—A miserable tool of Atchison and Stringfellow, or of anybody else who is in favor of slavery in Kansas. At their bidding he issued a proclamation as false as the father of lies himself, and put in jeopardy the lives and property of the unoffending citizens of the Territory. It cost the people of Kansas not less than $20,000 to defend themselves against the mob he brought against them, and what excuse has he give for such robbery and outrage? None, only he "*construed*" the laws (and we must pay for it. This Governor Shannon takes the stump for proslavery candidates for office, becomes a delegate to "law and order" meetings, utters the vilest far room slang against free State men, and then commissions the free State men to drive out the rest. The government pays the mob, and the free State men pay themselves. Is such a man fit to be Governor of Kansas?

Next comes the Secretary of the Territory. The following despatch tells who he is:—

"DEAR GENERAL:—The Governor having called out the militia, this is to inform you to order out your division, and proceed forthwith to Lecompton. The Governor not having the power, you can call on the Platte County Rifle Company, as our neighbors are always ready to help us. Do not implicate the Governor, whatever you do.

DANIEL WOODSON."

Is such a man fit to be Secretary? The other territorial appointees judges, marshal, &c., will follow suit. There is not one free State judge appointed, but he has been removed. Who are the Indian agents? Without exception, so far as I can learn, proslavery men, and one of them a few days since murdered a man in cold blood, just because he was a free State man. No notice is taken of the affair by the authorities, and probably none will be taken of it.

The Government contractors, who are paid, it is said, three or four millions annually from the treasury, have recently discharged all the free State employees, because they are free State men.

The government printing is given to the vilest proslavery papers in the world, while the free State papers have been passed by. In short, the patronage of the government is all used to aid in making Kansas a slave State. Is this what is meant by "Squatter Sovereignty?" Is this justice to the people in settle the question of slavery for themselves, without interference from the General Government? I pause for a reply.

Kansas.

A correspondent of the *St. Louis Intelligencer* says that *nine tenths* of the militia enrolled of Sheriff Jones posse were from Missouri.

One thing is a little singular; all of those men concerned in the recent invasion against Lawrence, expect to get two dollars and fifty cents per day from Congress for their services, and also expect to get a bounty land warrant each. The idea that Congress will thus appropriate funds and bounty to those of the citizens of our State who invaded Kansas, must appear preposterous; but the idea is entertained, and no effort will be spared by the Territorial officers to effect it.

Nominating Conventions.—On Saturday, the 22d inst., a Convention was held at Lawrence, to nominate candidates for office, for the future. They are to be voted for on the third Tuesday of the ensuing January, and will go into the discharge of their duties next spring, if Congress admits Kansas as a State.

The following gentlemen were nominated for the various offices

For Governor—Charles Robinson, Republican.

For Lieut Governor—W. J. Roberts, National Democrat.

For Congress—M. W. Delahay, National Democrat.

For Secretary of State—P. C. Schuyler, Republican.

For Auditor—J. A. Cutler, Whig-Republican.

For State Treasurer—J. A. Wakefield, Free Soil Whig.

For Judges of Supreme Court—S. Lecompte, National Whig; W. Conway, Free-Soil Democrat; Morris Hunt, Whig.

For Clerk of Supreme Court—S. B. Floyd, Free Soil Democrat.

Reporter of Court—Thornton, Democratic Republican.

Col. Lane contested with Robinson for the office of Governor, but on the last ballot, it stood, Robinson 55, Lane 22. The Douglas Democrats have got rather mad up. Col. Delahay would have got the nomination for Congress, only on account of his locality. The Convention, in order to reconcile the Ticket contested pretty hard with Lane, but there was force enough in the Convention to have demolished Douglas and Free Democracy completely.

Col. Lane, who evidently felt badly at defeat, has acted very well, and in a speech before the Convention, urged the Lane State party to support the nominees.

Delahay's Office Destroyed.—As is the fate of evidence made in the course of the border ruffian invasions in Kansas, I learn that the office of the Territorial Register, Col. Delahay's paper, was destroyed by a mob, partly of proslavery men from the vicinity of Fort Leavenworth, but chiefly from Platte County, Mo. The attempt was made on Saturday night. Col. Delahay was absent at Lawrence and none of those about his office attempted to defend it, indeed, there was no resistance.

The press, type, and the whole of the material was thrown in deep water to the Missouri river. A considerable lot of new paper was burned.

A letter to the Worcester Transcript from one who was engaged in the defence of Lawrence, Kansas Territory, from the Missouri invaders, says

No one who has not been in a besieged town, can imagine the cost of defending themselves in such a state, everything and everybody has to be appropriated to the defence; property, however choice or sacred, has to add its mite to the common defence; women, unused to hardships and exposure of life, have to take up the stern position of self defence, and every man toglets everything but war. Our blacksmiths fixed guns and made spears and lances; our wagon makers put the handles to our home-made spears; our farmers plowed and dug in the ditches along with the soldiers, and freely gave up their hay and corn to feed the men as laborers; the lawyers, merchants, physicians and mechanics, all dropped the tools of their several callings, shouldered their guns and followed the call of the drum. Horses are killed or taken by the enemy, guns are lost or broken; saddles and bridles cannot be found; clothing, blankets, pistols, spades, shovels, pitchforks, tables, chairs, bedsteads, and firewood, are lost, damaged or stolen. Money is all spent—credit gone—poor Lawrence has been so frightfully hit; she still has her honor, worth more than all—she has gained a bloodless victory. They swore by high Heaven that they never would return to Missouri without seizing our rifles and burning our town—they have gone, and we still have our rifles and our town.

Col. Lane told Col. Boone, in Missouri Col. only when a special demand was made of us to surrender our guns, in full view of our works that we were then engaged. "You see these men, Col. Boone? Not one of them, if he had a thousand lives, but would sacrifice them all rather than surrender the smallest part of our rights or our honor."

The Speakership.

The House continued in session through the night of Wednesday, and adjourned at 9 o'clock Thursday morning, the Democrats backing out from their resolution not to adjourn until a Speaker had been elected, and (together with two or three Banks men,) voting with the Americans for an adjournment. There were nine ballots during the night—On the last one Mr. Banks had 93, which, as usual was six less than a majority. Very good order was preserved throughout the twenty hour session. The proceedings were as follows

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10

At 1 o'clock this morning Mr. Paine made an ineffectual motion to place Orr and subsequently Smith, of Ala., temporarily in the chair till a Speaker is elected. A discussion involving the merits of Know Nothingism and Catholicism and other subjects ensued.

Much time was consumed in calling the roll on various questions including motions to adjourn. Many gentlemen were sleeping or dozing on their seats, and others were aroused by their brother members on guard when their votes were required.

Mr. Winslow moved that the House adjourn to Friday. The Democrats, in giving their reasons for voting in the affirmative, notwithstanding the resolution of their caucus not to adjourn or take a recess until a Speaker was elected, said they thus resolved in good faith in order to give the majority an opportunity to organize. Having had a fatiguing time they were now satisfied of the impracticability of the experiment.

Mr. Letcher said that he was perfectly satisfied that the proposition never entered Republican for the Kingdom of Heaven sooner than the election of a Speaker, at which there was no visible probability.

Mr. Banks said the Americans take the power to organize by amendating all the Democrat. Speaker. Let them amendment as they pleased.

Mr. Washburn, of Maine, said the Republicans came to the charge that they were keeping up the fight to the last.

Mr. Giddings remarked that so far as related to the conduct of gentlemen on this floor it was equal to his expectations. (Laughter.) He tendered to his friends, the Republicans, his thanks for the kind and decorous behavior, and to the Democrats that their conduct was better than he had expected. As no good could be accomplished by prolonging the contest, he voted, with other Republicans, to adjourn.

At 8 1-2 o'clock, the House adjourned to Friday by 10 majority.

From Washington.

January 8th.

The National Democratic Committee have designated the first Monday of June next as the time for holding the Cincinnati Convention. The Committee transacted no other business.

The convention of the soldiers of 1812 met this morning. Upwards of two hundred delegates were present, representing Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Vermont, Mississippi and New York.

They called on the President, who made them a speech. He referred to Van Cleskirk, from N. York, 94 years old, as the only Representative of the Revolution present; to Secretaries Davis and Guthrie, of the Mexican war, and those before him of the late war with Great Britain

They adopted resolutions that Government is under the most solemn pledge to carry out the promises of the Continental Congress, regarding the provision for officers of the Revolutionary Army. That they would earnestly petition the present Congress to supply the omission of former ones by providing for the declining years of the soldiers and sailors of 1812, as has been done for those of the Revolution.

That provisions for wounds or injury should commence from the date of disability, and the arrears of pensions be paid to the widow of surviving children. That the "Bounty Act" of 1855 should be so amended as to embrace the children of any person who, if living, would be entitled to land under that act as well as his minor children; and persons who enlisted for five years and served till discharged or disabled ought to receive 160 additional acres. That the provisions of the present laws should be extended to those confined in the foreign prisons during the late war, and—that inasmuch as many rolls of the War Office were destroyed by fire, it is unjust to refuse parole proof and require record evidence of service, and further, that military service, however short, should be entitled to 160 acres.

Mr. Phillips' Lecture.

The occurrence of the Masonic Lodge, doubtless kept many away from the lecture of Wendell Phillips, Esq., before the Young Men's Association on the 9th. Nevertheless, there was a fair audience, and though fatigued by waiting above an hour and a half for the arrival of the train in which Mr. P. was, and chilled by the coldness of the room, he was listened to with attention and gratification. The subject of his discourse was "The Lost Arts", and in an easy, rather conversational, yet polished manner, he showed in how many of the most remarkable arts,—such as glass making, the production of brilliant and durable colors, working in metals, and even in some of the greatest displays of engineering, men of ancient times far surpassed any thing which can be done now. In matters of taste, the moderns do not profess to equal the ancients. The distinguishing difference between the ancient and modern spirit is, in the *use made of the arts*. Anciently they were practised in secret, and the methods kept secret, in order to increase the influence and power of a class. Now, the aim is to enlighten the popular mind on all subjects—to *diffuse* knowledge, not to confine it.

NICARAGUA.—The whole of Walker's "army," it seems, consists of 500 men, 224 only of whom are Americans. The towns which had fallen into the hands of Walker had been abandoned by their inhabitants. A correspondent of the National Intelligencer says that the junto Walker

issued a barbarous decree, ordering all those persons to return to their homes within a specified time, under certain penalties, amounting to $10,000, to be doubled in the event of non-compliance therewith, without legal redress. None have obeyed, and Walker has taken possession of all the property of the proprietors, both native and foreign residents of said towns; but this has not furnished him with any pecuniary resources, since he finds no purchasers of confiscated estates.

The money derived from his freebooting expedition against Grenada, and the first contributions he succeeded in realizing have already disappeared. Walker does not pay a cent to his troops in money. The miserable rations they receive he provides by violence and extortion. Among the adventurers who went from California, with the intention of joining Walker, several have repented of their rashness and returned.

Walker is surrounded by secret and open enemies, who only await the receipt of arms and munitions of war to put him down by force."

CRIME IN CHITTENDEN COUNTY.—Our excellent State's Attorney, T. E. Wales, Esq., entered upon the second year of his office on the 1st of December last. From the following statement of transactions in his office during the last year, it will be seen that the ends of justice have not been neglected in his hands.

During the year there have been forty convictions for selling liquor contrary to law. Amount of fines imposed, with costs, $1473.-20.

Thirty-three persons have been convicted before Magistrates of assault and battery. Amount of fines and costs, $357 31. Eleven persons have been convicted of breach of the peace, and fined to the amount of $145.52

There have been nine convictions of Petit Larceny, where these alone have been imposed to the amount of $108.27, including costs; also nine convictions of Petit Larceny where offenders have been sentenced to imprisonment in the County Jail from 10 to 90 days each

Two young men have been sentenced to 10 days imprisonment for disfiguring doors. Two men have been bound for trial at the County Court for committing Grand Larceny, two for keeping bowling alleys, two for keeping gambling houses and one for impeding an officer in the discharge of his duty. Since the 1st of December there have been some ten cases of prosecution for violations of the Liquor Law.

RAILROAD ACCIDENTS.—The following table of the Railroad accidents of the United States of the past year, includes all the principal casualties to trains, but not the individual cases of persons run over, killed or wounded stepping on or off moving trains, &c.—

	Accidents.	Killed.	Wounded
January,	12	10	44
February,	10	2	20
March,	12	5	25
April,	7	2	19
May,	7	5	50
June,	8	4	20
July,	13	9	48
August,	10	28	105
September,	15	10	67
October,	21	13	82
November,	13	29	81
December,	7	4	12
	143	116	553

Of the 116 killed, 61 were engineers, conductors, brakemen and employes of the Roads, and 55 were passengers. As compared with previous years, the number of accidents, as well as the number of persons killed or injured is less than either in 1853 or 1854, notwithstanding the increased number of Railroads.—*Albany Journal.*

We acknowledge our obligations to Hon. Solomon Foot, for valuable public documents received from him

[Correspondence of the Free Press.]

Letter from Florida.

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA. DEC. 29th, 1855.

Running between the Fort and the Barracks, about in the shape of a great interrogation-point, is the Sea-wall, the principal promenade of the place. It will not accommodate so many as Broadway or Boston Common, being but just wide enough for two to walk abreast. One who has heard before coming here, of the delightful walk on the Sea-wall, is likely to be disappointed on seeing the reality; but it proves very much like the singed cat we read of, "a great deal better than it looks." It is quite a relief to be able to walk a mile at a stretch, without getting ankle-deep in the sand and bare. And almost every moon-light night, the wall is covered with promenading couples, varying their amusement by going out to the end of the wharf to rest on the benches. The present wall was built by the U. S. Government at a cost of about $100,000; not for a promenade, of course, but to keep the sea from washing away the town bodily. Of the old Spanish wall scarcely a trace remains; it was much closer to the buildings than this one—so near, indeed, that fish might be taken from the balconies. A very convenient arrangement.

The harbor of St. Augustine is a fine one, when once you get into it, being completely land-locked; but as the depth of water on the bar is but six or eight feet ordinarily, no large vessels can enter, and when once in, it is no easy matter always to get out; one vessel, as mine own eyes can testify, lay out in the stream three weeks, waiting for the proper conjunction of wind and tide. And sometimes, I am told, vessels are detained even longer.

Twenty years ago, St. Augustine must have been a different place from what it is now; when each house had its little grove of orange trees around it, with their deep green leaves and golden fruit; when a million and a half of oranges were yearly exported, and vessels came in a little oftener than once annually. Those were bright days for Augustine; but alas! on the 7th of January, 1836, came a black frost, and the oranges were frozen solid on the trees! And when the groves began to recover from that, the orange-bug made its appearance, brought, it is said, on some Chico oranges; a tiny insect, requiring a microscope for a fair view of it, enveloping itself in a shell or cocoon resembling half a flax seed, and devouring the leaves at a great rate. So the pride of St. Augustine perished; and the place has not yet recovered from the blow. The groves are springing up again, but the insect has not ceased its ravages, and it will be long ere as much fruit can be exported again.

There are two kinds of oranges raised here: the sweet and the sour. The sour oranges have a very thick skin, and are equal to any lemon for tartness; indeed, the so-called lemon syrup is often made of them. They grow quite large and in great abundance—ten or a dozen on a branch no bigger than one's finger. Some thousand have been picked from a single tree. The sweet-orange trees have a darker leaf than the sour, and the rind of the fruit is not so thick by half. They are very fine flavored, even better than the Havana oranges; but they do not yield so abundantly as the sour ones. Three hundred were picked this season from quite a small tree, which is now considered quite a large number, tho' in former times they would hardly have been thought enough to pay for gathering. *B. A.*

From the Alleghanies.

HUNTINGDON, PA., Jan. 7th, 1856.

In Central Pennsylvania, we have, thus far, had an open and rather mild winter, until last week, when Mr. Frost assumed his empire, and has clothed field and forest and flood in his chilly garments, and he bites the toes and pinches the ears of the urchins in the same rude manner that he has ever done. We have had no deep snow, but the merry jingle of sleigh bell greets my ear as I write. A kind of rest, by the bye, which I have noted *odd*, when you can enjoy the warm comfort of the rattling car. Our winters seem to have much changed. Twenty-five or thirty years ago, Winter entered upon his duties early in December, and exercised no divided authority until Spring began to warm him with her smiles. Now, (although last winter was pronounced *old fashioned*,) we rarely have one week of good sleighing.

With our winter, begin our political movements, and this winter, more especially, have they started early. The failure of our Legislature to elect a United States Senator last year, has opened this winter's campaign in earnest.

On Tuesday, the first day of the year, our Legislature met again. Last year it was largely American, this year, largely Loco Foco. The last, strangely impracticable,—the present, as plastic as dough-faces can be. I was present at their meeting, and could not but be struck by the marked change in the bearing of the Loco Foco elements. In former years, whether in minority or majority, there was always a bold, defiant, dictatorial tone borne toward the free party men—the doubting and waver ng were threatened, and the growlers were cursed and kicked without stint. A disappointed and disaffected partisan was knocked down and dragged out, before he had time to recover. "Make no terms with traitors," had grown into law with them; and they called all traitors who dared to differ with the party in its policy.

This year they met at the State Capitol, with wounds which to ointment will mollify. Numbers of them denounce President Pierce, and all the folly and infamy that have disgraced the administration and made it despicable. Others pronounce the Liquor restraining law of last year, "Know Nothing despotism;" while about equal numbers, worship with their faces towards Washington, or are anxious to sustain every honest Temperance movement. Again, about an equal number assail Simon Cameron and all his partisans, for corruption and knavery. Yet, when these conflicting elements met, all old griefs were forgotten. No one spoke of their differences. They had but one purpose, and that was to appear harmonious. They evidently saw that their party needed delicate handling, and they could afford to run no risks. You have seen the wasted victim of disease moved with such anxious care, that it was apparent that there was danger that visitors would depart by reason of the exertion. So comes the Loco Foco party of Pennsylvania at the organization of the Legislature. In the Senate, they were compelled to elect, as Speaker, Mr Pratt, who last year voted for Cameron for Senator, voted for the restraining Liquor law, and is an Anti-Nebraska Democrat, coming from a district largely republican; but they dared not denounce him, dared not to nominate any one else, because they knew, if they did, he would go over to the enemy. In the House a bitter war was got up for Clerk. The Colorts of Rum, or, as they are called, "The Tooth Legion," demanded that the Clerk be one of them, and they were willing, too, that their candidate should be known as an Anti-Pierce candidate. The Softs looked ominous. The difficulty was settled in the moment: all the hard names were forgotten, the man made Clerk, his opponent was made Assistant, and the balance of the corps of Clerks, known as transcribers, was made up in the same way, and everything moved on as merry as a marriage bell.

The U. S. Senator is to be elected on the 14th inst., and the candidates are Bigler, Candidate, a State Senator, and the candidate for from the sake of last year, evidently has the start on the other men, but the chances are that his opponents will double-team, and thus defeat him. B. D. Foster, a member of the House, perhaps stands next in the latter, and if we must have a Loco Foco, there is no man in their ranks I would sooner see elected. A man of talent, a gentleman, but still a Loco Foco. There are a dozen, and perhaps twenty, others who have aspirations for the high office, and some one, not yet thought of, may be the favorite of fortune; it is not by any means certain that the present harmony will out-live that election.

The Liquor question must be settled some way, this winter; and they will find that, like the electric eel, it is a shocking subject to handle.

A. W.

WISCONSIN.—The Wisconsin Legislature organized on the 10th. In the Senate Lieutenant Governor McArthur acted as President, and Byron Paine, republican, was elected clerk. In the House, Mr. Hall, democrat, was elected Speaker, and Judge Armstrong, democrat, clerk. Mr. Bashford, republican, who claims a majority of the legal votes for Governor demanded possession of the executive office from Governor Barstow. The latter declined to give it up, and the case is now before the Supreme Court.

OSWEGO.—Hon. Timothy Bontwell of John Wheeler was confirmed last week to the fill of Directors of the Bank of Burlington.

FROM CALIFORNIA.—The Northern Light arrived at New York on the 13th, with California dates to Dec. 20th, and $540,000 in specie. Matters at Nicaragua are said to be improving. Col. Kinney was still at San Juan del Norte. A large number of his men have recently joined Col. Walker. An Expedition under Ramon Rivas, agent of the President had fortified themselves near Castillo Rapido, and threatened to seize the Transit Company's steamer and the property of the passengers, but Com. Paulding, at the request of the company, sent forward an armed party, when Rivas and his party fled. The mines in California yield more abundantly than ever.

Dates from Oregon to the 14th of Dec. are received. The Indian war was raging with increased fury. The Oregon mounted volunteers, under Lieut. Kelly, attacked the Indians at Fort Wallawalla, Dec. 8th, and fought there forty-eight hours, losing eight killed and eleven wounded. Among the killed were Captain Bennett, and Lieut. Barrows. The Indians lost their chief and 70 men. General Wool was at Fort Vancouver arranging preliminaries for the campaign. Two steamers had departed from San Francisco for Oregon with ordnance stores and supplies for General Wool. Dates from Washington Territory are to the 10th of December. A party under Lieut. Slaughter, had been surprised at the forks of the Walla walla and Umatah rivers, by a large party of Indians. Lieut. S. and three others were killed.

One hundred and twenty recruits for Walker's army left San Francisco on the 20th.

The Times and Transcript, a leading Administration paper, has been discontinued.

Trade at San Francisco was dull and money tight. Domestic produce firm and advancing. Imports declined in price. Flour $13. Butter, choice, 35 cts.

European Intelligence.

The Atlantic arrived at New York on Saturday evening, with one week later dates from Europe. With the exception of the continued decline in breadstuffs, the news is not of great interest.

Peace negotiations seem in a fog yet.

Esterhazy had resolved on Petersburgh with the Western ultimatum, but it is not yet replied to. Austria has notified Prussia of its contents, and Prussia intends to urge it on the Czar. Saxony has also sent to St. Petersburgh to recommend to the Czar to accept the ultimatum.

Rumor repeats that Denmark is about to join the alliance, as Sweden has. The Western Propositions are kept secret, but it is believed Russia would accept them, but England demands indemnity, which Russia backed by Austria, absolutely refuses.

On the whole the prospects of a speedy peace appear to have advanced little or less.

Nothing from the Sea of War except details of the fall of Kars.

THE HUDSON RIVER RAILROAD AFFAIRS.—But three persons were killed outright by the accident on Wednesday of last week. The wounded are most of them said to be doing well. One lady who has been delirious ever since the accident, proves to have been the wife of Mr. Gordon, a Canadian gentleman, one of the killed, whose body was so mutilated as only to be recognized by the paper found in his pocket.—The Coroner's jury attribute the accident to the gross negligence of the engineer, who ran the wrong way with his dog till sent back by the Conductor, and not that the Poughkeepsie train remained at the station only five or six minutes after the express had left, contrary to the rules of the Road, which require an interval of ten minutes between trains. This throws the principal blame upon the Conductor of the Poughkeepsie train. Had he waited the minutes the accident would not have occurred. The following incidents are given by the *N. Y. Times*

Margaret Tracy, a resident of Troy, was one of the passengers of the express train, but escaped with a few bruises. She was taken to William Sprague's mansion in Poughkeepsie, where, in the course of the night, she gave birth to a dead boy. It appears that her husband, deserted her some time since, and hearing that he was residing in Boston, she had set out with the intention of finding him.

Mrs. Roberts has slight internal injuries and some severe bruises. Her two children are in the same room. One, a beautiful girl of seven years, appears to be entirely well, and I fear, fatally injured. She has been blind from her birth, but the physicians have lately expressed a hope that the sight of the right eye might eventually be restored, so that eye she has a frightful gash, penetrating the ball, which is oozing out, and destroying the lingering hope that she will ever have the blessing of sight. Her feet and hands are also bruised, and she gives evidence of having inhaled hot air or steam.

A boy of four years, a boarder for the last, seems to be much bruised about the face and hands. The little fellow says "it hurts," in response to any question that you ask him, and yet he smiles pleasantly through the bandages and strips of plaster that almost entirely cover his phiz.

At the private residence of Mr. Hopkins we found Capt. Schuyler, the man mangled and disfigured in all those accounts. He has several ribs broken, his right arm much bruised, and indeed is himself so bruised that he cannot move it. He has also slight bruises on his face, but he enjoys the usual good humor, though suffering still very severely. To encourage him, I asked the extent of his wounds, to reply, "I guess they are pretty bad, for I suppose they give the chances of the country, and I think myself plain." He will recover, but it will be but a partial recovery, may be hoped for.

At the Exchange Hotel is Mr. Blanchard. Her sight is not totally extinguished, as first supposed, but one of her ankle bones is broken, her face is much bruised, and one of her fingers is out of joint.

Mr. Dowey, an old resident of Poughkeepsie, was in the express car, and was killed. He was buried beneath a pile, and his daughter escaped almost unhurt. His first thought was to assist his wife, and with a strength almost superhuman, he engaged in removing the wreck and by his example inciting others to the most untiring efforts. She at last had the satisfaction of rescuing her father. He was not dead when he had been, so hardly he thought he had frozen both of his feet, so badly that amputation of one of them was necessary. Where do the friends of the sufferers now exhibit more devoted energy than in the part played by this heroic girl?

Miss Down—daughter of Valentine P. Down who, with Mr. D., was on the back train of the Hudson River Railroad—was killed while ministering to her father, who was thrown violently from the train, and fatally scalded in the head and shoulders, and severely frost bitten. It was at