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Postmasters generally, throughout the country, are requested to act as agents for this paper.

Christmas passed off very quietly in Wilmington, and so far as we have been able to ascertain, without any accident. The day was beautiful and the temperature as mild as that of early fall. We learn that a negro man got killed on the railroad yesterday, but we have not heard the particulars. We like to see everybody enjoy the holiday to the top of their heart, but some how it did seem yesterday as if the negroes had a little too big a swing. But Christmas comes but once a year. We are half inclined to believe that we have tyrannised over our worthy self in not taking a bigger holiday time than one day. However, we mean to make a personal apology to our shadow the next time we walk in the sun.

For Safe-Keeping.

Four soldiers, concerned in the murder of a Sergeant at Smithville, as stated in this paper, were brought up this morning in irons and lodged in the Jail of this county for safe-keeping, to await their trial for murder at the next term of the Superior Court for Brunswick.

Arrival of the Baltic.

The steamship Baltic arrived at New York on the 23d, with Liverpool dates the 10th inst. Her news is four days later than that by the Europa, but of course the leading interest is associated with the movements in France, where it appears that the military usurpation of the President has been completely successful. There can be little doubt that Louis Napoleon is acting in concert with and is supported by the absolutist governments, as the Vienna ministerial journals declare for him and praise his policy. The plan developed in his "Appeal to the people" sufficiently shows his object, and is as follows:

Persuaded that the instability of power—that the preponderance of a single assembly—one of the permanent causes of trouble and discord—I submit to your suffrages the fundamental basis of a constitution, which the assemblies will develop hereafter 1. A responsible chief, named for ten years. 2. The minister, dependent on the Executive alone. 3. A council of state, formed of the most distinguished men, preparing the laws and maintaining the discussion before the legislative corps. 4. A legislative corps, discussing and voting the laws, named by universal suffrage, without the scrutin de liste, which falsifies the election. 5. A second assembly, formed of all the illustrious persons of the nation. A preponderating power, guardian of the fundamental pact and of public liberty.

This system, created by the first Consul in the beginning of the present century, has already given to France repose and prosperity. It guarantees them still. Such is my profound conviction. If you partake of it, declare so by your suffrages. If, on the contrary, you prefer a government without force, monarchical or republican, borrowed from some chimerical future, reply in the negative. Thus, then, for the first time since 1840, you will vote with complete knowledge of the fact, and knowing for whom and for what you vote. If I do not obtain the majority of the votes, I will summon a new assembly and lay down before it the mission I have received from you.

But if you believe that the cause, of which my name is the symbol—that is, France, regenerated by the revolution of '89, and organized by the Emperor, is still yours, proclaim it to be so, by ratifying the powers I demand of you. Then France and Europe will be preserved from anarchy, obstacles will be removed, rivalries will have disappeared—for all will respect in the will of the people the decree of Providence.

The allusions to the Consulate and the Empire are direct and undisguised. The proposition in which the French people are called to vote, "yes" or "no" is as follows:

"The French people wish the maintenance of the authority of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, and entrust him with the power necessary to frame a constitution, upon the basis mentioned in his proclamation of the 2d inst."

M. Thiers has been exiled. Marshall Soult died on the 26th ult., in the 82d year of his age.

There are rumors of a rupture in the English Cabinet. Lord Gray will not act with Lord Palmerston whom he considers as leaning too much to the liberal party in Europe. The news from the Cape of Good Hope is very unfavorable to the British. The Caffers have everything their own way.

Congress.

Little or nothing is doing in either House. The Senate is debating the Compromise endorsement of Mr. Foots. Several Senators, among them Cass, Douglass and Downs, doubted the propriety of introducing the resolution, but since it had been introduced they would support it cordially.

The House has under consideration the bill authorizing the assignment of Bounty Land Warrants before location. No definite action has been taken on it. Business will make but little progress until after next Monday week. The burning of the Library of Congress is a most unfortunate occurrence.

It is said that one of the courts out West has decided that a man may whip his wife for one dollar—kiss any girl for five dollars, and bite off his neighbor's nose or ears for ten dollars.

Retirement of Mr. Clay.

It is announced that the Hon. Henry Clay has positively resigned his seat in the United States Senate, and will spend the remainder of the winter in Philadelphia in the hope of benefiting his feeble health. He will be seventy-six in April next, and consequently, in the present state of his health this may be regarded as his final exit from public life. Of course, there have been and are differences of opinion in regard to Mr. Clay's course and political principles, but few if any men in the United States will be followed into retirement by as much personal devotion or as many hearty wishes for their welfare.

Arrival of the Georgia—\$3,000,000 in specie.

The mail steamer Georgia, arrived at New York, on Sunday morning, with the California mails of Nov 16th. The news has been anticipated by the Daniel Webster. She brought 400 passengers, and nearly \$3,000,000 in specie.

Fire in the National Capitol—Destruction of the Congressional Library.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, 8 A. M.

The National Capitol is on fire. The Congressional Library is destroyed. The fire is still raging and no water.

SECOND DISPATCH.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24, A. M.

The Capitol was discovered to be on fire this morning about sunrise by a watchman. The fire was in the Congressional Library, and had made good headway before it was discovered. The engines having been at work the latter part of the night at another fire—Baker's Franklin House—the hose was frozen and could not be worked. There was, therefore, considerable delay in getting any engines to work. Meantime the Library and Document room above were completely burnt. Probably three-fourths of the Library were consumed, embracing some of the most valuable books in the collection—some of which can never be replaced.

The general impression is that the fire caught from one of the flues connecting with the furnaces in the main basement of the Capitol. The President, Mr. Speaker Boyd, and the Mayor were early on the ground, and were active in their exertions.

Eleven O'clock—All the fire companies of Washington are on hand, and the fire is believed to be subdued, not having extended beyond the Library.

Richmond Daily Dispatch.

Additional by the Europa—The very Latest by Telegraph to London.

PARIS, Dec. 5th.—A decree was issued to day, ordering the voting, on the 20th instant, to be done secretly, instead of in public. Rumors were rife of continued fighting, but they were not believed. The latest published accounts state that the insurgents had been put down, but not without a severe struggle. Accounts from the provinces were generally favorable to the President.

The firing was continued by the troops and the combat continued with spirit for half an hour. Further down the Boulevards cannon and muskets were freely used till 4 o'clock, when the fighting in that quarter ceased, but continued in other sections.

No definite particulars have been published, and little is known beyond the fact that a sanguinary conflict had taken place. Many persons not engaged on either side had been killed or wounded.

The last accounts from Paris represent the troops as successful at all points.

The Paris correspondent of the London Herald and Chronicle states that Gen. Castellau Lyons, and Gen. Emyer have declared against the President. This however is denied. Doubts are also entertained of Gen. Magon's disposition toward the government. Strasburg and Rheims are reported to have risen.

The correspondent of the London Daily News says that General Neymayer is marching from the North with four regiments to oppose the President.

The correspondent of the Times state that an attempted emute at Dreux was promptly suppressed, and the most reliable accounts from the department was favorable to the President.

Seven hundred French refugees left London for Paris on Thursday.

The French government has entire control of the telegraph lines, and have stopped the transmission of all despatches.

The movements of the troops are rapid, silent, but firm. On Thursday many barricades were thrown up. At one o'clock, while a body of 5,000 troops were passing along the Boulevards, several shots were fired from the neighboring houses.

For Commissioners of the Town—People's Ticket.

- WM. C. HOWARD, T. C. MILLER, MILES COSTIN, E. KIDDER, C. H. DUDLEY, H. B. NIXON, S. D. WALLACE.

The above names will be acceptable to the citizens of Wilmington for Commissioners of the Town for the ensuing year. Dec. 17th, 1851. MANY CITIZENS.

SELF RESPECT.—We are pleased to see that Kossuth declines being dragged about from one theatre and place of amusement to another, to be played off as a card by managers and others, for their own pecuniary benefit. His refusal to sit for his portrait to speculating daguerreotypists, who were among the first to beset him on his arrival in this country, evinces on his part a higher self respect than is usually shown by most "distinguished" personages.

Weights and Measures.

The following table of the number of pounds of various articles to the bushel, will be of interest to many of our farming friends:

- Of wheat, 60 pounds. Of shelled corn, 56 pounds. Of corn on the cob 70 pounds. Of rye, 56 pounds. Of oats 35 pounds. Of barley 48 pounds. Of potatoes, 60 pounds. Of beans 60 pounds. Of bran 20 pounds. Of clover seed 60 pounds. Of timothy seed 45 pounds. Of flax seed 58 pounds. Of hemp seed 44 pounds. Of buckwheat 52 pounds. Of blue grass seed 14 pounds. Of castor beans 46 pounds. Of dried peaches 33 pounds. Of dried apples 24 pounds. Of onions 57 pounds. Of salt 50 pounds.

The Fall of Venice.

The following is from a work just published, written by Charles Fridam, correspondent of the London Times, during the revolution in Austria and Hungary. The book is entitled "Kossuth and the Magyar Land."

Towards the end of July, the incessant roar of cannon which for thirty-two days and nights, without intermission, had continued to sound and resound upon the ear of the Venetians, began now, from some cause unknown to them, gradually to subside. By some, this cessation of hostilities on the part of the Austrians was ascribed to the preparation necessary for a new and more terrible mode of attack. And what added force to this conjecture, was the intelligence which had reached them that Marshal Radetzky was then at Mestre busily engaged in inspecting all the works, and superintending the construction of strong howitzer batteries at St. Giuliano and other important positions which had hitherto remained unoccupied.

Others very naturally supposed that the enemy, finding it a useless expenditure of powder and shot, had abandoned the idea of taking the city by storm, and were resolved to await until starvation should accomplish what their army could not effect. And as the city began now to experience the first effects of famine, this seemed for the moment the more probable conclusion.

The crowds around the baker's shops were already so dense that several persons had been pressed to death. Meat and wine were almost completely exhausted, and bread of the worst quality exceedingly scarce. Notwithstanding these severe demands upon their patriotism and courage, public opinion in Venice on the subject of resistance was still unchanged, the people seemed still resolved to hold out to the last, while the activity at the arsenals and at all the ports, appeared to indicate that some great enterprise was to be undertaken before the final catastrophe arrived. For some time previously a rumor had been circulated in Venice, that on the 1st of August the Austrians intended to commence another and more awful assault upon the city than any that had hitherto been witnessed, but there were few of its pleasure-loving inhabitants who listened with credulity to this whisper of fancy, and even they dreamed not of anything more disastrous than that which they had already encountered. But when the silence which reigned over the waters of the lagoons, had been unbroken for many days by a hostile gun, on Sunday, 31st July, at midnight, when the lower classes were quietly reposing in their beds, and the higher and gayer circles, as was their custom, promenading the illuminated plaza of St. Mark, or seated under its extended balconies carelessly sipping their coffee or puffing their cigars, no sooner had the bell in the tower of St. Mark tolled the hour of twelve and announced the fact that the first of August had appeared, than they found themselves in the midst of a shower of red-hot shot, more terrible than the irruption of Vesuvius and Pompeii, and covering at once nearly three-fourths of the city. In a moment all Venice was alive. The streets were crowded with the residents of the invaded section—men, women and children, all hurrying toward the Castello and the public gardens where the projectiles did not reach, and running as it were the gauntlet through those narrow ways, amid the shot and rubbish, broken chimneys and severed cornices, that were at every step rattling down about their heads. Yet not a complaint was uttered, not a tear shed. The people of the exposed districts quartered themselves upon the occupants of the other sections with as much composure as if they had been members of one family, and nothing was heard but imprecations upon an enemy, who avoiding the breasts of soldiers ready and willing to receive them, attempted to force a capitulation upon the town, by routing the women and children from their beds, in hopes through their screams and tears to accomplish that which their personal valor had been unable to effect.

The torrent of balls which continued to fall incessantly, night and day, had no other result than to destroy property and demolish the most beautiful works of architecture and sculpture. On the Grand Canal nearly every palace was perforated, and some, particularly those of Mocenigo (which Lord Byron occupied,) Balbi, Persico, &c. boast of having received as many as thirty or forty balls each. A number of the churches, viz: the Frari, the Scalzi, San Giovanni e Paolo, &c. with their splendid marble and statuary, suffered severely.

The means by which the Austrians succeeded at length in throwing their projectiles into the city, a point which they had endeavored in vain for months to accomplish, was by mounting at San Giuliano, pieces of eighty-pounds and Paixhan guns of the heaviest calibre, and firing with muzzles raised to a considerable elevation; the balls then in describing the parabolic curve would descend and fall within the city, whereas, discharged on a level or aimed directly at the object as had previously been done, in a distance of five or six miles, the balls invariably fell short of their destination, and sank without effect beneath the waters.

On the 1st of August, the day upon which this awful bombardment commenced, 2000 Venetians made a sally from Brondolo, and after capturing a few hundred oxen, retired. During the evening the tidings of that expedition reached Venice, and while the population of that gay capital were quietly seated in the magnificent Fenice under the shower of red-hot shot (for the theatre was in the invaded district) enjoying as composure as though nothing had happened, the performance of "William Tell," the enthusiasm which the narration of this slight success created was so great that the continuation of the drama was dispensed with, and the occasion converted into a national festival.

Day after day, unceasingly, the cannonading continued, at many points the bombs set fire to the buildings, but these were soon extinguished without much injury, and as the balls seldom if ever penetrated further than the roof and one story, the population are unconcerned. Provisions become hourly more scarce, the supply can last but two weeks longer, and yet the people very quietly say "we will hold out until we have nothing to eat, and then the Croats may come and do what they please."

To add to the horrors of their situation, the cholera broke out among the inhabitants in its most dreadful and malignant form, its ravages, doubtless increased by the scanty and unwholesome food upon which they had been for some time compelled to subsist; and yet, amid all these disasters, the city remained tranquil, the Place of St. Mark was as much frequented as ever, and the countenances of the Venetians as bright as though enjoying the sunshine of the palmiest days of the republic.

On the 14th of August, Marshal Radetzky, aware of the state to which the city was reduced, renewed his efforts to induce it to capitulate, by offering nearly the same terms that had been previously re-

jected. Strange that now, when ammunition, food, medicine, drink, even water was failing, when to the general misery and squallor the cholera is added, carrying off 80 to 100 a day, in Venice and Chioggia, families without bread, without a roof, in search of shelter and victuals, old men, women and children, crammed into the store houses, or under the naked sky, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, and all the bombs and balls of the Austrians, these terms, quite as moderate as could possibly have been expected, were again rejected.

On the 17th, the President of the Republic, warned by the rapid progress of public danger that longer resistance was impossible, in consultation with the commandant of the French squadron and the French Consul, it was decided as the only and last means of safety, to send a Venetian deputation to the Austrian camp with an offer of capitulation. General Gergowski, commander of the Austrian troops before Venice, received the deputation on the 19th, and in reply to their application stated that he had no power to treat, but that he would immediately forward their note to Milan, and that during the time necessary to receive a reply from Marshal Radetzky, he would consent to slacken his fire on the city, and further that Venice might confide in the paternal intentions of the Emperor, and in the enlightened and liberal spirit of the government. The deputation, comprehending the exact value to be attached to such phrases, returned dejected and disconsolate to Venice.

Time rolls on, the reply from Milan is hourly expected, the destiny of a nation hangs on the balance, and a day becomes an age. The fire of the enemy, somewhat slackened on the 20th and 21st, is renewed on the night of the latter, with as great severity as ever. What will be the nature of the reply from Milan? What terms will an all powerful and long-provoked enemy inflict upon an utterly weak and prostrate foe?

No one knows, but all fear they will be rigorous in the extreme. The republic approaches its end.— Venice has but two days' provisions left, and those of the worst kind. The progress of the cholera is frightful. The absolute and unconditional surrender of the city within two days, is inevitable. The 22d of August arrives, and with it the answer of the Field Marshal. That octogenarian commander, as magnanimous as renowned, has affixed no additional stipulations on his fallen foe, the terms are accepted by the municipality of Venice, in whose favor the provisional government and the national assembly have abdicated their powers, the firing has ceased on both sides, and the republic of Venice is no more.

Her defence stands alone—like her marble palaces and her renown, in the midst of seas and of the ages of the world; she falls as she has lived, free from excesses, free from violence, and whilst enduring incredible privations has never yielded to anarchy, overpowered by superior forces, and yielding to the weight of events which it was impossible to withstand, ruined in everything but spirit, Venice falls battling heroically for ancient and long cherished independence.

TRIUMPHS OF AMERICAN GENIUS.—It is stated on good authority that Mr. Dick has sold the Patent for England and Scotland of his Anti Friction Press, for the handsome sum of \$75,000. It took the great Bronze Prize over all competitors at the World's Fair, and it was also exhibited in the machine room at Castle Garden during the fair of the American institute. For all purposes requiring great power in a small space, its uses are almost illimitable. It is equally adapted for pressure or lifting, punching or cutting. A plate of half inch iron is clipped by the shears with as much ease as cloth. These extraordinary results appear to have been attained by the union of the inclined plane with what is called the knuckle joint.

RUST IN WHEAT.—A correspondent of the Boston Cultivator, speaking of wheat rust, gives the following as the result of his experience: "The rust or mildew on wheat is caused by a slight drought and a sudden rain, and the sun coming out not immediately after, without wind, when the wheat berry is about two thirds full, when it gives the wheat such an impetus that it splits the stalk of the grain, which causes the sap to ooze out, and finally stops the growth of the berry. After this takes place, any person will notice that the spots on the stalk are all lengthways of the stalk, and by taking a sharp knife, he will find that the stalk is split open. Now the grain must be about two thirds full to have this take place, and at no other stage of its growth. We believe that manuring with unrotted manure will increase the evil, because it begins to work when the grain needs it the least, in the hot, sultry weather of July and August."

MOONLIGHT.—The Moon was near the full, broad and lustrous, and the whole atmosphere was full of light. It changed the color of the sky around the planet, making the blue glow into gold, it poured into every dell, it hung like a veil of beams on every tree, and bush, and copse; and it spread a silver network over the green and dewy grass, as if the turf itself emitted the radiance which in fact fell upon it from Heaven. It was like that bright and blessed power of man's mind, imagination, which pours through the night of our mortal being robing the earth in lustre, brightening all it falls upon in vague and misty splendor, and seeming to draw forth from the thing on which it shines the very light that itself bestows.— Above was the wide unfathomable depth of heaven, crowded with starry eyes, except where round about the moon herself spread forth her own eclipsing glory, and there but one loved star seemed perpetuated to shine close to the queen of night.

Pickling Meat.

As this is the season for curing Bacon the following remarks of Prof. Refensque, on the use of Saltpetre, may not be inappropriate:

Prof. Refensque denounces the use of Saltpetre in brine intended for the preservation of flesh to be kept for food. That part of the saltpetre which is absorbed by the meat, he says, is citric acid or aquafortis, a deadly poison. Animal flesh, previous to the addition of pickle, consists of gelatinous and fibrous substances, the former only possessing a nutritious virtue; the gelatine is destroyed by the chemical action of salt and saltpetre, and as the Professor remarks, the meat becomes as different a substance from what it should be, as leather is from the raw hide before it is subjected to the process of tanning. He ascribed to the pernicious effects of the chemical change all the diseases which are common to mariners and others who subsist principally upon salted meat—such as scurvy, sore gums, decayed teeth, ulcers, &c., and advises a total abandonment of the use of saltpetre in making of pickle for beef, pork, &c., the best substitute for which is, he says, sugar, a small quantity rendering the meat sweeter, more wholesome, and equally as durable.

A Lady, about purchasing a pair of shoes, cautioned the shopman, as he handled her ankle, "not to get a love's business."