ERIE WEEKLY OBSERVER.

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THE ERIE OBSERVER.

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B. F. SLOAN AND E. M. MOORE,

OFFICE—FRONT, BETWEEN OF STATE AND FIFTH STS.

B. F. SLOAN, Editor.

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All orders through the Post Office at either place will be promptly attended to; and delivered in the city free of charge. Erie, July 25, 1857.—11.

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WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS IN

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FLOUR of all kinds kept constantly on hand, which we will sell as low as any other dealer in the city, and deliver free of charge within the city limits.

All Flour warranted to be as represented.

CASH paid for Grain—Wheat, Rye, Oats, Corn and Buckwheat. H. B. HAVERSTICK, P. CROUCH.

Erie, July 25, 1857.—11.

YE THAT WOULD HAVE JOHN ROBINSON'S FLOUR, AND MEAL That is honest Indian, call at Erie, July 23, 1857.—11. SHANNON BROTHERS.

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The Insurance for Town and Country!

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August 22, 1857.—16

THE DELAWARE MUTUAL SAFETY INSURANCE COMPANY, OF PHILADELPHIA.

ARE now doing business on the Mutual plan, giving the insured a participation in the profits of the Company, without liability beyond the premium paid.

Risks upon the Lakes and Canals insured on the most favorable terms. Losses will be liberally and promptly adjusted.

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Erie, April 4, 1857.

Fire! Fire!! Fire!!!

GO TO G. A. BENNETT'S Insurance Office, corner of State and Fifth street, Wright's Block, up stairs, and get your property insured. He represents the following reliable Companies.

MERCHANTS' FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY of Philadelphia. Authorized Capital $600,000. Securely invested $300,000.

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Rates as low as security to the insured will permit.

G. A. BENNETT, Agt. Erie, Dec. 13, 1856.

"EXCELSIOR."

CLARK & BALDWIN,

WHOLESALE & RETAIL

Druggists and Apothecaries,

No. 5, Reed House, Erie, Pa.,

AND DEALERS IN

DRUGS & MEDICINES.

Paints, Oils, Dye-Stuffs, Glass, Perfumery, Surgical and Dental Instruments, Trusses, Medicated Soap, porters, Brushes, Pure Wines and Liquors for Medicinal Purposes, &c.

We would call the attention of the public to the large and well selected stock of WHOLESALE MEDICINES, &c., which we have on hand and will sell at the lowest possible figures. Country Merchants would do well to give us a call, as we can furnish goods in our line at New York prices. All the popular Patent Medicines of the day. Wholesale and Retail at Pittsburgh prices and just from their hands. Being resolved to spare no pains to please with all purposes, we submit from what source to expect, we shall strive to lead rather than to be led. Physicians will find our stock large by strict attention to business to merit the liberal patronage which has thus far been extended to our business house.

A. S. CLARK, S. A. BALDWIN.

Erie, Feb 21, 1857.

THE CANVASS IN PENNSYLVANIA.

SPEECH OF SENATOR BIGLER,

AT CLARION, ON THE 8TH SEPT.,

In Reply to Hon. David Wilmot.

After giving a brief history of the democratic party, showing how eminently wise and successful its policy had been in the past, and how it had uniformly, in all exigencies, in war or peace, stood by the true interests of the country, and had advanced its growth and prosperity, and elevated the dignity and prowess of the nation, claiming for that party a higher degree of parity, wisdom, and patriotism than were possessed by any similar association of men in modern times; and having also paid a handsome compliment to the character and qualifications of Gen. Packer and his associates on the democratic ticket, he proceeded as follows:

Judge Wilmot, the republican candidate, has evinced his entire willingness to make his views known to the people, and seems quite unhappy that the State committee would not agree that the democratic candidate should waste his time with him in personal controversy, and still more displeased that the committee should have suggested that the discussion of the slavery question is not essential in a gubernatorial contest. Failing to secure the attractions of General Packer to get up large meetings and excitement for him, he has bravely dashed into the field alone. I am in possession of a copy of his first address, delivered at Philadelphia on the 24th ult., and published in the "Evening Bulletin," to the leading features of which I shall ask you attention before I take my seat. I find no fault with Mr. Wilmot for appearing before the public to make known his views. I think a candidate for any office may properly do so. I see no want of dignity or propriety in the practice, if pursued in the proper spirit. In doing this no candidate properly appreciating his position will solicit votes; he will simply declare his views on pending questions, foreshadowing, as best he can, the policy he will maintain if elected, so that the intelligent elector may vote for or against him, as may seem proper. But I have searched in vain for any such foreshadowing in the late speech of Mr. Wilmot. It is devoted exclusively to the subject of slavery, except only a brief reference to his letter on Americanism. State affairs seem to have had no attractions for him. It is an almost incredible fact that in a long speech occupying columns of the Bulletin he should not have alluded to any one of the many interests which would come under his charge were he elected governor, nor discussed a single question connected with the duties of the office for which he is a candidate, or over which the political authority of the State government could in any way be exerted. From beginning to end he has talked outside of the true purpose of his appearing before the public, and has failed, therefore, to give the people the means to decide whether he would make a good governor or not. He has talked about slavery, and questions incidental and collateral; but not a word about State affairs. He should certainly have given us his views on the question of more banks and paper currency. Many of the people would be glad to know whether he intends to maintain the policy of the present incumbent, his political friend, on these vital questions. What does he think of the policy of giving away the largest mainder on the same conditions? the people his views on these State questions, as also on the subject of paying the public debts, maintaining and extending our system of free schools; on the granting of special privileges to facilitate the ends of private gain, and especially on the pending amendments to the constitution, embracing questions of grave concern for the people? All these subjects, vitally important, and within the range of the legitimate duties of the Executive, seem to have been lost sight of in the smoke and dust of a kind of Quixotic onslaught upon slavery and the slave power.

But another fact, equally singular, is, that although his address abounds with graphic descriptions of the evils of slavery, and coarse imputations upon the motives of its advocates, it does not contain a single practical suggestion as to a remedy for the evils it laments. Mr. W. declares it to be "a question of vital practical importance, which lies at the foundation of everything valuable to us as freemen," and yet he has not attempted to show the people of Pennsylvania in what way they can apply the remedy. Not only this, but I shall prove to you that, according to his own showing, the people of a free State have no constitutional right to interfere for or against the evils he affects to deplore, whether in a State or Territory. If Mr. Wilmot found it necessary to make his address on national issues, entirely foreign to the executive duties, it is to be regretted that he did not devote a portion of his time to his once favorite topic—the tariff. The old friends of "protection for the sake of protection," whom he expects to rally under his flag, would doubtless be delighted to hear from the man whom they used to designate as the advocate of "British free trade," the "successful betrayer of Pennsylvania's best interests," and as a "vile traitor to the State of his birth."

Possibly he could have convinced the manufacturers of iron in Clarion and elsewhere that they are specially his debtors, and, permitting the dead past to bury its dead, they should come to his rescue in this his hour of need. Perhaps there were among his auditors at Philadelphia those who had assisted to give Mr. Dallas to the flames in effigy for following Wilmot lead on the tariff in 1846, and he could have induced them to repent that great wrong on Mr. Dallas, as also their oft-repeated imputations upon his own motives and conduct. He certainly could have shown those who abused myself and others last spring for agreeing to a modification of the tariff, when we had no power left to resist it, that they were unreasonable in that complaint, or are now mistaken in their support of the distinguished advocate of "British free trade."—But let that pass; we will leave the distinguished advocate of free trade in the embrace of the protectionists, and the protectionists under the leadership of the distinguished free-trader. The new alliance only furnishes another verification of the homely adage that political necessity makes strange bed-fellows.

But to the speech, and I will give you its best sentiment first, to that his friends may not complain. It reads follows:

"I hold that under the constitution of the United States we have no right to meddle directly with the question of slavery in the States where it already exists; it is a State institution, and can only be controlled by State laws, and we in Pennsylvania have no more right to legislate for Virginia upon the subject of slavery than Virginia has the right to legislate for Pennsylvania on the subject of our public schools. But in the Territories the question is different. The Territories are the common property of the Union, and we have the common rigth to control them."

Then again, speaking of slavery, he says:

"The question is no mere abstraction, nor is it simply a question of right and wrong, a question of morals; it is a question of vital practical importance, which lies at the foundation of everything valuable to us as freemen."

Touching the Dred Scott decision, he remarks:

"And as I am on this point, I wish to say that I bow to the Dred Scott decision as a matter of law. I raise no arm against the law, and I would never advise any one to do so; but there is no law on earth which can bind my reason or my conscience. I can and will think and vote for what I believe right."

Now let us consider the doctrines of these quotations for a few minutes. In the first he says we have "no right to meddle with slavery in the States where it already exists," but that "the Territories are the common property of the Union, and we have the common right to control them." In the second he presents the effects of slavery as "vital practical questions, involving everything valuable to us as free men." And in the third he informs us that he "bows to the Dred Scott decision as a matter of law."

Of course, I agree that we have no right to interfere with slavery in the States, but, "bowing to the Dred Scott decision," how does Mr. Wilmot purpose to reach the institution in the Territories? What becomes of "the common right" of the State to control its existence?—How can that right be brought to bear? That decision defines the constitution to mean that Congress has no right to legislate on the subject for the Territories; that a congressional interdiction against its extension is unconstitutional, and Mr. Wilmot agrees that decision is law. Then, what of his common right to control it in the Territories, and of the "vital practical questions" he has presented for our consideration?

Now, this is the point to which I wish your special attention. Though acknowledging in his own peculiar phrase the binding effects of the decision of the Supreme Court, Mr. Wilmot is very careful to conceal the influence of that decision upon his position and arguments; he has not told the people frankly that, by virtue of the decision he so reluctantly recognises as binding, slavery in a Territory is almost as completely out of the reach of the people or the government of a free State as it is in the State of Virginia.—He dare not be explicit on this point; for he would thereby illustrate the utter impracticability of his doctrines on the subject. Indeed, his whole theory goes to pieces at this point, and he must necessarily conceal as much as possible the effects of this decision, or the deceptive character of his speeches would become so transparent that he would be obliged to abandon the discussion entirely.

Bowing to the Dred Scott decision as matter of law, it will not do to say only that "Pennsylvania has no more right to legislate for Virginia on the subject of slavery than Virginia has to legislate for Pennsylvania on the subject of public school." Mr. Wilmot cannot stop at this point; he must and does virtually agree by that "bow" that neither Pennsylvania nor Virginia has any right to legislate for Kansas or Nebraska on either subject, and they have no power to interfere for or against the institutions of the Territories directly or indirectly. The citizens of each may go to Kansas, and when bona fide residents they can give effect to their will. He or I can do this; but as citizens of this State we cannot influence the question in either Kansas or Virginia. Prior to the Dred Scott decision, the republican party contended for the power of Congress over the subject in the Territories; but that decision has settled the questions against them, and has closed the last channel through which the free States could reach the question. It has passed into the category of the election of anti-slavery men to Congress, or state body cannot touch the question. Their long-cherished business of agitation is, therefore, gone—gone forever. Wherein, then, is the fitness of Mr. Wilmot's inflammatory addresses about slavery to the exclusion of every other topic?—Having no power over the subject, it cannot be of vital practical importance in Pennsylvania, unless, indeed, Mr. W., in his feverish sensitiveness, has allowed himself to conclude that some "dough-faced democrat," in obedience to "the slave powers," is about to propose to re establish the institution in this State. Until this be done the question cannot be so practical as he alleges. But is it not singular that Mr. Wilmot should seek to agitate the public mind in behalf of measures which have been declared unconstitutional and to which decision he agrees? What can he accomplish by such effort? Though he could convince a majority of the people that the measures would work practical good to the country, the constitution, until changed, is an insurmountable barrier to their adoption. Would it not be wiser to accept the philosophy of the trite saying, that "it is useless to cry over spilt milk?" When the election is over he will need the benefits of some such reflection, for I think his chances are better to become the successor of Judge Bullock Judge Bullock has been appointed his successor by Gov. Pollock, than of Gov. Pollock.

I do not mean to say that the candidates for governor may not properly allude to the subject of slavery; but Mr. Wilmot insists that measures which have been declared unconstitutional shall be recognized issues in the gubernatorial contest, and continues to discuss these measures as though they could be made available to the country, and insists that the people should take one side or the other. He says slavery is the only question involved; and has, so far, declined to speak on State questions at all.

He says that Virginia has the same right to interfere with our public schools that Pennsylvania has with slavery in Virginia, and that is true; but did it not occur to his mind, at the same time, that it would be a most singular, if not ludicrous spectacle, to witness a candidate for governor in Virginia resting his claims to popular favor solely on his views about public schools in Pennsylvania, and confining his discussions to that topic alone? Why, the people of the Old Dominion would get a strait-jacket for any man who might attempt to play such a trick before high Heaven. And what would Pennsylvania think of such impudent interference? They would most certainly invite the Virginia aspirant to take care of his slaves, and leave the public schools to them. Mr. W. would be sure to do this; and yet he talked for hours about Virginia negroes, and said not one word about Pennsylvania schools, so determined does he seem to rest his claims on questions belonging to other States, and over which his hs no control. Perhaps his friends can explain this—If he does not get more votes in States where his address would be appropriate than in his own, he will be badly beaten. He will be almost convinced that he has not only been speaking for other States, but running for governor somewhere else than at home.

Mr. Wilmot's prompt recognition of the binding effect of the Dred Scott decision has certainly surprised and disappointed some of his fanatical adherents. But they should notice that he dare not raise his voice against the constitution when asking to be permitted to take an oath to support it. That he has yielded reluctantly, and with exceeding bad grace, is evident from the low terms in which he impeaches the motives of the Court. He says "it is easy enough for the Executive to find corrupt judges to carry out corrupt designs." This is coarse, exceedingly coarse, scarcely allowable in a common-place politician, and utterly inadmissible in a candidate for governor. Very many who intend to vote for the author of the base allegation will despise his foul aspersions. Even they will not agree that it is becoming in David Wilmot to warn the country against the corruptions of James Buchanan and Roger B. Taney. But in his anger at courts, he has gone out of his way still further to make an onslaught upon the integrity of the supreme court of his own State, and broadly alleges that its decisions are often contradictory, and it is common talk among the bar that a decision must be revived every five years to have binding effect. The courts should take warning, for failing to be governor, as this gentleman certainly will, he may still retain the office of judicial censorian.

Fearing to repudiate the decision of the Supreme Court in express terms, many of Mr. Wilmot's school of politicians are industriously engaged in efforts to destroy the confidence of the public in its integrity. As a means of doing this, they are in the habit of expatiating on the extraordinary circumstance that the ordinance of 1787 should have been declared unconstitutional at the end of sixty years after its adoption, and the Missouri Compromise so declared after having stood for nearly forty years. They certainly know that the ordinance of 1787 did not derive its authority from the present constitution—that it was the work of the Congress of the Old Confederation, and was agreed to by the States, and was merely perpetuated under the present constitution as a measure which the States had agreed to. This item of history they prefer to suppress, so that the action of the court may seem the more strange. They know, too, that the Missouri Compromise was an arbitrary arrangement between the North and South, forced by an exigency that endangered the peace of the country, and that its constitutional authority, though constantly denied by many wise statesmen, had not been directly tested prior to the late decision.

The history of the renowned proviso, is rewritten in this speech, and Mr. W. has manifested special delight in exhibiting what he considers the inconsistencies of the democratic party on this subject, and more especially those of General Cass, Hon. Richard Brodhead, and myself. He alleges in substance that, if the General had voted before he reflected, he would have gone for the proviso, and that Mr. Brodhead had said he would vote for it if offered to the proper bill, and that I had been very careful to record my name in the affirmative, when a similiar sentiment passed the State legislature. The course of General Cass and Mr. Brodhead needs no explanation or defence at my hands. Their sentiments are too well known to the country to be successfully misrepresented. And, indeed, admitting all that Mr. W. alleges, I do not see that he makes out any man's destruction. The wisest men in the nation have often been wrong in their first impressions, as to the expediency of suddenly proposed measures, and to be mistaken on a constitutional question is no uncommon thing among able lawyers. As to the Pennsylvania resolution, it certainly did not receive that consideration to which it was entitled. I do not believe that it was under consideration in the Senate exceeding one-half hour before it passed finally. For myself, I knew but little about it until it came from the House of Representatives the day it passed the Senate, and had only thought of it as an abstract sentiment against the acquisition of territory, with the view to the extension of slavery and as affecting the question of peace with Mexico. As a proposition involving the rights of the States and the powers of Congress [illegible] States, without any such original intention, convinced my mind that its practical operation would be injustice to the slaveholding States, and I discarded its doctrines entirely. Four years after the advent of the proviso, when the democratic nominee for governor, I certainly was not charged with a want of sympathy for the South. The reverse was the constant allegation of my political enemies. The execution of the fugitive-slave law and the doctrines of non-intervention were topics in that contest, and I advocated the affirmative of both on all occasions. Mr. Wilmot himself publicly dissented from my views on these points at a meeting in his own town, where we stood face to face. But it is of little moment whether I have been consistent or not. I trust I may always be more ambitious to be right, and never vain enough to pretend to great wisdom or foresight. If I did not mistake the meaning of the proviso, when first proposed, I certainly misunderstood its author, for I tho't him a democrat, and he has turned out to be anything else. But has Mr. W. relieved his position by what he has said on this point? If it even be true that certain democrats inclined to favor the proviso before they had discovered the wrong, he was not thereby warranted in sustaining it when the injustice of its practical workings had become apparent by discussion, and especially since it has been shown to be unconstitutional.

But this candidate and his party are great on consistency. They are in the habit of arraigning Mr. Buchanan, Judge Douglas, and other democratic statesmen, on the charge of inconsistency, because at one time they sustained the policy of settling the slave controversy by a geographical division, and have since embraced the policy of referring the question to the people of the Territories, to be settled as they may deem best. There is very little sense and less patriotism in such criticisms. The whole history of the subject shows that the controversy, at the different periods when the excitement attained to a dangerous height, was treated as a subject of compromise, implying at once the concession of principle and peculiar views. Statesmen and patriots felt required to yield much in the way of opinion, to secure the peace of the country.—Mr. Buchanan favored the Missouri line so long as the policy of settling the question by territorial division was maintained; and Mr. Douglas, in 1848, proposed to extend the parallel of that line to the Pacific ocean as a final adjustment of the dangerous feud. But the very men who now, and since 1854, have not ceased to bewail the abandonment of this policy, were united in their opposition to its extension and perpetuity on that occasion. They repudiated it, scouted and reviled it. Another mode of settlement became absolutely necessary to save the country from civil war, and that of non-intervention, as now found in the Kansas law, was wisely adopted in 1850; and is maintained by the statesmen I have named. What inconsistency is there in such action? And what is to be said for the sincerity of those who continued to denounce the Missouri line up to the time of its repeal?—that party who in Connecticut burnt James Lanman in effigy for voting for it, and Isaac Toucey near the same spot for voting to repeal it, and who labored to reject the principle in 1848: They are not in a condition to talk about consistency. Having so conspired against this mode of adjustment, and secured its overthrow, they now have Mr. Wilmot engaged in a clumsy imitation of Mark Anthony with the dead body of Cæsar by toting the lifeless remains of this unconstitutional measure from place to place over the State, giving utterance to his deep grief in pathetic appeals to the passions and prejudices of the people, to draw down their vengeance on the destroyers of this once favorite scheme.

On Kansas affairs Mr. Wilmot becomes quite belligerent, and hurls vindictive aspersions upon the national administration. He talks as though he did not know that the odious test laws enacted by the first legislature had been repealed by the last; that his party friends in Kansas are daily availing themselves of these bogus laws; that Mr. Robinson, the Topeka governor, had petitioned Mr. Stanton, when acting governor, to confer the appointment of commissioner to acknowledge deeds on his friend, by virtue of the territorial laws. He seems determined to give the version of affairs that will best suit his purpose. Having presented a startling picture of the wrongs and outrages which, according to his story, have been wantonly inflicted upon the free-State party of that unhappy Territory, he makes the following sweeping declaration:

"I affirm that the administration knows all about these outrages, and yet they uphold them. They sustain the Missourian usurpation, and they dare not be just, because they are the slaves of the slave power who created them and upholds them."

This is terrific, indeed, coming from a candidate for Governor, but Mr. Wilmot's language is tame and feeble compared with the sparkling rhetoric of Col. Keitt, of South Carolina, on the other side of the question. The Colonel, in his letter dated at White Sulphur Springs, imputes to the administration altogether different action and purpose. He alleged that its first act was to appoint a governor to "debauch Kansas from allegiance to the South and deliver her into the hands of free-soil fanatics," and that "to say that the cause of the South was lost in Kansas prior to the appointment of Walker is to palliate fraud by falsehood." Here is a wide difference between big doctors. But the southerner seems to have the best of the contest. Indeed the best attempts of Wilmot and his school of orators to show the subserviency of the administration to the slave power fall far below the most ordinary efforts of Colonel Keitt, the Charleston Mercury and the New Orleans Delta, to demonstrate its free soil tendencies and its treachery to the South. With such fires in front and rear, who will say that Colonel Keitt may not reasonably imagine the fantastics to be hereafter played by "shivering cabinets" and "convulsive administrations?"

Then, again, Mr. Wilmot and his party seem to be in great tribulation lest the slave power should deprive some of the citizens of Kansas of the opportunity of raising their voices against the institution at the ballot box—lest some be deprived of that high and sacred prerogative, the right of suffrage. They descant eloquently on the sacredness of this right, and hurl destructive anathemas on the heads of all who shall attempt to restrict or usurp this proud function of American freemen. The people, and the whole people, must be heard. Now, this is all very well, and they cannot go further on this point than will the democracy; but does not this sickly concern for the rights of the people come with exceeding bad grace from Mr. Wilmot and his party, who, in the convention that nominated Colonel Fremont, laid it down as a principle that not only a portion, but all the citizens of Kansas, should be deprived of the right of saying whether they would have slavery or not?—They claimed that right for Congress, and virtually held that, though nine-tenths of the people might desire slavery, the interdiction of Congress should be conclusive. It was no half way business with them. It is part of their faith to deprive all the people of the sacred opportunity which they fals