

secured, and looking on the scene of which we are about to attempt a description, without any manifestation of impatience, until shortly before the adjournment.

Departing from the rule of proceeding which has obtained for many years in the Senate, Charles B. Penrose, who had been elected speaker of the Senate, prior to the adjournment of that body in the spring of 1838, assumed the chair as presiding officer, at 3 o'clock P. M. The object of this departure is obvious—it was part of the plan of which we have before spoken, and the intent to prevent the newly elected members from either speaking or voting on motions to be proposed, before a new election for speaker, was evident. Some discontent at this course was manifested by Messrs Myers and Fraley, old members, but the expression of it was immediately silenced by the speaker's hammer. It was now perfectly evident to all, that the object of the speaker was to prevent any discussion of the propriety of his course or any interference with a previously arranged plan for so organizing the senate as to preclude all action on the part of members supposed to be hostile to the views of the speaker and his friends.

The Secretary of the Commonwealth having brought in what he called the official return of members elect, including the minority returns of the county of Philadelphia, but exclusive of the true returns, which we have shown you were regularly and legally filed in the office of the secretary. The clerk was directed to call over the names of the Senators already sworn, that is, the senators being members of the last session, and excluding all the newly elected members. This being done, the clerk was further directed to read over the returns of elections of new members. When he came to the return from the county of Philadelphia, certifying that James Hanna and William Wagner were elected, Mr. Brown of the county, who received, at least, a majority of five hundred votes over Mr. Hanna, offered to the chair a certified copy of the legal return, which had been received by the secretary of state, but withheld by him from the senate. This the chair refused to touch; alleging that he could receive no paper relative to this subject, except such as the secretary chose to send. Thus, again, did Thomas H. Burrows, by his usurpation of power, defeat the right of the democratic members to their seats. In illustration of the merely partisan feeling which governed the secretary throughout these proceedings, and the gross inconsistencies into which the indulgence of this unworthy passion led him, it may be mentioned that by the only legal return in his office, certified by a majority of the Senatorial return judges, Messrs Frow and Ever, democrats, from the 8th senatorial district, composed of the counties of Huntingdon, Mifflin, Juniata, Union and Perry, were, beyond question, entitled to their seats. To defeat this right, certified copies of the returns from all the counties composing the eighth district, comprising the county of Huntingdon, which had been rejected by the return judges for gross frauds alleged to have been practised at several election districts, was procured and filed in the Secretary's office. With these, by law, the Secretary had nothing to do. He could not know them, he could not in any way recognize them. And yet the man, who refused to send to the Senate and the House, legal returns of the election in the county of Philadelphia, because those returns proved that democrats were elected, received into his office and sent to the Senate, certificates from a Prothonotary's office, lodged in his hands, against all law and form of law, to defeat, if it might be, the right of Democratic Senators to take their seats. In truth, so far has this machination been carried, that the Senate stooped to receive certificates utterly irregular and upon them exclude democratic Senators, and but a few minutes after negatived a motion made by Mr. Carpenter of Westmoreland, calling on the Secretary to send to the Senate the majority return from the county of Philadelphia, lest upon that return it might have been compelled to receive Messrs. Brown and Stevenson, the democratic members elected. This was decided by a strict party vote, on a call of the yeas and nays—the federalists all voting against the motion—the democrats for it. That the Senate had power to call for the paper is confessed; that under the circumstances it was its duty to do so, is so manifest, that any argument to prove it would be superfluous; that it refused to execute this duty, in order to carry out the predetermination of the majority to swear in Messrs. Hanna and Wagner, with-out regard to the "light and the truth," will, as we proceed, be further demonstrated.

After the rejection of Mr. Carpenter's motion, the new members, including Messrs. Hanna and Wagner, were called on by the Speaker to take the oaths. At this juncture, Mr. Rogers of Bucks interposed—not in a disorderly manner as has been alleged—but temperately and courteously stating that he held in his hand an authenticated paper—being the certified majority returns from the county of Philadelphia, which showed incontrovertibly, that Messrs. Hanna and Wagner were not elected; and he therefore protested against their being sworn in as members of the Senate. He offered the paper to the acceptance of the Senate, and was proceeding to address it, when he was called to order, peremptorily, by the Speaker, who decided that the paper should not be received. At the moment Mr. Rogers was interrupted by the call to order, several of the spectators, who had been highly

excited by the arbitrary proceedings of the majority, and the manifest partiality of the Speaker, urged by the impulse of the moment uttered some disorderly cries of "hear him," but these were in an instant silenced and order restored.—A motion was now made by Mr. Myers and Fraley that the swearing in of Messrs. Hanna and Wagner be postponed for the present. It will be recollected that similar motion had been before sustained by the majority, in the case of the Senators from the eighth district, on the alleged ground of uncertainty and irregularity in the returns. The motion of Mr. Myers was advocated by Mr. Fullerton, the only member of the federal party in that body, who had independence enough to spurn from him the degrading party shackles which had been imposed on all the rest. He pointed out the fact that the return, under which Messrs. Hanna and Wagner claimed to be members was, on its very face irregular, partial, and imperfect comprising but seven districts of seventeen, of which number it was known Philadelphia county was composed, and signed but by six return judges. He urged feelingly and forcibly upon the Senate to pause and reflect ere it took the step accepting the gentlemen named in that return as sitting members, without further investigation. Mr. F. was answered by Mr. Pearson a federal member from Mercer. With the statute book lying before him, or within his immediate reach, containing the public laws of Pennsylvania, by some of which the county of Philadelphia is divided into seventeen election districts, the Senator argued—if argument it can be called—that the Senate could not know that Philadelphia county contained more than seven election districts—nay, that the return on their table furnished evidence that contained no more and in the absence of the other proof members were bound to take it as true.

Will it be believed that, upon such a reason as this, for none other was given—a majority of Pennsylvania senators could be found so ignorant or so corrupt, as to reject the motion for postponement pending before them? Yet so it was. The motion of Mr. Myers was decided by another party vote on a call of the yeas and nays. Every federal member, with the exception of Mr. Fullerton, voting against it. During the progress of the discussion, Messrs Bell of Chester and Coplan of Fayette; democrats, who had been called as members to vote, and did vote for speaker, attempted to address the Senate. They were instantly and peremptorily forbidden to speak, and together with all the other new members, excluded from the vote taken on this highly important question. In fact, up to this moment, the most harassing course under a show of courtesy, was pursued by the speaker towards those democratic members who sought to speak upon the topics which agitated the Senate.

But the decision was made—the blow was struck—the severest, it is believed, ever yet directed against the elective franchise in Pennsylvania; and there, in the sacred chamber of the senate and in the face of an assembled multitude, many of whom were acquainted with the facts of the case, Messrs. Hanna and Wagner who had notoriously received but a minority of the votes of the freemen of the county of Philadelphia, were sworn in as members of the Senate representing the county of Philadelphia.

After this, Mr. Brown of the county obtained leave to speak. He addressed the Senate in a speech replete with feeling, and expressive of deep indignation. After he had concluded the Senate adjourned.

During Mr. Brown's address much disorder occurred in the gallery; and after the adjournment of the Senate, but not before, the crowd took possession of the chamber, but soon after dispersed.

Under no combination of circumstances, short of those constituting actual and necessary revolution, can we justify the exhibition of tumult in our Halls of legislation.—We protest against it as calculated to destroy all freedom of discussion and deliberation. But the question may be asked with propriety. Is it to be wondered at that a spirited and intelligent people, goaded into indiscretion by an act of gross injustice perpetrated under their very eyes, should permit to escape them a disorderly expression of excited feeling.

This popular tumult, short lived as it was, was immediately seized on as a pretext by the executive of the commonwealth for issuing a proclamation calculated to increase, rather than allay any excitement which might exist, calling upon the military force of the commonwealth to hold themselves in instant readiness to repair to the seat of government; and now, in pursuance of that proclamation and the orders issued under it falsely suggesting that blood had been shed, a body of armed men marched from the city of Philadelphia now occupies the peaceful capital of the state. We say peaceful—for we assert unhesitatingly, that for three days prior to the arrival of these troops, no town in Pennsylvania could be more quiet and orderly than was Harrisburg. What the result of this extraordinary step may be no man can foretell; but we may be permitted to hope that this last sad blunder, committed by an administration whose whole course might be denominated a "Comedy or Errors," if it were not for the serious results flowing from its mistakes, may not be productive of the effect we have too much reason to apprehend.

In conclusion, we beg leave to assure you, that since the commencement of the unhappy differences which convulse the legislative body, every effort has been made

by us to bring about a reconciliation on such terms as reasonably ought to have been accepted. These have been heretofore rejected. In the discharge of the duty we owe to ourselves and you, we shall persevere in these efforts, until all hope of the adjustment of difficulties be lost.

We are, fellow citizens,
Yours, &c.

W. T. Rogers,
Thomas S. Bell,
Henry Myers,
Samuel Miller,
Michael Snyder,
Wm. F. Coplan,
E. Kingsbury, Jr.,
Samuel L. Carpenter,
Charles Fraley,
James Caldwell,

Members of the Senate.
Wm. Hopkins, Speaker,
Samuel Strohecker,
William M'Kinstry,
Henry Longaker,
C. Foster,
Miles N. Carpenter,
Charles Chandler Jr.,
Robert E. Janies,
R. Broadhead Jr.,
T. H. Brittain,
Adam Schoener,
James R. Snowdon,
W. B. Anderson,
John W. Nesbit,
Samuel Penrose,
Thomas J. Heston,
Lewis B. Cole,
William Andrews,
Samuel Pegely,
W. Reynolds,
E. W. Hamlin,
James Woodburn,
J. H. Lavery,
Martin Shearer,
Joseph Douglas,
Charles D. Jones,
Wm. R. Gorgas,
Jacob Work,
M. W. Coolbaugh,
Charles Evans,
B. Crispin,
Abraham Hill,
John Park,
Charles W. Hegins,
Levi Hoge,
G. Dare,
Wm. Mortimer,
William P. Wilcox,
Jacob S. Yost,
John Hill,
Abraham Helfenstien,
William Field,
Strokes L. Roberts,
Charles Pray,
Thomas C. McElwee,
Robert Love,
R. P. Flenniken,
John W. Ryan,
Martin Loy,
Michael Ritter,
James Kerr,
William Colt,
D. F. Barstow,
Jacob Walborn,
Frederick Smith,
J. Bruner,

Members of the House of Representatives
Harrisburg, December 10, 1838

BLOOMSBURG, PA.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22.

VOICE OF COLUMBIA COUNTY.

At a meeting held in Danville, at the Court House, on Tuesday December 18, 1838, by the citizens of Columbia county for the purpose of expressing their opinions in the present unprecedented situation of our public affairs at Harrisburg.

On motion, JAMES LOUGHEAD, Esq. was chosen President: Stephen Haldy, Dr. O. D. Leib, Joseph Dean, and Lyman Sholes, Esqrs. Vice Presidents, and H. Webb, and V. Best, were chosen Secretaries.

Resolved, That the Chair appoint a Committee of forty persons to draft report and resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting.

Whereupon the following persons were selected by the chair:

John Cooper, Sewell Gibbs,
James Emmett, William Hartman,
Griffith Davis, James Childs,
Mich'l. Fornwald, David Reich,
Joseph Maus, Benj. P. Alward,
Michael Sanders, Gideon Mellin,
Wm. Campbell, John Rhodes,
S. A. Brady, Martin M'Alister,
Daniel Brewer, John Rishel,
Mich'l. R. Hower, John Dean,
W. R. Gearheart, John Reynolds,
Dr. Wm. Petrikin, Thomas Clark,
B. S. Woolverton, Wm. Snyder,
Edward Young, H. P. Baldy,
Enoch Mellin, Joseph Yetter,
D. Krownover, John Mench,
John Wagner, Sam. Saffer,
Jacob R. Hower, Wm. Henrie,
Joseph Hiles, Thomas Brandon,
Benj. Thornton, Dan'l Reynolds.

Who reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were adopted unanimously:

Whereas, a crisis in our political affairs has arrived, which all good men must deplore; but which, without forfeiting the name and character of freemen, we must meet—and meet like men, who their duties know, but know their rights, and knowing dare maintain.

The question to be decided by the approaching contest, is whether the cardinal principles of our Republican form of government, "that the majority shall govern" is yet to be obeyed in our elections or not? Or in other words, whether the people yet retain the right of self government? and need we ask, whether we are prepared to abandon this right, and submit to the dictation of the Bank of the United States and its myrmidons, and let them choose our Representatives? The question is unworthy of an answer, and if no other alternative offers, much as we wish for peace, we will, as descendants of those who shed their blood and treasures for Liberty and Independence, prepare for war! What, has it come to this? that a mere formalist—a humble drudge, in one of our public offices; a man utterly insignificant in himself, if not supported by a party; who have long wished for an opportunity to subvert our elective franchise.—Shall he, by his mere say so—judge of the qualifications of our two houses of the legislature? and by a departure from honesty, which richly deserves a penitentiary punishment, prostrate the will of the sovereign people, expressed by their legal votes in the election returns of the election districts of the state? Shall he be permitted, holding two official returns of the election, as he acknowledges he did, to suppress the true and just return; and present to the houses, spurious and illegal ones, for the purpose of forwarding the design of the enemies of free government, who pay him and support him in his atrocious attempt? We say he shall not do this with impunity nor will we submit to have our rights trampled under foot. Nor will we permit a house of representatives organized under such circumstances, by a notorious adventurer who has disgraced himself and his adopted State by his nefarious and abandoned intrigues, to be recognized as representing the citizens of the State; nor will we permit Governor Ritner, and the speaker of the Senate, Charles B. Penrose, to usurp the powers of government, and wrest all right from the people by a consummation of plans and projects, which would disgrace a Cataline, without using our exertions to prevent them.

The merits and demerits of the question are before the people. A minute detail is therefore unnecessary. We have, as a constituent part of that people, evidence sufficient laid before us to convince us, that a deliberate attempt is making to change our form of government. We believe the great body of the people are satisfied of this, and that our opponents know it to be so. Think as we do, therefore, we call upon every friend of free government—not only to speak out, but to come forward and aid us against the unhallowed attack on our free institutions, made by a band of traitors and conspirators.

We adjure our fellow citizens in these trying times, to be prepared to endure the privations necessarily attending a state of hostility. We had hoped that reason would have resumed her throne—but hope has fled and we have every reason to believe that the conspirators will proceed at all hazards to perpetrate their wicked designs. And we will, so far as in us lies, do our utmost to oppose them, and punish the perpetrators. And with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, and the justice of our cause, we will fearlessly prepare for, and abide the result.

Therefore Resolved—That the attempt of the Federal Bank party, through their tools and instruments, Joseph Ritner, Thaddeus Stevens, and Thomas H. Burrows, to divest the members of the Legislature, elected by the voice of the people, of their rights and privileges, must cover all concerned in it, with disgrace and infamy.

Resolved—That we seriously advise the instigators of the treasonable act now hanging about to be perpetrated at Harrisburg, residing in Philadelphia, to expect, that should the as yet sleeping Lion be roused, he may erect his mane in Chesnut street!—Verbum sat.

Resolved—That in Joseph Ritner, we cannot recognize a single trait, which ought to characterize the Governor of a great State; ignorant, imbecile, servile, we know him only as the pliant tool and instrument of the banks and monied aristocracy; and we view his act in calling the armed milita-

ry bands from Philadelphia, as a wicked attempt to murder his fellow citizens, or endeavoring to maintain their political rights; and his miserable pretext, that it was for the purpose of suppressing a mob, when none existed, caps the climax of his infamy, and adds the endowment of mendacity to the other mental ornaments of this all-accomplished Idiot!

Resolved—That we consider the conduct of Charles B. Penrose, Thaddeus Stevens, Thomas H. Burrows, and their coadjutors, as in the last degree, ignominious and disgraceful, and that the hissing and hootings of an outrage and insulted community, will pursue them through every maze of there unexampled turpitude to the latest period of their abject and degraded existence.

Resolved—That we view the conduct of those 52 members falsely styling themselves the House of Representatives, in suffering themselves to be drilled and trained by an unprincipled blackleg and blackguard, as equally unworthy their characters as citizens of a civilized country, and as members of the State Legislature.

Resolved—That we view the conduct of the State Senate, as illegal and unjust, and tending to degrade and disgrace the Senate, in the eyes of the world.

Resolved—That representing Columbia County, the "Star of the North" in its democracy, we will support and assist our democratic members of the Legislature in their manly resistance to the money of the United States Bank, the ball and buckshot cartridges of Gen. Patterson, and the fraud, corruption, and murderous intentions of Ritner and his associates; and will at the shortest notice assist them with men and arms, to the tune of our democratic majority 1528.

Resolved—That we have calmly examined the proceedings at Harrisburg for the last two or three weeks, and we unhesitatingly pronounce the charge of misrule and violence, made against our fellow citizens at that place, as a base and unfounded falsehood! fabricated by the conspirators to conceal their designs, to accomplish their treasonable purposes, by parading a military force which they dare not use.

Resolved—That we despise the cant and slang of the Federal party who break all law, outrage all decency, and render assu-der every tie which connects the bonds of society, and are the first and loudest to extol the supremacy of the law and the necessity of subordination.

Resolved—That we hold in equal contempt the advice of those who would wish us to fold our arms, hold our tongues and carry out the doctrine of passive obedience, non-resistance while a band of traitors, under the semblance of Law and Legislation, are consuming their acts of treason and robbing us of our privileges as American Citizens.

Resolved—That our members of the Legislature, are entitled to, and we owe them, our most grateful thanks, for their praiseworthy conduct; and we now instruct them, to consent to no arrangement which will in any the slightest degree, compromise our rights or principles; to adhere strictly to the rule laid down by Andrew Jackson, the great and good, "to claim nothing but what is right, and submit to nothing that is wrong." And we pledge all that is sacred to man, to sustain them in their attitude, under all and every emergency.

Resolved—That we cannot sufficiently admire the patriotism, virtue, and courage of our fellow citizens at Harrisburg organized under the name of the "Committee of Safety"—to them we say that the people are not ungrateful.

Resolved—That we invite a co-operation with our democratic brethren throughout the State, and call upon them to stand forth and assist us, in our contest with the sons of mammon and ambition.

Resolved—That we will do all that in us lies to prevent an outbreak; that we desire peace, and will do all that men ought to do to preserve it, but that in defence of ourselves and our rights, we will if necessity compel us, bear arms and use them as we have a constitutional right to do.

Resolved—That the Bank of the United States having loaned \$500,000 to Stevens & Co. without authority; will not be recognized as a creditor by the Commonwealth, but must resort to those to whom they lent the money for payment; and we believe, that the inability of the officers of the late administration to settle their accounts is the reason of the insurrectionary and treasonable course, now in progress by Burrows, Stevens, Ritner & Co.