

Political and General News.

Thirty-Second Congress—Second Session.

SENATE.—Mr. Borland introduced a resolution explanatory of the act appropriating money for the removal of Red river raft; which was considered and passed.

Mr. Gwin introduced a bill in relation to a railroad communication with the Pacific; and, after some debate, the subject was made the special order for Monday, the 10th of January next.

The principal speaker at this assembly was Captain Ingfield, who commanded the little steamer sent out by Lady Franklin, this past summer.

Mr. Gorman reported from the committee on Printing, a resolution directing the printing of two hundred additional copies of the Presidents message and accompanying documents for the use of the different government bureaus; which, after discussion at some length, was agreed to.

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The Search for Sir John Franklin.

The belief that Sir John Franklin still lives which has been so long abandoned by the people, appears to be held more firmly than ever by men of science, and by American explorers.

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Erie Weekly Observer.

ERIE, PA.

SATURDAY MORNING, JANUARY 1, 1853.

That Turkey for Christmas. "It may for a Prince almost good enough for an Editor," said only to hand. Our old friend Taggart, of Wesleyville, was the man that did it, for which his shadow never grew less, or his Turkey either.

We call attention to the Law cards of our Pittsburgh friends. Col. Saunders is well known to our citizens as a gentleman of talent and experience; and our young friend Riddell, who has just been admitted to the Bar under favorable circumstances, is an Erie boy, and hence should be noticed by those among whom he was raised.

Pictures from St. Petersburg is the title of a most interesting number of Putnam's Semi-monthly Library. It is translated from the German of Edward Jermann, a gentleman who spent some time in the pay Russian hospital, and pictures the odd incidents and characters he met with a fidelity that cannot fail to interest every reader who cares to know how the world moves along in other latitudes than our own. The book has made its mark upon the times, and is one of the few that is read, talked about as a good book should be. It can be had at No. 9, Brown's Hotel; price 25 cts paper; cloth 40c.

To-day is the first of a new year, and many a spirit upon it with a light heart and a truly "happy" spirit, while with others, it may be, do so equally the reverse. It is our duty to render all the assistance in our power to lighten the cares and perplexities of our friends, whether real or imaginary, and to so far lighten their hearts that they too may enjoy with us the "happy new year." Young men, if you would gladden the heart of your adored, and make her face radiant with smiles that will put to the blush an April sun after a shower, or a morn'g upon adding a suppers to his already bloated coffers, go to Strickland & Fuller's and buy some of their splendid Jewels. You will find there the nicest stock in the city, and perhaps the cheapest. Don't fail to drop in to-day to examine and buy.

Coming—the "Bakers." They are advertised to sing at Cleveland to-night, and hence it is very probable they will come here, "with song to greet you," soon.

A Democratic State.—There are twenty counties in Texas, every one of which, at the last election gave a majority for Franklin Pierce for President. In three of the counties General Scott did not get a single vote, and fourteen of these gave him less than ten votes each.—Harrah for old "San Joaquin."

Our Mendocino friends are getting proud, very proud, and consequently overbearing. They have got a union into their heads that their ancient town is on the direct route from New York to the Pacific, and that, as it is some distance to New York, and considerable more to San Francisco, they are just where the half-way house should be.—Mendocino will soon be a great place, a late edition of Cincinnati, and Erie a kind of "back settlement." Strange what fancies the prospect of a railroad being built into the heads of the people of such a distant place as Mendocino. We thought we could only get a railroad through our little city; it would be a big city, our "new Jerusalem." Well, we got it—er we got the road along one edge, but we haven't got it in the center. It is a long way to go, and from appearances we think we never shall. Railroads do benefit the country through which they pass, in a more equal manner to hill, or greatly retard the growth and prosperity of the small towns they touch on their course. In view of this fact, our friends of the Democracy are right in saying that "the Erie folks will have enough to do to take care of themselves," and if we do not mistake the Mendocino "folks," if they get their proposed Railroad, will acknowledge that they too will "have enough to do to take care of themselves." Any jealousy or rivalry, therefore, on the score of Railroads, between us and our Mendocino friends will understand this when they have had as many false lights held out to them as we have here. We tell them now there is no confidence to be placed in a genuine Railroad speculator—none whose God is the "mighty dollar," and who, for a fraction of that "almighty dollar," will sell his birth-right and his reputation. All this we understand here, and hence we have given up all expectations in regard to Railroads, upon the interest of Railroad men should coincide with our interests. Doubtless, if all the plans of Erie could be carried out—and they may be yet consummated—our city would be benefited by the construction of Railroads. If the New York and Erie and the Buffalo and Albany shall be compelled to make their virtual terminus at Erie, and the Seneca road should be built, then Erie would receive an impetus to her growth that would ultimately make her a very considerable inland town; but if all these should fail, if enemies abroad and traitors at home should succeed in their present efforts, then Erie has seen her best days, and will, in truth and in fact, have enough to do to take care of herself. In all sincerity, therefore, we say to our Mendocino friends, take warning from us, and don't put faith in a Railroad corporation, even though that corporation be composed of your own citizens, for facts demonstrate that every man has his price!

It is a fact worthy of the closest demonstration that it has ever been the distinctive principle of those who belong to the whig party to faithfully redeem all pledges, and especially to pay with punctuality all wages, fairly made and lost, upon the result of any election.—Getzels.

This is all very fine, and may be true; but let us examine it. In the days of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" the whig party pledged itself that upon its advent to power the people should all be provided with "two dollars a day and rans best." Did it "redeem" that "pledge"? Scarcely. It also promised that there should be no attempt to establish a United States Bank. Did it "redeem" that promise? Scarcely again; for an extraordinary measure was taken for the purpose of fastening upon the country that institution! But to come down to individual whig promises. About the time the attempt failed to establish the Bank, distinguished whig, John M. Bots, "pledged" himself to "head Captain Tyler, or die." Has he "redeemed" that "pledge"? By no means—did he head the Captain, and he isn't dead, but alive and kicking. Again, a few years later, another distinguished whig, Gen. Leslie Combs, promised that if Henry Clay was elected President he would climb the whig pole, in the city of Lexington, first. Did he "redeem" that "pledge"? We rather expect not—at least, we have never heard that he did. Once again. Our friend of the Gazette promised that Gen. Scott should have from 1850 to 2000 majority in Erie county, and about as many thousands in the State. Neither of these promises has he "redeemed." From the ample materials of the past promises of the whig party to "redeem" its "pledges" but we forbear the above is sufficient.

Mr. Evans, of Kentucky, has submitted a resolution in the House of Representatives, for an amendment of the Constitution, so that the Electors of President and Vice President—except the Electors at large—shall be chosen by Congressional Districts. Why not amend so as to let the people vote directly for the men of their choice?

Oregon stands a fair chance of being divided into two territories; one North and the other South of the Columbia River.

On Saturday last, a little orphan girl, taken by Philip Garrison, of Ohio city, was so grossly neglected and ill-treated, as to die. The Coroner's jury returned a verdict to that effect.

What of Cuba?

In "Putnam's Monthly" we find a lengthy, but able article on the past, present and future of Cuba. The writer starts out with the proposition that we, as a people, have the right to "sympathize" with every oppressed people, whether in the new or the old world—and he asserts that we have "ready sympathies for the Frenchman, the Hungarian, the Pole, the Sicilian, the English operative, the Irishman, the African, the Indian; and now that Frank is casting his malignant shadow Eastward, for the Turk also." "But," he continues, in reply to those who have no sympathies for Cuba, "there is almost in sight of our own shores a province of one of the monarchies of the old world whose inhabitants are suffering greater and more oppressive wrongs, and are governed by a sway more absolute and tyrannical, than has ever been exercised against Slaves, Magyars, Poles or Indians;" and that province is the island of Cuba! The article then enters into a history of the island, showing that the inhabitants have always been loyal to the mother country—that while other provinces under the dominion of Spain suffered the standard of revolt, and ultimately achieved their independence, Cuba, long suffering Cuba, remained firm in her attachment to the crown; and not only so but actually furnished its oppressors with the means of war against the rebels in Mexico. But "the wealth, the beauty, the fertility of the island of Cuba proved her ruin. By degrees, she came to be regarded only as a machine for raising money; and to carry out the purposes of the home administration to the fullest extent, it was necessary to destroy the privileges and the liberties which the Cubans had heretofore enjoyed." How this was accomplished, is fully shown, but we have not room to present to you the means made use of. We may, however, exhibit some of the fruits.—The Home Government, says the author, "considered not how large a revenue the island yields, but how it is possible to get more from it. It is accordingly racked to device new objects and measures of taxation. The list of different Cuban taxes is a copy of itself. The prime ministers of other monarchies might learn a lesson from it, were it not that there is no government which would dare avail itself of such an enormous system of oppression."

The pursuit of robbery and plunder—it can be called by no other name—has been reduced to a complete system. Each official reserves to himself a large sum from the amount wrung from the inhabitants, so that while the revenue of the island, from the various sources of taxation, must be at least twenty-five millions of dollars (it is ordinarily incorrectly stated at about twelve millions), only about three millions find their way to the Spanish treasury. In the mean time the slave-trade is carried on as extensively as ever, and with greater cruelty. Spain will not abolish it. She is determined, in spite of treaties, to pour annually into Cuba a fierce black population which shall intimidate the Creoles from any attempt at freedom. This, and this only, is the secret of the unflinching prosecution of the slave-trade in the face of treaties, and contrary to the wishes of the Creole population. It has been said that the continuance of the traffic is owing to the enormous bribes to the Captain-General, of thirty two dollars for each slave, and this is the only reason it is not abolished. It is ridiculous even to suppose that Spain, if she had no other object but to enrich an unscrupulous official, would run the risk of continually breaking her treaty with so powerful a nation as England, always on the alert if possible to enforce it.

The press, under the most infamous and servile censorship, is a weapon wielded only against her rights. A petition, signed by more than two, is condemned as a seditious act. The corporations, as we have stated, have no longer a representative character, and they are under the immediate control of the Captain-General, who appoints their members and dictates all their resolutions. The Board of Improvement has been a mere arm of the government, to sanction despotic acts, to support additional taxes, and to introduce mixed troops into the population. All who have dared to oppose these measures are forced into obscurity, or persecuted, or exiled.

The Creoles are excluded from the army, the judiciary, the treasury, and the customs, and from all influential or lucrative positions; private speculations and monopolies are favored and established with a view of taking from them their means of wealth; the poor in the country are compelled to serve in the precarious police, which is thus extended; and laws are imposed, and forced aid for the repairing of the roads, according to the will of the officer in command, or the pittance of the individual.

The twenty-five millions of taxes, after deducting what is embezzled by the officials, are employed in supporting an army of twenty thousand men, and likewise the entire army of Spain, in the paying of a vast number of officers residing on the island or at home; and in similitude for general purposes. In spite of the enormous taxes collected, it is only by subscriptions that the inhabitants can secure to themselves temples for their worship, or cemeteries for their dead; and for a baptism or a burial, or to obtain any of the consolations of religion, the care of which is indirectly under the all-absorbing military authority, a large additional sum must be paid. The military government has taken from the other political and administrative branches the control of education, in order to restrict, to limit, and to embarrass it. The tributory system has drained many sources of wealth. The flour monopoly has put down the cultivation of coffee; and the grazing of cattle has become a ruinous business from the tax on slaughtered animals.

Every inhabitant is compelled to ask for a license, and pay for the same, when he wants to go from the place of his residence. No citizen, however peaceful and respectable he may be, is allowed to walk through the city after ten o'clock in the evening, unless he carry with him a lantern, and obtain leave occasionally of all the watchmen on his way, the infraction of which law is punishable with immediate arrest, and a fine of eight dollars.—He is not permitted to lodge any person in his house for a single night, be the same either native or foreigner, his friend or a member of his family, without giving information of the fact, under the penalty of a like punishment. He cannot remove his residence from one house into another, without giving notice, previously, of his intention, to the authorities, under the penalty of a heavy fine. An order has been made which in effect prohibits parents from sending their children to the United States for purposes of education, and such as wish to do so are driven to the expedient of proving or feigning ill-health in their children, in order to obtain passports for them.

These are some of the wrongs under which the inhabitants of Cuba suffer, and the facts are not derived from Cuban alone nor from our own countrymen. English and French writers on the subject sustain them fully.—"But how do the inhabitants of Cuba regard their situation? Are they content to bear their chains? Have they no idea that they are oppressed and trampled upon? These questions our author answers by quotations from various writers, English and French, and from these sources of information arrives at the conclusion that "there is no doubt they look to the United States, and to the United States only, as their ultimate hope and salvation from the cruelness of Spain." In the language of one of them, "It is not to England, save, that the white-skins of Cuba look for aid or continuance in any future effort for independence, it is to America they turn their eyes;" and in confirmation of it he asserts that Cuba ever since he knew it "has been slowly, but steadily becoming Americanized!" From considerations like these, and many others we have no room to enumerate, our author arrives at the conclusion that "Cuba longs for admission into our Union. She pleads earnestly and continually. She tells us, that from the moment she becomes an integral portion of the United States, all the wrongs and oppressions which now weigh so heavily upon her, will be at an end. The slave-trade will be abolished; the people will enter at once into the enjoyment of freedom; her ports will be open to the commerce of the world, her soil entrusted to its full capability, her products sold at an untrammelled market; and under the influence of the moral and political freedom which are the vital elements of the American nationality, her children educated, and her people and people set at liberty, she would become the most prosperous of the States. On the other hand, she depicts the advantages which will accrue to the United States from the annexation of Cuba, as incalculable. She argues that, if annexation were

fully consummated, Cuba would be a valuable and an essential ally on New York itself—a an outlet, essential to American trade, and as a centre of transit and exchange, increasing in importance to the whole family of the confederated States, in even measure with the growth of the States on the Pacific, and the rising tide of oriental commerce which the flag of the Union is about to lead from Asia across the Isthmus. She lies exactly in the track of the golden current, and some of the spices are, like her, in a position to ward and defend its every inlet and outlet. In the circle of production, essential to a home supply, always sure, and independent of foreign sources, Cuba affords that the world will find a remaining grain, with her coffee, coconuts and tropical fruits; thus serving all her sister States, since she would sell to every one, and buy of every one, which is not true of the special products of any other state. She would also add as much as the Union really needs to the production of sugar, and would make that, henceforth, a strong and distinct feature in the national balance of interests. She argues that a new central point would imply another mediation in the councils of the confederacy—a proved truth in favor of the permanent equilibrium of the republic. The manufacturing east, the wheat and cattle-raising west, the mines and sugar-planting south, and, last, and least, the new-born and gigantic mineral resources starting up on the great northern lakes, and seeming the continent down to the far Pacific, with their mutual influences—have each and every one their independent geographical weight and dependence, as well as a diversified reciprocal dependence on each other, and fit the Union as a whole. In the perpetually recurring, but ever these balance checks never fail—state jealousies, and other distinct interests in a distinct guarantee for the general adjustment. It has been seen in the slavery discussion how far sectional bitterness can go, when the whole Union is reduced to two great conflicting parties, with no disinterested and intermediate powers to argue peace, and settle conciliation. Yet even in this difficulty it will be found, that the counsel which suggests, and the votes which compel moderation and compromise, will come from almost a third interest. Cuba may suffer from the dispute between the free and slave states; but apart from this, she desires to come into the Union without offense to any, and to the absolute profit of every partner in the confederacy. In bringing to the commonwealth a class of laborers which each state largely demands and consumes, and which is not produced by any, she also brings to the Union fresh elements of medicine, merriment, and stable equipoise."

It is, then, inconclusion, the writer's deliberate opinion that:— "Cuba will become a part of the United States. The time has not yet come to predict. They have manifested an interest in rapidly within the last few years, that of her own accord she has the speaker. We are borne forward by a force which seems maintaining some great consummation. If all do not agree as to the result which these changes are to bring, no one can shut his eyes to the changes which are being made. They have multiplied their numbers; they are multiplying; they will continue to multiply. The conservative and the radical—the ultra Whig and the ultra Democrat—are all overwhelmed by the restless course of things, if they stop even but moment to contemplate it. What is to be done? Shall we resist the change, or shall we yield to it? Shall we be carried away by it? or shall we rather do what we may to control and direct it? Let us see what are the principles on which this extraordinary progression depends.

The people of the United States—assert politically, religiously, and commercially free; they believe in the philanthropic mission of their country to extend the same throughout this hemisphere; and while they acknowledge that slavery is constitutional, and beyond the reach of abolitionary cables, they claim that it is beyond the moral influence of civilization, which slowly induces its peaceful termination. Such, in our view, is the expression of public opinion in the United States; of that opinion which, being the result of the consensus of parties, guides the acts of the government. If, in the course of time, the physical and moral wants of mankind cannot be disregarded. If subjects are oppressed by free trade, supported by brute force, the citizen of the free state will be very likely to use his individual might and influence to take off the yoke from the neck of the oppressed. The power of the American confederacy lies in the number of resolute freemen who cover the surface of its territory—in the fact, that their industry does not sustain heavy taxation by the government. In the course of time, the moral and political principles of the confederacy, set up to support mankind, office holders, or prices, useless or injurious; or armies, only necessary to perpetuate wrong. More even than all this, does their power spring, especially in foreign countries, from the certainty that the cause of the oppressed is the cause of individual right. It is the wish makes America the asylum of the oppressed of all Europe, and the government of the Union, that which approaches nearest perfection, by indefinitely diffusing enjoyment, her national practical realization of cosmopolitanism. The expansive arm of her policy finds no obstacle in the origin of her citizens. The Dutch people of New York, the Swedes New Jersey and Delaware, the Germans Pennsylvania, the French, flow to south Carolina from the region of the edict of Nantes, and in Louisiana and Florida the French and Spanish will prevail over the English and their ancestors. The result has been astonishing. We have increased in wealth, civilization, industry and power, in a manner unprecedented in the annals of the world. Our population doubles every twenty-five years; and a progression so rapid, and so beneficial, that in the year 1820, what will be our power and influence in times to come. More than twenty millions of souls now, forty millions in 1875, and so successively on, till we come to three hundred and twenty millions in one century. Blake from this estimate, founded on statistics, what is our individual deduction we please, and what result may we not still expect? Those are now in existence who will see this vast confederacy holding a population of two hundred millions! Where is the model, the precedent, the resemblance of the great republics, in history, that can be compared to this? The careful and philosophical observer of the essential progress of mankind in our times, has been led more and more to cherish a belief in the sublime idea of the fraternalizing and cementing of the nations, which shall be a fulfillment of the crowning prophecy of inspiration. It has pleased Heaven to make our country the home of freedom, the birthplace of liberal institutions, the best example for the struggling, and the sweet hope for the oppressed everywhere. More than this, we have rendered feasible purposes and ends, in peace and civilization, which might well have been regarded as impossible, but for steamboats, railroads, telegraphs and printing-presses; that in an hour are capable of flooding continents with intelligence. We find under these circumstances a glorious truth confessed, which a little while ago was regarded as incredible, that the extension of empire by conquest will soon be superseded by the irrepressible desire of states to become united to each other by the new law of annexation. This is already inspiring an inconceivable proportion of the inhabitants of every nation on the continent of North America. It is our own great Republic. The history of the future will be, in a continually increasing degree, a detail of the full operation of this principle, until the world shall be completely united and bound together by the tracks of its interconnecting commerce, and the sympathy and sense of its hopes; and the last triumph which is ordered by Providence, has realization in the dawn of that period when all the nations of the earth shall be as one people."

Our friend, Major Brown, of Brown's Hotel, received a most splendid and valuable present, at the hands of some of his Boarders, on Christmas day, in the shape of a pair of gold spectacles; for which he requests us to return his acknowledgments to the donors, Messrs. Merrick, Meredith, Smith, Follenberg, Wright, Knowlton and Wm. and D.D. Walker. It is not to be presumed, from the nature of the gift, that the "Major" is unable to see his guests, for his is not only a slight hint that they are able to see him; he is!

It is said that several members of the Senate and House, from the Slave States, have expressed their intention of opposing all propositions for the acquisition of Cuba, should any be made, in consequence of the adverse influence it would exercise on slave property in those States. Of course the radicals—North and South, will oppose now, so they ever have, every measure in which the real glory and interest of the country is involved.

One of our exchanges says that "several persons have been arrested in New York for passing false tokens, or worthless Bank bills." From the quantity of similar kind of "bank bills" in circulation here, we think there is a first rate chance to make more arrests.

The Boston Courier, that old whig organ, says that if Congress confers upon Gen. Scott the title of Lieut. General they ought to be sure and put a proviso in the bill that he shall not again for President.

That Turkey didn't come for Christmas. We felt very good about it.—Commercial.

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Doubtful Doctrines.