



#### Our Prize Essay Again.

We were in hopes to have had the several Essays with which we have been favored examined, and the prize awarded, on the first of April, but on account of the pressure of other business with us, and having many more applicants for the prize than we expected, we did not arrange with the committee of examiners sufficiently early for them to get through the examination at that time. It perhaps will be well for us at this time, to explain the course which we have pursued in having the different essays examined &c., that those who are not so fortunate as to get the hundred dollars, may be satisfied that the affair has been honorably conducted by us. As each Essay has been received, it has been numbered, and the author's name and residence marked in an index, with a number corresponding with the number of the Essay, placed opposite his name.

After the 1st. inst., which was the time specified to have, the Essays examined, the documents were all forwarded to a competent person in a neighboring city, for his perusal, and after he had finished examining, and had sent us the number of the one selected, he forwarded them by our request to another gentleman, with whom we had previously arranged, to make the same examination, and who has since returned to us the papers, with a different number selected from the one chosen by the first gentleman of the Committee. Since the return of the Essays into our hands we have not had an opportunity of conferring with the gentleman to whom the two Essays selected by the first and second parties is to be decided, hence the delay of still another week, before it is possible for us to give the name of the winner, and perhaps two weeks before the state of our columns will permit our publishing the Prize Essay.

We have been surprised at the number of Essays received, and many of them are so well written, and come from such a meritorious class of our laboring mechanics, that we really wish we were able to reward more than one out of the great number, for their industry and practical suggestions.

#### New York City Elections.

The annual municipal elections in this city took place on the 10th inst., resulting in the election of the Whig Mayor, Mr. Woodhull, by upwards of 4,000 majority. The result shows conclusively, the influence of the independent penny press over the masses. Three days previous to the election it was considered morally certain by all parties that the Democrats would prevail, as they usually do in New York, by a very large majority. At this period, however, the *New York Sun* threw a bomb shell into the Democratic camp which instantly turned the tables in favor of the Whigs. The *Sun* is probably read daily by upwards of three hundred thousand persons; its influence in arranging the elections, or guiding the public mind in all matters, is therefore immense.

#### Washington Monument.—A Promising Boy.

An orphan boy in this city only 16 years of age, Richard P. Resdon, has produced a design for a monument to Washington which has been pronounced by many "to be the most original and grand and appropriate," that has yet been brought before the public. It is not a modified copy of some foreign existing mausoleum like some that have figured before the public; for the designer knows nothing about the principles of architecture or perspective drawing; but with the prompting of genius, and a natural taste, he has produced a design which is wonderful in itself and in the boy bespeaks the man. Being a boy of good habits it is to be hoped that he will find some friend that will nurse and cultivate his talents, as he has given evidence of being an honor to his country, and at some future day occupying a niche in the temple of fame.

#### The Seven Hills, (near Memphis, Tenn.) March 22, 1849.

Messrs. MUNN & Co.—I notice a paragraph going the rounds of the papers, has appeared in the *Scientific American*, stating "a planter in Tennessee has invented a machine for picking Cotton out of the field, which is intended to gather merely the top bolls, &c." This is a little error—its operation will not be confined to the top bolls alone.

I, in conjunction with Mr. T. Prescott of this vicinity, whom I have taken as a partner—he having taken me in equal partnership with a new Gin of his invention, and which will soon see the light of fame—am the inventor; and in a few days we shall apply for letters patent, when an engraving and full description will, with your sanction, appear in the *Scientific American*. The coming crops, next Fall, will dispel all uncertainty as to its success or failure; until then we shall probably remain in *stato quo*. S. S. REMBERT.

#### Oil of Rhodium for Rats.

It has long been known that the oil of rhodium had a wonderful attraction for rats, and would attract them from their holes. Old rat catchers have taken advantage of this to make part of their trade in decoying them to destruction. The following receipt from the *American Agriculturist*, is said to be a good one, received from an old rat destroyer, but it has a good deal of a hocus pocus legerdemain appearance about it, nevertheless it is easily tried, and that is the way to test its merits.

Take powdered asafetida, 2 grains; essential oil of rhodium, 3 drachms; essential oil of lavender, 1 scruple; oil of anise, 1 drachm. Let the asafetida first be well triturated with the oil of anise; then add the oil of rhodium, continuing to rub the materials well together with the pestle in the mortar, after which add the oil of lavender, and cork up the mixture in a close bottle until required for use.

The method of applying the compound consists merely in smearing a tame rat with it after mixing a few drops of it with a little flour or starch, or employ the paste thus formed as a bait for the trap. It is stated that a tame white rat besmeared with it, let loose in a vault, has been known to be followed by a half a dozen other rats, which appeared to be enamored by their albino decoy. A trap placed in a cellar, haunted by rats, and left there all night, was filled the next morning with these pests to the number of thirty, and was surrounded by a host of others, that actually could not enter for want of room!

#### Pocket Tape Measure.

Who would dispense with one of these convenient little articles that had ever possessed one? We should as soon dispense with the use of a pocket knife or a pocket lead pencil as to be deprived of the convenience of a pocket tape measure. Friend Ashe, known to many of our readers as an exquisite ornamental painter, has engaged in the manufacture of the above useful article and would be happy to serve any who desire to purchase them either at wholesale or retail. To be had at 133 Fulton street, under Dunlap's Hotel.

#### Decease of a Man of Science.

The scientific community has met with a loss that will be sensibly felt, in the decease of Professor Downes, of the University College, London. He had acquired a high reputation as a practical chemist, and was well known to the scientific men of the United States by his various essays, and more particularly by his excellent *Manual of Chemistry*, which has been republished here, and has taken a high stand as a text book in several of our Colleges.

#### Newfoundland.

The British Banner furnishes the following statement respecting the island of Newfoundland. Its area embraces about 35,000 square miles—being larger than Ireland, and nearly as large as England. The population of the island is about 100,000,—chiefly English, Irish and Scotch or the descendants of these, who are Protestants and Catholics in nearly equal proportions.

No agricultural implement has been discovered on the Isthmus, from Chagres to Panama. Crops, hitherto, 'not worth raising.' Cotton grows spontaneously.

#### The Iron Business.

The *Pittsburg Journal* contains the subjoined paragraph, in relation to the iron trade of a portion of Western Pennsylvania:—

"A number of the iron men, from Clarion have arrived, and taken lodgings at the St. Charles, Exchange and other houses. Mr. Shippen, one of the most extensive manufacturers of pig metal in that section, informs us that the quantity for market this spring is much less than was anticipated last fall. The winter has been severe—boats scarce, on account of the heavy floods in February, and not as much manufactured in proportion to the number of furnaces as usual. Several metal boats arrived, and landed at the Allegheny wharf last night. They contain on an average seventy-five or eighty tons."

#### Maple Sugar at the West.

Few persons are aware of the large amount of this article that is yearly manufactured at the West. A late number of the *Toronto Farmer* says that the northern portions of the Canada settlements, will produce the greatest quantities of sugar from the maple. The forests on the south shore of Lake Huron, as well as those on numerous islands on that extensive sheet of water contain a very large quantity of the largest size sugar maple; and in that region of country, the sugar season lasts one-third longer than it does on the borders of lakes Ontario and Erie. A merchant who trades extensively in the article of maple sugar, manufactured by the Indians, has repeatedly assured us, that if proper encouragement was given to the business the sugar manufactured in that region, by the Indians and white population, might be made to yield an annual return of upwards of £100,000. On the great Manitou Island, even as unfavorable as was last year for the business, the aborigines made and sold upwards of 100,000 pounds of sugar; a considerable portion of which was bought by Michigan merchants, in exchange for woollen and cotton goods.

#### Church in San Francisco.

Rev. T. Dwight Hunt arrived at San Francisco from the Hawaiian Islands in October last, when a meeting of those favorable to the establishment of a chaplaincy was called, and about \$2,000 subscribed for its support. Mr. Hunt, upon being requested to perform the duties of that office, at once accepted, and his efforts have been attended with success. A Sabbath School has been organized, and a conference meeting established by him.

#### A Hundred and odd Years ago.

In 1742, we perceive by the manual of the Common Council of New-York, extracts of which have been recently published, that burning to death of negroes for crime was a common practice. The sentence of one of them reads, the prisoner must "be burned by a slow fire, that he may continue in torment for eight or ten hours, and continue burning on said fire until he be dead and consumed to ashes." These are the ancestors that we laud so much.

#### Asking the Leave to Gape.

The *New-Haven Register* tells this good one. Friday night last, owing to an accident the Springfield train did not reach Hartford until late, and in consequence, those awaiting its arrival at the station, had a tedious time of it. Among them was a demure looking yankee, inclined to have a nap—fixing his feet on the upper round of his chair, he leaned back against the wall, and "went at it." He was not fairly under way, however, when he was tapped on the hat by one of the officials, and told that "setting up and sleeping was not allowed in the Depot." "Eh!" ejaculated the astonished sleeper, "no sitting up and sleeping!" "No sir—again the rules of the company," said the official. "Well, I declare," replied the other "this is a mean place! Won't you ask the company if I mayn't gape?" following up his query with a "stretcher" that put the officious official to instant flight.

The *Lowell Courier* says that on the first of the present month the wages of the operatives upon the corporations of that city, were raised from twenty to twenty five per cent—having been restored to what they were six months ago.

#### Delaware and Hudson Canal Company.

We are informed that the Canal will be opened for navigation on the 20th proximo.—The coal cars commenced regular trips last week. It is stated by the Honesdale Democrat that the Company's Wire Suspension Aqueduct across the Delaware is finished.—Henceforward there will be no stoppage of canal navigation on account of high water. This aqueduct is the only structure of the kind in America, and perhaps in the world, and is indeed a great achievement. The Company design sending to market this season an increased quantity of coal.

#### A Year's Immigration.

In the year ending on the 1st of April 1849, there landed at this port, New York, two hundred and four thousand six hundred and thirty six immigrants.

#### Fulton's Steamboat.

The Rev. Dean of Ripon, in a recent lecture before the Mechanics' Institute in Leeds, stated that about forty years ago, he happened to be in New York, and was invited by General Moreau to make a short trip with him on board a "ship to go by hot water." It was the first vessel of Fulton.

#### Manchester, New Hampshire.

This place has now a population of 15,000. Eight years ago there was but a few houses in it. It is like Lowell a manufacturing city, and the ground on which it is built was formerly owned by Judge Stark a grandson of the celebrated republican general.

#### Gooseberries.

This is an excellent fruit, but very difficult to raise. They grow well until they begin to ripen when, as a general thing, they mildew and perish.

As all our garden gooseberries are from imported plants, it has been suggested that if our native gooseberry was cultivated, that it would not mildew. The grafting of the gooseberry on the yellow flowering currant has been successful also, to prevent mildews.

#### The Free School Act.

A bill amending the Free School law of this State has been passed, declaring that the law shall go into effect immediately after being ratified by the People.

When butter is to be made, if a lump of old butter be put into the cream, butter will come from much less churning. When soap is to be made, if a little old soap be put into the ley and grease, the soap will be made with considerable less boiling.

The Hon. H. V. Johnson, of Georgia, in the course of a debate in the United States Senate on the 28th of February, stated the estimated valuation of property in slaves at the astonishing sum of \$1,000,000,000.

There are 1500 vagrant children in Boston. Out of 1066 cases ascertained 963 were of foreign parentage and 103 of American. This speaks volumes for New England parental discipline.

Mr. John Duncan, the celebrated African traveller, is again about to undertake a journey into the unexplored wilds of Africa, back of the kingdom of Dahomy.

We have seen it stated that an excellent remedy for hoarseness, coughs colds, and cases of incipient consumption, is horse-radish, cut into small pieces and chewed in the mouth.

Donizetti, the musical composer, was the son of a Scotch farmer named Donald Izett, who joined the army, was captured by General La Roche and remained with him as a secretary. He married an Italian lady, and his name was changed to Donizetti. It is said that some of the finest airs in Don Pasquale, and Lucia are of Scotch origin, and thus accounted for.

It is said 2,000 persons bound for the mines will be left at Panama, on the 1st of April, unprovided for. The California Steamer had only enough coal to reach San Francisco, and can get none there. The Convention for forming a Provisional Government to meet May 1st.

The fare from New York to Albany has been reduced on some of the boats to 25 cents—distance 160 miles.