

# The Weekly Comet

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## Fire! Fire!!

We like to hear the cry—the tolling bells—the firemen sing out “bring her along”—The women and children come together in a huddled crowd, to sympathize and implore aid to stay the devouring element. We like to awaken from midnight dreams, and see the sky red with the reflected flames, and the burning embers high in the heavens. Such scenes afford exquisite pleasure, to be drawn from no other source.

Famine and pestilence work unseen good. It calls small towns and large cities together, to devise ways and means to stay the progress of the destroying angel—it calls forth the tender sympathies of the human heart, such as were originally planted by the All Powerful Arm that made man out of the potter's clay, and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils. Say not that fire, famine, and pestilence, work no good; they are ministers from on High, sent to teach “ungrateful man to man,” wholesome lessons, that by and by he would forget, if it were not for the ministers of destruction.

This is the “man” who preaches in the most eloquent and impassioned manner; and his proselytes come out from the multitude—not to fall on their knees and worship him; but to fall in and work at the breaks of the engine.

At the fire the other night it was pleasing to see—such men as always come forth “to work,” and compare them with the base multitude that stand in the back ground, with folded arms to gaze with mixed pleasure, on the heart rending scene.

We do not attach any credit to those who come forth, to go into the fire, the flood, and the pestilence, to act the good Samaritan; they obey a principal implanted within them, which it is futile to attempt to control—they walk out, in obedience to the pulsation of generous hearts. We speak of them only in way of contrast; to show up the selfish mercenary principles of others, who in their making up, have not the Divine principals of practical philanthropy implanted within them. We do not blame the deficient, for their deficiency; but glory in the whirlwind that up-roots the lordly mansion at the time it lays low the humble cot. The destroying angel visits the world to remind man of his absolute dependence on man—which money itself cannot break up.

We would ask the multitude of gentry, who stood about the fire the other night, to remember this Sunday morning's sermon, when their own houses are in flames. We would like to make mention of all, in the order in which they stand; it is however not expected, they know one another and this is sufficient. We cannot, however, forbear to say that on that occasion as usual—the clergy of St. Joseph's church did not think it beneath the dignity of their calling, to be useful.

The late Harry Hill—who is the only sane millionaire that has died in this country during the past half century; embodied in his will, a deal of wisdom when he said, that he had done all his charity whilst living. He kept a book which he denominated his “Charity Ledger.” In about twelve years he voluntarily donated for charitable purposes, over three hundred thousand dollars. This is what we denominate substantial christianity—the donor living to see the effect of his good works.

The news from Europe, is all of war. Russia and Turkey have raised the bloody banner, and the cry is for liberty. Turkey is too liberal in her politics for the despotic Russian—and now for a long struggle, that must inevitably result to the benefit of European liberty. The United States Government, opens her doors to the whole world—makes citizens, and republicans (at the same time) of all nations of men, and these are the missionaries that return to their own governments, clothed with our nationality to preach to the oppressed people, the christianity of Republicanism. The whole world—all nations of men, must be enlightened and free! The seeds have been sown in the fertile soil of the West, they have fructified and the East will soon join the West in the delightful music of harvest time.—Man was intended for something more than he is—the great problem of his existence is not yet solved. Every battle in the East is another victory in the West, and another stab, to that venerable old absurdity, that one man, is by Divine right created to rule over another.

In the Crescent of the 2nd inst., we notice the death of Dr. Hester, editor of the Medical and Surgical Journal, and Port Physician for that city. His premature death is a source of regret to a large circle of the citizens of New Orleans, and the medical profession, has lost in him a warm hearted, talented member.

Some efforts are being made by the press, to prejudice the public mind in reference to the Louisville Tragedy. It is asserted that Ward's apartments in the city prison, are magnificently furnished—that he has employed every lawyer of any note in Louisville to defend him. The Crescent has a very just article on this subject and says that it is known from authentic and reliable sources, that the rumors are false. Mr. Ward, it is said, desires “To stand before his God and his country, in unbiassed judgement.”

Lamartine, the French poet, philosopher and Statesman, has written a letter to one of the members of the Pierce cabinet, in which he commends in eloquent terms, the appointment of naturalized citizens as diplomatic envoys to European courts. Thus “demonstrating that under democratic institutions, neither rank, nor fortune nor social position, nor political antecedents can prevent a man of energy and talent from arriving at the highest dignities; that the Republic establishes no distinctions between men, and that whether native or of foreign birth, they are equal in its eyes.”

LAGGING CHINESE GENERALS.—There is in the official accounts, in the Pekin Gazette, of the rebels, a sad mixture of tragedy and farce. In one case two Imperial Governors were ordered up to the defence of a provincial city threatened with attack. One Governor returned no answer, and another occupied ten days in going four miles. Such negligence, the Emperor remarks, is truly abominable and he forthwith degraded the offenders to the rank, with a command of the General, that if they again showed signs of cowardice to behead them with one hand and write the report of it with the other.

THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—A Washington letter says that the completion of the interior of the main building of the Smithsonian Institution is now actively progressing. The original plan having been changed by Regents, all the work and framing has been removed, and its place is being supplied by fire proof materials.—The first story is to be fitted up for the Library and Museum of Natural History, and the second story as a Lecture Room, capable of holding 2,000 persons. These arrangements, it is thought, will be completed within six months at the furthest, when the western wing of the building, at present occupied by the Library, will be converted into a Gallery of Art.—True Delta.

The salary of the King of the Sandwich Islands is \$16,000 a year.

The corner stone of a new Masonic Temple, in Philadelphia, was laid on the 21st., with imposing ceremonies, before an immense throng of Masons, notwithstanding a pouring rain. A powerful orchestra performed appropriate music and an ode was sung by a choir. The stone was laid by Grand Master Bournonville, assisted by Samuel Sloan, the architect. An address was delivered by Dr. J. K. Mitchell, and an anthem and benediction closed the ceremonies.

SENTENCE REVERSED.—A Military Court Martial recently held at Governor's Island, New York, found Brevet Captain Horace B. Field, of 3rd artillery, guilty of the charge of drunkenness whilst on duty, and sentenced him “to be cashiered.” President Pierce, we learn from the Washington Star, has reversed the sentence, and directed the accused to be released from arrest. The President accompanies his decision with the remark that:

He cannot, however, allow the occasion to pass, without expressing his unqualified condemnation of the habit of using opium or any of its preparations, without the express immediate advice of the surgeon or physician.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.—The editor of the Norfolk Argus, who has lately paid a visit to the University of Virginia, says that it is now more prosperous than ever. Up to the time he left (November 2), there had been 427 matriculates, a larger number than had matriculated the last session up to January 16th.

Another Bull.—A greater lambing than the last, where's the Fool Killer. The Orleansian says:

During the imperial visit of the emperor and empress of France to the cathedral at Amiens, the bishop and clergy presented to them the head of St. John the Baptist, which has been in the custody of the cathedral for 900 years. It was brought from Constantinople at the time of the Crusaders, and is preserved in crystal and enshrined in gold. The skull has been reduced to the frontal bone and upper jaw. A small hole in the bone over the left eye is believed to have been caused by the knife of the executioner. The relic is held in great veneration in France.

MARRY.—Jeremy Taylor says if you are for pleasure, marry—if you prize rosy health, marry—and even if money be your object, marry. A good wife is heaven's best gift to man—his angel and minister of grace—innumerable—his gem of many virtues—his cask of jewels—her voice is sweetest music—her smiles, his brightest day—her kiss, the guardian of his innocence—her arms, the pale of his safety, the balm of his health, the balsam of his life—her industry, his surest wealth—her economy, his safest steward—her lips, his faithful counsellor—her bosom, the safest pillow of his care—and her prayers, the ablest advocates of heaven's blessings on his head.

The best one out.—During the discussion of what kind of stone the new Court House, at Bridgeport, Conn., should be made of, Ponce said it should be made of Black-Stone.

GOING A LECTURING.—The Utica papers state that Judge Edmonds is soon to deliver a course of lectures on Spiritualism in that city. The Syracuse papers are anxious that he should visit them also, believing such lectures would draw crowded houses.

A man with a huge moustache, presented himself as a witness before the grand jury of a county, in Illinois. The foreman was a gentleman of strong prejudice, and evinced a peculiar antipathy to such appendages, as he directed the witness to pass on, remarking “that he would not believe a man under oath who carried such things on his face.”

Jullien, with his monster orchestra, is coming South, it is said, and will give concerts in New Orleans in February.

INDIAN PAYMENTS.—Gen. Fletcher Winnebago agent, arrived at St. Paul Min., on the 18th ult., from St. Louis, bringing with him \$137,000 in gold, for the payment of the different annuities to the Sioux, Winnebagoes and Chippewas, to be distributed about as follows: Sioux, \$38,000; Winnebagoes, \$33,000; and Chippewas, \$11,000.

NEW READING OF AN OLD MOTTO.—The Boston Post gives the following as a motto for the union of whigs and free soilers: “United we stand, Provident we don't fall!”

Attention is asked to the several notices of the Clinton Plank road company. The work on the road is rapidly progressing. Stockholders will see that there is to be an election of a new board of directors shortly, at which they should attend, or send in their proxies. A short ride out on the road will satisfy any one, that the work is being done in a substantial manner; and must rapidly draw to completion. No enterprise has ever been undertaken, calculated to benefit the commerce of Baton Rouge, more, than this road to Clinton.

Mr. Otis H. Weed—a Boston dealer in ice, has failed for \$75,000, and frozen over into the insolvent court—Southern creditors have received the intelligence as “cold news indeed.”

LONE STAR CONVENTION.—On the first of next month a Convention of the Grand Lodge of the Lone Star Order of the Sons of Freedom, will be held in New York city. It is said that delegates from England and Germany have already arrived, and a large number of delegates are expected from other parts of Europe, St. Domingo, Cuba, Sandwich Islands and Tahiti.

JOHN MITCHELL.—The New York Herald of the 22d contains a lengthy letter from this distinguished gentleman, written to Thomas D. Bailey, his former editorial associate, in which he details the particulars of his escape from Van Dieman's Land. Mr. Mitchell remarks that it would have been quite an easy matter to escape from the island if he had violated his ticket of leave, but to avoid dishonor, and get to succeed, was the difficulty. In the letter he gives his reasons for making the attempt to escape to the American republic—his worship of whose principles did not begin in his exile. He stood up for this country when it was assailed by O'Connell, many years ago, in his native land. He was the first man there, in modern times, who declared republicanism; and how, he naturally “seeks refuge from tyrants through the ever open sanctuary door of our grand republic—mighty nursing-mother of liberty and justice—cradle of God's evangelists of vengeance!”

ANOTHER ARREST FOR AN ATTEMPTED FRAUD ON THE PENSION BUREAU.—The Commissioner of Pensions has information of the arrest of Wm. C. Cantrell of Tennessee, under a charge of forging the names of physicians to a certificate of disability in the case of an application for an invalid's pension, and also the name of the magistrate before whom the medical men are represented to have sworn. The proof against him is positive. His crime is punishable by confinement in a State's prison for a term of years not exceeding ten.

ALL A HOAX.—The martyrdom of a little Norwegian boy named Iverson, at Chicago, for refusing to steal, turns out to be a hoax, and akin to the “pious frauds” chronicled among the superstitious of old. A boy of this name, however, was drowned, and a jury of his own countrymen, mostly decided that his death was purely accidental. We derive these facts from the Chicago Tribune. The sum of \$1,200 had been collected to build a monument to the supposed martyr.

A FRENCH DOGBERRY.—The Mayor of one of the communes of France lately made up the following entry upon his register:

“I, Mayor of —, found yesterday in the forest of —, a man by the name of Rollins, committing an act against the laws. I commanded him to surrender, whereupon he set upon me, heaped me with insult and contumely, calling me a ragamuffin, an ass, and a precious doll, and a scare-crow—all of which I certify to be true.

No doubt the certificate was quite true. The Mayor will be written down, as the ancient Dogberry so anxiously described to be, “an ass,” to all intents and purposes.—Bulletin.

THE SEA, as well as air, is a free and common thing to all; and a particular nation cannot pretend to have the right to the exclusion of all others, without violating the rights of nature and public usage.—Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. Barney Williams and lady will shortly appear on the stage at the St. Charles Theatre New Orleans. They left New York the 26th ult., on board the Empire City.

Some of the Almanacs predicted a total eclipse of the sun, on the 30th ult. If there was an eclipse its darkness was not visible in this region. It behoves the Almanac maker's to come to-gather in consultation on this subject. If there was to have been an eclipse, and there was none; something's wrong in the spiritual or physical universe, and for future calculations it should be known immediately. Besides, it is a matter of some importance (we presume) that “the people” should know where the world is going to, if it has got out of its orbit. If such be the fact, it will depreciate the value of mathematical instruments—upset future calculation, and put old father time himself into a labyrinth of perplexities. A convention of Almanac makers, and Astronomers should take place immediately, at “Cape look-out” or some other central position on the earth, to enquire into this matter.

The new census of the United States will shortly be out, and show us some statistics of our own State, in reference to education; which will serve as an offset to our credits for railroad and other enterprises. Our white Population shows 250,491, out of which 21,221 natives do not either read or write. New York with over 3,000,000 (nearly twelve times as great as that of Louisiana) and a very large foreign population, exhibits about 31,000, devoid of the rudiments of Education. This fact might well serve as texts for Editors for a time—at least until their is a war to annex some still more ignorant people to the republic, whose foundation is said to be based in the intelligence of its citizens.

At the Clarendon Hotel, New York, male waiters have been superceded by females. This is a decided improvement in the progress of things. Is it not more agreeable to have trim, and bright eyed damsels to anticipate the wants at table, than to have the gruff voices of males, to sing out “What will you have, sir,” at every new course? Of course it is. A small regiment of neat Lasses in pink gowns and white aprons, add poetry to the recreation of the table, and make the music of moving dishes, more pleasing to the ear. A feast with feminine waiters for the guests, makes real, the poetic phrase—“It is a feast of reason, and the soul.”

Gleason's Pictorial, and the New Years Brother Johnathan, are on our table from the literary depot of McCormick & Co. McC. & Co., spare no pains or expense to get the latest works early; and their stock now on hand, embraces a valuable collection of English, French, and American standards, and light literary works.

In yesterday's Gazette we see advertised by McCormick & Co. “Battle and Shuttlecocks.” What are they? Be they implements of war or peace, or are they some new kind Cochon China foul? In answerin these questions, the Editor will oblige us to say what “black grinning Boards” are? perhaps this is idle curiosity but we like to be posted.

DR. OLIVER WESDELL HOLMES. This personage is now doing the New Yorkers with lectures on the poets the nineteenth century. No doubt poets are a set of wicked fellows, but we really do not think they deserve so hard a fate as to be criticised Holmes. After showing by extra from Wadsworth and Byron *poetry should be*, he finishes his lecture by showing *what it should be*, by reciting some of his own composition.

THE MORTALITY AMONG THE FIGERS OF THE ARMY.—Thirty of the nine hundred officers of United States army have died off since the first of January last. This, time of peace, is a very large centage of deaths, proving beyond question the hazardous nature of services they are at all times called to render to their country.