The Press

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FORNEY'S CALIFORNIA PRESS

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FIRST PAGE.—Peers in the Commons; Personal and Political; Letter from New York. FOURTH PAGE.—Commercial Intelligence.

The Laws of Trade.

The power of the press is undoubtedly very great; but there are many things utterly beyond the reach of its influence. Without the slightest disposition to underrate the importance of the advocates of non-intercourse, of which the *Southern Confederacy* is the most malignant type, we beg to be allowed to intimate that the tides will continue to ebb and flow, the earth to revolve upon its axis, the sun to give light by day and the moon and stars by night, water to run down hill, and grass to grow—even if those journals should see proper to advise and advocate a different order of things.

There are certain natural laws entirely beyond the reach of even the editors of newspapers, and while the operation of that law of trade which creates a universal desire on the part of purchasers to buy where they can buy cheapest may occasionally be checked by inflammatory sectional appeals, or by political influences, it can never be destroyed.

Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and self-interest the second, and although we see thousands of men squandering their hard-earned dollars for trifling gratifications, or from benevolent motives spending their means liberally to advance philanthropic objects, or from patriotic considerations making generous contributions to the real or supposed welfare of their country or section, it cannot be expected, nor in the nature of things will it ever extensively occur, that the merchants of any portion of the world will be so regardless of their interests, and so insensible of the real nature of their vocation—which is to furnish to their customers, on the best possible terms, the goods which they require—as to obtain their stocks in order that they may take the opportunity to freely offered them to make purchases in cheap and advantageous ones.

The great practical problem of almost every intelligent human being in this utilitarian age is, to make the best use of the income he is enabled to realize from his industry, his talents, or his inheritance. The idea of doing out bargains for the material articles of commerce by the real or pretended political opinions of the men in whom their ownership has been transiently vested is such a palpably absurd system of extravagance, and such an arrant humbug, that it can no more become a fixed part of the policy of a people so intelligent and keenly alive to their interests as the citizens of the United States, than the burning of witches or the senseless pageantry of royalty.

The current custom of selecting all our public officers—even policemen or custom-house inspectors—on account of their political opinions on great public issues, is sufficiently ridiculous, and can only be defended on the score of party exigencies, and the popularity of the maxim that "to the victors belong the spoils." It is the height of absurdity to extend this principle to articles of merchandise. The political or religious convictions of the merchants through whose hands they pass on their way from the point where they are originally manufactured to the homes of their consumers leave no impress whatever upon them. Men do not weave Democracy into cotton shirting, or Republicanism into calico, or Americanism into cassimeres. Many articles pass through the hands of manufacturers, artisans, and merchants, who, in the aggregate, entertain every imaginable shade of opinion on the questions that are currently agitated. If the history of a bale of cotton from the day it leaves a plantation until the day it is returned to the South woven into a thousand various fabrics, could be accurately written, it would afford a striking illustration of this truth.

"If in all the various commercial processes by which raw material, and articles produced from it, pass from hand to hand, business men, instead of devoting their time to an examination of the intrinsic merits of the article they are about to purchase, set their wits woolgathering in vain efforts to obtain satisfactory information in reference to the political or religious opinions of those through whose hands it has passed, there will be much valuable time wasted in a worse than worthless manner. Yet this is the policy which non-intercourse journals are striving to enforce, and this is the entertainment to which, in a free and enlightened country, in the nineteenth century, the mercantile community is invited.

We look back with horror at the periods when men were burned at the stake for their religious opinions, and the whole policy of coercion of free thought is rejected with scorn by every liberal and intelligent mind of the present century, yet, with all our boasted advancement, efforts are made to enforce a system which has its basis in as foolish, vindictive, and unworthy a spirit as the barbarous proscriptions of the dark ages.

It is a gratifying reflection, however, that even some of the advocates of this antiquated and obsolete policy of non-intercourse are sagacious enough to perceive the folly of their own suggestions. A significant evidence of this is afforded by the following article, which we find in the Georgia *Federal Union*. The editor clearly perceives that the law of trade, which irresistibly urges men to buy where they can buy cheapest, is in full force among the Southern planters, and that—to use his own language—"nine-tenths of the political Hotspurs of the South" are completely under its dominion. The editor of the *Union* says:

"While Southern merchants patronize Northern houses, the North will continue to laugh at us, and continue to steal our property whenever they can. The key to this problem, after all, lies in this: *Southern merchants all know that Southern planters, and the Southern people generally, buy from those local merchants who sell the cheapest.* Nine-tenths of the political Hotspurs of the South, who are almost crazy because they can't get rid of the Union in a day, *will buy goods from a merchant who advertises that he has just received from Fred Douglass; provided the merchant sells them a few cents lower than other local merchants in the place where they reside.* Along as Southern men *will buy of Southern merchants who sell the cheapest*, so long will Southern merchants go North to buy their goods of Graysleton houses. *The New York houses sell so much cheaper than those of Southern cities that Southern merchants know it is to their interest to buy of the former.* The only way to reach the merits of this question is for the Legislature to put heavy taxes on goods brought from Northern cities. Will they do it?"

The belligerent non-intercourse editors, instead of vainly attempting to induce men, as full of sagacity and business-knowledge as Southern merchants, to pay heavy extra percentages for their stocks of goods, and thus run the risk of being undersold by their business competitors at home and ridiculed for their folly or denounced for their extravagance by their customers, should turn their attention to the discovery of perpetual motion, or the contrivance of a plan for reversing the current of the Mississippi, as tasks better worthy of their genius than the one in which they are at present engaged.

The Continental.

We congratulate our citizens, and the public in general, as we also do the members of the Hotel Company in particular, upon the completion and opening for business of the finest hotel on the continent of America. We hail the completion of this enterprise as a significant indication of the awakening interest of our merchants and capitalists in the prospects and requirements of our grand metropolis. This magnificent hotel, furnished and arranged under the personal superintendence of PARAN STEVENS, Esq., the Napoleon of hotel proprietors, and to be conducted upon the same liberal scale which has earned a world-wide reputation for his houses in Boston, New York, and Mobile, is supplied with accommodations for about one thousand guests, and it is not improbable that the additional hotel accommodations thus secured to us will increase the number of hotel guests in Philadelphia at least ten thousand during the present season. Among the assistants announced for the interior supervision of this immense establishment, we are pleased to find the name of Mr. C. F. Jones, formerly of the St. Lawrence Hotel. We invite attention to the card of Messrs. J. E. Stevens & Co., in another column of our paper this morning.

WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

Letter from "Occasional."

[Correspondence of The Press.]

WASHINGTON, February 14, 1860.

The following parody, though not entirely complimentary to the new Clerk of the House of Representatives, and filled with the usual satires of the Administration party, is so really good in itself, that I venture to ask you to allow me to preserve it in the pages of "Occasional." I copy it from the Pittsburg *Post*, and think I recognise the genius of a well-known humorist of the smoky city. If you have laughed as heartily over it as myself and other friends of Colonel Forney in this city, you will not overlook the request I make of you. Even Mr. Buchanan, who is considerably downcast since the election of the new Clerk, cannot fail to relax his rigid features as he peruses this first-rate pasquinade.

"Let those laugh who win," is the old adage. We shall see where present complications will lead us. I pardon the attempt to make the editor of *The Press* a servitor of Mr. Seward, in view of the fact that the author of this travestie has made Mr. Buchanan assume the character of a *female*, and has allotted to Judge Black the *rôle* of the Hunchback, whose game was deception from the beginning to the end. The part cast for Colonel Forney is the best in the whole piece, and your readers will perceive that he *won the game at last*:

[Parodied from Knowles' play of the "Hunchback."]

SCENE II.—*The Executive Chamber in the White House.*

Enter the President and the Attorney General.

President.—What have my eyes to do with water?
Fire becomes them better.

Attorney General—True.

President—Yet must I either weep or swear;
Must I be be-deviled by a man!
One that was my slave! whom I have seen
Kneel at my feet from morn till noon, content
With leave to only gaze upon my *state*
And tell me what he read there, till the page
I knew by heart! 'twixt doubt I knew,
So *spongy* was the nature of his tongue.
And he to lesson me! Let him come here
On Monday week! He no'er leads me astray!
I would not profit by his cunning, or his "*Press*,"
Though Reward for their sake do call him *cousin*.

Attorney General—You're very right!

President—Oh, for some way to bring him to my feet!
But he should lie there. Why, its gone abroad
That he has cast *me off*! That there should live
The man would say so! Or that I should live
To be a politician's leaving, and chiefly him
Whom I had raised from out the mire of poverty,
And on my broad shoulders pushed him up
Till doubts assailed his mind, whether
God made the universe or he made God,
So dizzy was the height I raised him to—
[Enter Messenger.]
Well?

Messenger—The Clerk of the House of Representatives is without. He brings a message
For his Excellency, and humbly craves
Admittance to his presence.

Attorney General—Show him in.

President—No. [to him
Attorney General—Thou must see him. To show slight
Were slighting them that sent him. Show him in!

[Exit Messenger.

Some message proper for thy Presidential ear—
Perhaps the Post Office Appropriation Bill. Why.
This agitation, and these mutterings!
Reflect!
Take thought! collect thyself! with dignity
Receive the House's messenger.
[Exit Attorney General.

President—He comes! Now, Old Buck, you've played
The man before—play it now!
[Enter Messenger, conducting Forney, attired in a *Black* suit, with a collar round his neck, marked "W. H. Seward."]

Messenger—The Clerk of the House of Representatives.
[Exit.

President—(aside)—Speake he not? or does he wait
For orders to unfold his business?
Stopped his business till I spoke.
I'do be d mpsse forever.
Forney—(timidly)—This message from my masters!

President—Oh, fate! who speaks?

Forney—The Clerk of the House.

President—I breathe! I could have sworn 'twas he.
(Makes an effort to look at him.)
So like the voice—
I dare not look, lest the form should stand!
"The Forney's voice, if ever Forney spoke!
Forney the Clerk of the Black Republicans!
Politics hath freaks, but none so mad as that!
It cannot be: it should not be! a look,
And all were set at rest.
(Tries to look at him again.)
So strong my fears I shall be disgusted,
Dread to confirm them takes away the power
To try and end them! Come the worst,
I'll look!
(Tries to look, but turns away again.) [per
Forney—Will please your Excellency to take the paper?
[Breath
President—There Forney spoke again. Not Forney here;
Could more make Forney's voice. Not Forney's tongue
And lips more frame it into Forney's speech!
Know I you, young man?
Forney—Reverse in the race of office change friends!
It turns them into strangers! *What I am*
I have not always been.

President—Could I not name you?

Forney—If your disdain forone, perhaps too bold
When, would its ambition made him aspire
The Senatorship o'er shoulders of a better man,
Now by the fickleness of hollow fortune
Perforce reduced, in manner fear to
To take an humble tone, would suffer you—

President—I might?

Forney—You might!

President—Oh, *Forney!* is it you!
Forney—Your answer to my masters.

President—Your masters!

Forney—Will sign the bill?
Or will it please you put it in your pocket
Till ten days time shall hatch it into life?
I'll bear your answer faithfully. [one eye.)

President—You'll bear it! (looks intently at him with

Forney—Sir, Your pardon!

But my haste is somewhat urgent.
The mail contractors are impatient, and
To "use despatch" were the repeated orders
Of my masters!

President—Orders? Well,
Ill read the bill, sir. 'Tis right you mind
The orders of your new masters,
They are paramount; nothing in present
Should supersede them, stand beside them!
They merit all your care, and have it. Pit.
Most fit they should! Give me the bill, sir.

Forney—You have it, sir.

President—Mind his orders! So!
Quickly he fits his habits to his wages!
Forsworn his "Helpers" with all his will!
His heart's in his vocation! So!
Is this the bill? 'Tis upside down—
And here I'm poring on it.
[Enter servant.]
Servant, sir.

He servant brings a chair, and goes out. President sits awhile gazing vacantly on the bill, then throws his chin down, and, turning his head slightly aside, looks with one eye at Forney.]

How plainly shows the *blackness* of his suit.
'Tits not him that wears it. I wrong him.
He can't be happy—does not look it—is not.
That eye which seeks the ground is argument
Sound! He loves me. There I let him stand
And I am sitting.
[Rises and points to a chair.]
Pray you—take a—chair.
[Forney bows low and resumes his same position. The President still gazes at him. Long pause ensues.]
Forney, why don't you speak to me?

Forney—I trust you're happy.

President—Happy! Very, very happy.
When last you saw me, little did you think
I'd be so happy, Forney!

Forney—Sir!

President—Sir! I call thee Forney, and thou
Call'st me Sir!

Forney—Such the address my duty stints me to.
Thou art the President, chosen
By the proud Democratic party.
The humble Secretary sole am I
Of the Sharpe's Rifle Republicans.

President—Most right! I had forgot. I thank you, sir,
For so reminding me; and give you joy.
That what I see had been a burthen to you
Is fully off your hands.

Forney—A burthen to me! Mean you the party?
Say that the Senatorship is a burthen to Bigler;
Say that spoils are a burthen to Simon Cameron;
Say that the printing is a burthen to Bowman;
Say the Postmaster Generalship would have been
A burthen; say everything a politician
Desires and gives the name of sincerity to;—
Even such a burthen was Democracy to me
And Douglas let me write her.

President—On the brink
Of what a precipice I'm standing! Back!
Forney! this moment leave me.
[Forney retires to the hall.]
He is gone! 'Twas best that so he went.
Else the strait of him, who owns that best
Which last he'd wish were done.
(Leans his head upon his hand thoughtfully, and gazes into the fire, his back to the door. Forney enters, approaches, and kneeling, gently takes his other hand.)

Forney—My James!

President—Here again?
Up! up! By all thy hopes of Heaven go hence!
Dy stay's perdition to me! Look you, Forney,
Were there a grave where thou art kneeling now
I'd walk into it, and be hearthed alive
Ere taint should reach my name.
Should some one come and see thee
Kneeling thus. Let go my hand!
Judge you so poorly of me, as think
I'll suffer this? My honor, sir!

Forney—I was bold—
Forgetful of your position and my own.
Here was a time *I only* had your ear,
I had forgot that time was past and gone!
I pray you pardon me!

President—(looking with both eyes)—I do so, Forney.

Forney—I shall no more offend.

President—Make sure of that. No longer is it fit
Thou keep'st the Clerk's desk in the House.
Gate it up—a day, an hour remain not in it.

Forney, alarmed—And wherefore?

President—Live not in the same town with me,
And I in one party and you in another.
Politics put barriers between us. The same land
Should not contain us. Oceans should divide us
With barriers of constant political conventions,
Such as politicians dust not tempt.
Oh, Forney, Forney,—

Rash was the act so light that gave me up.
Had you expostulated,
Had you reasoned with me,
Tried to find out what was indeed my heart,
I would have shown it—you'd have seen it. All
Had been as naught can never be again!

Forney—Low at thou my, James!

President—Dost thou ask me, John!
[Messenger suddenly enters.]

Messenger—Mr. Seward demands Mr. Forney's instant Attendance of him; he says he has something for him told.

[Rises and points to a chair.]

Forney turns—takes