

CAPITAL CITY COURIER

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[In order that the COURIER, for, in common with the rest of humanity, may enjoy the festivities of the glad Christmas season, the paper this week is issued Thursday evening instead of Friday night, as is customary. If any omissions of late matter are noticed by our readers, this explanation will make clear the reason.]

And this is Christmas day! Even while the COURIER is making its weekly visit the lights on every holly and evergreen are burning and "Peace on earth and good will to men" is the spirit that pervades all hearts. The star which, more than two thousand years ago, guided the simple shepherds of Judea to Bethlehem still shines to guide the weary soul to heaven's gates. Time has not dimmed the lustre of its light or destroyed its transcendent glory, nor human faith in the glorious promise of which it is the beautiful sign. And so, with these thoughts uppermost in mind, the COURIER takes occasion to extend to its many readers the compliments of the season and to wish them, one and all, many happy returns of the day.

The proposition to send a shipload of grain to Russia as a donation for the benefit of the destitute thousands who are suffering from famine is wholly commendable, not merely as a charitable act but also as an evidence of American gratitude. During the rebellion Russia was the only European power heartily with the North, and its friendship probably saved us thousands of lives and millions of treasure. In one of the darkest periods of the war, when it looked as though England and France and Spain would lead the south assistance, Russia sent a fleet of vessels of war to America. Their instructions were sealed, but the czar said to the president: "We desire above all things the maintenance of the American Union as one indivisible nation." The coming of this fleet was taken as a notice to England and other European nations to keep their hands off, and they did. For this kindly act, which might have involved Russia in an expensive war, we owe that country a debt of gratitude, and we can pay it off in no better way than that which is now offered us.

Here is consolation. From the statistics of the coal business gathered for the census bureau, it appears that in 1889 the average price per ton at the mines was \$1.44 for hard and 99 cents for soft coal. The natural query is, who gets the other \$3 that are put on the price of coal when Nebraska people come to buy it?

When an ex-president of the Adams express company recently restored \$500,000 to it, because he had bought a piece of cheap property and then sold it to his company at an advance of half a million, some of the wise men who run the universe through the editorial columns of the daily papers learnedly told us that the morals of great business men were improving. When you come to look closely at this express case it doesn't offer much hope to the masses who are robbed by the monopolistic corporations. In the first place the \$500,000 went back to an already rich company and not to the people. In the second place the ex-president restored it not because of any twinges of conscience but because there was a powerful corporation after him with money enough to make life a burden to him and to bankrupt him defending himself. The people cut no figure in this case. They were not in it.

And now it is claimed that the fabulous prices said to have been paid for "The Angelus" were a fake, to use a bit of slang, all a part of a grand scheme to bamboozle and bleed the public. This charge comes from Verestchagin, the noted painter. He alleges that the sale to Americans and the return to France were bogus transactions intended to "boom" Millet's fame and enhance the value of his other works. Verestchagin alleges that Sutton, the American scientist in the case, made a similar proposition to him, which he declined. Perhaps the foreigner with the unpronounceable name is jumping at conclusions, but, if his statement is correct, what a clever scheme "The Angelus" deal was, to be sure—from an American dollar and cent point of view. Our true born American is displaying new flashes of genius every year in his effort gull the public and make money for himself.

Here is a curious fact, if indeed it is a fact. A florist asserts that the three colors, blue, red and yellow never all appear in the same species of flower. There may be two, but never the three. For example, there are red and yellow roses, but who ever saw a blue rose? There are blue and yellow pansies but no red. In verities we find red and blue and no yellow. To people interested in flowers there should be a curious interest in nothing whether this rule holds good or not in all cases. The florist in question is so sure of it that he says it is a law of nature.

Speaking of Col. E. D. Webster, now of Stratton, as private secretary to William H. Seward during the war, he experienced and observed enough of the inside events at the White house and the state department to make a book of absorbing interest. In conversation with the writer he related an incident about Lincoln that was characteristic of the martyr president, and as it has a historic interest it is worth repeating at length.

Early in the rebellion, you remember, the north came very near being involved in a war with Great Britain. If John Bull had tackled us along with the south it might have finished us. At any rate it was a very ticklish situation. To refresh the history of the

younger readers a few words of explanation are permissible here. The confederacy sent two commissioners named Mason and Silldell to England to solicit aid. They ran the blockade at Charleston one stormy night in the fall of 1861 and escaped to Havana. There they took an English steamer named the Trent. When some distance out at sea a union man of war overhauled the Trent and took off Mason and Silldell and carried them to Boston, where they were locked up. Of course the north was wild with patriotic applause, but old John Bull was equally wild with rage. England began to make preparations for war and finally gave Brother Johnathan just seven days to make up his mind whether or not he would deliver up the rebel commissioners. This was about Christmas time, just thirty years ago.

Secretary Seward reached the conclusion that the consistent thing and the best thing to do was to give up Mason and Silldell, but the sentiment of the north was strongly against it. If he had openly proposed doing this, there would have been a tremendous opposition. He decided to do it secretly and on Sunday afternoon he called his son and Webster and another clerk to his office and began to prepare a statement to go to the country. While his assistants brought books and looked up authorities the great statesman wrote. He pointed out the fact that in 1812 the United States had gone to war with Great Britain for searching American ships. He showed very clearly that in the Trent affair Uncle Sam had violated the very principle for which he had fought fifty years before.

About the time the paper was finished, late in the afternoon, president Lincoln and his secretary, John Hay, dropped in. Secretary Seward asked for permission to read his document, which was readily granted, and Webster was asked to do the reading. When he had done, the president asked him to read it again slowly, pausing at the end of each sentence. As the second reading neared its conclusion, Lincoln, with head bowed as though in deep thought, walked towards the fireplace, drew a roll of paper from his pocket and quietly dropped it into the fire. This was done without ostentation or comment. The president named a date for a cabinet meeting, asked Seward to bring his statement and assured him his plan had been adopted. That document is now recognized as one of the ablest state papers ever drawn in America.

Years afterward Hay was connected with the American legation in Paris and Webster was consul over in England. One day they met in Paris and the incident related above was brought up. Hay explained that the paper which Lincoln burned was a statement in which he took grounds radically opposed to Seward's view. The reading of the

letter made a convert of him, however, and he abandoned his own position, not even attempting to bolster his pride by arguing the matter with his secretary of state. The incident shows the wonderfully acute perception of Lincoln and the nobility of his character.

Webster was selected as the agent of the government to deliver the rebel commissioners to a representative of John Bull. On the cold, stormy New Year's day of 1862 he went down Boston harbor in a little tug boat that was repeatedly threatened with destruction before her mission was ended. He got the prisoners at Fort Warren, and then steamed down to Cape Cod, where a British man-of-war was stationed. He delivered the rebels safely, and started for New York by rail. A telegram notified secretary Seward, and he started the country the next morning with the news of what he had done. This is a bit of secret history that is not generally known. If Webster had been so inclined he could have made a fortune by buying stocks, for when the danger of war with England was averted securities went up with a jump. One outsider did get an inkling of the coming event and tried to sell his information, but the stock jobbers did not have enough confidence in him to buy.

The Chicago Herald appeared Saturday evening with a twenty-eight page Christmas number. It has an elegant lithographed cover in color, is filled with entertaining matter and altogether is "a thing of beauty and a joy forever" that reflects credit on its enterprising publishers.

The depravity of this world sometimes has a comical side to it. For instance, a prominent Nebraska clergyman in speaking of his experience in charitable work the other day, told of having discovered men who made a business of posing as "sick husbands" to half a dozen different women. This enabled the women to beg money, valuables and dainty food.

Sol Miller, of the Troy Chief, says: "It is senseless to use the word 'Xmas', as Christmas was named after Christ, and it is not likely that Christ signed his name by making his mark." Pretty sound philosophy, that.

The Journal's "Educational Souvenir" which appeared Thursday is a production that does credit to this enterprising establishment. Its sixteen pages are brim full of interesting educational matter, while the many beautiful half tone illustrations add to its attractiveness and beauty. The friends of education owe a debt of gratitude to the publishers of this pretty Christmas

A New Year's Petition to 1892.

When Nature seeks with fond caressing
To clothe the earth in vernal dressing,
Give us, we beg, an Easter blessing!

On May the first, when moving traces
Can be discerned upon our faces,
Move us, we pray, to better places!

When July comes, with tramp and hummer,
And iceman takes the place of plumber,
Give us a Fourth that is a hummer!

When Summer girls get tired of rowing,
And take to reading and to sewing,
Give them some men to keep things going!

In Autumn, when the trees grow thinner,
And leaves descend on saint and sinner,
Give us a good Thanksgiving dinner!

And when, in hoary old December,
We sit before the dying ember,
Give us a Christmas to remember!

TOM MASSOR.



ments for the successful manner in which they have brought the educational interests of Lincoln to the attention of the world. The souvenir is really "a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

Beginning with its issue of next week, the COURIER will commence the first of a series of articles descriptive of the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago. This is a matter of world wide interest and the series will treat it with becoming gravity. It will be most fully illustrated, including pictures of all the principal buildings, scenes, etc. Watch for it next week.

There are many fine old Christmas customs, but most of them are for the benefit or happiness of mankind. A Norwegian tells me of a pretty practice in his native country that is both peculiar and touching. It is a custom over there to give the birds of winter a Christmas dinner. Poles are fixed on barns, sheds and fences, and from these are suspended sheaves of grain. If the birds do not eat it all up on Christmas it is allowed to remain until they have disposed of the entire feast. Even the poorest peasants are said to give up something out of their small stores for the feathered tribe's Christmas.

Before another issue of the COURIER reaches its distant readers, the year 1891 will have passed the mile post of Time and be numbered with the hundreds gone before, existing only in the archives of memory. To many of us it has been a year of trials and tribulations, disappointment and defeat, sorrow and remorse; to the other and much larger class, it has brought joy and contentment, with happiness unalloyed. Looking back, there is little to be sorry and much to be thankful for; and so, standing on the threshold of the new year, let us bury our sighs and regrets in the oblivion of the past and with strong hands and willing hearts enter upon the journey of life for

+ 1892 +
A Happy New Year to All.

The new Lincoln frame and art company make a specialty of frames for fine crayon work, with Elite Studio 235 south Eleventh street.

The only place to get the "Time lock register bank" at the great 10 cent store, 118 south 12th street.

New etchings, many fine plates, just received. Come early. Crankers Art and Music store.



He had played with Booth and Barrett.
Knew Shakespeare all by heart.
Had sung in comic operas,
And could pantomime a part:
An adept on the banjo,
Could do a song and dance;
Took tickets at the gallery door,
And once went in advance:
Was leading man for twenty years,
And it seemed a shame to him
To have to throw a part up, just
Because he couldn't swim.

Gus Heege and Annie Lewis appeared in "Yon Yonson" at the Lansing Saturday evening before one of the largest and most brilliant audiences yet attached to the theatre. "Yon Yonson" is immeasurably superior to "Ole Olson" in which Heege formerly appeared and it affords the bright comedian an infinitely better opportunity for showing his capabilities. Thus far the Swedish dialect has been fitted to but two plays, the two named herein. It is a new factor in modern theatricals, and one that wisely used, will prove of value. The first attempt was comparatively speaking, a failure; but in the new comedy it may be said to have achieved success and opened the way for future triumphs. There is something inexplicably droll in the mixture of the Scandinavian with the English tongue. It has a domestic flavor and for the present at least, it is something new on the stage. "Yon Yonson" is well put together and is a strong attraction independent of the Swedish feature. It is particularly rich in scenic properties and the different parts are splendidly interpreted by the company which Mr. Latt has brought together to support Heege and Miss Lewis. Surely it is impossible to praise the latter too highly. The bright little body receives a weekly salary of \$500 it is said, and she earns every dollar of it. She is responsible for not a little of the success of "Yon Yonson." Next year Miss Lewis will star in a new play.

Most people think Hoyt, usually so happy in the nonchalance of his comedies, made a palpable blunder in saddling his best work with the ridiculous name "A Texas Steer." Admitting that the name gives one a wrong impression of the comedy, it is by no means certain that, from a business point of view it was poorly chosen. It arouses curiosity and that's exactly what Hoyt intended. "A Texas Steer" has been likened to "The Mighty Dollar" made famous by

the late Billy Florence, and Crane's new play, "The Senator," recently seen in this city. Perhaps the principal resemblance lies in the fact that it, like the other two, is a political play; albeit there is something in the character of "Maverick Brander" that recalls the "Hardwell Slote" of days gone by. As a satire on the actualities and paradoxical possibilities of American "practical" politics it is really a strong effort and the character delineations are in Hoyt's best vein. "Maverick Brander," "Bossy," "Dixie Stile, the orphan from Indiana," "Brassy Gail," "Major Yell" and "The Minister to Dahomey" are all representations, exaggerated, but nevertheless cleverly portrayed, of types of current American life. "The Minister to Dahomey" is the most original, and Will H. Bray makes of this part a brilliant feature of the presentation. Mr. Hoyt's genius in the construction of farce comedy has taken a great upward bound in "A Texas Steer" and "A Midnight Bell" and the new departure in these two productions cause great expectations for the brace of brand new comedies by the same author, "A Temperance Town" and a "Man Born in Missouri." "A Texas Steer" had been seen once before in Lincoln, but when it was presented at the Funko Wednesday evening every seat was filled, there was standing room only, and but little of that. It was interpreted by the original company, including Flora Walsh (Mrs. Hoyt) and Tim Murphy. Murphy rises to great heights in the portrayal of "Brander." One derives almost as much enjoyment from his work as from a Crane or a Roland Reed and that is saying all that need be said. Miss Walsh as "Bossy" is pliant, bright, and altogether delightful. She is one of the most pleasing comedienne on the stage. The "Captain Fairleigh Bright" of John Marshall could be improved upon considerably. All of the other incidental roles were admirably taken. The American quartette rendered some appropriate selections.

A. M. PALMER'S "CAPTAIN SWIFT."
Few American plays have won the distinction of praise that has been allotted Mr. A. M. Palmer's production of "Captain Swift." It has been seen here before and by a capable cast, but its present revival it is said even outvalues its past excellent presentation. That Lincoln receives a really rich and rare treat in this engagement, few people realize. The fact, however, is that it was only by chance that Manager Church secured the attraction. Last week Mr. Church heard that Mr. Palmer's "Captain Swift" company was about to start for San Francisco where the piece is to be put on for a run. The company was to jump through without a stop. He immediately wired Mr. Palmer offering him the Christmas dates held by "Jim, the Westerner" and offering large inducements, received an affirmative reply and the booking was made. It was too late to send lithographs for window and wall advertising and Mr. Church was authorized by wire as to how to advertise the attraction and he has done accordingly. In the cast are such people as Arthur Forrest, whose characterization of Mr. Wilding, a gentleman from Queensland, is said to be the finest the part has ever had. The scenes are all laid in London, a synopsis of the piece being as follows: Act 1—London (Mrs. Seabrook's Drawing Room); Act 2—Fornshaw (Exterior Seabrook's Country Home); Act 3—Fornshaw (Conservatory at Seabrook's); Act 4—London (Gardiner's Chamber). Two carloads of beautiful new scenery especially prepared for the San Francisco engagement will be unloaded here and the identical production as mounted in New York will be seen during the Lincoln engagement, which is for two nights and two matinees, Friday and Saturday of this week. Prices will remain as usual and the reserve sheet is now open at the box office.

MONDAY AT THE LANSING.
Another chance is offered the fun loving public of seeing this popular characterization of the New England farmer, "Alvin Joslin" the funniest of all plays, Uncle Alvin advertising to give 180 laughs in 180 minutes. Those who have seen the play say there is 180 laughs in every act. This comedy has always been mounted in excellent style, and there is every reason to believe that Uncle Alvin will endeavor to give his friends—the public—a production long to be remembered. This is Charles L. Davis' original company under his personal direction and the success with which it is meeting everywhere, speaks well for its merits. The engagement is for one night only for which the sale of seats is now open at the box office.

HICKEY'S "TUG OF WAR."
The second meeting in Hickey's tug of war contest was held at the Lansing Wednesday evening. It was exciting to a marked degree. The police defeated the Swedes, the American team won from the penitentiary guards, the firemen from the Germans and the draymen from the Irishmen. The latter protest against the referee's decision and offer \$100 against the draymen for \$100. The next and third meeting will be held at the Lansing Tuesday evening. The unusual interest manifested in this class of entertainment assures a large and enthusiastic audience.

When called before the curtain at the Funko Tuesday evening, Mr. Hoyt made the same identical two-minute speech he delivered here last year. On the other occasion the writer has listened to exactly these words in answer to curtain calls. While it may be true that in most instances authors are no great speakers, yet it seems that in the course of a whole year so clever a writer as the author of "A Texas Steer" might evolve something new in the way of a neat little speech. His remarks Tuesday were very flat but the opportunity of seeing the man who has furnished the pretext for so much laughter the past few years was afforded the people, and—well, curiosity is all that is some people to church.

Continued on Fifth Page.