

Democratic Banner.

BY MOORE & THOMPSON.

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TERMS

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Interesting from the Pacific.

Operations of Col. Fremont in Upper California.

The *Washington Union* of Monday night, contains a lengthy and very interesting letter from Col. Thomas H. Benton, relating to the operations of Col. Fremont, during the last winter and spring, in Upper California, together with others from Col. Fremont, giving a graphic and interesting account of his movements.—Col. B.'s letter is accompanied by several columns of official correspondence between the authorities of Upper California, and Thomas O. Larkin, Esq. our Consul at Monterey, relating to Col. Fremont and the attempt to drive him from that department, in the early part of the year, by force of arms. Our limits force brevity upon us, so that we are compelled to omit even the substance of these letters, but it is not unknown to our readers that the appearance of Col. F. and his party in that department of California, early in the year, gave anything but satisfaction to the authorities, and this correspondence between our Consul and Governor Castro, resulted from a proclamation issued by the latter, peremptorily commanding Colonel Fremont to withdraw with his men from the country. From the letter of Colonel Benton, we learn that after Col. F. had crossed the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada of the Alta California, he left his men upon the frontier, a hundred miles from Monterey, and went alone to that city to explain his object and wishes in person to Gov. Castro. The interview was entirely satisfactory, and resulted in permission being granted him by the Governor to winter in the valley of the San Joaquin, where there was plenty of game for his men and grass for his horses.—Scarcely had he arrived in this valley with his men, when reports began to reach him from all quarters that the Governor was raising the province against him—he was warned of his danger by our Consul—the settlers proposed to join him but he refused their assistance—and taking position on the summit of the Sierra, thirty miles from and overlooking Monterey, he awaited the assailants. From this position he could clearly discern the movements of the force under Gen. Castro, but after all their threats, they only approached the camp, and Col. Fremont, not finding himself attacked, and determined to avoid collision, then determined to retire, and to proceed to Oregon, on his intended route of the valley of the Sacramento, the Tlamath lake, and the valley of the Wahlamath river. Accordingly, about the 10th of March, he left his position on the Sierra, descended into the valley of the San Joaquin, and commenced his march by slow and easy stages of four and six miles a day, towards Oregon. The Governor after his return from the evacuated camp on the Sierra, issued a proclamation denouncing Col. F. and his men as a band of robbers and highwaymen, and it appears they were not even permitted to retire without further molestation.—*Fremont.*

We copy from Col. Benton's letter:—
"The first letter that we received from Capt. Fremont after his withdrawal from the Sierra, and from the valley of the San Joaquin, is dated the first day of April, in latitude 40, on the Sacramento river; and, though written merely to inform Mrs. Fremont of his personal concerns, becomes important in a public point of view on account of subsequent events in June and July, by showing that on the first of April he was on his way to Oregon—that he had abandoned all intention of returning through any part of California—would cross the Rocky mountains through the Northern Pass on the line between the Upper, or Kettle Falls of the Columbia, and the Great Falls of the Missouri—and be in the United States in September. This shows that he had, at that time, no idea of the events in which he was subsequently involved, and that he had abandoned the cherished field of his intended scientific researches for the express purpose of avoiding all offence to the Mexican authorities. Of the events in the valley of the San Joaquin and the camp on the Sierra, he speaks a few words without detail, but descriptive of his condition, characteristic of his prudence in not compromising his country, and worthy to be repeated in his own language. He says: 'The Spaniards were somewhat rude and inhospitable below, and ordered me out of the country, after having given me permission to winter there. My sense of duty did not permit me to fight them, but we retired slowly & growlingly before a force of 3 or 4 hundred men, and two pieces of artillery. Without the shadow of a cause, the governor suddenly raised the whole country against me, issuing a false and scandalous proclamation. Of course, I did not dare to compromise the United States, against which appearances would have been strong; but though it was in my power to increase my party by Americans, I refrained from committing a solitary act of hostility or impropriety.' His next letter is dated

the 14th of May, and informs me that, in his progress to Oregon, he found himself and party unexpectedly attacked by the Tlamath Indians—the most warlike of that quarter—had lost five men in killed and wounded—and still expected to be in the United States in the month of September.

This was the last letter received from Col. Fremont until the following, of July 26th, from Monterey, and which was bro't by Commodore Sloat. It is a plain statement of his movements, and will be read with deep interest. The letter of Col. Benton goes into a lengthy and able review of the operations of Col. F. and fully justifies his conduct against the falsehoods and gasconade of Gov. Castro. The *Union* truly says:—'Nothing could be more moderate at first—nothing more decided, when he was assailed by the Mexicans—more manly, more heroic than his conduct.'

Private letter from Captain Fremont to Senator Benton, dated Monterey of the Alto California, July 25, 1846.

Mission of Carmel, July 25, 1845.

My Dear Sir—When Mr. Gillespie overtook me in the middle of May, we were encamped on the northern shore of the Greater Tlamath Lake. Snow was falling steadily and heavily in the mountains, which entirely surround and dominate the elevated valley region into which we had penetrated; in the east, and north, and west, barriers absolutely impassable barred our road; we had no provisions; our animals were already feeble, and while any other way was open, I could not bring myself to attempt such a doubtful enterprise as a passage of these unknown mountains in the dead of winter. Every day the snow was falling; and in the face of the depressing influence exercised on the people by the loss of our men, and the unpromising appearance of things, I judged it inexpedient to pursue our journey farther in this direction, and determined to retrace my steps, and carry out the views of the government by reaching the frontier on the line of the Colorado river. I had scarcely reached the lower Sacramento, when Gen. Castro, then in the north (at Sonoma, in the department of Sonoma, north of the bay of San Francisco, commanded by Gen. Vallejo,) declared his determination immediately to proceed against me, and after defeating me to proceed against the foreigners settled in the country, for whose expulsion an order had just been issued by the governor of the California. For these purposes Castro immediately assembled a force at the Mission of Santa Clara, a strong place, on the northern shore of the Francisco bay. You will remember how grossly outraged and insulted we had already been by this officer; many in my own camp, and through out the country thought that I should not have retreated in March last. I felt humiliated and humbled; one of the main objects proposed by this expedition had been entirely defeated, and it was the opinion of the officers of the squadron (so I was informed by Mr. Gillespie) that I could not again retreat consistently with any military reputation. Unable to procure supplies elsewhere, I had sent by Mr. Gillespie, Capt. Montgomery, commanding the United States ship-of-war Portsmouth, then lying at Monterey, a small requisition for such supplies as were indispensably necessary to leave the valley; and my animals were now in such a state that I could not get out of the valley, without reaching the country which lies on the west side of them in an entirely destitute condition.

Having carefully examined my position, and foreseeing, I think, clearly, all the consequences which may eventuate to me from such a step, I determined to take such active and anticipatory measures as should seem to me most expedient to protect my party and justify my own character. I was well aware of the grave responsibility which I assumed, but I also determined that having once decided to do so, I would assume it and its consequences fully and entirely, and go through with the business completely to the end. I regret that, by a sudden emergency, I have only an hour for writing to all friends, and that therefore from the absence of detail, what I say to you will not be clearly understood. Castro's first measure was an attempt to incite the Indian population of the Joaquin and Sacramento valleys, and the neighboring mountains, to burn the crops of the foreigners and otherwise proceed immediately against them. These Indians are extremely numerous, and the success of his measure would have been very destructive; but he failed entirely. On the 6th of June I decided on the course which I would pursue, and immediately concerted my operations with the foreigners inhabiting the Sacramento valley. A few days afterwards, one of Castro's officers, with a party of 14 men, attempted to pass a drive of 200 horses from Sonoma to Santa Clara, via Now Helvetia, with the avowed purpose of bringing troops into the country. On the 11th, they were surprised at daylight on the Cosumne river by a party of 12 from my camp. The horses were taken, but they (the men) were dismissed without injury. At daybreak on the 15th, the military fort of Sonoma was taken by surprise, with 9 brass

* The mission of Carmel is 3 miles south of Monterey.

pieces of artillery, 250 stand of muskets, some other arms, and a quantity of ammunition. Gen. Vallejo, his brother, (Capt. Vallejo,) Colonel Greuxdon, and some others, were taken prisoners and marched to New Helvetia, a fortified post under my command. In the meantime a launch had reached New Helvetia with stores from the ship Portsmouth, now lying at Yerba Buena, on Francisco bay. News of Gen. Castro's proceedings against me in March, had reached Commodore Sloat at Mazatlan at the end of that month, and he had immediately despatched the ship Portsmouth to Monterey, with general instructions to protect American interests in California.

These enterprises accomplished, I proceeded to the American settlements on the Sacramento, and the Rio de los Americanos, to obtain reinforcements of men and rifles. The information brought by Mr. Gillespie to Captain Montgomery, in relation to my position, induced that officer immediately to proceed to Yerba Buena, whence he had despatched his launch to me. I immediately wrote to him by return of the boat, describing to him fully my position and intentions, in order that he might not, by supposing me to be acting under orders from our government, unwittingly commit himself in affording me other than such assistance as his instructions would authorize him naturally to offer an officer charged with an important public duty; or, in fine, to any citizens of the United States.

Information having reached me from the commanding officer at Sonoma, that his post was threatened with an attack by a force under Gen. Castro, I raised camp on the American fork on the afternoon of the 23d, and, accompanied by Mr. Gillespie, at two in the morning of the 25th, reached Sonoma, with 90 mounted riflemen, having marched 80 miles. Our people still held the place, only one division of Castro's force, a squadron of cavalry, numbering 70 men, and commanded by Joaquin de la Torre, (one of his best officers,) having succeeded in crossing the straits, (Francisco bay.) This force had attacked an advanced party of twenty Americans, and (was) defeated with the loss of two killed and two or three wounded. The Americans lost none. This was an unexpected check to the Californians, who had announced their intentions to defeat our people without firing a gun; to beat out their brains with their "tapaderos," and destroy them "con cuchillos puros." They were led to use this expression from the circumstances that a few days previous they had captured two of our men, [an express,] and after wounding, had bound them to trees, and cut them to pieces while alive, with an exaggeration of cruelty, which no Indian would be capable of. In a few days de la Torre was driven from the country, having barely succeeded in effecting his escape across the straits, the guns [six large and handsome pieces] spiked at the fort on the south side of entrance to Francisco bay, and the communication with the opposite side entirely broken off, the boats and launches being either destroyed or in our possession. Three of Castro's party having landed on the Sonoma side in advance, were killed near the beach; and beyond this there was no loss on either side. In all these proceedings, Mr. Gillespie has acted with me. We reached Sonoma again on the evening of July 4, and in the morning I called the people together, and spoke to them in relation to the position of the country, advising a course of operations which was unanimously adopted. California was declared independent, the country put under martial law, the force organized, and officers elected. A pledge, binding themselves to support these measures, and to obey their officers, was signed by those present. The whole was placed under my direction. Several officers from the Portsmouth were present at this meeting. Leaving Captain Grigby, with 50 men in command of Sonoma, I left that place on the 6th, and reached my encampment on the American Fork in three days. Before we arrived at that place, General Castro had evacuated Santa Clara, which he had been engaged in fortifying, and with a force of about 400 men and two pieces of artillery, commenced his retreat upon St. John's, a fortified post, having eight pieces of artillery, principally brass. On the evening of the 10th we were electrified by the arrival of an express from Captain Montgomery with information that Com Sloat had hoisted the flag at Yerba Buena, and sent one to Sonoma, to be hoisted at that place. One also was sent to the officer commanding at New Helvetia, requesting that it might be hoisted at his post.

Independence and the flag of the United States are synonymous terms to the foreigners here, [the northern, which is the stronger part, particularly,] and accordingly I directed the flag to be hoisted with a salute the next morning. The event produced a great rejoicing among our people. The next day I received an express from Commodore Sloat, transmitting to me his proclamation, and directing me to proceed with the force under my orders to Monterey. The registered force, actually in arms, and under my orders, numbered two hundred and twenty riflemen; with one piece of field artillery, and ten men, in addition to the artillery of the garrison. We

were on the eve of marching in pursuit of Castro when this intelligence arrived; accordingly, I directed my march upon Monterey, where I arrived on the evening of the 19th, with a command of 160 mounted riflemen, and one piece of artillery. I found also there Commodore Stockton in command of the frigate Congress, and Admiral Seymour, in command of her British Majesty's ship Collingwood, of eighty guns. I have been badly interrupted, and shall scarcely be able to put you in full possession of occurrences.

To come briefly to a conclusion. Commodore Sloat has transferred the squadron with California and its appurtenances into the hands of Commodore Stockton, who has resolved to make good the possession of California. This officer approves entirely of the course pursued by myself and Mr. Gillespie, who, I repeat, has been hand in hand with me in this business. I received this morning, from Commodore Stockton, a commission of Major in the United States Army, retaining command of my battalion, to which a force of eighty marines, will be attached. We are under orders to embark to-morrow morning, on board the Cyane sloop of war, and will disembark at San Diego, immediately in the rear of Castro. He is now at the Pueblo de los Angeles, an interior city, with a force of about 500 men, supposed to be increasing. The design is to attack him with my force at that place. He has there seven or eight pieces of artillery.

Commodore Sloat, who goes home by way of Panama, promises to hand or send you this immediately on his arrival at Washington, to which he goes direct. It is my intention to leave this country, if it is within the bounds of possibility, at the end of August. I could then succeed in crossing the Rocky mountains—later it would not be possible on account of the snow; and by that time a territorial government will be in operation here.

Yours, very truly,
J. C. FREMONT.
Hon. Thomas H. Benton, United States Senate, Washington city, D. C.

DEATH-BED OF AN INFIDEL.

The writer of this was called about mid-day to visit a young man in the last moments of life. He was a professed infidel, and refused any spiritual aid or the services of a minister. On entering the room the scene was truly awful—the young man was dying—near the bed sat his widowed mother and sisters. He was struggling to hide his fears, and appear calm and collected in the conflict with death. As I approached him, the window was slightly opened to admit sufficient light; he turned towards the window, and as his eye for a moment rested on me—it was only for a moment, however, for he as quickly turned away, with his face towards the wall—seemed determined to prevent my conversing with him. I took his hand, he withdrew it; I asked him to look at me and talk about his latter end; he groaned and hid himself beneath the bed clothes. Again I held his hand, and by gentle force turned him towards me. His countenance was intelligent, and his features good; his appearance indicated twenty or twenty one years of age.

'Shall I pray with you, my friend?'

'No, no,' said he; 'I don't believe in prayer.'

'Shall I read a portion of God's holy word?'

'No; O, don't worry me; I don't believe the Bible. Why add to my sufferings with such things? I tell you I am an infidel, and all I ask is to be left alone.'

'Do you know you are dying, my young friend?'

'Yes, I know it well enough—I never shall see that sun rise or set again—I wish it was over—I wish I was dead—I wish you would leave me—I did not send for you—mother, mother, send this man away—it is useless to talk to me.'

'Oh, my boy,' cried the almost heart broken mother, 'do listen to the word of truth. You will soon be beyond its reach—you are fast hastening to the judgment. Oh, my child, it is a fearful thing to meet God unprepared.'

Her sobs choked her utterance. I knelt by his side, and prayed for God's Spirit to bring the wanderer back. He rolled and tossed in his bed, and constantly interrupted me during prayer; I then read from the Bible such verses as I thought would lead his mind to right reflection. He hid his face, placed his fingers in his ears, and begged me to desist, and groaned so audibly as to alarm those in the room. After several ineffectual attempts to get him into conversation, I rose to leave the room. As I passed towards the door, I grasped his hand and said, 'farewell, my friend.' He raised his eyes towards me, and seemed to be willing to listen.

'Suppose,' said I, 'we were on board a ship together, and in some violent storm the ship was wrecked—I had secured a plank, and as I clung to it for safety, refused to let you take hold. What would you think of me?'

'Think of you?' said he; 'I would think you were a selfish wretch.'

'We have been wrecked—here [pointing to the Bible] is the plank on which I rest; the billows of death are riding over you; and will you lay hold before it is forever too late. Before you is the shoreless

ocean of eternity; the voice of mercy may yet be heard. Turn you, for why will ye die? Your infidelity is no security for such a storm. Think of your Saviour—O look to him as your only staff, your only sure support.'

He kept my hand; the tear started in his eye; his whole soul was centered in the gaze of agony. 'It is too late, too late; there is no mercy, no hope for me, I am lost, forever lost.'

Before the sun set, his soul was in eternity; gone to the audit. At twelve years of age, he left the Sabbath school; commenced his apprenticeship, associated with infidelity and drank the poison. At twenty summoned to the bar of God, without a ray of light to cheer the darkness of the valley of the shadow of death. Young man think of this sad story; flee from sin to holiness and God.—*Boston Watchman.*

THEORY OF WIND.

Heated air has a tendency to rise, and cold air rushes in to supply its place.—Thus the heated air of the equatorial regions rises and gives place to a current sent from the polar regions, which is a process that serves to equalize the temperature of the world. But the polar countries lying near the axis of the sphere, the air from those regions has not received so much motion as that about the equator, or greater distance from the axis, wherefore it arrives at the equator, where the motion of the earth is greater. If it had no motion before an east wind would be the consequence, and the force of that wind would be as the difference between the motion of the earth where the wind came from, and that where it arrived; but then it has a motion to the south; for it rushes into a vacuum left by the air which rises, so that the wind will not be from the east, but from the northeast; and the number of degrees north of the east from which it will blow, will depend upon the comparative force of air from the north, to the difference between the earth's motion at the equator and at the polar region from whence the air comes. As there must be a corresponding efflux from the equator higher up, according to this theory the wind should every where be north-east or south-west, but it blows in different directions at different times and places, and this probably depends on the variations in temperature at different times and places.

MISERIES IN LIFE.

Residing between a stone-cutter's and an undertaker's.

Passing a narrow passage fresh painted.

Dreaming that you have wings, and waking with a fit of the gout.

Endeavoring to make violent love under the table, and pressing the wrong foot.

Hearing the bells ring for the marriage of your rival.

Toasting cheese, and when it is more than half done, letting it fall into the ash-pan.

Drying a long letter, by holding it negligently behind your back to the fire, as you converse with a friend; turning round and beholding it in flames.

Forced by politeness to leave a comfortable party for the purpose of accompanying a cross old maid to her lodgings, two miles distant.

Wishing to wake early "for the boat,"—looking at your watch, and discovering you neglected to wind it over night.

Making several memorandum knots in your handkerchief, and forgetting the important cause of every one of them.

Dreaming that you have suddenly acquired a large fortune; stretching out your hand to grasp the welcome booty, a-waking and finding nothing in your fist but the bed-post.

Going with a party of pleasure on the water; while in the act of handing a lady into the boat, your foot slips, and you tumble in up to your neck, dragging the alighted fair one after you.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

'If the people were not hanged for murder,' said a young lady, 'we should not be safe in our beds.'

A member of the Society of Friends, who happened to be present, and heard this argument for capital punishment, drew his chair up to the lady, and said—

'I want to ask thee a question or two. Dost thou think a man ought to be hung before he has repented?'

'Oh no—certainly not! No one ought to be sent into eternity until he is prepared for the kingdom of Heaven!'

'Good!' said the Friend; 'but now I have another question to ask thee. Dost thou think any man ought to be hung after he has repented and is fitted for the kingdom of Heaven?'

'We need not say the lady was speechless.'

COMICALITIES.—'A new broom sweeps clean,' as the widow said when her new husband ran off with all her money.

'I can be no follower of thine,' as the cripple said when the loafer ran off with his crutches.

'I hope I have given satisfaction,' as the pistol ball said to the wounded duelist.

'I'm getting 'up in the world,' as the shad said when drawn out of the water.

'Don't speak all at once,' as the instructor said to his deaf and dumb pupils.