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The Press.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1861.

The Chinese Question.

What has long been dreaded by the Chinese has taken place at last. England, which introduced "the wedge," by the first Chinese War, eighteen years ago, whereby certain Chinese ports were opened to the "outside barbarians" of England, and then to all other foreigners, also obtained Hong-Kong for herself, as a distinct settlement, which is now one of her Colonies. This did not suffice. Under Lord Palmerston's rule—and, if not at his suggestion, certainly, as events have proved, with its expression of his disapprobation—a new *casus belli* was found, or made, and a new war ensued, during which Canton was stormed, captured, and occupied, after which the combined English and French force, naval and military, proceeded to carry the war to the very gates of Peking, and actually went up the river Pei-ho to the city of Tien-tsin, ninety miles distant from Peking. This frightened his "Celestial Majesty" the Emperor Hien-fung, and he consented to a treaty, which was signed on July 3, 1858.

To obtain a permanent and encroaching footing in China has long been one of the most decided desires of England. As early as the reign of Elizabeth, (A. D. 1596,) an English expedition was sent against China, and failed. Nearly a century later, in the reign of Charles II, the English "squatted" on the southern coast of China, much as they had done in Hindostan, when they commenced their approaches to sovereignty of that country. But the Hindoos, an effeminate race, were very different from the Chinese, who are at once more numerous and more warlike, having large Tartar forces, by no means deficient in courage and discipline. The only European nation allowed to have any footing was Russia, and its intercourse was commercial, not political: it has existed from about the year 1780. England was permitted to have similar relations for a short time, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, but this was checked when it was found that the English brought in great quantities of opium, cheaply produced in India, and strictly prohibited in China. The trade in tea and silks was carried on, but under such restrictions as kept the English so much out of China that few of them ever entered Canton, the port of shipment.

For many years preceding the seizure of the English stock of opium, at Canton, by Gov. Lin, in 1839, constant difficulties were arising between the Chinese and British, on account of the contraband dealing of the latter in opium. The value of what was burnt at Canton was about $20,000,000, and assuredly the Chinese were justified in what they did; but, in the war which ensued, Might conquered Right, and the treaty of August, 1842, opened *five ports, instead of Canton alone*, to all nations; admitted the residence of foreign consuls in these ports; ceded the island of Hong Kong to the English forever, and allotted $21,000,000 to be paid to England, for expenses of the war and as indemnification to the opium-merchants.

The course of the recent war need not be traced here, as it must be fresh in the memory. The Anglo-French army, according to all accounts hitherto received, did not penetrate into Pekin. The Emperor ran away into Tartary, with a baker's dozen of his wives—the whole number exceeding Solomon's, being 3,333. The English opened one of the outer gates, and encamped on the broad outer wall which encompasses the city. They did not enter, it is said, for fear that the disaffected inhabitants should take advantage of the crisis to pillage and destroy. The last accounts state that Lord Elgin and Baron Gros *had* taken up their residence in Pekin until November 9th; but not these Ambassadors only, but a strong European force should have occupied Pekin, which is a Sacred City to the Chinese, who look upon European *forbearance* as equivalent to *fear*. The Emperor's summer palace, which the French "looted," (pillaged,) and which the British finally burnt to the ground, was not in Pekin, but five miles distant.

The Emperor of China, anxious to get rid of the "barbarian" invaders, is said to have delegated to Prince Hung, his brother, the power of making a Treaty which will effect this. His Celestial Majesty, it would seem, has a lively appreciation of the value of a whole *skin*, and, therefore, *retreated from the French* and English bullets. On the 24th of October, the Treaty was made which restores peace to China. The principal conditions are: the Emperor apologizes for the attack by the Takn forts upon the British and French in the Pei-ho last year; British and French Ministers are to reside in Peking; 8,000,000 taels to be paid, by instalments, to France and England; (another account says "the indemnity by last year's treaty to be doubled,"); the Allied forces to remain at Tein-tsin until all the money be paid; Tien-tsin to be immediately opened to trade; the treaty of Tien-tsin to go into immediate operation; the Chinese to be allowed to emigrate; the Treaty to be publicly promulgated all over China; the Allied armies to evacuate Peking on November 8th; $500,000 to be paid for the benefit of the four British officers who were murdered; the island of Chusan, which the British had taken, to be given up; Cowloon to be ceded to the British Crown.

The indemnity of 8,000,000 taels, amounting to $10,640,000 of our money, so far from being *double* the amount fixed by the treaty of Tien-tsin, dated July 3, 1858, is *less than half* that, which was $16,000,000 to the English, and $6,000,000 to the French. What Cowloon may be—port or island—we have been unable to learn from *Lippincott's Gazetteer*, an authority which never failed us before. And that England should give up Chusan, an island so well fitted for a commercial settlement, surprises us, for we recollect that Chusan was held as security for the payment of the indemnity of $21,000,000 under the treaty of 1842, and held until the last dollar was paid. It has long been regretted by the English that Chusan, rather than miserable and unhealthy Hong Kong, was not retained, and Lord Elgin's relinquishing it now will not be well thought of by the mercantile interest at London and Liverpool.

Moderate terms are regarded by the Chinese as the effects of fear. The allied forces should have wintered in Peking, where the population is so vast that there *must* be ample means of living, no matter how great the cold. Actual occupancy of the Chinese capital, by European conquerors, can alone let John Chinaman feel that he has been beaten and his Emperor a disgraced fugitive.

However, *the wedge is in*. Whatever concessions England and France have gained from China have been also gained for all other civilized nations trading with the Chinese. The United States, by the treaty of 1858, come in upon the same footing as the most favored nations. The world gains commercial and political privileges—England gets Cowloon, in addition to Hong Kong, and, no doubt, will quietly follow her wonted plan of gradually advancing her feet, until they are firmly planted upon Chinese territory. Thus she did in Hindostan.

China, *at any rate*, will be an easy prey. Rebellion at home, and a conquering army from abroad, may speedily change the Imperial dynasty. The Emperor, supposed to be infallible, unconquerable, and godlike, has shown his want of sense in acting so that the European army had to advance upon his capital, his want of courage in not meeting and defeating them, and his want of spirit in running away at the first alarm of danger.

Of course, if the Chinese can evade the fulfilment of the provisions of the new treaty of Peking they will. *That* is the reason why the Allied troops remain in the country until all the money be paid. But, as far as we can judge of the future by the past, England would be just as well pleased if China should *not* act up to the treaty, for then an English army would be permanently quartered in the country, and the next great step to conquest and annexation thereby taken.

Hon. John W. Killinger.

We print, below, an eloquent and independent letter from the above-named gentleman—*the Representative from the Tenth Congressional* district of this State—addressed to the Editor of THE PRESS. Mr. KILLINGER draws a faithful and striking picture of the wrongs perpetrated upon the country by the *Disunionists*, and those who have sympathized with them, and patriotically expresses his determination to vote for any honorable proposition, in order to close this most disastrous dissension.

WASHINGTON, January 8, 1861.

To the Editor of The Press: The second session of the Thirty-sixth Congress has opened an eventful page in our country's history. For the first time in that history the disruption of the Federal Union, and the overthrow of the Federal Government, have been deliberately attempted. The threats of thirty years' growth have ripened, and culminated in open acts. The fact is manifest that we are now passing through the most perilous crisis to which our political system has ever been exposed. It is worse than idle to stop to discuss *theories of secession*, and to *thresh over* and over again the chaff of constitutional abstractions. What the public councils have to do with, in the immediate present, is the stubborn fact that the Federal Constitution—the band of our Federal Union—has been repudiated, and the Federal laws passed in pursuance thereof, have been defied, and an appeal taken to the last resort, that of armed rebellion.

The question that confronts us, then, at this moment, is one of overwhelming magnitude, overshadowing all issues of partisanship, all contests for place, and all strife for plunder. It involves the very existence of the Government, and threatens the very foundations of the Republic. All other questions dwarf into insignificance beside it, and must await *its* solution.

This momentous issue is one to be regretted, but not to be avoided. We may, and we do, deplore it, but we must not the less resolve to meet it with becoming firmness and patriotism. It is not of our seeking, but in the last extremity it must, nevertheless, be met as our fathers met the clash of resounding arms, in the days that tried men's souls, as in a furnace of consuming fire! The Constitution, the Union, and the Laws, are at once the bulwarks of our security, the main-spring of our prosperity, and the palladium of our liberties; and they cannot be destroyed without convulsions so terrible as to leave behind them disaster and utter desolation. This Government of thirty-three millions of people, with a history of a century, stretching from ocean to ocean, and shaped by the geography of a continent, is not a bubble to be pricked, or rope of sand to be rent in twain. Its peaceful dissolution is impossible. If disrupted, it will be amid the storm of battles, and with the whole heavens lurid with the glare of its conflagration!

For thirty years past and upwards, a conspiracy, hardly concealed from public observation, has existed in South Carolina to destroy the Government. This nefarious purpose has, of late years, assumed more definite form, and been strengthened by the conviction that political power and material greatness were rapidly centering in the free States and Territories. The recent census returns and the election of Mr. Lincoln have concentrated and intensified the resentments and disappointments of Southern politicians, until finally the Southern heart has been fired, and the Gulf States are precipitated into actual revolution.

So far has this purpose progressed that it has penetrated the national capital, is heard in open defiance on the floor of Congress, and holds within its grasp the sworn officers of the Government. Those who have taken solemn oaths to maintain the Constitution inviolate, and to execute the laws made in pursuance thereof, have yielded to its syren songs of delusion, or been intimidated by its stern assertions and impudent menace. It has filched from the National Treasury, beggared the finances and paralyzed the industry of the country. It has betrayed the property of the Federal Government into the hands of traitors, and has poured out the fountains of public morality and private virtue. In open rebellion in some of the States, it has literate commissioners in others, and invites revolution in all. Year later than last week it inflicted that most ignoble stab upon our national pride of hauling down our national ensign, and witnessed its insulted folds trodden the feet of an infuriated populace in the streets of Charleston. This was a feat which the enemies of American institutions had never been able to accomplish, and it was reserved for our countrymen to humiliate us in the eyes of the civilized world, by dragging in the mire and filth of mob violence the glorious flag, whose scars had never paled in the face of the foe, and whose stripes had never been unfurled except in honorable distinction.

We have to deal to-day with the same spirit of insubordination which President Jackson curbed by the exercise of his strong will, and the power of Federal authority. The nullification heresy was in full development thirty years ago, before slavery—then a matter of purely local concern—had become the great issue of our national politics. General Jackson then predicted that thereafter the negro would serve as a pretext for nullification, and the prediction has become history. From that day to the present, is the stubborn fact that the agitation with vain theories of Southern aggrandisement, outside of a Union which is really the only protection to the white world to its peculiar institutions. The storm has burst upon us, and must be met, not by partisan appeal or violent denunciations, but in the stern resolve of patriotic duty. What we have to do is to see that the mischief which has begun shall stop where its limits are now defined, we might acquiesce with regret, but without alarm. But we have no such security. With the loss of a single stone, the wall tumbles to the ground. The withdrawal of a part destroys the cohesion of all that remains. The secession of one State is the signal for secession from which will leave scarce two States in political affinity. The only thing possible, short of anarchy, is, the Republic, one and indivisible.

In the face of these things, true and undiputed as I believe they are, I cannot but hope that in the first step to be taken that suggests itself to every patriotic citizen—what is the first duty required of every Representative of the people? Plainly, to assert the dignity of the Government; to vindicate the outraged majesty of the law; to restore the *statu quo ante bellum!* No man's life is secure, no man's liberty secure, no man's property secure, no man's liberties are secure, except as we maintain the Government in its integrity and entirety.

Indications are multiplying around us that the hour of promise will soon span the vault of our political horizon. We are realizing daily how strong the Federal Union really is. Its foundations are intrenched in the hearts and best affections of the American people—its honor will be vindicated, if need be, by their strong right arms, and its future greatness and strength will be secured. The spirit of patriotism is rekindling out the quiet and spiring conduct which marks true statesmanship. Firmness in repressing treason, and conciliation in harmonizing with the patriotic elements of the country, are both needed, and in equal degree. The Nullifiers are beyond the reach of immediate redemption from the pit into which they have rushed headlong, but the masses may be weakened and isolated by depriving them of the pretext for rebellion, and thus the border slave States may be arrested before they take the same fatal plunge of secession. The patriotism of the free States may be relied upon to do justice to all sections, and to concede the constitutional rights of every State, and thereby the Union-loving men of the South will be strengthened for the conflict with the traitors in their midst.

I came to Washington with the determination to unite with Democrats and Union-loving men in the legislation which I might deem necessary to secure the constitutional rights of all our fellow-citizens, and to adjust all grievances in a fraternal spirit. If ever there was a time in the history of our country when partisanship should be merged in patriotism, that time is now. Fanaticism and passion are unsafe counsellors in this moment of the country's peril. As far as I know myself, I will, while not forgetting my life long devotion to principles, endeavor to rise above considerations of party ascendancy, and meet the momentous issues which are upon us, with calmness, and the dignity of statesmanship. My views of, and my course upon, these issues will, in good season, be spread before the intelligent people whose representative I am here, and if I fail to satisfy all of their correctness, I will at least appeal to all to judge me fairly and accord me sincerity of purpose.

At this immediate juncture, I am called on to deal with facts and events as they now confront us. My mind is clear that no terms can be made with traitors who have arrayed their hands, and are in the actual commission of high crimes and misdemeanors. To allow the Federal Government to be coerced into humiliating concessions by confederate treason, to the wide world to its peoples and to the eyes of the civilized world, by dragging in the mire and filth of mob violence the glorious flag, whose scars had never paled in the face of the foe, and whose stripes had never been unfurled except in honorable distinction.

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We must stand by the constitutional authorities of the country, rebuke treason, and put down rebellion. And in the spirit of conciliation which prompted the construction of our matchless form of government, and which alone has upheld it hitherto in the affections and respect of the people, we may then return to the adjustment of difficulties, the assertion of constitutional rights, and the correction of the abuses which formed the subjects of Federal legislation before the storm of treason broke upon us.

Yours, J. W. KILLINGER.

A Letter from John M. Botts.

Mr. Botts, of Virginia, has written the following letter:

RICHMOND, Saturday, Jan. 5, 1861.

DEAR SIR: I regret very much that it will not be in my power to accept the invitation of the committee to attend the ball to be given by the proprietors of the St. Nicholas Hotel on the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans—an event that terminated the second war of Independence, and brought its chief actor conspicuously before the country and the world; and finally elevated him to the highest office in the gift of a free people, but whose real value I had never fairly estimated until the present crisis has been brought upon the country.

Opposed as I was to *him*, and *to his Administration* from first to last, I take a pride in doing justice to his patriotism, now that he is gone, by offering as a sentiment:

"The memory of Andrew Jackson, *who*, when his country was imperilled by domestic foes, *swore* by the Eternal the Union *must* and *shall* be preserved, and *before the Eternal made his promise good.*"

I am, respectfully, JOHN M. BOTTS.

J. De Peyster Ogden, Augustus Schell, and others.

A PARTY of calathumpians were fired into by John West, Franklin, Mo., last week, he not liking their wedding serenade; a tin-pan musician, named French, was shot in the leg.

Letter from Harrisburg.

(Correspondence of The Press.)

HARRISBURG, Jan. 9, 1861.

The monotony of legislation was relieved this morning by Mr. H. G. Leisenring offering a national question for consideration. He offered a resolution referring the constitutionality of the ninety-fifth and ninety-sixth sections of the Penal Code to the arbitrament of the Supreme Court. This is our miscalled personal-liberty bill, when, in fact, it is framed in exact accordance with the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the case of Prigg vs. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Messrs. Byrne, Abbott, and Leisenring advocated the resolution, and it was opposed by Messrs. Gordon and Williams. The latter compiled as much time as all the others combined, and indulged in much abuse of the Supreme Court, declaring that it did not possess the confidence of either the profession or the people. He further declared no man was secure in his rights as that court is at present constituted, for conflicting opinions are to be found in the same volume of reports. He quoted from Judge Black's allusive opinion in the Barney Hold case, to show that a man was not secure in his property longer than nine years, if the case was to be decided by the Supreme Court. Williams is said to be a lawyer of great acquirements. His style is perspicuous and closely to a degree, but his *propaganda crusade*, in which *he found cold comfort* from the ministers of the law, has not only embittered him against them, but given him a very poor opinion of any person who respects that tribunal, or *any community* that pays its debts except on compulsion.

In the House, Mr. Ridgway read in place a bill to incorporate the American Sub-Marine and Salvage Company. Corporators—Bruna De Villero I, Charles Boker, T. N. Davis, and such others as may be associated with them. Capital stock $250,000, with power to increase to $2,000,000, in shares of $100 each. Object—the raising and recovery of wrecked or sunken vessels. A half per cent. bonus to be paid to the State. The charter is to expire in 20 years unless renewed.

In the Senate, Mr. Smith, a petition and bill to release the bequest of Eliza Howard Burd to the vestrymen of St. Stephen's Church, Philadelphia, from the payment of the collateral inheritance tax, amounting to $12,750. The bequest was for building and maintaining a school and asylum for orphan female children. There are several precedents for legislation of this character.

Mr. Parker, to incorporate the American and India Commercial Company. The capital stock is to be $500,000. This is a mammoth pawnbroking bill, and has "an ancient or fish-like smell," as it it had been heard of in these halls before. It was *killed last winter*, and it is now attempted to galvanize it into existence.

Mr. Parker, also, an act to incorporate the Philadelphia Improvement, Savings, and Loan Company. Corporators—A. B. Eckel, C. A. Trioi, William Frederick Smith, J. Alexander Simpson, Samuel Eckel, J. V. B. Hahn, Joshua Komes, A. Ketterlinus, John Eisopner, Charles F. Keith, Jones G. Dixon, Charles R. Abbott, &c. Capital stock, 2,560 shares, of two hundred dollars each. The object is to purchase and improve lands in the city of Philadelphia, and dispose of the same, to receive all monies entrusted to their care, and to invest the same securely.

Mr. Connell, to incorporate a compelling savings fund to pay all deposits under fifty dollars on demand. Also, one creating the Twenty-fifth ward of Philadelphia out of the Nineteenth and Twenty-third wards. At present the Nineteenth is the most populous ward of the city.

Mr. Nichols, an act to incorporate the Penn Gas Coal Company. Corporators—Robert H. Grafton, John Lindsay, Wm. Coleman, J. H. Robinson, R. E. McGrew, John P. Sheler, and Lewis Cooper. Capital stock, from five to ten thousand shares, as they may determine, of fifty dollars each, with power to further increase it. Object—to mine coal in Westmoreland county, or iron ore, and manufacture fire brick, mineral oil, and to build a railroad to connect with other roads, provided it be not more than fifteen mi