

CASE-INSURANCE IN ADVANCE. THE DAILY DISPATCH... TERMS OF ADVERTISING...

THE CIRCULATION OF THE DISPATCH IS LARGER THAN THE COMBINED CIRCULATION OF ALL THE OTHER DAILY NEWS-PAPERS OF THE CITY.

TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1879.

WEATHER REPORT. INDICATIONS FOR TO-DAY.—For the Middle States, southwest to northwest winds...

THE WEATHER YESTERDAY: 6 A. M., 59; 9 A. M., 63; noon, 73; 3 P. M., 79; 6 P. M., 67; midnight, 64.

LOCAL MATTERS.

Church Notes. At the First Baptist church the congregations have been very large at the meetings during the past week...

Indicted for Murder. MEETING OF THE HUSTINGS COURT YESTERDAY—INDICTMENT OF JOHN E. POINDEXTER.

The grand jury of the Hustings Court met yesterday—Mr. W. H. Haxall foreman—and found a true bill for murder against John E. Poindexter.

At the Clay-Street Baptist church the meetings have gone on during the past week with some improvement...

At the Fulton Baptist church, in connection with some other services, a meeting was held in this congregation by the Young Men's Missionary Society...

At the Venetian Street Baptist church the congregations were large, four persons were baptized, and there is a good deal of interest among the unconverted.

The Grace-Street Baptist church during the past week has been enjoying a revival. The congregations are large and the interest deep and widening.

At the High-Street Baptist church two persons have been baptized during the series of meetings. At the communion five were received by letter and twenty-three young converts received the hand of fellowship.

At the Methodist preachers' meeting yesterday Rev. Dr. Crawford appeared and made a parting address, expecting to return to the China mission in a short time.

At the Manchester Methodist church on Sunday one member was received on profession of faith.

At the Clay-Street Methodist one was received by certificate.

At the Young Men's Christian Association meetings, the meetings which closed at Dr. Hoge's church Saturday evening have not only been the talk of Richmond, but seem to have attracted attention all over the country.

At the Baptist Sunday-School Association, the reports from the schools were as follows:

Table with columns: School Name, Teachers, Scholars, Boys, Girls, Total. Lists schools like First Church, Second Church, etc.

The committee to devise and put into operation plans for reaching the neglected classes of the city and environs with the Gospel reported substantially that the young men of several churches were laboring efficiently in that direction...

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COLORED FOLKS.

Their Rights and Wrongs Considered. CONFERENCE OF MEN REPRESENTING THE COLORED PEOPLE OF THIS CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT AT ODD-FELLOWS HALL YESTERDAY—CATHOLICISM AGAINST PROTESTANTISM TALKED ABOUT—A STATE CONVENTION OF COLORED MEN TALKED ABOUT.

About seventy-five colored men of this congressional district met in conference at the Odd-Fellows' Hall, Franklin street, yesterday at 12 o'clock, and were called to order by ex-Justice Cornelius Harris.

The following is a summary of superintendents' reports for February:

Table with columns: Name, Average, Per cent. Lists names like Gentry, Broad-street, Trinity, etc.

The next monthly meeting will be held at Oregon-Hill Methodist church second Sunday in April.

A special meeting will be held at Nicholson-Street Methodist church fifth Sunday in this month.

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Mr. Todd also presented a resolution approving the condemnation of a piece of property of J. M. Elliott, on Twenty-fourth street, north of A, at a valuation of \$700, for the Union-Hill avenue.

Mr. Scott, from the Committee on Finance, submitted the following report:

Gentlemen.—The Committee on Finance respectfully report that since the passage of the appropriation ordinance for the present fiscal year claims have been certified to the Auditor for payment from several committees of the Council covering debts incurred by these committees during the past fiscal year.

This discloses officially a fact, known, however, to most men of affairs, and known for some time past, that the section of the appropriation ordinance of last year, which declares that the amount appropriated shall be considered to be the limit of the amount to be expended by the several committees, and that for any excess of expenditure beyond the appropriation the city of Richmond shall in nowise be responsible (which limitation has now been re-announced in the last appropriation bill), has not been observed.

Your committee has been informed that with some of the most important committees of the Council it has for some years past been the practice to expend on their own authority sums of money in excess of their appropriations, hoping that by retrenchment or by receiving a larger appropriation from the appropriation committee they could make up their deficits. These expectations, it is needless to say, have uniformly failed, and the practical result has been that these committees have for the most part carried over from year to year unliquidated balances of debt; the debt of the last year being paid by borrowing from the appropriation of the present year, thus leaving under ordinary conditions of expenditure a deficit of the present year to be provided for by another process of borrowing from next year, and so on until it ends in an increase of the permanent public debt.

Your committee will please to observe that the unpaid balances here treated of comprise no part of the "floating debt," which has been provided for by your honorable body in your last appropriation bill. This debt is not apparent on the books of the Auditor in any shape, and cannot appear, because it only makes its appearance at the end of the fiscal year, and is then paid out of the new appropriations upon warrants drawn by the respective chairmen of the indebted committees, and repaid again when the books of the Auditor are written up and a new fiscal year is commenced.

Upon the best information now before your committee it is believed that this debt does not exceed altogether at this time the sum of \$200,000; but that debt, though nominally small, is none the less a heavy burden by reason of the principle which is involved in its creation. For it must be insisted to the most ordinary intelligence that if a valid debt of \$200,000 may be created without the previous authorization of the Council, one of ten times that amount may as readily be incurred.

Your committee understands that the principle upon which the validity of debts of this character proceeds is the familiar one which binds the principal by reason of the acts of his general agent performed within the scope of a general authority conferred upon him by the principal. The general agents of the city for their respective departments, and it would be unreasonable to expect the citizen who contracts with a department to know or inquire whether or not the department had already expended the amount to its credit on the books of the Auditor. If, indeed, he were to inquire, he would find it impracticable to acquire any certain information, for not unfrequently nominal balances appear to the credit of departments, until near the close of the fiscal year, when in reality they are merely made up more than sufficient to extinguish such balances.

If this theory, upon which rests the validity of these debts, be correct, it is apparent that the tax-payers of the city are placed at a fearful disadvantage. Here can be no certainty in any year what debts may be incurred in excess of appropriations. In one word, the government of the city becomes, not a government by its various committees; and the responsibility of the city is thereby transferred to the Council, and the Council, in its turn, is transferred to the citizen, and the citizen is thereby placed at a fearful disadvantage.

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