



THE NEW HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE, AT BLOCKLEY.—At the recent annual meeting of the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane, held in the city of New York, Dr. Kirkbride presented and explained the plans of the new Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, now in course of erection in this city. Dr. K. remarked that the new institution was intended to accommodate two hundred and thirty patients, and that, when completed, the plan of separating the sexes, which had been frequently discussed at meetings of the Association, would be fairly tested. The new building was intended for males, and that now in use would be devoted entirely to females.

It was due to the benevolent citizens of Philadelphia and its vicinity that it should be stated (he said) that to them the afflicted would be indebted for this new hospital, which would probably cost about \$300,000, nearly the whole amount required for the purpose being already contributed. The main building will consist of a basement above ground, and two principal stories, while the most excited classes of patients will be provided for in a one-story building. The arrangements for heating and ventilation had attracted much attention, and especial provision had been made for the use of steam for warming the fresh air in winter, and of a fan, driven by a steam engine, for forcing it through the building at all seasons. The grounds surrounding the new hospital, embracing nearly sixty acres, admirably situated, will be surrounded by a substantial stone wall. The drainage will be entirely underground, and the main chimney will be used as the forcing power for the ventilation of all the water-closets, urinals, sinks, &c., about the building.

— Aug. 12. 57—

A New Steam Fire Engine.

The Philadelphia Hose Company have determined to purchase a Steam Fire Engine, to be constructed by Reanie, Neaffie & Co., according to a plan furnished by Mr. Joseph L. Parry, which, it is believed, is better than any heretofore made. The cost of it will be \$3,500, and the alterations necessary in their building, to adapt it for the accommodation of the new engine, will cost about \$1,500 more. The Company are endeavoring to raise this sum of five thousand dollars by subscription, and have issued a circular submitting the subject to the consideration of the people. There ought to be no difficulty at all in raising this sum, or a larger one, among the Insurance Companies alone. They are the parties that will be most benefitted by the introduction of steam fire engines. A small sum like this, expended as proposed, would not be felt by the Companies, and it will be the means of saving them, probably, ten times that amount every year.

Oct. 16. 57— — Aug. 4. 57—

The Colored Churches of the City.—There are now in this city eighteen churches for colored people. Of these, ten, or more, than one-half of the whole number, are in the Methodist connection; three are in the Baptist connection; two are Episcopalian, and three are Presbyterian. These churches are capable of accommodating about eleven thousand people, and comprise four thousand three hundred and fifty-four communicating members. Rev. Mr. Catto, pastor of the First African Presbyterian Church, estimates the value of the church property at \$228,000.

SHOOTING ROBINS.—This rather petty species of sportsmanship has been subjected lately to the application of a law, the field of which has been enlarged by Consolidation. An ordinance which prohibits the shooting of birds at any time of the year, in the city or the suburbs thereof—a very ancient law, which prescribes that a fine of forty shillings shall be the penalty of such offence—was put in force against a certain violator thereof, resident in the Twenty-second ward. A few years since he would have been free from harm; but Consolidation, while increasing the city territory, has increased the jurisdiction subject to our city laws. We feel no commiseration for the delinquent. This shooting of little birds which are useful in destroying injurious insects, is a small business.

— Aug. 23. 57—

IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRESS.—While in less favored sections of the Union, banks and brokers are smashing to pieces, and panic stricken capitalists are hoarding their means for fear of having them swallowed up in the financial vortex; in Philadelphia things are going on just as usual, and outside the stock market the word panic is scarcely heard. Fine buildings are in progress upon all sides, and alterations are being made which are scarcely less important than some of the more thorough improvements. Although August is not usually the time selected for commencing new buildings, yet during that month the Building Inspectors issued 181 permits. The following shows the kind of buildings for which the permits were issued:

Dwellings.....	142	Stores and Dwellings....	2
Stores.....	5	Slaughter Houses.....	2
Stables.....	7	School Houses.....	2
Churches.....	2	Railroad Depots.....	4
Shops.....	6	Carriage House.....	1
Factories.....	1	Dry House.....	1
Barns.....	1	Store House.....	1
Country House.....	1	Arsenal.....	1
Chapel.....	1		
Dry House.....	1	Total.....	181

Sept. 13. 57— — Sept. 2. 57—

Reported for the Pennsylvania Inquirer.

Handsome Church Improvement.—On Price street, Twenty-second Ward, is a religious edifice in progress, which, when finished, will rank amongst the most beautiful ecclesiastical structures in the city. It is the Roman Catholic Church of St. Vincent de Paul. The ground plan of the building is cruciform, the longest wing or base of the cross being about seventy feet in length by fifty feet in width. The side wings, or those answering to the two arms of the cross, extend for about fifteen feet on either side of the main body. As yet nothing but the base or a building seventy feet by fifty, is completed, it having been erected in 1850, but the other portions of the edifice are rapidly rising. When finished, which will be some time next year, the whole length of the church will be one hundred and sixty feet, and the greatest width, including the two transepts, seventy-two feet. In each transept will be an altar, two being required by the services of the Catholic church. The apsis at the upper end of the cruciform structure will contain an altar, and will be surmounted with a semi-dome, through the glass of which light will fall upon the interior. The top of the grand dome in the centre of the church, will be seventy feet from the floor, and it is contemplated that its interior will be suitably frescoed, and be in keeping with the interior of the whole building. Attached to the church is a Parsonage, for the use of the Priest.

Reported for the Pennsylvania Inquirer.

Improvements.—Among the many improvements which are now in progress, and in contemplation in this city, we notice the following:—

The buildings of the old hay market, at Sixth and Parrish streets, have now been demolished, and the erection of dwelling houses will be commenced.

Several dwellings are now in course of demolition on both sides of Wallace street, below Ninth, for the purpose of extending the Germantown Railroad depot on the south side to Wallace street, and upon the north side of that street this removal of dwellings is for the purpose of erecting an engine house and machine shop, 120 feet square, upon their site. By this means, the depot for passengers will be entirely rid of the smoke, which at present renders the old depot intolerable in hot weather. The entrance to the enlarged depot for cars will be at the corner of Wallace and Ninth streets, instead of some forty feet below Wallace. By this arrangement, it is supposed the danger of collision with vehicles at the crossing will be avoided.

We learn that plans are now preparing for the erection of a large print and dye works on Frankford creek, near the old borough of White Hall Orthodox street, from Paul to Main street, has just been opened, and the work of grading, preparatory to paving, will be commenced in a short time.

— Aug. 6. 57—

Aug. 11. 57—

THE SUBURBS OF THE CITY.—Twenty years

have changed the appearance of the Suburbs of the City greatly. A score of years ago, the buildings outside the built up bounds of the City, but within a circuit of six or eight miles from its skirts, were generally small farm houses or unpretending country residences belonging to citizens. These country houses were scattered sparsely over a wide expanse of ground and they were generally very plain in appearance, and constructed with a view mainly to comfort and economy. The increase of wealth and population has tended to effect a great revolution in this branch of architecture, and there are now thousands of splendid country mansions around the city where but a few years since comparatively humble cottages were scattered. This change may be seen in every direction, but principally North and West of the City. West Philadelphia has changed and improved wonderfully within a short time, while a new city of beautiful villas and cottages has sprung up around Germantown. On the line of the Germantown turnpike, along both sides of the York road, and upon every one of the numerous new streets and lanes which radiate from Germantown, beautiful mansions have arisen. These houses are not mere temporary abiding places, knocked up of lath and plaster, and made to look very smart at a very trifling expense; but they are generally large and substantial edifices of stone, planned with architectural skill, elegantly adorned and furnished, located on well kept grounds, bountifully supplied with water by means of the hydraulic ram, and in many instances lighted with gas. Wealthy gentlemen have expended large sums of money upon their country establishments, and the effect has been to make a very large portion of the country around the closely built city beautiful and attractive. Without railroads these important improvements would not progress with much rapidity; the railroad to Germantown gave that ancient and sleepy borough renewed life and activity; the North Pennsylvania Railroad is instilling new life into the country along its line, and citizens are locating their country residences in Montgomery country near the line of the road. The West Philadelphia and Frankford Passenger Railways will supply a want much felt, and cottages and villas in great numbers will soon mark the routes of these roads.