

The Columbus Commercial.

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TRI-WEEKLY, \$4 A YEAR

ADDRESS OF MR. JOHN L. JOHNSON.

Delivered at the Lurline Supper on Wednesday Evening, December 4.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:

I appear before you this evening with a double share of gratitude. First, because you have seen fit to honor me with an invitation to your annual banquet, and then in that you have selected me to welcome those who are equally fortunate with myself in partaking of your hospitality. I would that you had chosen one whose efforts would cast no shadow upon your judgment; one from whose silver tongue the golden flowers of rhetoric would flow as the sparkling waters from the rippling fountain. But I love this dear old city of Columbus; I love the turbid river that washes against its stately bluffs; I love the balmy breezes that kiss it and the blue skies that bend so tenderly over it; I love its people, for I was a stranger and they took me not in; I love its girls, for nowhere have they brighter eyes, sweeter faces and more beguiling ways. And in the Lurline Fire company, especially, I have friends whose friendship has been weighed in the balances and has not been found wanting. So, while there are many who could far surpass any public attempt at oratory I might make, there is no one who has a deeper and more sincere interest in your welfare than myself.

Gentlemen, you occupy a most important position in the city of Columbus. Of what avail were it to build these solid business blocks, to erect these magnificent houses of worship, to dot this city with beautiful homes, did you not stand between them and the ever threatening flames? There is not a citizen of Columbus to-night who does not rest easier because he knows you will watch over and protect his property; there is not a child who does not lay his head upon his pillow in perfect confidence and trust in you. And where could you find a more fitting and appropriate place to celebrate your anniversary than this very building, which "Old Sydney" and the Lurline Fire Company saved from the flames a dozen years ago. Those charred and blackened rafters are silent but eloquent witnesses of your courage and efficiency. The fireman's life is fraught with danger and efficiency. Perchance 'tis night, and as he sleeps bright visions of loveliness glide by in his dreams. But hark!—far off through the night comes the sound of frantic bells; the breeze swells with the cry of fire! fire! until the very trees take voice and join the delirious chorus. That beautiful home, the pride of its owner, is wrapt in the hungry embrace of the fire-fiend, and far above it the glowing flames leap heavenward like banners of some mighty host waving in glorious victory. But that victory is not yet won, for ere the alarm has died away the gallant firemen are there, here, everywhere that danger threatens and duty calls they may be found. But though they perform countless deeds of daring, it is too late—the house is doomed. Are all saved? The shrieking mother draws her little ones around her, and, behold! the youngest girl is missing! And see, in that topmost window a baby face is pressed against the glass! Can she be saved? The whole of that side is ablaze; to reach that window is certain death, but does a fireman hesitate? No, not one. In a moment two of the longest ladders are spliced together; they are placed against the window, and then, amidst a death-like silence, broken only by the shrieks of the agonized mother, a young fireman mounts the ladder and disappears in the smoke and flames. Now he has reached the window, and when he leans in and takes the little child in his arms, a mighty shout rends the air. He clasps her in one arm and begins the perilous downward journey. At every step the danger increases, for the breath of the flames has touched the ladder and it quivers as the slender aspen in the summer breeze. Farther down he comes, and farther and farther. If he can pass that gauntlet of fire they are safe. But look! the ladder trembles, wavers, totters, and goes down to a fiery grave, carrying its precious burden of man and child. They lift up the little child safe and unharmed—scarcely an eyebrow scorched—but the brave heart of the fireman is stilled forever. Lift him up gently; straighten with reverence the bruised and mangled limbs; fold the arms gently upon his breast, and lay upon his brow the wreath of priceless immortelles that dead heroes wear, for never hero died a more heroic death.

But the story of a fireman's life is not all tragedy. There are times when the humorous predominates. A while ago I took passage from Savannah to New York in one of those floating ocean palaces. On such a steamer all trades are represented, and among them is a complete fire department. It is customary to give false fire alarms at intervals to exercise the department, and at such times all the passengers are notified. One day, when the thermometer registered 90° in the shade, I went to my cabin in search of a cool spot, and, taking off my clothes, I put on a long white garment, and soon was dreaming peacefully. But in my dreams I heard the cry of fire and awoke with a start. Could it be real? Yes, for over my head was

the quick rush of feet and the muffling of the engines as they came into play. Just then a burly sailor burst in the door, flung a life preserver on the floor and exclaimed: "To the deck for your life; the boat is on fire!" It was but the work of a second to leap from the bed and buckle that life preserver around me, and then, with watch in one hand and pocket book in the other, I made a bee-line for the deck. Down the long deck I sped, my airy draperies floating gracefully about me, when I observed that I was the center of attraction. The ladies gazed on me in astonishment; young ladies, to some of whom I had been playing the devoted, were in a perpetual giggle, while some young fools of my own sex rolled over and over in paroxysms of laughter. Then, too late, the fatal truth dawned on me that it was a false alarm, and they had omitted to notify me. The deck would not open to swallow me, as I hoped, and once more I shot like a white meteor to the seclusion of my cabin, and when I emerged several hours later the treats were on me for several rounds.

Gentlemen of the various fire companies, the Lurline throw open their doors and their hearts to you to-night. And they ask you that inasmuch as they have seen you bravely and courage when the clanging of the fire bells broke into the peaceful silence of the night, to exhibit that same courage and staying power in the attack upon the good cheer they lay before you. To the Mayor and Council no formal words of welcome are necessary, for under their fostering care and protection the fire department has grown and prospered, and the Lurline are proud to offer them this small token of respect and gratitude. To each one of the guests I extend a sincere and heartfelt welcome.

The South has hitherto been spared the invasions which, during the last quarter of a century, have caused some parts of the West to be overrun with hordes from foreign shores scarcely less inimical to prosperity and civilization than were the Huns and Vandals who overran the Roman empire, and the South wants none of these people now. There is not in the South any of the intolérant spirit of know-nothingism; the foreigner, as a foreigner, is as welcome as the man from Ohio or Kansas, and none could be more heartily welcomed than he; but there is no idea more universally, more firmly fixed in the Southern mind, than that of determined opposition to the immigration of the ignorant and vicious. Let the anarchist, the socialist and the enemy of law and order remain away; the South does not propose to repeat the experiences of Pittsburgh, Chicago and other sections which have been cursed by the mischievous activities of this pestiferous crew. To the industrious, law-abiding, God-fearing man, be he foreign born, naturalized or native, the South extends a hearty invitation to come and share in the certain prosperity which is before her; to come where lands are cheap, nature kind and the rewards of labor sure and generous; and to the immigration agent, who is striving to show to the people of other states how greatly they improve their condition in life by taking up their homes in the South, we acknowledge a great debt of gratitude on behalf of the South. The South wants and expects to receive a heavy immigration within the next few years; but it must be of the right sort; and she will be found heartily seconding any efforts which may be made to place governmental restriction on the character of foreign immigrants who seek a foothold on American shores.—Southern States.

If the next legislature, in dealing with the public school question, shall in some way release the state from the payment of any sum whatever to support the schools, it will do well. Let a term of say six to eight months be made compulsory in every district in the state, and then let each county, or each district, levy a sufficient tax to provide funds to carry on the school. The News mentioned this matter some months ago, and still believes that it is the most practical solution of the question that is agitating so many minds. Let the legislature make a general school law, applicable alike to all the counties in the state, and then leave the taxing power to the various counties or districts. If it is necessary to change the constitution to do this, then let the question be submitted as soon as possible.—Brandon News.

Brown's Christmas goods have begun to arrive. Look out for the finest display you ever saw. Prices are cheap as the cheapest where quality is considered.

I have exclusive control of Hawthorn's Fancy Candy. Call and see it. A. C. MYERS.

Caledonia Department.

J. TURNER HOOD, Editor.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS.

We are just back from presbytery, West Point, which the "better three-fourths" and myself enjoyed very much. We were entertained at the palatial home of Banker T. M. Moseley, who is well schooled in Southern hospitality by a most excellent wife. We shall long remember the kindnesses shown us.

W. D. Stephenson, Jr., of Caledonia, Capt. W. A. Harris and A. P. Presley, of Woodlawn, were present from this side.

Rev. J. C. Arnette, pastor of the West Point church, and the oldest minister of his denomination in the state, is now very low, having just passed through several severe relapses and complications of malarial fever.

Rev. T. B. Wood's successor has not been named yet. It is conceded by every one that his place cannot be filled as nobly and self-sacrificingly as he filled it.

Uncle William Stephenson has returned from a very pleasant visit to his daughter in-law in Lee county. It will be remembered that his son Whit was brought home and buried last spring. The widow and children are doing nicely. He brought a grand-daughter back with him, who is now in school at Oak Ridge. It is needless to say that she is in good hands and will receive more than a parent's care.

Prof. E. T. Lawrence has returned from the exposition, and reports a pleasant and profitable trip.

The wedding bells are a-tuning. Listen neighbors!

Miss Birdie Molloy was in attendance at the exposition last week.

Miss Annie Lawrence and Miss Leonard Molloy, our two representatives at the I. I. & C., spent Thanksgiving at home, to the delight of their many friends and admirers.

Mr. Ira Gaston and Rob Egger, entered school Tuesday, making a fine addition to our young men.

Messrs. Perry Verner, R. M. Nickles, John Nickles and myself were royally entertained on Monday night by our big-hearted friend and brother, Dr. Hutchinson. The doctor's genial countenance and open heart is easily explained by a visit to his equally pleasant and entertaining family.

Mr. Verner and myself were initiated into the mysteries of the I. O. O. F., which, to say the least, is a grand institution for preserving and inculcating the principles of fraternity as set forth in the "Holy Writ." We are somewhat bruised in spots owing to Bro. McQuown's anxiety to show a fraternal feeling for us while in the toils of "goatism."

Our brevity this week is due in part to the ecclesiastical and fraternal world as circumscribed, by the Presbytery and I. O. O. F.

JUDGE CAMPBELL argues that the law in regard to concealed weapons should be abolished. Would it not be better to try a more rigid enforcement first? Let every fellow go to jail who is proven guilty. When a person does not give in his pistol to the assessor, let him go to jail also. This law does not prevent a person from owning a pistol at all. Keep a pistol if you want to; carry it when you travel where you do not feel safe; have one in your house for the protection of your family; and report it to the assessor like an honest man.—Lumberton Day-Book.

A SIMPSONITE who was in town today with about 50 turkeys and other country produce, and accompanied by his better half, says his turkeys, like his cotton, were a surplus crop. His wife raised the turkeys, while he made the cotton and corn and other stuff, and he is more like a free man today than ever in his life. Out of a hatch of 64 turkeys they raised 59, a remarkably good showing, and as he has put 50 of the birds on the market for \$44, spot cash, and his three sales of cotton for \$128, having meat in the pen and an abundance of corn, potatoes, rice and molasses, and owing no man a dollar, he is as independent of Wall street and the money changers as any man need want to be. And he's no Populite calamity howler either.—Jackson Clarion Ledger, 5th.

Concord Grapes, 35 cents a basket, at Mrs. Terry's.

A PROTECTIVE UNION

Organized by the Members of the Farmers' Alliance.

WINONA, MISS., Dec. 5.—The State Farmers' Alliance, which met at this place Tuesday, adjourned last evening. Capt. J. H. Jamison, of Noxubee county presided. About ten counties were represented.

The most important business transacted was the organization of a "Protective Union," the purpose of which is strictly business. The new organization, if successful, will practically absorb the alliance. It states explicitly in its constitution that it is neither political nor partisan, and that any member found guilty of trying to use the order to further political or partisan purposes, will be expelled from the union. All members of the alliance will be members of the union, but it is not restricted to alliance members, country merchants (retailers) being eligible to membership.

The purposes of the union will be to take measures to purchase goods and supplies from manufacturers, to promote and encourage immigration, and to look after the general financial interests of its members as well as the material welfare and development of the State. The following officers were elected: J. H. Jamison, president; J. A. Kinney, vice-president; B. G. West, general manager; Oscar Butler, secretary; A. S. Kyle, treasurer. An executive board was also selected. Fully half of the officers of the union are true Democrats, while the others are Populists, but political matters can not be discussed.

A Sure Sign.

The Clarion Ledger very aptly says that the south is exciting the envy of the rest of the country, and that this is a sign of its prosperity. The United States is too big a country and its interests are too diverse not to clash occasionally. Where all the people of a nation are interested in the same products, industries and manufactures the interest of one portion is the interest of all, but it is not so with us. There are many agricultural products and mechanical industries for which the south is better fitted than any other section of the Union. There are also many such industries which can be conducted in the south alone; so that this section not only possesses its peculiar productions and manufactures, but offers superior advantages for those which have been regarded as the especial province of other parts of the common country. Social and political conditions in a measure have been responsible for the backwardness of the south in taking her proper place as the leading section of the Union in manufacturing and agriculture, and this drawback has been magnified and perpetuated by a system of unscrupulous and persistent misrepresentation. "You can fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time." Some of the people have been awake to the fact that they have been fooled for a good while; and all the people are waking up very fast. It is an ungenerous spirit that will felicitate itself upon fortune gained at the expense of others; but the wealth and prosperity of other sections of this country have so long been maintained at the expense of the south that it is human nature to rejoice and triumph mildly at the turning of the tide.—Greenville Times.

THE Chicago Inter Ocean mentions Spain's recognition of the Southern Confederacy as a reason why the United States should recognize the Cuban insurgents. The cases are not parallel. The Southern Confederacy was organized. It held possession of a large part of the country. It had an established government, complete in every department. It had an army and a navy; it fought and won pitched battles. The Cuban insurgents are simply keeping up a guerrilla, bushwhacking war, have no navy, no important towns, no government, no civil authorities, no law.—Commercial Appeal.

If you are writing a letter to a loved one, use paper that will be a pleasant reminder of you; if to a stranger, use a paper that will creditably introduce you. Your stationery is your card, your credentials, as it were, and we urge you to get a box from us at trifling cost, and do yourself no discredit. MAYO & WEAVER.

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That our Groceries are the nicest line of this class of goods ever brought to this town. STREET DUST can not be washed out of food. It is worth something to have everything FRESH, CLEAN and PURE.

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To have it that way in our store. Our Teas and Coffees are sure to be relished. Prices are no higher than other stores; We are told they are lower. Most people are a little bit choice about their eating; we are prepared to meet this demand. COME AND SEE US.

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