The Press.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1861.

FORNEY'S CALIFORNIA PRESS

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This paper is published expressly for

CALIFORNIA CIRCULATION,

And contains a complete summary of what has transpired in our City, State, and the Atlantic States, since the departure of the last steamer for California.

To Advertisers.—The circulation of The Press exceeds that of any other daily paper in Philadelphia, with a single exception. Satisfactory proof of this fact will be cheerfully given to advertisers.

First Page.—Shaksperiana—No. II; Letter from Centre County; From York, Pa.; To the People of Maryland; The Phœnixville Meeting; Our New York Letter; General News. Fourth Page.—The Crisis in the South; A Sensation Letter from Gov. Wise; Marine Intelligence.

## The President and the South Carolina Commissioners.

The correspondence between the President and the South Carolina Commissioners has been published. The latter submitted it to the Convention of that State, where it was read in "secret session," on Friday night last, but the injunction of secrecy having been removed it soon appeared in the Charleston papers.

The first letter is dated Washington, December 28, and was written by the Commissioners to Mr. Buchanan. It is accompanied by a copy of their "full powers," "to treat with the Government of the United States," for the delivery of forts, etc., and for the settlement of all financial questions in which South Carolina and the Union possessed a mutual interest, but it complains that the peaceful negotiations originally contemplated have been rendered impossible by the removal of Major Anderson to Fort Sumpter. The presence of any of the national troops in the harbor of Charleston is considered a "standing menace," and their immediate withdrawal is therefore recommended.

The President's reply is dated December 30. He gives quite a full history of his proceedings in reference to the South Carolina movement up to that time, and of the motives by which he has been governed. He quotes from his last annual message to show that he has no authority to determine the character of the relations which shall exist between the several States, but that his chief duty is to enforce the laws, and that therefore he cannot receive the Commissioners at all in their official capacity, but simply "as private gentlemen of the highest character."

He then proceeds to consider the alleged "pledge," about which much has been said, that no change would be made in the military arrangements at Charleston. He says:

"On Saturday, 8th December, four of the Representatives from South Carolina called on me and requested an interview. We had an earnest conversation on the subject of these forts, and the best means of preventing a collision between the parties, for the purpose of sparing the effusion of blood. I suggested, for prudential reasons, that it would be best to put in writing what they said to me verbally. They did so accordingly, and on Monday morning, the 10th instant, three of them presented to me a paper, signed by all the Representatives from South Carolina, with a single exception, of which the following is a copy:

*"To his Excellency James Buchanan, President United States:*

"In compliance with our statement to you yesterday, we now express to you our strong convictions that neither the constituted authorities nor any body of the people of the State of South Carolina will either attack or molest the United States forts in the harbor of Charleston previously to the action of the Convention, and we hope and believe not until an offer has been made, through an accredited representative, to negotiate for an amicable arrangement of all matters between the State and the Federal Government, provided that no reinforcements shall be sent into those forts, and their relative military status shall remain as at present.

JOHN McQUEEN,
M. L. BONHAM,
W. W. BOYCE,
LAURENCE M. KEITT.

Washington, 9th December, 1860.

"And here I must, in justice to myself, remark that, at the time the paper was presented to me, I objected to the word "provided," as it might be construed into an agreement on my part which I never would make. They said that nothing was further from their intention—they did not so understand it, and I should not so consider it. It is evident they could enter into no reciprocal agreement with me on the subject. They did not profess to have authority to do this, and were acting in their individual character. I considered it as nothing more in effect than the promise of highly honorable gentlemen to exert their influence to the purpose expressed.

"The event has proven that they have faithfully kept their promise although I have never since received a line from any one of them, or from any member of the Convention on the subject. It is well known it was my determination, and this I freely expressed, not to reinforce the forts in the harbor unless I should deem it necessary to defend them against actually attacked, or until I had certain evidence that they were about to be attacked.

"This paper I received most cordially, and considered it as a happy omen that peace might still be preserved, and that time might be thus given for reason. This was the whole foundation for the alleged pledge. But I acted in the same manner as I would have done had I entered into a positive and formal agreement with parties capable of contracting, though such an agreement would forsooth, have been, on my part, from the nature of my official duties, impossible. The world knows that I have never sent any reinforcements to the forts in Charleston harbor, and I have certainly never authorized any change to be made in their relative military status. Bearing upon this subject, I refer you to an order issued by the Secretary of War, on the 11th instant, to Major Anderson, but not brought to my notice until the 21st instant. It is as follows:

*Memoranda of Verbal Instructions to Major Anderson, 1st Artillery, Commanding Fort Moultrie, South Carolina:*

"You are aware of the great anxiety of the Secretary of War that a collision of the troops with the people of the State shall be avoided, and of his studied determination to pursue a course with reference to the military forces and forts in this harbor which shall guard against such a collision. He has, therefore, carefully abstained from increasing the force at this point, or taking any measure which might add to the present excitement or tend to precipitate a collision. He feels confident that South Carolina will not attempt by violence to obtain possession of the public works or interfere with the vessels of the Union. But as the course Land acts of Iran and impulsive persons may possibly disappoint these expectations of the Government, he deems it proper that you should be prepared with instructions to meet so unhappy a contingency. He has, therefore, directed me verbally to give you such instructions.

"You are carefully to avoid every act which would needlessly lead to precoke aggression, and for that reason you are not, without necessity, to take up any position which could be construed into the assumption of a hostile attitude. But you are to hold possession of the forts in this harbor, and if attacked you are to defend yourself to the last extremity.

"The success of your force will not permit you, perhaps, to occupy more than one of the three forts, but an attack or an attempt to take possession of either of them will be regarded as an act of hostility, and you may then put your command into either of them which you may deem most proper to increase its power of resistance. *You are also authorized to take similar steps whenever you have tangible evidence of a design to protected to hostile act.*

Assistant Adjutant General.

"Fort Moultrie, S. C., Dec. 11, 1860.

"This is in conformity to verbal instructions to Major Buell.

JOHN B. FLOYD,
Secretary of War.

"It is certainly questionable whether the last sentence of extra instructions did not fully authorize Major Anderson to change his position, for, by all the accounts from Charleston which have reached us, there seems little doubt that he had an abundance of "tangible evidence" of a design to capture Fort Sumpter or attack Fort Moultrie, when threats indicative of such a purpose were daily resounding through the streets, and when the Convention was discussing plans for their seizure. However, Mr. Buchanan argues in his letter that Major A. acted entirely "upon his own responsibility, and without authority," and that his *first* promptings were to order him to return to his original position. But the intelligence that Castle Pinckney and Fort Moultrie had been seized by the South Carolina authorities, and the "Palmetto flag" hoisted over them, as well as over the custom house and post office, immediately changed this determination. He concludes as follows:

"It is under all these circumstances that I am urged immediately to withdraw the troops from the harbor of Charleston, and am informed that negotiation is impossible. *This I cannot do; this I will not do.* Such an idea was never thought of by me in any possible contingency. No such allusion had been made in any communication between myself and any human being. But the inference is that I am bound to withdraw the troops from the only fort remaining in possession of the United States in the harbor of Charleston, because the officer there in command of all the forts thought proper, without instructions, to change his position from one of them to another.

"At this point of writing I have received information, by telegraph, from Captain Humphreys, in command of the Arsenal at Charleston, that "it has to-day (Sunday, 30th) been taken by force of arms." It is estimated that the munitions of war belonging to the United States, in this arsenal, are worth half a million of dollars.

"Comment is needless. After this information I have only to add, that whilst it is my duty to defend Fort Sumpter, as a portion of the public property of the United States, against hostile attacks from whatever quarter they may come, by such means as I may possess for this purpose, I do not perceive how such a defence can be construed into a menace against the city of Charleston.

"With great personal regard, I remain yours, very respectfully, JAMES BUCHANAN.

"To Honorable Robert W. Barnwell, James H. Adams, James L. Orr."

The Commissioners replied to this letter, under date of January 1, 1861, and they bitterly upbraid him for an alleged change in his policy. The tone of this extraordinary document may be inferred from the following extracts. Referring to his course several weeks ago, they say:

"Seeing very clearly that this question of property was a difficult and delicate one, you manifested a desire to settle it without a collision. You did not reinforce the garrison in the harbor of Charleston. You removed a distinguished and veteran officer from the command of Fort Moultrie because he attempted to increase his supply of ammunition. You refused to send additional troops to the same garrison, when applied for by the officer appointed to succeed him. *You accepted the resignation of the oldest and most eminent member of your Cabinet, rather than allow the garrison to be strengthened.* You compelled an officer stationed at Fort Sumpter to return immediately to the Arsenal forty muskets which he had taken to arm his men. You expressed, not to one, but to many of the most distinguished of our public characters, whose testimony will be placed upon the record, whenever it is necessary, your anxiety for a peaceful termination of the controversy, and your willingness not to disturb the military status of the forts, if Commissioners should be sent to the Government, whose communications you promised to submit to Congress."

After continuing in this strain for some time they thus refer to his refusal to withdraw the troops from the Charleston harbor:

"In relation to this withdrawal of the troops from the harbor, we are compelled, however, to notice one passage of your letter. Referring to it you say: 'This I cannot do. This I will not do. Such an idea was never thought of by me in any possible contingency. No allusion to it had ever been made in any communication between myself and any human being.'

"In reply to this statement, we are compelled to say it, that your conversation with us left upon our minds the distinct impression that you did seriously contemplate the withdrawal of the troops from Charleston harbor. And in support of this impression we would add, that we have the positive assurance of gentlemen of the highest possible public reputation and the most unsullied integrity—men whose name and fame, secured by long service and patriotic achievement, place their testimony beyond cavil—that such suggestions had been made to and urged upon you by them, and had formed the subject of more than one earnest discussion with you. And it was this knowledge that induced us to urge upon you a policy which had to recommend it its own wisdom and the weight of such authority.

"As to the second point, that the authorities of South Carolina, instead of asking explanations, and giving you the opportunity to vindicate yourself, took possession of the other property of the United States, we would observe, first, that even if this were so, it does not avail you for defence, for the opportunity for decision was afforded you before those facts occurred. We arrived in Washington on Wednesday. The news from Major Anderson reached here early on Thursday, and was immediately communicated to you. All that day men of the highest consideration—men who had striven successfully to lift you to your great office—who had been your tried and true friends through the troubles of your Administration—sought you, and entreated you to act—to act at once.

"They told you that every hour complicated your position. They only asked you to give the assurance that if the facts were so—that if the commander had acted without and against your orders, and in violation of your pledges—you would restore the status you had pledged your honor to maintain. You refused to decide. Your Secretary of War—your immediate and proper adviser in this whole matter—waited anxiously for your decision until he felt that delay was becoming dishonor."

They conclude their letter as follows:

"By your course you have probably rendered civil war inevitable. Be it so. If you choose to force the issue upon us, the State of South Carolina will accept it, and relying upon him who is the God of Justice, as well as the God of Peace, will endeavor to perform the great duty which lies before her, hopefully, bravely, and thoroughly.

"Our mission being now at an end, negotiation and peace, and your note leaving us without hope of a withdrawal of the troops from Fort Sumpter, or of the restoration of the *status quo* existing at the time of our arrival, and intimating, as we think, your determination to reinforce the garrison in the harbor of Charleston, we respectfully inform you that we purpose returning to Charleston to-morrow afternoon."

This letter, which is one of the most impertinent and insulting epistles ever sent to the ruler of a great country, was not replied to at all by the President, further than by the following significant endorsement:

"Executive Mansion, 3 o'clock.

"This paper, just presented to the President, is of such a character that he declines to receive it."

It is evident that the Secessionists at one time hoped to lure Mr. Buchanan on to a "lower depth" of complicity with their treasonable designs, from which he shrank back with horror; and that, after all the concessions he has made to them, they are now becoming as hostile and antagonistic to him as to the Republican party. But for every foe that he makes by a faithful and fearless discharge of his constitutional duties he will make a hundred friends, and by pursuing such a course he will not only win the applause of millions of his countrymen, but the approval of his own conscience and of posterity.

## The Triumph of the Liberalists in Mexico.

In nearly all portions of the world, except our own favored land, a spirit of progress seems to be at work, gradually ameliorating the condition of the people, introducing new reforms, extending their liberties, or establishing order and peace. In Italy, the great movement of the age, by which her long-divided districts are rapidly being consolidated together into one great nation, is steadily progressing. In Austria, important reforms, of a very liberal character, have recently been inaugurated. In France, the liberty of the press has been much increased, and the restrictive passport system is about to be partially, if not completely, abolished. In China, peace has been restored between the Allies and the Emperor, and many of the old shackles upon trade have been removed.

The clouds which have long hung over our distracted and demoralized neighboring Republic of Mexico also appear to be breaking away. On the 22d ult., the Liberals completely routed the forces of Miramon, and on Christmas day they occupied the capital, from which they have so long been excluded. Puebla has also fallen into their possession, and Juarez is about to take possession of the seat of Government, with no foe in the field powerful enough to oppose or dispute his right to govern. It is supposed that the war between the rival factions has now been finally ended, and that henceforth internal peace will be fully secured.

It is amid events like these, which cheer the hearts of nearly all the nations of the earth, that the London *Times*, after for a long period under-estimating the dangers with which we are threatened, is compelled to admit that "it is quite possible that the problem of a Democratic Republic may be solved by its overthrow in a few days, owing to the prevailing spirit of folly, selfishness, and short-sightedness." Surely if anything can arouse our statesmen to a proper sense of the impending perils, and prompt them to adopt such measures as will restore harmony and order in our country, our rapid descent in the scale of nations, should lead them them to make strenuous] exertions to re-establish it in its vented position.

## Another Withdrawal from the Cabinet.

The withdrawal of Secretary Thompson from the Cabinet yesterday will excite little regret throughout the country. Being closely affiliated with those who are determined to break up the Confederacy if possible, it is eminently proper that he should terminate his official connection with a Government which he is evidently anxious to destroy. The pretext of his resignation is the reinforcement of Major Anderson—an act of the Administration which will form one of the brightest pages of its history, and to which it was impelled by every patriotic consideration that should influence men who are not traitors to their country.

## Reinforcement of Major Anderson.

The telegraphic announcement we published yesterday morning, that the *Star of the West* had sailed from New York with reinforcements and important new supplies for Major Anderson, is fully confirmed by the journals of our neighboring city. No recent intelligence has been received with greater pleasure. Since the people have risen *en masse* in many portions of the country to sustain a gallant officer in the discharge of a delicate and important duty, under peculiarly trying circumstances, and since Congress has, by a vote of more than two to one, adopted a resolution of thanks, the proof that the Administration is also determined to sustain him, not only in verbal or epistolary conflicts with the foes of the Union, but by material aid, is hailed with universal gratification. Let us be thankful that we have still a Government mindful of its duties, and not only brave officers to defend our strongholds, but an overwhelming public sentiment, a Congress, and an Administration ready to support them.

A correspondent from York, in this state, gives us some particulars in reference to Mr. McIntyre, the newly-appointed collector at Charleston, South Carolina. From all that we have additionally heard he will be equal to his station. It is a great advantage in his favor that he is a citizen of Irish birth, and that he belonged to the old Whig party. He was a supporter of Henry Clay, and afterwards joined the Democratic party.

### Resignation of Naval Officers.

Norfolk, Jan. 8.—Lieut. Chapman and Master Mills, of the U. S. sloop-of-war *Brooklyn*, have resigned.

### Sinking of a Western Steamer.

Memphis, Jan. 8.—The steamer *Frontier*, of this city, was sunk near Napoleon on Friday night. She is a total loss. The passengers and crew were all saved.

### Burning of a Cotton Ship.

Mobile, Jan. 8.—The ship *Birmingham*, Captain Johns, with 800 bales of cotton, was burned yesterday in the bay.

### Currency at St. Louis.

St. Louis, Jan. 8.—Exchange on New York 4a5 per cent. premium. Missouri paper sells at 3 per cent. discount for gold, and 2 per cent. discount for silver.

## Letter from Harrisburg.

[Correspondence of The Press.]

Harrisburg, Jan. 8, 1861.

The long agony is over at last, and Edgar Cowan, Esq., of Westmoreland, a gentleman as yet unknown to extended fame, is the fortunate man. The contest between him and Hon. David Wilmot was long and exciting, and up to the time of the meeting of the caucus it was doubtful upon whose banner victory would perch. The "Proviso" man had, perhaps, the greatest political pressure in his favor, and the wiliest politicians were pushing his claims with great zeal; but his tariff record was a serious drawback, and it cannot be denied that his prominence as an anti-slavery man kept off many members from conservative districts who are personally favorable to him.

Edgar Cowan, whose nomination took place last night, and election to-day, was born in Westmoreland county, in 1815, and is, consequently, in his 46th year. His parents were poor, but managed to give him a collegiate education at Canonsburg, and he has since kept up his knowledge then acquired, and increased the store, so that he is a thorough Latin, French, Greek, and German scholar. He is a great student, acquainting himself with nearly all the modern sciences, and is possessed of one of the finest private geological, botanical, and zoological cabinets in Western Pennsylvania. As a lawyer, Mr. Cowan stands in the very first rank of his profession, and as an orator he has few equals in the State. This is the first political office he has ever held.

As a matter of interest to politicians everywhere, I submit the ballots, together with Cowan's vote on each ballot:

| | 1st | 2d | 3d | 4th | 5th | 6th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wilmot | 24 | 24 | 10 | 33 | 36 | 53 |
| Cowan | 29 | 33 | 38 | 43 | 49 | 52 |
| Stevens | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 1 | .. |
| Veech | 2 | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Williams | 7 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 6 | .. |
| Gilpin | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Penney | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | .. |
| Walker | 10 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| Hickman | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | .. | .. |
| Pollock | 7 | 6 | 3 | .. | .. | .. |
| Killinger | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Stewart | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Reeder | 1 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |
| Palmer | 3 | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. |

*First Ballot.*—Messrs. Hall (Blair), (Meredith (Indiana), Imbrie (Beaver), Lawrence (Washington), Wharton (Huntington) Abbot (Philadelphia), Alexander, (Indiana), Anderson (Washington), Ashcomb (Bedford), Blair (Huntingdon), Craig (Armstrong), Gordon (Jefferson), Happer (Washington), Irvin (Cumberland), Lawrence (McKean), McGonigal, (Westmoreland), Moore (Philadelphia), Mullin (Cambria), Preston (Philadelphia) Reily (Bucks), Roller (Blair), Schrock (Somerset), Taylor, (West Chester), Thomas (Philadelphia), Wildey, (Philadelphia), Wilson (Beaver) —28

*Second Ballot.*—Messrs. Boughter (Lebanon), Bound (Northumberland), Fuller (Fayette), Hall, Imbrie, Lawrence, Meredith, Nichols (Philadelphia), Parker (Potter), Wharton. Messrs. Abbot, Alexander, Anderson, Ashcom, Blair, Craig, Gibboney (Mifflin), Gordon, Happer, Irvin, Koch (Schuylkill), Lawrence (McKean), McGonigal, Moore, Mullin, Preston, Reilly, Roller, Schrock, Taylor, Thomas, Wildey, Wilson—33

*Third Ballot.*—Messrs. Boughter, Bound, Fuller, Hall, Imbrie, Lawrence, Meredith, Nichols, Parker, Wharton. Messrs Abbot, Alexander, Anderson, Ashcom, Bixler (Lebanon), Blair, Craig, Gibboney, Gordon, Happer, Irvin, Koch, Lawrence, McGonigal, Moore, Mullin, Patterson (Clarion), Preston, Reily, Roller, Schrock, Seltzer (Philadelphia), Taylor, Thomas, Wildey, Wilson —36.

*Fourth Ballot.*—Messrs. Boughter, Bound, Fuller, Hall, Imbrie, Lawrence, Meredith, Nichols, Parker, Wharton. Messrs. Abbot, Alexander, Anderson, Ashcom, Austin (Fulton), Bixler, Blair, Collins (Fayette), Craig, Gibboney, Gordon, Graham (Butler), Happer, Hood (Lancaster), Irvin, Koch, Lawrence, Lowther (Perry), Mecklinger, Moore, Mullin, Patterson, Preston, Reily, Robinson (Butler), Roller, Shrock, Seltzer, Sheppard (Philadelphia), Taylor, Thomas, Wildey, Wilson—43.

*Fifth Ballot.*—Messrs. Boughter, Bound, Fuller, Hall, Imbrie, Lawrence, Meredith, Nichols, Parker, Robinson (Mercer), Wharton. Messrs. Abbot, Acker (Chester), Alexander, Anderson, Ashcom, Austin, Bisel (Northumberland), Bixler, Blair, Blichard (Lawrence), Craig, Crum (Westmoreland), Gibboney, Gordon, Graham, Happer, Noyes (Union), Hood, Irvin, Koch, Lawrence, Lowther, McGonigal, Moore, Mullin, Patterson, Preston, Reily, Robinson, Roller, Shrock, Seltzer, Sheppard, Taylor, Thomas, Wildey, Wilson—49.

*Sixth Ballot.*—All named in the fifth ballot, and in addition Messrs. Bleistine (Lancaster), Irish and Penney (Allegheny), Smith (Philadelphia); Messrs. Clark (Dauphin), Douglass (Allegheny), Duncan (Cambria), Fetterman (Lycoming), Marshall (Allegheny) Williams (Allegheny).

The Philadelphia delegation took rather a snap judgment upon the other candidates for State Treasurer, in nominating Mr. Mecklinger instead of Henry D. Moore, last night, after a United States Senator was selected Mr George R. Smith made the motion, and it was adopted unanimously. This was perfectly proper, as the State Treasurer has been conceded to Philadelphia, and Mr. Moore was the choice of your delegation.

Mr. Stevens's bill, to reduce, an act to incorporate the Lombard and Shippen-streets Passenger Railway Company Corporators—Ed. Brady, J. S. McGarity, Nicholas Biddle, John Bruce, James G. Hewitt, H. J. Reilly, Jacob Brown, James Tucker, William D. Baker, Emanuel Peter, William Howell, Cornelius Duross, John P. Levy, And. Graham, Robert Bonsall, Jacob