



From the Saturday Courier.

We present our readers with an engraved view of the exterior of the new National Theatre, just erected in Chesnut street, at the corner of Ninth, on the lot whereon the Mammoth Opera House was intended to be built. The front on Chesnut street is one hundred and forty-seven feet in length, and the depth, extending from Chesnut to Museum street, is one hundred and fifty-two feet. A row of stores, eight in number, with five entrances to the theatre, occupy the front of the building; over the stores is a promenade extending the whole length of the front, with three capacious French windows opening from the second tier of the boxes. The *coup d'œil* is striking and effective; and Mr. Burton has given an additional beauty to our city's principal street.

The interior of the theatre combines the most desirable points of sight and sound. Mr. Haviland, the architect, has bestowed great pains upon its construction, and his professional skill and Mr. Burton's experience, have conjoined with the most desirable effect. A full view of the stage, from the front lights to the back, may be had from every part of the house; the boxes describe a parabola in their bend, so that while the interior is much larger than that of any other theatre in the city, the whole of the audience is placed nearer the actors. The front of the stage is sixty feet in width, while the Chesnut street but just exceeds forty.

The seats in the boxes are wider apart by twelve inches than they are in other theatres; consequently the complaints so generally uttered by long-legged gentlemen respecting the cramping nature of the box seats are done away with. Chairs of elegant make are placed in the dress-circle and private boxes.

The house is lighted with the greatest brilliancy; a central light of many burners (gas) is securely fastened in the dome, casting an equal grade of light over the whole of the audience and the front of the stage. Numerous cut-glass chandeliers, of a new and graceful pattern, decorate the lower circle of boxes. The lobbies and avenues of the theatre are supplied with gas from a different meter, so that in no case of accident can the house be in total darkness.

The ornaments that grace the audience part, consist of raised scrolls and devices in burnished and dead gold, on a rich creamy ground. Amongst various tasteful modellings, the cotton bush, the wheat sheaf, the maize, or Indian corn, and the tobacco plant, the staples of the country, are gracefully introduced. The pillars of the different tiers of boxes have carved capitals, with burnished gold leaves and beading. The proscenium is richly ornamented with a profusion of carved work, in white and gold. We doubt if any theatre ever built could boast of a more elegant, chaste and rich display.

The National Theatre has been built with every possible attention to strength and durability. The timbers used in the construction of the stage are massive in the extreme: a stone foundation wall encircles the pit—on this wall, the pillars of the various tiers of the boxes rest, and are carried up to the roof. To ensure the solidity of the building, the joists of the boxes rest midway upon another row of perpendicular supports, and running from the floor to the roof. The lobby and the exterior walls afford addition strength to the building, which, in the opinion of several of our practical architects, combines more solidity and beauty of decoration than any other theatre in the Atlantic cities.

Delaware Avenue Improvement.—There is a fine improvement going up on Delaware avenue, just below Almond street, being two capacious store houses of brick, with handsome fronts. These are the first built upon the avenue since the extension of the wharves below South street, which was accomplished by the Southward Board of Commissioners, a year or two before Consolidation. The property has been much enhanced in value since then, and with the extension of the commerce southward come the demand for storehouses. We expect, in a few years, to see Delaware avenue opened to Queen street at least, and improved with many substantial business structures.

June 6, 1855

High Price of Provision.—The present high prices of provision seems to have reached its straining point, and we may now look for a speedy decline, at least so far as many articles are concerned. Meats are exorbitantly high. Choice cuts of beef sell at 20 cents per pound. Suetlin and chop-house steak, 20 a 22 cents; rump steak, 15 cents; corned beef, 12 a 14 cents; beef tongue, 62 a 70 cents; shin of beef, 37 a 44 cents, and the same may be said of Veal, mutton, lamb, &c. Vegetables are more plenty, but sell high. Turkeys sold yesterday at \$1.50 a 2.25 each, and chickens \$1 a 1.50 per pair. Fat are plenty and fine. Hailcut 10 a 12 cents per pound, rock 10, black fish 8, porpoises 5, perch 15 per bunch, lobster 8 cents per pound, crabs 25 a 37 per dozen, clams 22 a 2.50 per thousand, oysters \$1 a 15 per thousand, shad 12 a 25 cents each. Butter, for a good article, sold at 37 a 45 cents per pound, and eggs at 16 a 20 cents per dozen.

May 19, 1855

Corner Stone Laid.—Yesterday afternoon, according to previous arrangements, the corner stone of the Schuylkill Water Works was laid. A large assembly of citizens was present on the occasion, and throughout the proceedings were characterized with much spirit and good feeling. A box, containing a number of documents, lists of the Board of Commissioners of the Northern Liberties and Spring Garden, the names of the Water Commissioners, the Engineer, Carpenter, Stone Mason, &c., with all the varieties of American coin, the daily newspapers of the city, &c., was deposited in the corner stone by Alexander Crumblings, Esq., President of the Water Board. Preparatory to that ceremony, he delivered an address, in which he gave a history of the undertaking, embracing much interesting matter of a statistical character. John M. Read, Esq., to whom was assigned the duty, delivered a very appropriate address, in which he gave a history of the Fairmount Water Works, and glanced at the numerous works of a similar kind in sister cities and towns. The address was exceedingly interesting. The Hon. George M. Dallas, being loudly called for, addressed the assembly, and was warmly applauded.

After the ceremonies were over, a large party of citizens in public stations and others repaired by invitation to the hotel of Col. R. H. Bartle, where they partook of a most splendid dinner; got up in the Colonel's best style. The dinner party was honored with the presence of the Hon. G. M. Dallas, Hon. Charles J. Ingersoll, Hon. Chas. Brown, Hon. John T. Smith, Hon. E. A. Pennington, John M. Read, Esq., H. D. Gilpin, Esq., James Page, Esq., and other gentlemen of distinction. Regular and volunteer toasts were drank and several speeches were made, which kept the company at the height of enjoyment until a late hour. We were compelled to leave before the assembly broke up, and are unable to be more particular in our details of the entire scenes of the day. Under a promise of the official proceedings we shall in a day or two present to our readers all that occurred, together with some interesting statements in reference to this great work, which is destined to form a glorious feature in the vast improvements and spirit of enterprise of the present age.

THE SCHUYLKILL WATER WORKS.—The following statements present further particulars of the business of the laying the corner stone of the building of the Spring Garden and Northern Liberty Water Works on Monday afternoon.

In the cavity of the stone is deposited a red cedar box, lined with zinc, containing the following articles: A copper plate, with the following engraving thereon: "Schuylkill Water Works, erected by the Districts of Northern Liberties and Spring Garden, under the direction of the Water Commissioners."

Northern Liberties: Spring Garden: George Williams, Alexander Cummings, Joseph Yeager, Thomas Holloway, George W. Dinnert, James Jandy.

Appointed under the Act of Assembly, passed April 18th, 1844.

Dedicated to the purpose of supplying the District with Water, July 1st, 1844.

William E. Morris, Engineer.

Merrick & Towne, Engine Builders.

McGowan, Mason.

John A. Bender, Carpenter.

John Helms, Superintendent."

AN OLD RELIC.

We yesterday saw an iron weather-cock, which was put up as long ago as 1699, by William Penn, Samuel Carpenter and Caleb Pusey, on the flouring mill located on Chester Creek, Delaware county, Pa. The property is now advertised for sale, as will be seen by an advertisement in another part of our paper. The weather-cock, which is quite a curiosity, from its old-fashioned appearance, and possesses interest on account of the associations connected with it, has been left at the Exchange, where it may be seen by the curious.