The Press.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1857.

FIRST PAGE.—France, as seen through the French journals by last steamer; California Correspondence; Capture of Castillo by Gen. Walker (reported by an eye-witness, for THE PRESS); Letter from a Captured Filibuster; General News; The Courts; The City; City Police; The Money Market; Philadelphia Cattle Market. FOURTH PAGE.—Additional California News, &c.

SLAVERY PROBABLY DECREED IN KANSAS UNDER THE LECOMPTON CONSTITUTION.

Lord President CALHOUN, as will be seen by our telegraph news from Kansas, giving the result of the *Election* in that Territory on the 21st, has had things all his own way. The Constitution, fabricated by CALHOUN and his confederates, under the lash of this supreme master of the ballot-box, and this mighty manufacturer of votes, *has probably been adopted with the slavery clause.* This is courage; and we rather admire the pluck of the men who, considering that they are in a meagre and miserable minority in Kansas, have yet the will to force their way through all impediments, and to compel Congress to take the dose as they have prepared it. These men knew right well that, even if the slavery clause had been rejected, they had matters so arranged, that they could introduce and hold slaves in Kansas in daring defiance of the popular will.

But they determined to make sure of the matter, and so forced through the slavery clause boldly.

We have now to repeat, once for all, that if the people of Kansas are in favor slavery, they should have it, and we would protect them in it; but we are inexorably opposed to forcing that or any other domestic institution upon them. They are opposed to slavery. Their whole record has shown it since the Territory has been organized; and now we find that they are asked to accept it, in the face of their abundant protests. This is neither justice, humanity, reason, nor law.

What, however, they desired and deserved was to vote upon *all* their "institutions," and this is their humble petition to Congress now. We pledged ourselves to this great principle in 1856. We will stand by and fulfil this pledge in 1857.

A DEMOCRATIC MEETING.

We have given as fair a report of the meeting of the Democrats of this city, favorable to the Lecompton Constitution, held last evening at Dr. JAYNE's Hall, as we could, considering that the written-out speeches were reserved for other journals. Curiosity attracted numbers of differing opinions, and there were doubtless some who came to support the known object of the meeting. Mr. BUCHANAN's great and pure character attracted others; for *here*, where his friends have had to do battle for him for years against a most relentless faction in his own party, the very mention of his name arouses the kindliest feelings. The resolutions are moderate, and carefully drawn. Justice LEWIS, the President, made a respectful opening speech, courteous and kind as he always is. Senator BRIGHT spoke with force and vigor—contrasting strongly, by his statesmanlike tone, with the offensive personalities of Mr. WITTE, who resorted to low abuse of men who were Democrats before his name was heard of, and who, long after he has tired of begging for favors at the Departments in Washington, will be found under the Democratic flag. Other gentlemen addressed the assemblage, and the meeting adjourned in good order.

A somewhat significant and startling episode took place just before the resolutions were read. The agent of the telegraph office appeared on the stand with the important intelligence that the election in Kansas on the 21st had resulted in a decision in favor of slavery. We understand that those present refused to allow the despatch to be read, and thus prevented the whole affair from being turned into a comedy, instead of confining it to the legitimate object of declaring in favor of the great dogma that the minority, and not, as we have been led to believe, that the majority should rule. See this highly important despatch in another column!

THE CAPTURE OF THE GREAT FILLIBUSTER.

Some two months ago we commended the course of President BUCHANAN against the spirit of aggression and violence, organized in some of the Southern cities, against the peace and quiet of the republics of Central America. We took occasion to speak in terms of reprehension of these efforts; to express our abhorrence at the bloodshed which had followed the career of General WALKER in Nicaragua; to recall the misrepresentations upon our national character which this bloodshed and violence had provoked, and to say, in conclusion, that no part of Mr. BUCHANAN's administration would be more entirely approved by the conservative masses, than his opposition to this marauding and aggressive spirit. His orders enforcing the neutrality laws against all these lawless expeditions were stringently carried out, and yet, notwitstanding, these laws were evaded at the port of New Orleans, and a large number of volunteers permitted to sail under command of WALKER, and finally, to embark, as it was supposed, with impunity under the very guns of an American ship-of-war in the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. BUCHANAN showed his sense of the negligence of the District Attorney at New Orleans, by promptly removing him, and for this he is still being visited by the denunciations of a number of those newspapers in that quarter of the Union which seem to regard him as especially committed to fillibusterism and invasion. It appears that his precautionary measures did not stop here; for by the arrival of the steamer *Northern Light* we have the gratifying intelligence that Commodore PAULDING, with the United States frigate *Wabash*, has arrested General WALKER and one hundred and fifty of his men. WALKER himself arrived in the *Northern Light* at New York, on Sunday evening, and is now on parole, and his followers were placed an board the United States sloop-of-war *Saratoga*. It will, therefore, appear that Mr. BUCHANAN has vindicated the laws of the United States and has answered frankly and fully to the country the peaceful declarations of his Inaugural Message.

We sincerely congratulate him upon the success which has attended his efforts in this respect, and have no doubt he will be ardently sustained by Congress and the country.

WEEKLY STATEMENTS OF THE CITY BANKS.

We are gratified to learn that the presidents of the banks of our city have unanimously resolved that each bank shall make up a statement of its condition at the close of the business of a specified day of every week, to be determined at their next meeting, embracing the exchanges of the business of that day (which are made early on the next morning,) and publish the same the day following.

The public will thus, hereafter, be able to know not only the actual condition of each bank weekly, as required by the relief law, but by the voluntary action of the city banks, the public may be able *to know the actual aggregate condition of all the banks at the same hour of the same day of each week*, a vital feature, which was omitted in the hasty legislation of October last, and now happily established by the good sense of the banks themselves.

The statements of the New York city banks are made up to the closing hour of Saturday, and are published every following Tuesday, which day we hope will be adopted by our banks.

We presume that the banks, in order to comply with the literal terms of the law, will publish a statement of their condition on the "first discount day in January;" and that "weekly thereafter" they will make up and publish their statements on the same day as resolved upon.

The banks in this instance have met the public desire in a liberal spirit, but their arrangement being purely a voluntary one, is liable to be deranged by the withdrawal of one, two or more of their number from the agreement, or it may be annulled altogether by the action of a majety of them. For those reasons we shall urge the Legislature to take early action on the subject, by amending the Relief bill, so that weekly statements, *made up to the same day*, shall be required by law.

PENNSYLVANIA UPON POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY.

The Declaration of Rights, which forms the 9th article of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, and which remains unaltered to the present moment, contains a most admirable and perfect enunciation, of the general great and essential principles of liberty and free government, re-asserting all those contained in the immortal Declaration of Independence, and particularly the inherent, unalienable and indefeasible right of the people to alter, reform, or abolish their Government, in such manner as they may think proper.

A desire being manifested by a large body of the citizens to have an alteration of the Constitution, a Democratic Legislature, on the 28th of March, 1825, passed an act for ascertaining the opinion of the people of this Commonwealth relative to the call of a Convention, and the question was submitted to them at the ensuing October election. JOHN ANDREW SHULTZ was then Governor, and FRANCIS R. SHUNK, afterwards Governor under the new Constitution, compiled and published for the information of the people, the proceedings relative to calling the Conventions of 1776 and 1790, the Constitutions of those years, the minutes of the two Conventions, and the proceedings of the Councils of Censors. The question was lost by a majority of 15,348 against the call of a Convention.

A period of ten years rolled round, with many ineffectual efforts on the part of the friends of reform, which were always defeated, because they disagreed as to the reforms required, and presented no tangible plan of amendment to the consideration of the people of Pennsylvania, who are of an eminently practical character.

At last, in 1835, a committee of the friends of reform in Philadelphia, put forth an address to the people of the State, embodying those changes in the Constitution which all agreed were indispensable. The curtailment of the enormous patronage of the Governor, his ineligibility limited to two terms, the appointment of the Judiciary for terms of years with the advice and consent of the Senate, the giving of the election of justices of the peace to the people; and, in fact, the entire abolition of all offices for life, with an extension of the right of suffrage—were the distinct propositions of reform submitted to their consideration.

Another Democratic Legislature, (the present Judge THOMSON, of the Supreme Court, being the speaker of the House of Representatives,) on the 14th of April, 1835, passed an act to provide for calling a Convention with limited powers. So jealous and conservative of the power of the people were the authorities of that day, that in providing for the submission of the question of Convention at the fall election, they expressly declared that the vote was to be for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of the citizens of this Commonwealth on the expediency of calling a Convention of delegates, to be elected by the people, *with authority to submit amendments of the State Constitution, to a vote of the people, for their ratification or rejection, and with no other or greater powers whatsoever.*" The majority for the call of such a Convention was, in a large vote, 13,404.

The ensuing Legislature, on the 29th March, 1836, passed an act "providing for the call of a Convention to prepare amendments to the Constitution of the State, to be submitted to the people thereof, for their ratification or rejection." This act provided for the election of delegates equal in number to the Senate and House of Representatives, on the first Friday of November next, their assemblage on the first Tuesday of May, 1837, at Harrisburg, the publication of the amendments agreed upon, and their submission to the vote of the people.

The Convention, composed of prominent members of the two great parties of the day, nearly equally divided, met at Harrisburg at the time appointed, afterwards adjourned to Philadelphia, and completed their labors on the 22d February, 1838.

The amended Constitution was published for the information of the people, and circulated in every portion of the State, and notwithstanding a most strenuous and organized opposition, was carried at the October election, and with two leading amendments—*an elective judiciary*, and a qualified prohibition of State and municipal debts, sanctioned by large majorities—forms the frame of government under which we now live.

A Pennsylvanian in Kansas could point with pleasure to the brilliant example of his native State in recognising and carrying out the doctrine of popular sovereignty, the true rule being that the will of the majority shall govern, and that all questions involving the form of Government shall be submitted to the direct vote of the people for ratification or rejection. And yet, three Pennsylvanians have been Governors of Kansas—the last (one of the ablest statesmen of the day and the associate of our distinguished President in the Cabinet of Mr. POLK,) being compelled to resign because, under the direct instructions of the Executive, he had promised the people of the Territory that any Constitution which was agreed upon should be submitted, *Pennsylvania fashion*, for ratification or rejection, at a fair election to its *bona fide* inhabitants.

The instructions were explicit. Governor WALKER's inaugural and his speeches were equally clear upon this point of the submission of the whole Constitution to a fair and free vote of the people, and yet this base Lecompton fraud is to be crammed down the throats of the Democratic party by an evasion of the plain meaning of the plainest words in the English language.

We are now asked to believe that the free States of the North have *no domestic institutions*, and that the slave States have only *one domestic institution*, that of master and slave, which has disappeared in nearly every other Christian and civilized country on the face of the globe.

Peterson's Philadelphia Counterfeit Detector and Bank Note List.

T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS have issued the first Monthly Number of the above publication. It is corrected, for Banking, by DREXEL & Co., and for the prices of Stocks, by EDWARD W. CLARKE & Co., of this city. Its authentic information, therefore, is highly reliable. It gives a list, with descriptions, of counterfeit bank-notes, so that by comparing a suspected note with the descriptions, its real character may at once be *detected*. The whole of the Union, as well as Canada, in which bank-notes are issued, comes within the operation of this publication. There is also a list of the very latest counterfeits. *Nota Bene.*—We have no doubt that Messrs. PETERSON's accumen, great as it naturally is, would be very considerably sharpened if each Bank would forward to them one current specimen of each denomination of note issued by it. Thus, they would immediately be able personally to know *bad* by comparing them with the *good* notes before them. After a little time, when fully "posted up," in this wise, there is no doubt that they would find a way of sending the notes into current circulation!

A terrible black list, here, is the catalogue of of "broken, closed, failed, fraudulent, and worthless banks." The names of several hundreds of them are given.

The stock list is on a very simple plan. Of each description we have, first, the par value; second, the price offered; third, the price asked; fourth, the interest payable.

There is, also, corrected with reference to the later transactions before publication, a wholesale price-current for Philadelphia, clearly arranged, and including articles of food, and produce of all kinds.

The Detector is handsomely printed, with new and clear type, on good paper. From the high character of all connected with it, a reliable and authentic publication may confidently be expected. Messrs. PETERSON will find it not very easy to better their first number.

This, by the way, is the first publication of the new firm of T. B. PETERSON & BROTHERS. Messrs. GEO. W. & THOS. PETERSON, who long have been assistants to their brother, the spirited founder of this great establishment, are now associated with him as partners, and, in common with the public and the press, we cordially wish the house not only continued but increased success.

SALES THIS EVENING.—Elegant and valuable books, at Thomas & Sons' auction rooms, South Fourth street, now arranged for examination with catalogues.

Stocks and Real Estate, at the Exchange. See pamphlet catalogues and advertisements.

The Arch-street residence will be open throughout to-day for examination; $10,000 may remain on mortgage for three years.

The brigantine Basil K. Reed, Capt. Saunders, from Demarara bound to Baltimore, loaded with molasses, hides, and fruit, went ashore on Monday night at Currituck. The vessel does not leak, and will probably be gotten off by the wreckers, who will commence work immediately. The captain brought $11,000 in specie to Norfolk, on Tuesday night, in an old cart.

Valentine Ellison, aged sixty years, was found dead in bed, at Baltimore, on Saturday.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMPORTANT FROM WASHINGTON.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27, 1857.

Christmas in the Capital passed quite pleasantly and soberly, (except in the case of the youthful rowdies who infest the city,) the majority of the gay and pleasure seeking of this population having left for the northern cities, or for their respective homes. There has been an agreeable lull in politics, despite the deep interest and intense anxiety in regard to the Kansas trouble. For, at least forty-eight hours, the harsh and discordant words, "Kansas," Lecompton Convention," caused to vibrate on the wearied *tympana* of the unfortunate sojourners of this politics-ridden city.

There was, on the day after Christmas, an arrival here of several important personages from Kansas—the very last from that scene of trouble and strife. George N. Saunders, Major Russell, the great Western contractor, and other prominent gentlemen of the Territory, are among them. They all concur in a statement which gives to this troublesome broil the character of a "Comedy of Errors," to wit: that, before the arrival of Mr. Buchanan's message and Douglas's speech, all the original Buchanan and Administration men in the Territory were dead against the Lecompton Constitution, and its only supporters were a few porfessed Douglas men, who falsely pretended that they had the authority of the distinguished Senator for this attempt to force an obnoxious Government on the people. They even claimed to have a letter from Mr. Douglas to that effect. So impudent and emphatic was Calhoun in this assertion that even Gov. Walker was at one time almost convinced that the scheme had the sanction of Douglas, until he received a letter from that gentleman, denouncing the whole procedure. This fact alone, without other satisfactory reasons, justified the prompt course of Senator Douglas. From the same source I learn that on the 19th, when these gentlemen left Kansas, the universal belief was, that there would not be over a thousand votes for the Constitution, though it was apprehended that a much larger vote might be returned. The vote will be *pro-slavery*—all the free-State men and a majority of the pro-slavery refusing to vote. It is proven, beyond all question, that the best of the pro-slavery men are the bitterest against the Lecompton swindle; they say that their cause has been seriously injured and disgraced by this scheme of a set of imposters and pretenders, who are mostly not Southerners; that even if not equal to the free-State party in numbers, they were sufficiently strong to secure certain rights which are now seriously endangered, as well as the *status* of all Southern men, which has been affected, in a great degree, by this great outrage done in their name, and under the assumed banner of slavery.

These statements, which are in harmony with all the other authentic intelligence from Kansas, are pregnant with meaning and suggestion touching this controversy.

There is a very brisk struggle here for the foreign appointments. It appears to be generally conceded that Judge Buchanan, of Maryland, Col. G. W. Morgan, of Ohio, and Beverly Clark, of Kentucky, will receive first-class missions. X.

MOVEMENTS OF GEN. WALKER.

He Delivers Himself over to the Custody of United States Marshal Rynders, and is Allowed his Liberty on Parole of Honor—His Intended Visit to Washington.

[From the New York Express of last evening.]

This morning, Gen. Walker, as it was expected he would do, delivered himself over to United States Marshal Rynders, in whose custody he now is, although allowed his liberty on his parole of honor.

Quite a number of persons called to see the General this morning, at his quarters, Gen. Henningsen's house, West Twelfth street. Among the visitors were Gen. Wheat, late of Walker's army; Judge Phillips, Gen. Henningsen's brother, and others. He received his friends in a very cordial manner. Considerable conversation passed between them upon the General's sudden return, all expressing much surprise at the course of our naval forces. It was generally remarked that this interference with him would probably do much to strengthen his position, and in the South a warm feeling will spring up in his future behalf.

After some time spent in conversation, the general stated that he desired to proceed to deliver himself up to Marshal Rynders, according to promises made Commodore Paulding. It was remarked that it would be well for him to be accompanied by counsel on his visit to the marshal's office, in which opinion he concurred. Accordingly a messenger was despatched for Thomas Francis Meagher, and Malcolm Campbell, lawyers, the same counsel who appeared in behalf of Colonel Fabens and Captain Bonner at the time of their arrest for enlisting recruits for Walker.

On the arrival of these gentlemen, they also made manifest their great astonishment at the General's appearance in New York. After a short conversation, the General informed them that he desired their attendance in his behalf, if required at the marshal's office. Messrs. Meagher and Campbell expressed their hearty sympathy in the General's behalf, offered their services and soon departed, agreeing to be at the United States marshal's office at 11 o'clock.

THE GENERAL GIVES HIMSELF UP.

At half-past ten o'clock Gen. Walker, accompanied by Gen. Wheat, took a carriage and started for the marshal's office, at which place they arrived a few moments before the appointed hour.

Capt. Rynders, who had been informed of the General's intended visit, was on hand, seeming very anxious to take the General once more by the hand and give him a hearty welcome. Thomas F. Meagher and Mr. M. Campbell were also present when Gen. Walker drove up to the door. There were a few persons present beside, attracted by curiosity.

As Walker entered the marshal's office, he saluted Marshal Rynders, at the same time handing him a package. Captain Rynders took the General by the hand, saying:

"As Captain Rynders, I am happy to see you; but as United States Marshal I cannot say that."

The General thanked him and then took a seat, when he waited for the reading of the communication to Rynders.

Marshal Rynders, as soon as he let go of Walker, took the package and proceeded to his private office, where he broke the seal. The following were its contents:

To Isaiah Rynders, U. S. Marshal of the Southern District of New York.

U. S. FLAG-SHIP WABASH,
San Juan Del Norte, December 11, 1857.

Sir—This will be handed you by General Wm. Walker, who has given me his parole of honor that he will present it to you in person.

With the naval force of this squadron I arrested General Walker at Greytown, on the 8th instant, for a violation of the neutrality laws of the United States—he having set on foot, in the United States, unlawful military organizations to make war on people with whom we were at peace, being, at the time of his arrest, at the head of said organization, in the act of making war as above stated.

As U. S. Marshal of the Southern District of New York, I consign him to your custody.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
HENRY PAULDING,
Flag Officer, Commanding U. S. Home Squadron

As soon as Marshal Rynders had finished reading the paper, he called the General and his Counsel into his private office. He then stated that he (General Walker) would have to consider himself in his custody, but he should permit him to go on his parole of honor, stating at the same time that he had better report himself immediately at Washington.

The General consented to this, at the same time requesting Mr. Meagher and Mr. Rynders to go on with him. This they consented to do, and it was agreed to go on to-morrow (Tuesday) morning.

[For the Press.]

MR. EDITOR:—I am sure you and many of your readers will be gratified to learn that the track of the Lackawanna and Bloomsburg Railroad *is finished*. This work, though remote from Philadelphia, and of no pretensions, deserves a worthy of a passing notice. It extends from Scranton, in Luzerne county, where it intersects the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, through Kingston and Plymouth, in Luzerne county, and Berwick and Bloomsburg, in Columbia county, to Rupert's Station, on the Catawissa, Williamsport and Elmira Railroad, and thus links together two great thoroughfares that stretch westward, one from New York, and the other from Philadelphia. It is 57 mile in length, half of which is over a continuous coal formation, and a portion of the other half through a rich district of iron ore and limestone. Along most of the route the country is abundant in agricultural resources, and at several points there is a considerable lumber trade to be accommodated. Pursuing the valley of the Lackawanna country, and to its mouth, and thence the valley of the Susquehanna, the grades and curvature of the road are extremely easy, and the scenery through which it passes enchanting. A dense and enterprising population among almost the entire line are ready to supply the road out of the resources at hand with a large and steady business, whilst the road brings that population within a few hours' ride of each of the great cities.

These are circumstances which give great importance to the Lackawanna and Bloomburg Railroad, but there are others which invest it with peculiar interest.

It was projected and commenced by a number of country gentlemen living in the Wyoming Valley, who, though business men of very solid means, had not a particle of experience in building or managing railroads. From this circumstance some minds would have predicted disappointment or failure, and to confess the truth, the prediction was not wanting.

But for the encouragement of similar enterprises, be it stated, that these gentlemen brought, if not experience, *integrity* and *economy* to the work, and these have been found excellent substitutes for technical skill and knowledge.

The work, though progressing slowly and encountering difficulties and obstacles which seemed at times insurmountable, has never stopped from the day it was begun, until three days ago, when it was finished. The credit of the company has remained unimpaired in the midst of financial convulsions that have shaken the country from centre to circumference.

The interest on its loan—seven per cent. per annum—has been regularly paid at each appointed interval of six months; and notwithstanding the extraordinary expense attending the completion of the work, and the embarrassments resulting from the general suspension of specie payments, it affords me great pleasure to assure the bondholders that their January coupons will be promptly paid.

The road has been run from Scranton to Kingston for more than a year past. It is now run its entire length. The running expenses are kept down to the lowest figure which is consistent with safety, and, indeed, the whole management is according to the strictest accountability and economy.

It is thus demonstrated that the same perseverance, prudence, and sagacity which are necessary in other pursuits, are all that are needed in a successful railroad enterprise. The road has found a few good friends in Philadelphia, to whom much of its prosperity is due, and whose assistance it will continue to need until it is thoroughly furnished with rolling stock, when it will reward all who have helped it. As a Pennsylvania enterprise of great merit, whether its prospects or past history be considered, it is worthy of the confidence of Philadelphia capitalists. W.

DEMOCRATIC MEETING IN FAVOR OF THE LECOMPTON CONVENTION.

A large meeting assembled at Jayne's Hall last night, called to endorse the proceedings of the Lecompton Convention. About 2,000 persons were present. The meeting was called to order at 7½ o'clock by Mr. Witte, who nominated Hon. ELLIS LEWIS as president of the meeting, assisted by a large number of vice-presidents.

Judge Lewis, on taking the chair, made the following remarks:

FELLOW-CITIZENS: I make my profound acknowledgments to you for the honor you have conferred upon me in selecting me to preside over your deliberations. Justice to myself requires me to say, that I have accepted this position with reluctance, after having repeatedly declined it. The object of this meeting is, as I understand it, to deliberate upon the measures proposed by the President of the United States for the admission of Kansas into this Union as an independent State. The Constitution of the United States provides among other things that Congress shall prescribe all needful rules and regulations for the government of the Territory and other property of the United States, and many judicious individuals hold that this clause has relation exclusively to the Government of the Territory as property, and not to the sovereign right to govern the people who inhabit it. This may be safely conceded without detracting from the power of Congress in regulating the Territories, or governing the inhabitants who resided in them before their admission into the Union as a State. Congress has certainly the right granted by the Constitution to declare war and make peace, and the Government of the United States has the right to make treaties with other nations. In the prosecution of a war, territory may be acquired by conquest, in the execution of a treaty it may be acquired by contract, and wherever the Government of the United States, either by conquest or by treaty, acquires jurisdiction over, or a right of property in a Territory, the right of sovereignty results from the right of ownership. The people who go into a Territory belonging to the United States are bound by the Constitution of the United States and by such acts of Congress as may apply to unorganized Territories. With these exceptions, they are in a state of nature; each man prescribes a law for himself, administers justice to himself in his own way, and every one has an equal right, in a state of nature, of doing justice to himself and regulating his own conduct, no one having superiority over another. As sovereignty implies superiority, it follows that where all are equal, as in the case when the people are in a state of nature, no sovereignty can exist at all. The new doctrine that sovereignty exists among a people in a state of nature, and that the formation of government is only an act of sovereignty, has no just foundation, because it is only when government is formed by the people who before were in a state of nature that sovereignty has its birth. It is only then that sovereignty is created by the people themselves; that that equality which existed before, and that want of control which existed before, ceases, and only ceases when the aggregation of individual rights is invested in appointed authorities. This sovereignty which Congress possesses over the Territories exists independent of the people of the Territories; it has existed in the way I have already described. No Territory has ever been organized except through the authority of Congress, since this Government was established. In accordance with this construction, supported by a practice ever since the establishment of the Government Congress, on the 30th of May, 1854, passed what is called the organic law, for the organization of the Territory of Kansas; and one of the provisions of that law, declared that it was the true intent and meaning of the law not to legislate slavery into the Territory or out of it, but to leave the people perfectly free to form their domestic institutions in their own way. [Applause.] The Territorial Legislature authorized by the act of Congress, was elected by the people, and sometime in the month of February last, they passed a law authorizing the election of delegates for the purpose of framing a Constitution, preparatory to their admission into the Union as an independent State. That election took place in the month of June, and the Convention met in September following; and having adjourned from time to time, they at last framed a Constitution. Now, you will remember that there was nothing in the organic act of Congress, or in the Territorial act of the Legislature, authorizing the election of delegates that required the submission of this Constitution to the people. The delegates were authorized to frame a Constitution, and so framed, it would have had all the legal effect of a Constitution without submission to the people, the moment Kansas was admitted by Congress as a State. But there was one question on which some difficulty arose in the Convention—a question on which much difference of opinion existed throughout the United States and throughout the territory—I mean the question of slavery. That question they submitted to a vote of the people, at an election held on the 21st of this month. The result of that election is not yet known, but the President of the United States proposes to abide by that result, whatever it may be, and proposes to admit Kansas into the Union with a Constitution thus framed. What objection is there to this? Surely, the affairs of Kansas have occupied the time and attention of this great nation quite long enough for all useful purposes. It is complained that the whole Constitution has not been submitted to the people. Why did they not see to that when they elected members of the Legislature? Why did they not influence their own Legislature to provide for that in the law authorizing the election of delegates? What have we to do with it? Why not influence the action of their delegates selected for the purpose of carrying out their wishes? How can we control the Convention? If the people deemed the submission of the Constitution necessary, their representatives in Convention ought to have so declared; but they made no such declaration, and the result is that the Constitution is good enough without such submission. The mere fact that they submitted one portion of it, about which they were not prepared to make a final decision to the people, is no reason why they should submit every portion of it so long as they acted within the limits of their authority, and we are bound to presume they had good reasons for their action. They doubtless knew that a large portion of the inhabitants of Kansas were in arms against the laws, and that, under such circumstances, it would be impossible for them to have a fair election, and would oppose any Constitution, no matter how good it might be, and no matter in what manner formed, if it was formed under the act of a Legislature, against which they stood in open opposition; and they doubtless desired to defeat the wishes of these people, knowing very well that their own constituents respecting law and order were perfectly satisfied with every portion of the Constitution, except the one which was submitted for their consideration. Be that as it may, they were the representatives of the people of Kansas; their decision is made, and it is not for us to overrule it. It is objected that the Legislature which passed this law was not legally elected. That Legislature is the only Legislature that has ever been acknowledged to be legally valid by the Congress of the United States, or by the Government of the United States, or by any branch of the Government; it is the only Legislature *de facto* which has ever had existence in that Territory, and its acts are therefore legal and valid until annulled by the only power which holds the sovereignty, and that is Congress. Congress has not annulled its acts, and therefore they are binding. It is objected, again, that the people had no fair chance to vote on the slavery question, because they were restricted in every case to vote for the Constitution. Now this is the merest form that can be imagined, because the other provisions are not submitted, are not intended to be submitted, but are held to be valid without submission, and are valid without submission, and this formal manner of their expressing it by a vote has no effect whatever upon their rights. The moment they are admitted into the Union they may proceed to amend their Constitution to suit themselves. There is nothing in the Constitution which prevents the people from proceeding, and in a very short period of time amending it if they feel so disposed. Why then keep Kansas in this rebellious and distracted condition any longer? The doctrine of popular sovereignty cannot require that she should be kept in a kind of vassalage and bondage under the government of the United States. On the contrary, it seems to require that she should be admitted as a State as soon as possible, and the moment she is admitted on an equal footing with the other States, the largest blessings and the largest privileges of popular sovereignty can be granted. (Applause.)

Mr. Wm. H. Witte next addressed the meeting.

The President then introduced Hon. Jesse D. Bright, of Indiana, who was received with great applause.

Mr. Bright said: Mr. President and fellow-Democrats of the city of Philadelphia: It is proper that I should preface what I have to say on this occasion by making my acknowledgments to the Committee, who, representing your views, have been so kind as to honor me with an invitation to meet you here to-night. It is not the first time I have had that privilege, but I must confess I have met you on former occasions under more favorable auspices than we meet now. I have met you heretofore when battling for the supremacy of those principles which we conceived essential to the perpetuation of the Government under which we live; we meet now, as I am advised, to consider the sentiments and recommendations enunciated in the late Message of the President of the United States, and to express our approval and disapproval.

I propose, in this report of Mr Bright's speech, give it entire, we will briefly allude to most of the topics he discussed without elaborating any one of them except his views on the admission of Kansas, which we will give entire

Mr. Bright spoke at some length of the action of the Democratic and Federal party in reference to the purchase of what is known as the Louisiana country, and the action of Congress in organizing States therefrom. He reviewed the action of the two parties under the Administration of Mr. Polk, showing to whom the country was indebted for the addition of the empire that was then added. He reviewed at some length the measures known as the Compromise measures of 1850, and showed conclusively that the Democratic party had ever favored the acquisition of territory, while the anti-Democratic party had opposed it. That in the organization of Territorial Governments, and their subsequent admission into the Union as States, the Democratic party had strictly adhered to those requirements of the Constitution which gave to the people the power of deciding upon their own form of government, while the anti-Democratic party had uniformly insisted upon the interference of Congress, requiring the adoption of inhibitory resolves on the subject of slavery, &c. (We give his remarks in full on the Kansas question.)

The doctrine of non-intervention, as enunciated in the Nicholson letter, by that eminent statesman now at the head of the State Department, always commanded my warmest approval; for the maxim, "mind your own business," is as applicable in public as in private affairs. (Cheers.) I experienced no difficulty, therefore, in giving to the Kansas-Nebraska bill, when before the Senate of the United States, my earnest support, containing, as it did, an express recognition of this doctrine, in the declaration that the true intent and meaning of the act was, "not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, not to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to *form* and regulate their *domestic institutions in their own way*, subject only to the Constitution of the United States;" and in that other declaration that the Territory, when organized as a State, "should be received into the Union, with or without slavery, as the Constitution might prescribe at the time of its admission."

Under these principles, the Territory of Kansas was organized; and now, after a brief but stormy probation, it is asking admission into the Union as a State. The constitution which it presents is Republican in its form, and is the work of a legally organized convention of delegates, elected under authority of law. The question is, shall it be admitted? It costs me no effort to express my determination to stand by the principles of the Kansas-Nebraska act, and to vote for its admission as a State, without stopping to inquire whether slavery be or be not recognized by its constitution. (Cheers.)

The principal objection that is now urged against its admission is, that the whole Constitution was not submitted to the people for their ratification.—I regret, with the President and the Administration, that this was not done. Looking at the matter from this distant point, I believe it would have been more wise and prudent to have submitted it; but that question was for them, not us, to determine. It is not for us to force a submission; *that* would be a violation of the principle of non-intervention—a violation of the Kansas act, which guarantees the right of regulating all domestic questions to the people themselves—that is, through their representatives, for it could be done in no other way.

This is a representative government, not a Democracy like the Republic of Athens, where laws were submitted to a vote of the people *en masse*. We, the people, transact our public business, make our laws, and regulate our institutions through representatives. Year after year you are called upon to elect representatives to your State Legislature to make laws These laws effect your lives, your liberties and your property. Yet, who is wild enough to advocate the submission of these laws to a direct vote of the people? Who is so chimerical as to insist that a vote of the people is necessary to give them vitality?

Why, my fellow-citizens, that great Constitution under which we live, and our fathers lived, and have prospered as never another people have prospered—that sacred Instrument, embodying the pure principles of Republicanism, and which will stand forever, through countless ages, as a model of American statesmanship—the Constitution of the United States—never was submitted to a direct vote of the people. It was ratified by the votes of the State Legislatures of the different States.

And this was the *early* practice of our Government. Nearly every State in this bright galaxy of States, has come into the Union with Constitutions that were not submitted to the people. Surely, surely, no great wrong can be committed by walking in the footsteps of our revolutionary fathers—by following the example they have set us. Never, never, since this was a Government, has any State of this Union been refused admission into the Union, on the ground that her Constitution was not submitted to the people. The Constitutional Convention of each State and Territory has always until lately been treated and recognized as embodying the popular will. I appeal to the record for the truth of this position.

The State in which I live came into this Union with a Constitution not submitted to the people. Six of various other States I could mention. I state these facts to show that this is no new demand; but, if precedents are to guide our action, the vast bulk of them is with those who favor the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution.

Why should a *new test* be applied to her unknown to the laws and the Constitution of our country? There is but one test required by the Constitution of the United States, in reference to the admission of new States, and that is, that their Constitutions shall be Republican in form. I deny the right to travel outside of the requirements of the Constitution to constitute new tests not recognized by it I desire, as a legislator, to square my action with its requirements. Seeing nothing in it requiring the submission of a Constitution of a State to the people, I will not set up my individual wishes, or my private feelings, in derogation of its provisions. I will not apply a test to Kansas that neither the Constitution nor the custom of my country has applied.

And I am the more ready to sustain its admission, when I see, on looking into the two rival Constitutions—the Lecompton and the Topeka—that, so far as the fundamental principles of government are involved, the former is quite as faultless as the latter. Indeed, striking out the provisions on the subject of slavery, about which there is unfortunately so much contrariety of opinion in our country, I would, as a matter of individual choice, prefer the former to the latter. The ground of this preference is not material, and I will not, therefore, step here to state it. It is enough that the Lecompton Constitution, unlike the other, comes to us in an *authentic* form—is the embodiment of the public will, as expressed through the *legally* elected delegates, and is republican in its form.

But it is objected that the delegates who framed this Constitution, were elected by a minority of the people, and that their work does not reflect the public will. If they were so elected, whose fault was it? It is certain that *all* had an opportunity of voting, and if any willfully neglected, or designedly neglected to exercise this right, it is not for them now to urge their own misconduct as a reason for the rejection of the State.

Again—In that respect does the Constitution fail to reflect the public will? No point of objection has been made, deserving, in my opinion, any consideration, except the one relating to the slavery clause. Fellow-citizens, I am no advocate of, or apologist for, slavery. Whatever may be my private opinions, they shall not interfere with my public duty. (Cheers.) We have by our legislation, adopted the wise policy of non-intervention by Congress on this subject; and to that policy, the peace and harmony of the country demand that we should rigidly adhere. But to those gentlemen who think it a crime so to legislate, it certainly must be a matter of great relief (at least it should be) that this question of "slavery" or "no slavery" in Kansas, which has been the great and absorbing question in this Territory, and throughout the States, and not only in the Territory, but outside of it, has, by this same Convention, composed, as is alleged, of pro-slavery delegates—elected, it is further alleged, by a small minority of the people, whilst the great mass was anti-slavery in sentiment—been submitted to a direct vote of the people.

It was in the power of this mass, therefore, by going to the polls on the 21st of this month, and voting their sentiments, to have put down, once and forever, the existence of slavery in Kansas. If they have not done it, if they have pertinaciously refused to vote, as it is announced was their purpose, my duty will be a plain one—to turn a deaf ear to their factious complaints, and adhering to the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska act, to vote for the admission of the State under the Lecompton Constitution, with or without slavery, as their instrument may provide.

The course which I have thus marked out to pursue, fellow-citizens, I deem both wise and politic. It should be the desire of every patriot to expel this subject from the halls of Congress. By admitting Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution, we at once *localize* the question; and if then that instrument is not what the majority desire, it will be in their power to correct it, free from that interference from without which has been the cause of so much trouble.

Fellow-citizens, this is no time for us to falter in our duty. Let us not be influenced by passion, or influenced by our private feelings, to forget the duty we owe to our country. As Democrats, let us not forget our fealty to the great national party, to which we belong. (Cheers.) We have, as it were, participated through a month of excitation, which resulted in placing in the Presidential Chair, a statesman whom Pennsylvania has always delighted to honor—a statesman of undoubted ability—of undoubted integrity—of vast experience in public affairs—who stands to-day, as one of the few connecting links between the past and the present generations—"full of years and full of honors." (Cheers.) For nearly half a century, you have honored him with your confidence, and it is no idle praise to say, he has never betrayed, or failed to come up to the full measure of your expectations. Will the Pennsylvania Democracy now stand by their old and honored chief? Shall the victory they have just achieved, that vindicates our rights, cause us to stand together, shall we again march on to new honors and new victories?

Allow me to answer these interrogatories for my own State. Indiana voted for Mr. Buchanan in the Cincinnati Convention, from the first until the last ballot. [Applause.] At the election in November succeeding, she was one of the few States that gave him a clear majority over all isms and combinations. [Cheers.] Her herculean efforts in that memorable contest, to secure the election of a citizen of the Keystone State, thus dealing a deadly blow to fanaticism in all its varied forms, is the brightest page in her political history. I need not permit me here to add, that no personal consideration will induce me to the action of her lion-hearted Democracy, (applause). They believed he would do, as he has done—call around him his ablest and most distinguished Democrats—faithful fidelity and their private virtues, who would aid him in administering the affairs of your Government with an eye single to its growth and prosperity. Has he not done so? [Cries of yes, yes.] Will not the response come from every honest heart, he has? The path of duty, then, is plain and easy. Let us follow it, and we cannot err. Sustain