

skill; and another is, that the foreigners who come here exercise an undue and harmful influence in elections. What ought to be done to prevent these evils, and what are the remedies proposed? The great Know-Nothing specific is the repeal of the naturalization laws, or what is almost equivalent to it, an enlargement of the probation to twenty-one years. Why twenty-one years should be adopted it is not easy to perceive. The reason assigned is, that a native born American must be twenty-one years old before he can vote. If we should go so far as to assume that the foreign adult is as well-prepared to vote understandingly as a new born American infant we have still, in order not to violate the plainest rules of logic, to assume that naturalization and the right to vote are one and the same thing. A proposition that is palpably absurd; for it is evident that one can exist without the other. The right to vote is not derived from naturalization and may be conferred though naturalization may be denied.

Let us inquire what will be the precise effect of thus modifying or repealing the naturalization laws; and how far such modification or repeal will affect the evils complained of. And first, as to the matter of voting. Citizenship and the right to vote are distinct. One is regulated by the National Government and the other is left by the Constitution to be regulated by the States. A man may be a citizen of the United States, and yet not entitled to vote in any State of this Union. He may not be a citizen of the United States and yet the right to vote may be conferred upon him by any State of the Union. In vain may Know-Nothing platforms proclaim the doctrine that a State has no right to regulate the elective franchise as respects foreigners. The proposition I have just laid down, is incontrovertible. The Constitution has nowhere granted to the Federal Government the power to prescribe the qualifications of voters in the several States, and has nowhere placed any restriction upon the exercise of this power by the States. The effect of naturalizing a foreigner is simply to establish certain relations between him and the Federal Government. It entitles him to its protection against other Governments, and gives him the right to hold certain offices in the Federal Government. His social relations and duties are regulated by State law, and can only be regulated by State law. A State may confer upon him the right to acquire property, to hold it, and to transmit it to his descendants. State laws provide for him the means of protecting his life, his liberty, and his property, and State laws confer upon him the right to vote. If he should select Massachusetts for his home, when the election comes on he does not look to the Constitution and laws of the United States, to ascertain whether he can vote, but to the constitution and laws of Massachusetts. As to elections of state officers, it cannot be pretended that Congress can interfere without utterly destroying every vestige of State sovereignty, and the Constitution has expressly declared that the qualifications for elections for members of the House of Representatives shall be the same as the qualifications of electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislatures, and these qualifications can only be fixed by the States. What Congress cannot do directly it cannot do indirectly. The election of Senators is confided to the State Legislature, however composed. The qualifications of the members of these Legislatures can, of course, be fixed by the State only. The result is, that legislation by Congress on the subject of naturalization laws will not touch the influence of foreigners in elections. Their influence in the presidential elections is most loudly complained of, and yet the Constitution has given, in express words, to the State Legislatures unlimited discretion in determining who shall choose the electors. They may confer the power to choose electors exclusively on native Americans if they think proper. They can confer it upon one man or ten men, or upon all the inhabitants of the State collectively.

As to foreign papers and convicts it is in the power of the States to prevent their being landed on their shores, or to expel them after they are landed. There seems to be a doubt in some minds as to the effect of a decision of the Supreme Court on a question growing out of foreign emigration; the decision was made in the well known passenger cars of Boston and New York. Both the majority and minority of the court, which was divided on the main question in these cases, which was the rights of the States to tax passengers in vessels coming from foreign ports, concurred in the opinion that as to papers, convicts, and criminals, the States had full power to prohibit their introduction. Mr. Chief Justice Taney, in an opinion remarkable for clearness and force of reasoning, goes further, and says that the States can prohibit the landing of foreigners if they think them dangerous to their peace and safety, whether falling under the denomination of papers and criminals or not; that Congress cannot force upon a State policy which such State may regard as injurious to its repose, to its health, or to its morals. Then as respects the two great evils of emigration complained of, the repeal of the naturalization laws can have no influence whatever, they are subjects of State legislation, and ought to act. The condition of Massachusetts and New York may demand a resort to rigorous and restrictive legislation, because these evils are pressing heavily upon them. But the new States of the West, where these evils, if they exist at all, exist in a mitigated form, may desire to adopt a more liberal policy. They want population, and it may be their interest to invite foreigners to settle there by holding out the inducement of an early participation in the political privileges of their citizens. In Mississippi, the influence of the foreign vote is scarcely perceptible in the State at large. It may be her policy to adhere to the existing laws. Let each State, however, determine for itself, and when the emergency arises, let each State meet it by legislation adopted to its own peculiar circumstances. The question is not national, but local, and must vary as State policy varies; and there cannot be any durable national party organization based upon it.

It is contended, however, that the repeal of the naturalization laws would check immigration. Let us examine this proposition. About one-third part only of all the foreigners who come here are induced to come by political considerations, by a desire to hold office, by a preference for our institutions, by a desire to acquire the name of American citizens, and to devote themselves to the support of our Constitution and laws, and to enjoy the benefit of the protection of our Government. Such men might be unwilling to come here simply to be taxed by our Government while their allegiance was still due to another Government

while the repeal of the naturalization laws or the extension to twenty-one years as the period of probation might check the immigration of this class of persons, as it would withhold the right of citizenship and the right to protection; but this is by far the most meritorious class of persons who come here. Now, if it is contended that the right to protection against the Government to which they owe allegiance, is secured by a simple declaration of an intention to renounce that allegiance, I will undertake to say that it is by no means established that this declaration of intention would entitle them to protection out of the limits of the United States. The doctrines of the Koszta letter are not generally accepted, even in this country. The spirit and ability of the letter, and our republican hatred of Austria, associated, as they were, with one of the most brilliant actions recorded in our naval history, relieved those doctrines of that close scrutiny which they would have received under different circumstances. They were tolerated at the time, because the action and result were heartily approved. The people of this country, (and I among others), filled with admiration of the promptitude and bravery of the commander of the St. Louis, would have kicked Vattel, Puffendorf, and Grotius from their shelves rather than disparage, in their officer, a spirit so essential to the mortal strength of the Navy.

By far the greater portion of the foreigners who come here, come from no political considerations. The thought of voting, or of holding office, never enters their heads; they are induced to come from other considerations entirely. They come because it is a new country, where it is easier to live and where there is a wider and more fruitful field for industry. They would, therefore, continue to come and the pauper, the criminal, and the convict, the idle and the desolute, would come without regard to the character of the naturalization laws. We should therefore, be careful that in attempting to remodel our system, we do not deprive ourselves of the benefits of immigration without mitigating its evils. The other grievance complained of, the competition of foreign skill and labor, would not be affected at all by an alteration of these laws. It would neither rob the foreign artisan of his skill, nor the laborer of his strength. The remedy for this particular grievance is shadowed forth vaguely under the captivizing name of the "organization of labor." What this means nobody knows. It is of French extraction, and carries us back to the visionary schemes of revolutionary France—to the days of Lamartine and Ledru Rollin. In my opinion, to employ a term rendered classical by Mr. Benton, it is a complete "bamboozle." These combinations have ever proved fruitless, and often disastrous. In all the contests between capital and labor, capital has invariably triumphed in the end. For labor is in this unfortunate dilemma, if it succeeds in overthrowing capital, it destroys itself; and if it fails, its chains are more firmly riveted. Capital is king. It will select skill and labor wherever it is to be found, regardless of combinations, and regardless of the ballot box. Unfortunately the reins are not in the hands of free labor at the North but, in the merciless and unrelaxing grasp of capital.

This organization of labor comprehends something more than a contest between capital and labor. It proposes to prohibit the importation of the products of foreign labor because they come in competition with American labor. I wish southern men to note the fact that this new party at the North, gathering confidence from success, have advanced step by step until finally, to the exclusion of foreigners they have added a demand for the exclusion of foreign goods. The *Crusader*, a leading Know-Nothing organ in New York, boldly announces this purpose. The dangerous tendency of this secret order is beginning to manifest itself in the most startling propositions. Foreign immigration is to be cut off, the importation of foreign goods prohibited, foreign languages banished, religious persecutions installed; in short, there are not bounds to its exactions. Will southern men, the advocates of free trade, enter into an alliance with a party which demands monopoly and a prohibitory tariff; with a party, in short, which is fanatical both in politics and religion?

If by the organization of labor is meant a combination to prevent the industrious foreigner from obtaining employment in this country, I must say that such combination are not only most liberal but against the laws of every civilized nation on earth; and while the Know-Nothing are complaining that foreigners cannot understand our laws, they themselves must be taught to respect them. I have thus gone over the ground occupied by this new party, and find nothing to justify their extraordinary course of action. I desire to see the evils of foreign immigration removed if possible. I am opposed to stimulating it by extraordinary inducements. I am prepared to concur in the adoption of the most stringent measures to prevent the influx of criminals and convicts, and all involuntary and compulsory immigration through the agency of foreign Governments. But I would discuss measures of reform in these respects as I would any other measures of reform—openly, candidly, and publicly, without fear, and without reserve.

Very truly yours, &c.,
W. P. HARRIS.
Col. J. F. H. CLABORN,
Pearlington, Mississippi.

An Important Act of Citizenship.
The following important act, relative to citizenship, passed by the present Congress, seems to have been generally overlooked by the Press. It is of the utmost importance: AN ACT to secure the rights of citizenship to the children of citizens of the United States born out of the limits thereof.
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That persons heretofore born, or hereafter to be borne, out of the limits and jurisdiction of the United States, whose fathers were, or shall be at the time of their birth, citizens of the United States shall be deemed and considered, and are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States; Provided however, That the rights of citizenship shall not descend to persons whose fathers never resided in the United States.
Sec 2. And be it further enacted, That any woman who might be lawfully naturalized under the existing laws, married, or who shall be married, to a citizen of the United States, shall be deemed and taken to be a citizen.
Approved February 10, 1855.



Democrat and Sentinel.

RICHARD WHITE, Editor and Proprietor.
HENRY C. DEVINE, Editor and Proprietor.
WHITE & DEVINE, Editors and Proprietors.
EBENSBURG.
THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 15.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.—Auditor's Notice, by C. D. Steele.—Removal, by Eschiel Hughes.—Public Sale, by James Myers.—Public Sale, by M. M. Adams.—Wall Paper Depot, by Lloyd, Blackburn & Co.

93—We publish in to-day's paper another letter from our late townsman and esteemed friend, ROBERT CARMON. His letters remind us of his remarkable disposition, on all occasions, "to say what he thinks, and think what he pleases," for they partake of the same style. It will be well for the future emigrant to pay attention to and profit by the warnings given.

As these letters are eagerly sought for, we hope to hear from Mr. Carmon again.

92—On motion of T. C. McDowell, Esq., on last Tuesday, C. D. Steele was admitted to practice in the several Courts of Cambria county.

On motion of R. L. Johnston, Esq., John Conrad was admitted to practice in the several Courts of Cambria county.

Both these young gentlemen passed through and creditable examinations. They were close students, and will no doubt be ornaments to the legal profession. Possessed of tact, talent, and business qualifications, they cannot but succeed in attaining the height of their ambition.

The Court.
The first week was occupied by criminal and civil cases, and closed on Friday forenoon. In the criminal calendar there was no case that reached that pitch of mortal delinquency, that entitled a defendant to quarters in the "Western Penitentiary." Sheriff Durbin, had, therefore, to forego the usual luxury of a trip to Pittsburg.

The case of Deveraux vs Given, and of Kingston vs Thomas, were the only civil cases tried. In our summary we give the result.

SECOND WEEK.
An interesting case of slander was "booked for trial." The parties are of the North. There was a lady in the case, and she thought herself hurt three thousand dollars, by side "bar" remarks from the defendant. The case did not come before the Jury or the Court; it was fortunately and satisfactorily adjusted.

The case against Rev. P. H. Lempe, for marrying a minor, was tried—and well tried. Messrs. Johnston, Maghan, Foster, and Reed, exerted themselves on their respective sides with their usual ability. The Jury found that the prosecution against Mr. Lempe was a failure.

Letter of W. P. Harris.
Our readers will be richly repaid by a perusal of the above mentioned document, which will be found on our outside of to-day.

Mr. Harris is one of those Southern statesmen who have carefully watched the progress of the order of "Know Nothings;" who looked upon it at first with an eye of favor, because that there was reason to think at one time, that the new order would become an element to counteract the spirit of abolitionism in the north and west of the Union. He takes up the order, and discusses its origin, history and prospects, with a clearness, a calmness, a philosophic penetration, and a justness of conclusion, which we have rarely seen equalled, in the discussion of a question so vexed and so exciting. His analysis is masterly. No surgeon could dissect a hard subject with more coolness; his exposure of the rottenness of the order, its utter nothingness, its entire inefficiency for good, and its irresistible tendency to mischief, ought to satisfy those Democrats who have been deceived into it, of the absurdity of their position.

One portion of the letter has struck us as prophetic. The letter, it will be observed, is dated February 6th. In it occurs the following passage: "It is now true, that they have got a glimpse of political power, and this has changed the whole face of the organization; and you will find that before very long its members will be divided amongst themselves, and each separate faction, in desperate self-defence, pandering to the very influences which they at first sought to destroy."

This prediction has been fulfilled to the very letter, during the recent struggle for United States Senator from this State; in which, as is well known, Gen. Cameron, the regular nominee of the Know Nothings, had enlisted in his support, a number of Catholics; who, to the astonishment of the public, and the uninitiated, were to be found at Harrisburg for weeks actively endeavoring to secure the election of the sworn foe of their religion.

The letter takes up some space, but its style is pleasing and conversational; and whoever commences the perusal will find that he cannot leave off until the end.

OPENING OF THE NAVIGATION.—An order has been issued by the Board of Canal Commissioners directing that the water be let into the main line of public improvements to-morrow, March 16th. This will be good news to the canal men and all those who anticipate a filling up of their drained pouches with the filling up of the canal—an opening of the money market with the opening of the public improvements. The immediate realization of these anticipations, however, depends in no small degree, upon the state of the weather; which shall have for a few weeks to come. And the prospects for fair weather are not flattering by any means.

Departure for Kansas.
Another of our citizens, James C. Noon, Esq., is about to leave us, bound on a trip for Kansas, &c.; although he is by no means touched with the "Kansas Fever," we learn that he has inducements held out to him, which will warrant his going, and may make his trip advantageous. Mr. Noon, to a well-disciplined mind, unites pleasing manners and habits of industry, qualities which we think will enable him to win in any place. We hope that he will flourish, and that he will not forget to send us an occasional remembrance in the shape of *Field notes*; they will be read with pleasure by the community in which he is deservedly a favorite.

Col. John M. Gilmore.
We neglected in our last issue to notice the appointment of Col. Gilmore, Assistant Superintendent of the Portage Rail Road. The appointment is an excellent one. The Commissioners were fortunate in selecting the Colonel for that post, as there is no one, within our knowledge, better acquainted with the ropes of the old Portage.

93—Our thanks are due Hon. Jno. Cresswell of the Senate, and Hon. Messrs. Daugherty and King of the House, for continued favors.

Quarter Sessions—March Term, 1855.
Commonwealth vs Josiah Webb & James James.
—Indictment for Larceny. A true bill. Defendant pleads not guilty. Jury called, who find Josiah Webb guilty, and James James not guilty. Josiah Webb sentenced to pay \$1 fine and costs of prosecution, and undergo an imprisonment in the county jail for three months.

Com. vs William Duncan.—Indictment for assault and battery. A true bill. Def. pleads not guilty, and jury called who find defendant not guilty.

Com. vs Michael Cassidy and Patrick O'Bryan.
—Indictment for assault and battery. A true bill. Defs. plead not guilty. Defs. submit. Sentenced to pay a fine of \$5 and costs.

Com. vs David L. Davis.—Indictment for assault and battery. A true bill. Def. pleads not guilty. Jury called who find def. guilty.

Com. vs William Wecker.—Indictment for assault and battery. Not a true bill.

Com. vs Thomas Moran.—Indictment for assault and battery. A true bill. Def. pleads guilty and submits.

Com. vs Jacob Sharratt.—Indictment for Larceny. Not a true bill.

Com. vs Elizabeth Zerbe.—Indictment for selling liquor to minors. Not a true bill. The county to pay the costs.

Com. vs Henry Harber.—Indictment for keeping a tippling house. Not a true bill.

Com. vs Michael Stewart.—Indictment for keeping a tippling house. A true bill. Dist. Atty enters a *nolle prosequi* on payment of costs.

Com. vs John Williams.—Indictment for assault and battery. Recognizance of Mary Williams, prosequitrix, forfeited.

Com. vs John Hendrick.—Indictment for keeping a tippling house. A true bill. Def. not taken. Atty enters *nolle prosequi*. County to pay costs.

CIVIL LIST. [FIRST WEEK.]
Elias Baker vs John Fenlon.—Summons case. Plaintiff becomes non suit, with leave to move at next term to take off non pros.

E. Shoemaker vs Valentine Glass.—Appeal—Plaintiff takes a non suit with leave to move to take it off, &c.

Samuel Calkin vs Thomas H. Moore's Heirs.—Ejectment. Jury called who find for plaintiff.

John Rees vs Abram R. Longenecker.—Appeal. Jury called who find for plaintiff \$15.06.

Edward Howard vs Samuel Peterberger.—Appeal. Settled.

Robert Deveraux vs John G. Given.—Ejectment. Jury called who do find for defendant.

Charles W. Butcher vs Robert Trotter.—Ejectment. Jury called who find for plaintiff \$109.00 and costs of suit.

Henry Parrish vs Edward Sutherland.—Appeal. Plaintiff becomes non suit.

Paul Kingston vs Robert Thomas.—Action for trespass. Jury called, who find for plaintiff \$63.30.

SECOND WEEK.
Commonwealth for use of Corbett and Johnston, nor for use of Catherwood, Craig & Co. vs Cornelius Crum.—March 13th, 1855. Defendants Council confess Judgment for \$41.10.

Levis and Roberts' assignees et al vs Michael Din Maghan et al.—Scire Facias. Jury called who find for plaintiff \$103.51, and find for Joseph Craig and Maria his wife and Maria J. Crum as true tenants.

Alexander McKiver vs Jefferson and Ebenbury Plank Road Company.—Appeal. Jury called, who find \$32 and costs for the plaintiff.

WESTERN CORRESPONDENCE.
GLASGOW CITY, Mo.,
March 5, 1855.
Messrs. WHITE & DEVINE:—Since writing my last to you, I have traveled over and seen a large scope of this State and a part of Illinois. In this State there are many places where I could suit myself to better advantage than any place I have seen yet; but I cannot brook the idea of settling permanently in a slave State, where the white man who labors, or rather is not able to have his labor performed by slaves, is looked upon as very little, if any better, than the slave; and that too by those who are not any letter (in any way) than others.

Of Illinois, it is unnecessary to say anything in praise. But there is plenty of land for sale, of the very best quality, and at the very best price, (\$10 to \$12.50 per acre) so that the man of small means has but a slim chance here. And from what I hear of Iowa, the chances are no better, unless you go far back in the State.

I have not been in Kansas since I last wrote you, but I have seen a great many persons who have been there since I was, and from different parts of the Territory; and all agree with me as to the quality of the soil, the scarcity of timber, coal, and water; and of one gentleman who I saw in Kansas when I was there, and who has been traveling all through the Territory ever since, taking notes for the purpose of publishing a map of Kansas, and who has gone east to have it executed, I learned that of all the coal veins he had seen, the largest was only 22 inches. That is on one of the small tributaries of the Osage river, in the southern part of the Territory. And from him I also learned that there is a great deal of suffering there now;—that the emigrants from the northern States had formed a Kansas Aid Society, and had appointed three lecturers to travel, lecture, and solicit aid in the Territory, and three others to travel, lecture and solicit aid in the northern States, the proceeds to be applied to assist in the support of those northern emigrants who are short of the means of support. Such cases, he informed me, are numerous. The expenses of these lecturers must, I suppose, be first paid out of said fund.

That something of this kind is actually necessary and must be done, I am fully satisfied, in order to keep soul and body together and the northern emigrant in the Territory, as also to do as well by them as the South, who have held meetings in a number of the county seats and towns in this State, in all of which they have formed themselves into societies, and appointed committees, whose duties are to solicit aid or money to be given to those poor men (of Missouri) according to their necessities, to enable them to emigrate and settle in Kansas, provided they are pro-slavery in principle. In some three or four towns near the Missouri river, above this City, they passed resolutions, that they would not sell wood to, nor patronize, either with freight or passengers, any steamer or Captain who would carry emigrants from the northern or free States to Kansas Territory—that they would exert their means and influence to protect the interests of the State of Missouri, and secure slavery in Kansas. That they will accomplish it I have no doubt, particularly if the election for Representatives takes place in March or April, as I understand it will, which will be too early in the season for many Northern or Eastern emigrants to arrive—and the report here is that thousands are coming out in the spring—and it is a very easy matter for us who are not far from Kansas, to go there and settle a few days before the election, and if we sell out our claims after the election is over, whose business is it?—Going into Kansas and settling does not bind a man there for life, but is just settling any other place—he can leave when he pleases to do so. The next election will, I think, beyond all doubt, fix the color of Kansas, black or white—Freedom or Slavery. This is admitted by all.

In either case, the party in the minority will cease emigration to a great extent, if not altogether. I saw an account of the census taken in 4 districts, and the comments on it by the editor were that the pro-slavery men were on the increase.

Of all the men that I have seen from Kansas this winter, only one expected to return again. Some few remain in this State; but for the most part, they all make for their old homes, fully satisfied of the appearance of the elephant.

I do not wish to be understood as my account of this Kansas country, as endeavoring to discourage emigration to it, for such is not the case. I do sincerely wish emigration from the north may be sufficient to establish Freedom, not only in Kansas, but in all other Territories of the U. S. for no man can travel through this State, which has been 24 years in the Union, and compare her improvements with those of Iowa, only 10 years old, and find Missouri, with all her "natural advantages," at least twenty years behind Iowa in improvements, but must come to the conclusion that slavery is the cause, and that it is a curse to any State, at least as far north as is this State. But as I had promised to many of my friends whom I had "shined," that I would give them a fair and truthful account of the country, as I found it, and even this I am not any more than doing, for I find and read a great many communications from different correspondents in Kansas, published in different papers, both north and south, that differ very widely from me in regard to Kansas. Why, even Thomas Hart Benton and I are wide apart—but I don't care a farthing. He is only Benton and I am Carmon. He is clamouring for popularity, and I am seeking a home. All I say is, for those who have the Kansas fever, to leave their families at home, and come and see for yourselves. Count the cost of the buildings and other improvements, choose your spot and put them up, pay for them, and then move in aid occupancy. It is a very easy matter to set down in Pennsylvania or Massachusetts, and count the cost or expense of a small or a large family to the border of Kansas, and then pull up stakes and start. But I would now advise all to multiply their aggregate amount by about 8 or 9, and bear in mind as you come along, that you will not be the first that has been skinned; for I assure you that it is a little the completest skinning operation you have ever experienced. But a few days since a boat arrived here from St. Louis; it was stopped here by the ice, and discharged her passengers, about 30 of which were for Kansas. The river closed over again, and the boat laid here until this morning, when she started for St. Louis. Some of the passengers went on in stages, hacks, &c., and the balance are here yet awaiting the arrival of another boat going up. One of the passengers here is a

Virginian—left there about Christmas, and says he has now spent about \$1800; four or five are from Pennsylvania. One man, wife and child, left Tioga county about 4 weeks since, and says the cost now is \$250. The old Virginian says he will go home again.

Now, in conclusion, I will say that for the man that has got money, Kansas is the place to speculate. There are several kinds of speculations to go into that must pay a large per centage. Hoping that this will be sufficient for me on the subject of Kansas humbug.

I remain your humble servant,
ROBERT CARMON.
From Philadelphia.

Correspondence of the Democrat & Sentinel.
PHILADELPHIA, March 11, 1855.
Our fire system continues to be a constant topic of agitation and dispute. We have now somewhere from eighty to a hundred engine and hose companies each independent of the other, recognizing no authority beyond its own officers, and many of them in a constant state of quarrel with rival companies. At a fire there is no concert of action, each party acting as its own whims or caprice may dictate. The engine houses have become the regular abodes of a large portion of the young vagabonds about town, and academies of instruction in all the minor vices. Full of spirits and fond of excitement, nothing pleases them so well as the fearful tolling of the fire bell, and on the instant they dart forth to the scene of conflagration, and if a "fight" can by any possibility be commenced, their enjoyment is complete.

A considerable proportion of our fires have their origin in no other cause than the desire of some of these wild spirits to help put it out, and enjoy the (to them) pleasing recreations which accompany that task. Many efforts have been made to reorganize the whole fire system, but with very limited success, as they are all strenuously opposed by the body of the present firemen, who are numerous enough to form a very respectable capital for small beer politicians, who flatter their prejudices, to operate upon. Still, public opinion so imperatively demanded a reform, that Councils, several months since, passed a bill providing for the introduction of some little order and system into the Department, although it fell far short of what was generally demanded, and was indeed pretty much such a law as the Firemen themselves asked for. Now, however, many of them refuse to assent to its provisions, and it is doubtful whether it can be enforced.

Although the fighting companies are occasionally thrown out of service, and the belligerents sometimes punished, they nearly always manage to escape through the power of the political influence they possess; for when a company or two are, as often happens, control the politics of a Ward, they can easily find plenty of sympathetic schemers ready and willing to arrest the course of justice, and shield them from merited punishment. Young men and half grown boys, who come from the country to reside here, are particularly apt to be fascinated by these institutions, and it is a common remark of their employers, that, from that moment, half their usefulness is gone, if not entirely destroyed.

It is amusing sometimes to hear of the ridiculous extent to which they carry their disputes between each other. It more nearly resembles the practices of the Indians than any custom of civilized life. The mere suspicion of belonging to a rival company has brought down upon many a poor unoffending but luckless wight an unmerciful flogging, and his only satisfaction is to return the compliment upon some of the members of the company who thus maltreated him whenever occasion offers. Not long since an instance of this kind came under my notice. A young fireman of Irish descent had been set upon by the rowdies of a rival company, who beat him very severely. Patrick vowed revenge, and on the occasion of the next fire provided himself with half a brick-bat, and watching his opportunity, sought out one of his aggressors and indicted upon him quite a severe blow with that weapon. In the confusion he escaped detection, and the wounded man, after suffering for some time, finally recovered. A friend of Patrick's who was informed of his connection with the affair, remonstrated with him on such conduct, and among other things told him that he had narrowly escaped killing his victim, and bringing down upon himself the fearful charge of murder. As Patrick's education had made him somewhat familiar with school-boy fights, and implanted in his mind extremely liberal ideas of the strength and powers of endurance of the human skull, this was an entirely new idea to him, and with true Irish naïveté he exclaimed, "Och, sure you must be joking! Don't be telling me that a mere gentle pat of a brick-bat on a man's pate will murder him!"

Talking of the firemen, reminds me that some of your sporting readers may feel some interest in the foot races of the champions of the different companies which have come off on several occasions recently in the ring of Welch's Circus, for the prize of a silver horn. The competitors were to run round it twelve times, making a distance of a quarter of a mile. The best time made was one minute and twenty seconds. Meantime a wonderful amount of private racing has been going on by way of practice, through our streets and around the public squares. A lady who happened to be in the way of a pair of racers running on a bet of a dollar, was very unceremoniously knocked down the other day, and like scenes have been so frequent as to become quite a nuisance in some parts of the city.

Business is becoming quite brisk, and the Hotels are crowded with country merchants. Of course, there is no probability that near so many goods will be sold this season as last Spring, but still Philadelphia, from present appearances, will hold her own quite as well in this respect as any of the other Atlantic cities.

A Mechanical Circus, recently imported from France, in which automata are made to act dramas, plays and farces, is advertised on exhibition in the amusement column of the *Leitner*. If plays can be acted by machinery, I suppose you shall next have sermons preached and cases plead in Court by the same means.

Truly Yours,
A wild excitement prevailed in San Francisco at the last days, in consequence of the discovery of new diggings at a place called Kern River. Thousands of adventurers were hastening to this spot.