

Muscatine Tri-Weekly Journal
February 28, 1855

Correspondence of the "Journal"

St. Louis, Feb. 16, 1855.

Eds. journal: Whether it is because of the wagon loads of valentines, or the huge heaps of delayed mail matter that have just come to hand, I cannot say; but there has been a heavy run on our Post Office for about a week. It is almost impossible to get into the office at all, so great is the rush--and to get to the deliveries, after ten in the morning is an impossibility. For a week or so, nothing could be seen in the bookstores but thousands upon thousands of valentines. One of our stationers has sold about \$1,200 worth of this kind of nonsense.

A widow woman with five children, destitute of money, half starved and almost naked, reached this city yesterday from somewhere in Arkansas, and were on their way to join some relatives in Illinois. They had suffered dreadfully from cold and fatigue during their journey, and were truly objects of charity. The sight brought to mind the handsome sum our preacher collected in church last Sunday to obtain food and raiment for the poor, ignorant heathen in some far off part of the world; I thought, too, of the passage in the Bible instructing the disciples to carry their good works into all the world--beginning first at Jerusalem.

An extension of the city limits seems to be exciting a good deal of attention just now, and meetings are held every day or two to consider the subject.

The first train went through from Washington, on the Pacific railroad, on the 9th. The cars started from the new depot in Seventh Street. The work on this road is progressing finely, and I hear no more complaint about a want of funds.

A new evening paper is about to be started here, to be called the Evening Mirror. I do not know who are to be its editors. A new Catholic paper (bad luck to it) is also soon to be established, for the purpose of keeping the Know Nothing organ straight.

The livery stable of T. Turner, Broadway, near Carr Street, was burned on the night of the 14th. Seventeen or eighteen horses perished, among which were "Know Nothing," worth \$800, and another fine horse valued at \$500. The whole loss is about \$13,000, with an insurance of \$8,000. The building burned very rapidly, and threw a light into my room (it was but a square and a half distant) sufficient to read by. Though half-asleep, I could hear the shrieks of the poor horses as they madly struggled to escape from the cruel element.

Policemen are queer animals and have remarkably nice notions as to the great law of self-preservation. I doubt if the man is now living that ever caught one at a riot. To find "a needle in a hay stack" is a much easier matter than to scare up one of these gentry when he's wanted. Late last night, hearing a fuss in the street, I got up to see what was the matter. I saw a man -- somewhat inebriated -- marching up the street, armed with a barrel stave, and driving a woman before him. He was talking very energetically, and applying the aforesaid stave most industriously to the poor woman's shoulders.

The following remarks, which I overheard, will serve to enlighten you as to his reason for "lamming" the lady: "Curse you! (bang! went the stave) by this kind of conduct (energetic application of the stave) you have grieved me till you have broken my heart! (bang!) and I'll break your d-d neck for it!" (bang! - bang! - bang!) And thus the gentleman amused himself until out of sight and hearing, and failed to stumble upon a single policeman. I felt sorry for the poor heart-broken creature, and wished with all my heart it might please Providence to remove him from his troubles by putting it into the Sheriff's head to hang the scoundrel before morning. On this beast's account am I sorry that there is no purgatory for the brute creation.

A Thespian Society, called the Young Men's Dramatic Association, have played once or twice lately at the Varieties Theatre. I saw them play "The Merchant of Venice." I had always thought that this was a comedy, until they made a farce of it. The prompters found it a hard matter to get the actors on the stage, and when they did get them on, it was harder still to get them off again. "Jessica" was always "thar" when she wasn't wanted, and never would turn up when her services were required. They'll do better next time.

Rev. Dr. Cox will deliver the last of his course of historical lectures before the Young Men's Christian Association, soon. He is an eloquent and interesting speaker, and never fails to attract large audiences.

S.L.C.