THE EVENING STAR.

WASHINGTON.

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CROSBY S. NOYES.....Editor.

THE EVENING STAR has a regular and permanent circulation much more than the combined circulation of the other Washington dailies. As a News and Advertising Medium it has no competitor.

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Popular interest in the city's failing water supply was considerably in evidence last night at the meeting of the board of trade, which devoted most of its session and all of its enthusiasm to advocacy of the plan which proposes the raising of the Great Falls dam and incidentally the speediest possible use as a conveyor of water of the now-useless aqueduct tunnel. It is undoubtedly and unfortunately true that up to this time the great majority of residents of the District of Columbia have been but little concerned on this most important matter. Good water is an hourly necessity in all civilized communities, and, as there is growth of civilization, so is there increase of demand for the natural fluid for which no substitute can be found, so that were this city at a standstill as to population, conditions would nevertheless call for more of water than is now available. But the city grows wonderfully and is extending itself, even in these dull times, and as a consequence there is already serious shortage in the supply of water upon which nearly three hundred thousand people depend for much of food, comfort and health. Economists urge that considerable water is wasted, but investigation fails to develop that carelessness which is alleged by those who seem to be impressed with an idea that each individual should be permitted to use just so much water every day. Water is one of the essentials to such a hygienic condition as those who are deeply interested in Washington's welfare are endeavoring to bring into existence and the supply should be as liberal as possible. From the authoritative statement made by Col. George H. Elliot, the engineer in charge of the Washington Aqueduct, the steadily decreasing supply must, even under the most favorable circumstances, continue to decrease for quite eighteen months to come, and should the Senate amendment—substituting an investigation for the appropriation asked by Col. Elliot—become law, the period will be lengthened at least a year. With the fact and the possibility both within contemplative range there has been an arousing of public sentiment, but the awakening has been much less general than it ought to be; due to the fact that only a few thousand of the District's population—dwellers on the higher levels and in the suburbs—have suffered directly—the great bulk of the people have been and to some extent still are entirely heedless of the prophecies which they will undoubtedly have occasion to recall before anything can be done to increase the steadily shortening supply. The Star's petition has opened the eyes of a great many of the careless ones and there is today much discussion and frequent expression of hope as to congressional action favoring the raising of the dam. The conference committee is now engaged on the District appropriation bill and while at this early period of its deliberations it is not possible to indicate the committee's probable action on this matter of vital importance, it is most unlikely that the appeal of those who are entitled and qualified to speak for the inhabitants of the District of Columbia will be unheeded. With a magnificent river like the Potomac descending to it from the mountains Washington should never lack for an abundant supply of pure, cold water, amply sufficient not only for drinking, bathing and cooking purposes, but for adorning the city by developing luxuriant vegetation, and for prolonging life by thoroughly purifying the streets and sewers, and by giving to Washington the healthful cleanliness which is not merely next to, but which is municipal godliness.

The Star is unable to present fully the vast number of complaints that are coming to it on the water petition coupons. They are legion. They show varying degrees of distress, from those places where for three weeks housholders have had to hire water carriers to bring them their supply to those where for a few hours the faucets failed to respond to the appealing touch of the despairing citizen. These coupons come from widely separated sections of the city. They show great patience on part of a long-suffering people. And of course, they are only straws—the insignia of distress. There are untold numbers of possible complaints "on the other side of silence"—where people have become accustomed to deprivation and by habit are dull to all efforts at reform. They wait and suffer until those who will not wait fight the battle for all. But the story of these coupons is plain, true, pitiful. It should be heard and heeded.

There were one hundred and thirteen men at work on the new city post-office building; a very considerable increase and due to the fact that stone-setting has recommenced. Now that the weather is favorable, further increase in the force may reasonably be looked for, but unless there is more than a disposition to break the record it does seem likely that the building will be completed during the present century. Three years and a day have departed since operations were commenced, but there is still a great deal lacking in the mere walls of the third story. There are people who calculate that at the present rate of progress the building, minus all its interior woodwork and furnishing, will be done by 1901, but the chances seem to be increasingly favorable to incompleteness prior to August 17, 1906.

It is being alleged that Mayor Strong is in danger of weakening his administration by over-doses of anti-Platt.

Of remarkable men this country has produced at least its quota and among those whose title to eminence may not be disputed the figure of Frederick Douglass is properly conspicuous—a fact that will be accentuated by the sudden death of him who did so much for himself and for the enslaved millions of his race who by force were compelled to residence in this country. Born into captivity and constrained for years by anti-educational environment he nevertheless achieved greatness such as rewards the conscientious efforts of but few, and now that his earthly existence has ended, his character assumes greater proportions than those conceded it during his lifetime. It is not enough to say that Frederick Douglass was a great man—the term has degenerated and is frequently misapplied; it is but fair to show wherein his greatness was and of what it consisted. Self-elevated from the degrading depths of slavery and ignorance to the highest plane upon which philanthropic man may here stand, he retained to the last simplicity such as is but rarely to be found in those who have come up through great tribulation and are accorded place in the midst of the mighty. Always deeply interested in political matters, he was ever with the better element and was never accused of anything that savored of moral impropriety; called to associate with those who were by the accident of birth his social superiors, he built up friendships where a narrower mind than his would have compelled lasting enmity; often brought face to face with the officially powerful, he was yet regardless of what a mere politician would have regarded as his personal interests—his courage never faltered. It is therefore evident that the principal feature of his character was its wonderful breadth. In the minds of those who were personally cognizant of Douglass and his anti-slavery campaigns he will always be the great orator, and as such today he is remembered in thousands of English homes—homes that were thrown open to shelter him when he fled, a merchantable fugitive, from his native land. There he is yet spoken of as the one man whose language had the simple charm which until the arrival of Douglass seemed to be exclusively possessed by that powerful public speaker and unwearying friend of freedom, John Bright; each reached the heart of his many audiences with monosyllabic directness of the most uncommon yet most magnetic sort. To the masses for whom he toiled so incessantly and risked so much, the memory of Frederick Douglass should be especially precious, yet he cannot be regarded as wholly theirs; he was an American, of whom the whole people can truthfully say nothing but good and of whose friendship no human being—no matter what his racial origin—could be otherwise than proud.

The Daughters of the Revolution are to be congratulated on the interest they display in the endeavor which a few people are making to provide this nation with an anthem that shall at once achieve undoubted supremacy and place itself on the same plane as the Marseillaise, the Russian national hymn, "God Save the Queen" and the Austrian hymn. Only genius can evolve an air that shall everywhere be regarded as distinctively national, and that same genius must be broad enough to combine with the air words that shall in every sense be worthy of the highest grade of that variety of musical composition which results in a truly popular and melodious expression of solid patriotism. It is understood that after hearing several of the contesting songs the Daughters of the Revolution will take a vote for the purpose of discovering the preference of the majority. Should it be necessary to take such a vote, that alone is incontestible evidence of the fact that the national hymn has not yet made its appearance; when it comes it will carry conviction to so many hearts that taking a vote will be entirely unnecessary. It is rather surprising that in a century of existence there has not developed such an anthem as nearly all civilized nations possess and are proud of, but it must be borne in mind that our musical culture is yet very young. By and by we shall have a national hymn fully equal in every respect to the hymns sung by our friends of other lands; meanwhile we must content ourselves with awkward adaptations of stolen or borrowed goods.

The paragraph in yesterday's Star attributing the overwhelming republican majority in Philadelphia to the imbecility of the democratic Congress should have been credited to the Philadelphia Times, instead of the New York Times.

The miscreant who after being released by Governor Altgeld again offended will be punished by being compelled to take his place as last man in the line of pardon-applicants.

The uncertainty of things in China would possibly make it a good idea for Li Hung Chang to take his race-horses and other belongings and go to England.

It may be that Coxey took up his residence in Philadelphia because of a tradition that grass grows in the streets there where anybody can walk on it.

The decorations bestowed on Li Hung Chang by the emperor do not appear to have included a life-insurance policy.

Whatever may be the verdict in the Hayward trial, there is a disposition to keep the indictment in the family.

Philadelphia has managed to startle itself by the energy with which it resisted innovation in its politics.

Mr. Strong appears to be ready to put on the reform gloves with all comers.

Reuben Kolb should profit by an eminent example and abdicate.

SHOOTING STARS.

Uncle Sam's Reflection.

They picked the bonds up, every one,
Just as I knew they would;
Whatever else may come to pass,
Your uncle's credit's good.

Two Sides of the Question.

"Ah, my boy," said little Willie Whacklin's father, "think of what a boy George Washington must have been to say, 'Father, I cannot tell a lie,' after he cut down that cherry tree."

"Yes," replied Willie slowly, "an' think what kind of a man his father must have been to make George willing to take such chances."

Weather Vagaries.

We've just got over freezin',
An' yet ez like ez not
Some kicker in a day er two
Will say, "Gee, ain't it hot."

Getting Up a Book.

"There's one thing in Count Grabgilt's favor," said one man. "He may come here with matrimonial intentions, but he won't make this country material for a book."

"Oh, yes he will," replied the cynical citizen, "and it'll be a bank book."

Look not for jests in calendars—
That is, not as a rule;
Yet on the heels of valentines
Follows April Fool.

Business Hours.

The convention of ladies was getting along famously. They had debated and made speeches and had said lots of things. At last one who was suspected of having a wire or two to pull arose and said:

"I've got some business that I want to transact."

"No—no—no," came from all parts of the room.

"I insist—this is business that concerns the association."

"But," said the chairman, "there are a lot of speeches to be made."

"Yes," spoke up another member, "besides, it's one of the recognized rules of this club that no business shall be transacted during business hours."

And that settled it.

Violets.

Oh, violets, your presence sweet
Will cheer the rural scene ere long;
How gaily will the woodland greet
Your coming with the robins' song.

Nor are alone the rustics gay.
The clerk who once curtailed his lunch
Is glad since he no more must pay
A dollar for a tiny bunch.

"A Day in Washington Better Than a Week in School."

James R. Young in Phila. Star.

A score or more of young men, pupils of the Penn Charter School of Philadelphia, were at the Capitol on Saturday, under the escort of Prof. Seymour Ransom, the nephew of Senator Ransom of North Carolina. They listened to the proceedings of both houses, and spent several hours in an inspection of the points of interest.

"A day in Washington is better than a week in school," said Prof. Ransom when asked why he had brought his pupils to this city. Other school managers in Philadelphia should emulate Prof. Ransom in this very excellent idea.