For the National Era.

LETTERS FROM THE CAPITOL.

WASHINGTON, *January* 16, 1851.

DEAR W——: Having become established in my winter quarters, I have thought that some little chronicling of daily events, and an occasional sketch of life in the Capital City, might not be uninteresting to you.

On the evening after my arrival, I attended one of the President's levees. This I found a great crowd, but a very pleasant affair notwithstanding, as here I met many friends and acquaintances of last session. President Fillmore wore the old, urbane smile, and gave the same courteous greeting to all who approached. I wonder if, with men of his temperament, good nature is always spontaneous and easy—if it never drags. I have often thought that your habitually kind and courteous people must miss a great luxury, which the more passionate and bilious enjoy in speaking their minds, with a careless or vehement boldness, and in touching up the faults and follies of their fellows.

President Fillmore's family are said to please much here. His daughter, who I have been told is a very noble girl, has a fine intelligent face which interests you at once.

I noticed on that evening an endless variety of costumes, the national spirit of independence breaking out in all imaginable styles and colors, and that everybody wore an easy, at-home manner. There is, as you know, at these levees neither music nor dancing, but people look very gay, nevertheless—as they collect in groups to laugh and chat, or stroll up and down, admiring and criticising, as they find most matter for commendation or satire.

I have not been to the Capitol much as yet, no very interesting questions having been up for discussion of late. The Cheap Postage bill before the House is one of most importance to us outsiders. They are making five-minutes' speeches upon this, which are sometimes quite amusing. The difference between the different speakers' powers of condensation and directness of thought is here most apparent. Now and then rises one, who, speaking straight to the point, is able to say his say distinctly and fully within the small appointed time—but, alas! the Chairman's hammer brings many a poor fellow up standing in the first faint dawn of a thought—cruelly cuts him off in the midst of a metaphor, perhaps. I have noticed that Mr. Stanly of North Carolina and Mr. Strong of Pennsylvania are particularly happy in packing their opinions into the five-minutes' measure. I was greatly amused the other day by a choice bit of reasoning employed by an opponent of the bill. "If," said he, "the revenue of the Department is increased in proportion to the reduction of postage, as the friends of the measure affirm, do away with postage altogether, and what an immense income will you have!" This logic is like the Irishman's, who, having heard a new patent stove recommended as "saving half the fuel," declared that he would have two, and so save the whole!

In the Senate, yesterday morning, Mr. Clay spoke at some length, and very earnestly, in support of a petition from Rhode Island, against the African slave trade, and in support of Colonization—which petition the distinguished Senator impressively declared was signed by a large portion of the *elite* of that State; by Governors and ex-Governors—Senators and ex-Senators—members and ex-members—by many of the *literati*, heads of colleges, &c. The petition presented under such august auspices opens with a fearful picture of the slave trade as it yet exists with all all its outrages, horrors, and brutalities—no, I ask pardon of those dumb, unreasoning creatures who have never been degraded from an honest brutehood by the lust of tyranny and the vile love of money, and would substitute infernalities for brutalities. The petitioners then proceed to point out Colonization as the only remedy for this enormous evil, and to ask in its behalf the countenance and support of Government. May we not consider the long vexed and vexatious question settled at last? Is not its final quietus made? Statesmen, divines, authors, and philanthropists will argue, and preach, and speculate no longer, now that the "*literati*" of Rhode Island have pronounced their decision; and most surely the free colored people of the United States will doubt and demur and remonstrate no longer, now that the *elite* of Rhode Island have taken their poor fortunes in charge. They scarcely expected such an interposition of *Providence*. May we not look to see the ocean soon white with the outward bound sails of Government-furnished fleets, bearing to the far land of their grandfathers, and great-grandfathers, America's oppressed and disowned children. As the matter now stands, the free colored people will surely not take offence at being publicly branded by the distinguished Senator as a "degraded, corrupt, and dissolute class"—for, under the patronage of the literature, divinity, and fashion of a sovereign State, are they not going forth to civilize and Christianize Africa—"missionaries," according to the appointment of Clay, "priests after the order of" Dr. Tyng?

Without reference to Mr. Clay, whom I believe sincere in the advocacy of his favorite impracticability, as a benevolent plan, and aside from his political interests, I can but remark that I am often struck by the pious phrases and high-sounding professions of philanthropy with which the speeches of politicians abound, when upon this same subject of colonization. Words of solemn warning and severe morality, never brought forth on any other occasion, then come with ponderous force; and the name of the Deity, not precisely a stranger in their vocabulary, is then uttered in a new connection, and in a tone somewhat less easy and familiar than that in which it is heard in their ordinary discourse. An organ-grinder, under my window, after giving us "Janette and Jeannot," and "Yankee Doodle," has, to our utter astonishment, struck up "Old Hundred." Who believes that the Italian stroller feels the simple solemnity of that grand old puritanical air? Does he not mechanically grind out religion, as he does sentiment and patriotism, because it pays?

Last evening, the ladies at the National Hotel gave a soirée, which I had the honor of attending. It was a very brilliant affair—a scene of much display and enjoyment. Almost every Washington celebrity was there, except the great American statesman, Webster, and the little Hungarian Lieutenant, Jagiello. I noticed the French Minister and his family, Lady Bulwer, Madame Calderon, and the half-ferocious, half-comical representative of the Russian Bear, M. Bodisco—the elegant Miss Lynch of New York, and the brilliant Mrs. Ashley of St. Louis—fine types of the Northern and Southern lady—and numbers of both matrons and young girls, whose enviable distinctions were beauty, gracefulness, and tasteful dress. And there, in apparent fine health and spirits, were Clay, Cass, Houston, and Scott—an interesting little bevy of Presidential possibilities. Above them all, like Saul above his brethren, towered the Herculean hero of Vera Cruz, looking far more like the great "*embodiment*" than his attenuated Kentucky rival.

The Michigan statesman would well *fill* the Presidential chair, for what he lacks in height, he makes up in breadth, and would look the representative of the more solid, conservative, respectable, and well-to-do portion of the nation—such as large merchants, wealthy planters, law-abiding Doctors of Divinity, substantial Dutch farmers, peace-loving justices, dinner-giving, order preserving mayors, and their aldermanic *corps*. And I don't see why General Houston is not as well fitted for that great chair as the rest—only let him be put under bonds not to whittle the arms of it. On the score of killing Mexicans, his claim is older, if not stronger, than Scott's; he has full as much conciliatory suavity as Cass; in the opinion of his enlightened constituents, as an orator, he is the peer of Clay, while he has the advantage of Webster in the faithful devotion of his State. In truth, I do not see but that his claims are not only good, but pressing upon the patriotism and gratitude of the country—he has an imposing person, he has political experience, he has military renown, *he has Southern principles*. Take away his jack-knife, and give him a hat of Christian fashion, and he will surely answer.

We have had for the past week the most deliciously unseasonable weather you can imagine. I am writing this morning near an open window, through which pours a rich flood of summer sunlight, while, to make the illusion perfect, from a balcony near comes the matin song of a canary, with no hint of a cage in the blithe warble. Think of this for your comfort, as you battle with the East wind in your morning walk, or shiver over the register on your return.

I am struck with the beautifying and revivifying effect which this climate seems to have on the complexion of many ladies. I never saw such brilliant color as positively illuminates the fair faces one meets on the Avenue, these sunny days. Not the deep, universal, vulgarly healthy glow which a frosty morning spreads over the countenances of your Northern beauties, but a bright, changeless carnation, which stays where it belongs, in the cheeks and lips, and never shoots up into the brow which lies like a line of snow above it, nor makes impertinent incursions into the nasal territory.

Sometimes, when I meet a lady with slight figure, thin features, and shadowed eyes, I am startled by the unvarying vividness and distinct outline of this color, and murmur sadly—"far gone in consumption—hectic—poor thing!" Don't in your cynicism suggest that all I ascribe to the climate of Washington may be but the effect of that French abomination, called *rouge*. You cannot explain away the phenomenon in that manner: but for a moment granting that the daughters of the Puritans could so be-Jezebel themselves, they would surely have taste enough to put it on more delicately and artistically. Even your irreverence for the *elite* of the Capital City could not go so far as to suppose it possible that matrons, whose failing eyesight prevented them from seeing what a daub they were making of it, would indulge in rouging! No; if we may no longer reverence the grey hairs of Age, because "they are not," let us at least refrain from smiting it on the cheek.

Again, I repeat, all must be referred to the climate; and if some are afflicted with too much of a good thing, it is their misfortune, not their fault—the climate overdoes the matter. It is strange, however, that it has no effect on my complexion. I look in vain to see the red light breaking through the pale, Spanish-brown of my cheek. But perhaps I have not been here long enough for such good work.

I pray your pardon for spinning out this slight thread of a letter to such an unconscionable length.

GRACE GREENWOOD.

LITERARY NOTICES.

THE YOUTH'S CORONAL. By Hannah F. Gould. Appleton & Co., New York. For sale by Franck Taylor, Washington.

This handsome little volume is a collection of some of the most graceful poems of this popular authoress. The poetry of Miss Gould is filled with a quiet, gentle, domestic spirit, through which it exerts a sweet and healthful influence on the minds and hearts of her readers. She is the true, sympathizing friend of childhood—the muse of home. Her simple songs and charming little fables are heard in the school, in the nursery, and around the cheerful evening hearth. Her fame is secure, treasured as it is in the warm and grateful affections of the young. G. G.

THE ISLAND WORLD OF THE PACIFIC. By Rev. H. I. Cheever. With Engravings. Harper & Brothers, New York. For sale as above.

This is an interesting book on an ever interesting subject. Ah, that life of the South Seas, with its eternal warmth, its luxuriant bloom and verdure, its volcanic grandeurs, its shadowless summer skies, its passion and its sleep, its primeval simplicity, its picturesque barbarism!—what a wild fascination it has for us, in our already old world, our climate of fierce extremes, our life of thought and labor, in the civilization which cramps and stifles and overloads us. Poor Alton Locke was not alone as a seer of Polynesian visions—not alone before the sunken, longing eyes of the famishing and despairing London Tailor has gleamed up the mocking mirage of far tropical islands, with their gorgeous flowers and luscious fruits, cool mountain passes and lazy stretches of bright southern seas—of skies undimmed by the smoke of cities, of airs untainted by the breath of disease—of the tall, lithe, lightly-clad barbarian, sleeping away the noontide heat in the generous shade, while the leaves of the orange and banana made music in his dream.

The book before us is in parts, very finely written, and contains many little sketches and anecdotes of a most pleasing character. We should like it better, however, were their fewer poetical quotations. The author is never content with having given us a good piece of description in his own plain prose, but breaks out into the verse of somebody else. He seems to be afflicted with a sort of poetical intermittent fever, which comes upon him at regular intervals throughout his volume. G. G.

OLIVE. A Novel. By the Author of "The Ogilvies" Harper & Brothers, New York. For sale as above.

This is a very pleasant and interesting story, which we can cordially recommend to all our romance-loving readers. Olive is a noble character, of the new and better order of heroines—not unapproachably and impossibly perfect, but good, and gentle, and loving—independent, but not manuish—high, but not hard-minded, and strong only in the simple affections of the woman and the fervent faith of the Christian. G. G.

SINGLETON FONTENOY, R. N. By James Hannay, late of Her Majesty's Navy, Author of "Sketches in Ultra-Marine" Harper & Brothers, New York. For sale as above.

This novel we have merely glanced through, but it has a very pleasant and readable look—chatty and light—a little shallow, probably, but, as it presents a sparkling surface, none the worse for that, in these times, when muddiness is so often put off upon us for depth. G. G.

THE MOTHER'S RECOMPENSE. By Grace Aguilar. Appleton & Co., New York. For sale by Taylor & Maury, Washington.

This admirable tale is a sequel to *Home Influence*, one of the finest works of this excellent writer. Miss Aguilar always wrote not only in a graceful style, but as inspired by a high moral aim. Her desire was to do lasting good, as well as to fill the passing moment with innocent enjoyment. The world was not appalled, nor did it pause to weep, when Grace Aguilar died, and yet much of truth, of noble thought, and of love—many winning, consoling, and quietly regenerating influences, ceased to flow in upon it, when that pure womanly heart ceased to beat. G. G.

THE LUTTRELLS: or, The Two Marriages. By Folkestone Williams. Harper & Brothers, New York. For sale as above.

This novel we have not read, but we have read with great pleasure *Shakspeare and His Friends*, by the same author; and from an occasional glimpse, here and there, into this, we think we may promise its reader very agreeable entertainment. G. G.

HENRY SMEATON: a Jacobite Story of the Reign of George the First. By G. P. R. James, Esq., Author of Tales too numerous to mention. Harper & Brothers, New York. For sale by Franck Taylor, Washington.

Of this last novel of Mr. James we are sorry to confess our entire ignorance, for we have an old and hearty liking for the author. He was an early favorite of ours, and we owe him a large debt of gratitude for the pleasant beguilement of many a weary hour. We have read a large, though we cannot say the greatest, number of his romances, and no story from his pen has ever failed to engage our interest, when we once allowed ourself to dip into it. Mr James is surely one of the wonders of our age, not alone for his fine natural gifts, but for his unparalleled industry, and for the extent and accuracy of his historical knowledge. G. G.

THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER. January, 1851. For sale by Taylor & Maury, Washington.

This is a fine number of this admirable miscellany, containing even more than the usual amount of able and interesting articles—essays, critiques, and poems. Our attention was most engaged by a review of Dr. Howe's Report upon Idiocy. This eminent philanthropist is doing a great and good work in a long-neglected and despised field of human effort. No one can read these reports without feeling a deepening of interest and a dawning of hope for that wretched class of our fellow-beings thrown helpless upon life—disinherited almost equally of intellect, affection, and moral perception. Let none be disappointed and disheartened that the results are small, but hail with grateful joy the faintest gleam, the most inarticulate cry of the soul which for years has slept in the night and torpor of idiocy. The mine is dark and noisome, and the ore not rich; all the more honor to those who labor so patiently to bring it forth. The rock is hard and unpromising, and long and wearisome must be the toil ere it cleaves, and shows the small soul-crystal within. The soldiers of the Empire served faithfully for small pay; but when it came at last, each coin had a double value for bearing the head of Napoleon. Thus the true philanthropist ever sees on his hard-earned rewards the face of his Divine Master, and is abundantly repaid. G. G.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. No. 349. January 25, 1851.

This is also a fine number of a fine periodical. It contains some chapters of Bulwer's new novel, two or three good poems, an able article from Blackwood on *The Defences of Britain, A Frenchman in Cairo*, a tale, and the usual number of brief articles. But we must not forget to mention an article of great and peculiar interest, entitled, *The Story of Maria Forster—an Incident in the Life of Jean Paul*. This must affect every reader deeply and sadly, as one of those heart-histories of real life, which far surpass the wildest conceptions of genius, and the most melancholy creations of romance. We were much struck by the concluding sentence of this story:

"That which is lost through a perversion of the sentiments, or by a misapplication of the faculties, is lost forever to the soul; even as a star that might be extinguished would be an everlasting diminution of the splendors of the universe."

ANDREWS' LATIN-ENGLISH LEXICON. Harper & Brothers, New York.

This is the title of a very important contribution to Lexicography. It is based upon the larger Latin-German Lexicon of Dr. William Freund, and comprises additions and corrections from the Lexicons of Gesner, Facciolati, Scheller, Georges, and others. It is a single volume, in a convenient form for the use of schools, and yet ample enough to answer any ordinary want of ripe scholarship.

The Editor has retained all the definitions and philological remarks in Freund's larger Lexicon, and has effected its compression into smaller compass, by retrenching some citations, and omitting others which appeared to be superfluous or of minor importance, retaining, however, a full reference to each omitted citation. This was certainly the least objectionable of all practicable methods of accomplishing the object.

The arrangement is strictly alphabetical, each word being regarded as the subject of an independent article. This is the best arrangement—much better than the other only tolerable arrangement in a general Lexicon, that which gives radical words in alphabetical order, but places derivations under their radicals.

In handling the various articles of the Lexicon, great attention has been paid to the grammatical, exegetical, synonymous, chronological, rhetorical, and statistical elements of each word discussed. The grammatical element embraces the process of formation of words; the etymological, the derivation; the exegetical, the meaning and its shades; the synonymous, the equivalents in meaning; the chronological, the periods of use; the rhetorical, the styles in which used; the statistical, the frequency or infrequency of use. A thorough distinction of each word under each of these heads, it is obvious, would leave nothing to be desired, but would be impossible. The learned author and his able editor have succeeded so far as to leave no reasonable demand unanswered.

The work contains tables of abbreviations of names of authors and titles of works, with their chronological dates; also, of the abbreviations and signs used in the work itself.

We congratulate students and scholars on the appearance of this Lexicon.

It is for sale at Franck Taylor's.

CONGRESS DURING THE WEEK.

Congress proceeds slowly with its business.

Wednesday, in the Senate, after the presentation of memorials by Messrs. Clay and Hale, and the proceedings in relation to them, of which we have spoken in another column, the Senate resumed the consideration of the bill to cede the public lands to the States in which they lie, on condition that they shall severally convey said lands to actual settlers.

Mr. Walker closed his remarks in support of it, and Mr. Benton then moved to amend, by inserting the substance of the bill for graduating and accelerating the sale of public lands, lately introduced by him. The bill was postponed till Wednesday following, Mr. Seward having the floor.

Thursday and *Friday*, the days were chiefly occupied in the Senate by Truman Smith, who delivered a long speech in support of the French Spoliation bill. The Senate adjourned over till Monday.

The House was engaged Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, on Postage Reform. Friday, the Cheap Postage bill was taken out of Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and the House proceeded to vote upon the amendments. A motion to lay the bill on the table failed—yeas 61, nays 139. The amendments were all separately agreed to, the third reading of the bill was ordered, the previous question was seconded, and the yeas and nays were ordered on the passage of the bill—and it was then passed—yeas 130, nays 75—as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Alexander, Allen, Andrews, Ashmun, Bennett, Bingham, Bokee, Booth, Bowlin, Breck, Briggs, Brisbin, Brooks, Buel, Burrows, Butler, Cable, Calvin, Campbell, Casey, Chandler, Clarke, Cleveland, Cole, Conger, Corwin, Crowell, Danner, Deberry, Dickey, Dimmick, Doty, Duncan, Durkee, A. Evans, N. Evans, Fitch, Fowler, Freedley, Gerry, Giddings, Gilbert, Gilmore, Goodenow, Gott, Gould, Grinnell, Halloway, Hammond, Hampton, Harlan, Hay, Haymond, Henry, Hilliard, Holmes, Howard, Howe, Hunter, William T. Jackson, Julian, Kerr, James G. King, John A. King, Preston King, La Sere, Leffler, Littlefield, H. Mann, Job Mann, Marshall, Matteson, McDonald, McDowell, McGaughey, McKissock, McLanahan, R. M. McLane, McLean, Meacham, John K. Miller, Daniel F. Miller, Moore, Morehead, Morris, Morrison, Morton, Nelson, Ogle, Olds, Otis, Peaslee, Peck, Phœnix, Pitman, Potter, Putnam, Reed, Reynolds, Risley, Robbins, Rockwell, Root, Rose, Rumsey, Sackett, Sawtelle, Schenck, Schermerhorn, Schoolcraft, Silvester, Spalding, Sprague, Stanly, F. P. Stanton, Stetson, Taylor, James Thompson, Thurman, Tuck, Underhill, Van Dyke, Vinton, Waldo, Wentworth, White, Whittlesey, Wilmot, Wright, and Young—130.

NAYS—Messrs. Albertson, Alston, Ashe, Averett, Bay, Bayly, Beale, Bocock, Bowdon, Bowie, Boyd, William J. Brown, Burt, E. Carrington Cabell, G. A. Caldwell, Joseph P. Caldwell, Carter, Clingman, Williamson R. W. Cobb, Colcock, Daniel, Disney, Duer, Dunham, Edmundson, Ewing, Featherston, Fuller, Gorman, Green, Hall, Hamilton, Haralson, Isham G. Harris, Sampson W. Harris, Thomas L. Harris, Hoagland, Holladay, Houston, Inge, Joseph W. Jackson, Andrew Johnson, James L. Johnson, Robert W. Johnson, Jones, Kaufman, McMullen, McQueen, McWillie, Meade, Millson, Morse, Orr, Outlaw, Parker, Penn, Phelps, Powell, Richardson, Robinson, Ross, Savage, Seddon, R. H. Stanton, Sweetzer, Thomas, Jacob Thompson, John B. Thompson, Toombs, Venable, Wallace, Watkins, Wellborn, and Williams—75.

Sixty of the seventy-five nays, and about twenty of the one hundred and thirty yeas, were from the slaveholding States. With one or two exceptions, the opposition to the bill, from the free States, came from Hunker Democrats.

The provisions of the bill are the following:

1. Three cents, for all distances, on letters weighing not more than half an ounce, which may be prepaid or not.

2. No post office to be discontinued, and the compensation of no postmaster to be reduced, on account of the passage of the act, and new mail routes to be continued in the same manner as under the old system.

3. One cent on newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and all descriptions of printed matter, weighing not more than two ounces; and bound books, not exceeding thirty ounces, mailable matter.

4. Newspapers delivered in the State or Territory where printed, at half of the foregoing rates; delivered in the county where printed or thirty miles from the place of publication, free of postage: 50 per cent. to be deducted from postage on magazines when prepaid.

3. Three cent pieces to be coined at the mint of the United States, three-fourths silver, and one-fourth copper.

6. Counterfeiting, altering, or forging letter stamps made felony.

7. Letters not called for in two weeks to be advertised once in the newspaper of the neighborhood having the largest circulation.

"*And be it further enacted*, That it shall be in the power of the Postmaster General, at all post offices where postmasters are appointed by the President of the United States, to establish post-routes within the cities or towns, to provide for carrying letters to the post office, by establishing suitable and convenient places of deposite, and by employing carriers to receive and deposite them in the post office; and at all such offices it shall also be in his power to cause letters to be delivered by suitable carriers, to be appointed by him for that purpose, for which not exceeding one or two cents shall be charged, to be paid by the persons sending or receiving letters; and all sums so collected shall be paid into the Post Office Department: *Provided*, That the amount of compensation allowed by the Postmaster General to carriers shall in no case exceed the amount paid into the treasury by each town or city, under the provisions of this section."

The bill is not, of course, acceptable in all points to the friends of Postage Reform. It adopts the three, instead of two cents, rate. It does not require prepayment. It does not abolish the franking privilege, or transfer the cost of it to the General Treasury, but it really extends it, by burdening the mails with a vast quantity of free printed matter in every county or range of thirty miles where a newspaper is printed. Should the cost of carrying mail matter therefore be increased, it will be the fault, not of the Postage Reform *so long* urged by its friends, but of an imperfect bill; nor can they be blamed should there be a larger deficit than they predicted from the operation of cheap postage, without the franking privilege.

Still, we rejoice at the passage of the bill, defective as it is in some respects.

It is a great step in the right direction.

The Senate will soon take it up, and efforts will doubtless be made to amend it, but we hope the friends of Postage Reform will do nothing that shall endanger the measure, or subject it to the hazard of defeat by a final disagreement between the two Houses.

Saturday, the Senate did not sit, and the House was employed in Committee of the Whole on the Private Calendar.

Monday, Judge Berrien, from the Committee on the Judiciary, to which had been referred the bill and amendments respecting private land claims in California, reported a substitute, which was made the special order for Monday next. The day was occupied mostly with a speech from Mr. Hunter of Virginia in opposition to the French Spoliation Bill.

The House resolved to devote the second Tuesday in February to the bills relating to the District of Columbia. An unsuccessful attempt was made by Mr. Johnson of Tennessee to induce the House to fix a day for the consideration of his bill, to give lands to the landless; the House then, under a suspension of the rules, proceeded to the consideration of the bill introduced by Mr. Robinson, to provide for the prompt execution of the Bounty Land Law. No conclusion was arrived at, when the House adjourned.

Tuesday, Mr. Seward spoke at length on the French Spoliation bill in the Senate, and the House disposed of considerable business on the Speaker's table, referring to appropriate committees, &c.

THE HON. PRESTON KING.

Mr. King, we are sorry to state, met with quite a serious accident last Monday morning. Going out of his house, in some haste, to a fire, and the streets being covered with sleet, he fell, and broke the knee-pan of his right leg. The fracture is not a dangerous one, but requires strict attention for its cure, and will confine him to his bed during the remaining part of the session of Congress, if not longer.

THE COALITION FOR SLAVERY.

This coalition is gradually strengthening itself. We learn that there is a paper in circulation, the signers to which pledge themselves not to support any candidate for any office who refuses to support the compromise measures and the Fugitive Act. Among the signers, it is understood, are Henry Clay, Daniel Dickinson, Mr. Duer, Mr. Toombs, and many other Whig and Democratic politicians. The name of General Cass has not yet been attached.

Three coalition tickets are talked of for the next Presidency, and Vice Presidency—Fillmore and Cobb, Webster and Foote, Clay and Dickinson.

VERMILLION, *January* 17, 1851.

To the Editor of the National Era:

SIR: I notice in your paper of January 9 the proceedings of a meeting held in Palermo, Oswego Co., New York, on Monday evening, November 4, called the Fugitive Slave Law Meeting. I find in that notice my name mentioned as a member of the committee that drafted those resolutions.

Now, gentlemen, I think it due to myself to say, through your columns, that I did not draft those resolutions; nor do I approve of them, either in sentiment or language. I was not present at the time of my appointment as committee-man, and gave no liberty to have my name used in connection with these resolutions. I was present at the time of their proposal to the meeting, and publicly expressed my disapprobation of them.

Please publish, and oblige yours,

MORRIS PLACE.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT NEW ORLEANS.—A fire broke this morning (January 18) in the St. Charles' Hotel, and, before the flames could be arrested, the entire building, with nearly all its valuable furniture, were laid in ruins.

The flames extended to Rev. Mr. Clapp's church; also the Methodist Church; and likewise to the Poydras Street church—all of which, besides several other buildings, were destroyed.

DOMESTIC MARKETS.

NEW YORK, *Jan.* 20.

Flour.—Steady at $4.75 a $4.88 for common to straight State brands. Southern and Genesee $5 a $5.12½. Corn meal $3. Rye flour $3 50.

Grain.—Quiet. Genesee wheat $1.25. Red $1.02 a $1.05. Corn steady at 66 a 67 cents for mixed and yellow. Oats 50 a 52 cts. Rye 75 cts.

Provisions.—Mess pork $12 a $12 12½. Prime $9.25. Bacon firm. Sales of lard at 8 a 8¼ cts.

PHILADELPHIA, *Jan.* 20.

Flour.—Common standard brands steady at $4.62 a $4 68¾. Corn meal $2 87 a $2.94. Rye flour $3 50.

Grain.—Red wheat $1.02 a 1 05. White $1.10 a $1.12. Yellow corn 62 cents. Oats 45 a 47 cents. Rye 70 cents.

Provisions.—Steady. Mess pork $12 25. Prime $9 75 a $10. Bacon firm. Lard at 8¼ a 8½ cts.

Wool.—Firm; common washed 35 a 36 cents.

BALTIMORE, *Jan.* 20.

Beef Cattle.—Ranging from $2 50 a $3 50 per 100 lbs. on the hoof, equal to $5 a $6 75 net, and averaging $3 gross.

Hogs.—$5.50 a $5.75 per 100 lbs. They are brisk.

Flour and Meal.—Howard street $4 56¼; City Mills $4 62½. Corn meal $2 75 a $3. Rye flour $3.62.

Grain.—Good to prime red wheat $1 a $1.05. White $1.06 a $115. Yellow corn 57 a 59 cents. White $64 a $65. Oats 48 a 50 cents. Rye 75 cts.

Provisions.—Old mess pork $13; new $15. Bacon, steady as last quoted. Lard 8 a 8½ cents in barrels and kegs.

LETTER FROM LONDON.

LONDON, *January* 3, 1851.

To the Editor of the National Era:

The present week has witnessed the death of the old, and the birth of the new year. In many respects the year which has just expired, amid the wild ringing of midnight bells, has been a memorable one in English history. It has been marked by national prosperity, when utter ruin had been predicted, by the advancement of popular reforms among the hearts of the people, and the general diffusion of useful knowledge.

That England, during the past year, has been in a somewhat critical position as regards her industry, inasmuch as she has been divorcing herself from her old policy of protection, (and all changes are fraught with danger,) no person can deny; but, as a whole, the year has been a happy one, in which industry, among all classes, has been better rewarded than before, (as an average,) and her new policy of free trade has experienced a triumph in the teeth of those croakers who have been all along uttering such doleful prophecies of ruin.

It has been a year of national peace, and a love for peace has grown strong in the hearts of Englishmen. The year, too, will be a marked one, as the one in which the great World's Industrial Fair was originated, and the building to contain it was designed and constructed; for the direct effect of the great gathering next summer will be to cause peace among the nations.

The year, too, has other features which will preserve its memory green in the hearts of millions. In 1850, England lost her greatest statesman and noblest patriot, Sir Robert Peel, and was thrown into deep mourning almost at the same time that the startling news of President Taylor's death was spreading from city to city and from town to town, over the whole United States. During the past year, England has lost by death her Vice Chancellor, the Duke of Cambridge, and the Recorder of London. That great poet, Wordsworth, sings now no more, but is added to the list of the illustrious dead of 1850; and Jeffrey too, and Bowles; Jane Porter, the moralist; Fraser Tytler, the historian; Brunel, the great engineer, and many other great names which will not soon be forgotten by this generation, and whose virtues will be handed down to future ages. But the new year is full of promise, and will be a remarkable one in the annals of the world's industry, peace, and brotherly reciprocity.

On Tuesday, the last day of the old year, the contractors for the building of the World's Fair formally delivered over the magnificent structure into the hands of the Royal Commissioners. The building is not yet entirely finished, but nearly so, and will be *quite* so in the course of two or three weeks. Previous to delivering the building into the hands of the Commissioners, the contractors entertained in their crystal palace the Royal Society of Arts, for they are much indebted to that Society in the construction of the building, as its counsels and advice have been freely given and freely followed on many points which have arisen for difference of opinion, during the growth of the structure.

Mr. Owen Jones is painting a portion of the interior, so that the committee may judge of the merit of his plan, which consists of the three colors, blue, red, and yellow, in the proportions of 8, 5, and 3. The columns are to be blue and yellow, the under side of all the girders red. Many are already objecting to his plan, insisting that so much red cannot be in good taste.

The greatest trial that foreigners will be compelled to undergo, next summer, will be the extreme difficulty of obtaining apartments. The hotels will be crowded; besides, a man will need the resources of a millionaire, to live at a London hotel next summer, when, on ordinary occasions, it is a costly practice. All apartments will early be taken, and those who come late must fare badly. *Punch* may not be so wide of the mark when he gives us a few peeps at life, next summer, and pictures a man in his night-cap putting his head out of a cab-window, and calling for his hot water to shave himself with, while in the distance there is an advertisement which reads—"A Family Omnibus to Let!"

The anniversary of the Manchester Soirée took place a few evenings since. Mr. Cobden was present, and made an able speech upon the taxation which the English Government insists upon imposing upon knowledge. It was an able speech, and he showed by facts how wrong it is to lay a duty upon paper, which shall press terribly upon the poor, but scarcely touch the rich. It is a well-known fact that *The Times*, and a few of the leading papers, are strongly in favor of taxation on paper, and by the penny stamp, for it prevents competition. With such an enormous tax, no man will attempt to run a race with them while they have the advantage of great age, consummate abilities, and plenty of capital. Were the taxes thrown off, there would be forty daily papers published in London, while now there are only four or five, and monopoly would be defeated. It is the general opinion here, that if such were the case, journalism would lose its present splendor of talent and dignity of character; but such need not and would not be a sequence of free trade in knowledge. One result would be, that Reform would have its ten journals where Anti-Reform had its one, while now the case is directly the reverse.

The frightful accounts of the ravages of cholera in Jamaica have set the people here to thinking of the sanitary condition of London. The strict regulations which were in vogue while that epidemic was feared in London have been revoked, and now burials are taking place in many of the church-yards. I could give you some terrible facts, but will not shock your readers with them. Friends of health are calling lustily upon the sanitary commissioners to take decided steps to insure the health of the metropolis during the great influx of people next year. It is calculated by those who are not given to inordinate enthusiasm, that the extra population of London next spring will not fall much short of a million; and if such be the case, it will be necessary for the health of such a mass of human beings that precautions be taken on every hand by the commissioners and board of health. There is no wisdom in any cowardly fears on the subject, nor in any spirit of careless bravado. It is strange that, in so enlightened a city as London, the practice of interments should be allowed within the bounds of the town. Long ago, Paris made the practice unlawful, except in extraordinary cases; but here the matter is one of speculation; and in some cases hundreds and thousands of bodies have been packed immediately under the churches, where, every Sunday, the congregation meet for worship; and at such places faintings are a common thing, and individuals are suddenly attacked with illness, and are removed to undergo serious sickness or death. And although physicians have long known the *cause* of these faintings and sudden attacks, yet it was terrible hard work to discontinue the practice for a short time, when the cholera panic made every heart tremble. The reason is and was, that the owners of the churches and chapels will not forego their profits made from burials, and old privileges and scandalous monopolies have an alarming tenacity for life in London.

The result of the election, in the borough of Aylesbury, for a member to supply the place of the lamented Lord Nugent in Parliament, was the return of Mr. Calvert, Whig. Mr. Broughton, a thorough Radical, was defeated.

In France, the past week, the public and the Assembly have been agitated by the trial of M. Allais, (a police agent of M. Yon, who was Commissary of the Police for the National Assembly,) for forging a plot of assassination, and accusing a club of Bonapartists of a base design upon the life of M. Dupin and Gen. Changarnier. During the trial it was proved that M. Allais was at least a scoundrel, and the probity of M. Yon was made doubtful. The friends of the President, under this state of things, demanded the dismissal of M. Yon, by the Assembly, as he had endeavored to throw odium upon the character of Louis Napoleon. A fierce quarrel then arose between the two powers—that of the Assembly and the Executive, and, upon a vote, the former refused to accede to the wishes of the latter in the dismissal of M. Yon. The quarrel has been closed, however, by his resignation, which has been accepted.

Another subject for excitement has been afforded in the person of M. Maguire, a deputy, who was thrown into jail for debt. He is a member of the Mountain; but the Legitimists united with the Reds in demanding his releasement, and he was forcibly delivered from jail by the Assembly.

At last the Elector of Hesse has returned to Cassel, but experienced no welcome. The people were gloomy and dispirited, and showed no enthusiasm nor marks of displeasure. When he entered the city, a snow-storm was raging, and seemed to add to the general gloom of the town.

The proceedings of the Dresden Conferences are shrouded in secresy; but nothing is done yet, it is supposed, of importance. It is thought that it will materially alter the treaties of 1815, and if such be the case, the Government of France will ally itself to some objecting party or parties, and endeavor to make capital out of a war.

It is clear that the war in Schleswig Holstein will be forcibly closed, and the rights of the Holsteiners, perhaps, trifled with. Nothing like fairness can be expected from the Dresden Congress, for none of its members have any true sympathy for Liberty. JULIAN.

OHIO.—That portion of the Opposition who are disgusted with the Hunkerism of many of their old leaders, have called a Young Men's Democratic State Convention, to meet in Columbus on the 21st of May. The call appears in the *Statesman*.

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