

COUNCIL.—Kelley introduced a bill to amend the Oregon City charter.

A bill to establish Montville Institute passed.

House.—Shuck presented a petition for a prohibitory liquor law.

The following bills passed:

A bill to provide for building and repairing bridges; a bill amending an act to organize Curry county; a bill to change a territorial road in Marion county; a bill to establish Montville Institute.

Moffitt presented the report of commissioners to audit war claims; 100 copies ordered printed.

Johnson introduced a bill to incorporate the Portland and Dayton plank road company.

House went into committee of the whole on the bill to prevent negroes and mulattoes from coming to reside in Oregon—Conson in the chair.

Smith of Linn made a lengthy speech against the bill, stating that it was unequal for. There were no negroes of consequence here, and none coming. If a few did come, we wanted them as laborers. The passage of the bill would excite the abolitionists and proslavery men, and forestall the question of slavery or no slavery that would soon be submitted to the people. He was not a proslavery man; he should favor a free State for a hundred reasons, and one was that slavery could not exist here.

Smith of Jackson said he was willing to show his hand; he was a proslavery man, and he was opposed to the bill because it prohibited all niggers bond as well as free from coming here. He wanted slaveholders from the South to have the privilege of bringing their slaves here.

Rogers opposed the bill mainly on account of the five hundred dollars fine it imposed upon masters of vessels who should bring negroes or mulattoes here on ship board, if the same should happen to run away and remain in the Territory over forty days. He thought it would set against our commerce. He said that the organic act debarred slavery from Oregon, and he could see no necessity for a negro bill to exclude slaves.

Lovejoy said he believed the organic act so far as slavery prohibition was concerned was repealed by the Nebraska bill. He knew that when the bill organizing the Territory of Oregon was up in Congress, Webster declared the provision in it was unconstitutional, and both he and Calhoun refused to vote for it on that account; and he had understood of late that Attorney General Cushing had given it as his opinion that slavery can as readily exist in Oregon as in Kansas, since the passage of the Nebraska bill. He would say that if slavery could be made profitable his conscience would not forbid him from allowing slavery to come here. But he thought it would be an injury to the country, preventing the immigration of white laborers; besides he thought with the British Possessions on the north, the Indians on the east, and a free State on the south, slavery could not exist here.

Allen said he was in favor of the bill, and proposed to amend by inserting "free" before negroes. He was in favor of a free State, and wanted no negroes to black his boots.

Allen's amendment was lost.

Shuck offered an amendment excluding Chinamen.

Lovejoy offered another embracing "Kanakas and so forth," which Shuck accepted. The amendment was lost.

Committee rose and reported against the passage of the bill.

Report adopted by the following vote—Ayes, Allen, Avery, Barr, Berry, Bennett, Brown of Linn, Brown of Multnomah, Colard, Cochran, Gates, Johnson, Lovejoy, Mathews, Miller, Monroe, Moffitt, Ray, Smith of Jackson, Starkweather, Underwood, Walker and Welch 22.

Nays, Conson, Rogers, Harpole, and Grover. Absent or not voting, Dryer, and Smith of Linn.

Joint memorial to Congress for additional appropriations of land for University purposes taken up and referred to committee on education.

Starkweather gave notice of a bill to test the sense of the people as to the adoption or prohibition of slavery in the Constitution.

JANUARY 10.

COUNCIL.—Bill to provide for building and repairing bridges, a bill to incorporate the Adelpheosophical society, and a bill to amend the act organizing Curry county, passed.

Bayley introduced a bill to take the sense of the people on the location of the seat of Government.

Ross introduced a bill repealing the viva voce law.

House.—Dryer presented petition of Hiram Smith relative to an insane pauper. Committee on counties reported bill to define the line between Washington and Multnomah counties.

Bill passed incorporating Salem, also a bill to repeal the charter of Marion Free Ferry Company.

Bill to allow certain half breeds to become citizens taken up. It was advocated at length by Moffitt and Johnson, and opposed by Smith of Linn, and Colard. Vote on final passage—Ayes, Avery, Barr,

interfere to exclude Slavery—but that the people of the Territory have the power and the right, and Senator Bigler believes the disposition to do so;—and that they should be protected in the exercise of that right from all interference whatsoever.—He also expresses the opinion that the control of the South in the Federal Government has passed away forever, and declares his utter dissent from, and aversion to, all the schemes and projects of Southern ultra Pro-Slavery journals, for re-opening the slave trade, or for extending the power and influence of Slavery. With reference to the question of Slavery in the Territories, he asserts, that all the power of Congress over the subject, is conferred upon the people of the Territory; and that if Congress ever had power to exclude Slavery, the people have it now.

Southern Senators looked aghast when such expressions as these fell from the lips of the speaker; and the more they think of it, the more they don't like it, and the more they suspect that in electing Mr. Buchanan they have caught a Tartar.—Mr. Bigler was dumb when the present debate commenced; but the Electoral Colleges have made up their record now, and the Senator's tongue can wag fearlessly and free. Depend upon it, it will not be a year ere we witness as fierce a fight upon this question, between the Northern and Southern wings of the Democracy, as we have had at any time in the past.

KANSAS MATTERS.

The contest in the case of Whitfield, Delegate elect from Kansas, has been settled upon the preliminary question and he admitted to his seat upon the prima facie evidence of his election presented in the certificate of Gov. Geary. This, however, does not settle the question permanently, and we shall probably have a renewal of the contest soon in a new shape. A Special Messenger from Kansas has arrived here, with a memorial numerously signed, remonstrating against the admission of Whitfield. Additional memorials of the same character are daily expected, and, when received, the effort will be made to refer them all to the Committee on Elections. It turns out upon investigation that the election under which Whitfield claims to have been chosen Delegate, and by virtue of which Governor Geary gave him the certificate, was held without authority or in form of law, either valid or invalid; in other words, that there was no law, either Federal or Territorial, under which the Governor was authorized to call the special election. Under these circumstances the proclamation for the election was a mere voluntary act, of no vitality, and the election itself is claimed to have no more authority than would have been possessed by an ordinary town meeting.

While upon the subject of Kansas let me say that the President has removed Chief Justice Lecompte, in consequence of Geary's complaints against him, and appointed in his stead James O. Harrison, a distinguished lawyer of Lexington, Kentucky.—William Spencer has likewise been nominated as Marshal of Kansas, vice Donelson; and Thos. Cunningham, of Pennsylvania, Associate Justice, in place of Burdell deceased. John H. W. Underwood of Georgia is also nominated Associate Justice in Nebraska, vice Haden, resigned.

HUDSON'S BAY AND PUGET SOUND COMPANIES.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House are prepared to report a bill to purchase the possessory rights of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, for which the Committee will ask an appropriation of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which amount, it is said will be sufficient to satisfy the Company. The same Committee have also matured another French Spoilation bill, which they are ready to report, and which in substance is the same as that passed two years ago.

MODIFICATION OF THE TARIFF.

The question of the modification of the tariff of 1846 comes up in the House of Representatives on the first Tuesday in January. The chances are pretty fair for the reduction of the revenue by addition of various articles to the free list, including coarse wool, salt, sugar, and raw materials generally which enter into American manufactures.

MINNESOTA AND ARIZONA.

The Committee on Territories have agreed to report a bill to authorize the people of Minnesota to form a Constitution and State Government, with a view to their admission into the Union. A memorial has been received from the people residing upon the Gadsden purchase, asking that their country may be erected into the Territory of Arizona. They represent that they are cut off by natural barriers from the benefit of the laws of New Mexico—being nominally only in the county of Donna Ana, without any of the privileges of citizenship, and exposed to savages. They ask their delegate now here to be admitted. The case is before the Committee on Territories, but I fear the prayer of the petitioners will not be granted.

RE-OPENING OF THE SLAVE TRADE DISCUSSED.

Mr. Etheridge of Tennessee introduced into the House the other day a resolution against the re-opening of the African slave trade, upon the ground that it is inhuman, at war with Christianity, civilization, &c.—After ineffectual efforts by southern men to secure a modification of the resolution, so as simply to declare it impolitic to re-open the slave trade (thus waiving the question of its humanity) the original resolution was

adopted with some fifty odd negatives.—Then Mr. Orr, of South Carolina, introduced a resolution against the impolicy of its revival, which was adopted with only eight dissenting votes, to wit: Messrs. Brooks, Keitt, Barksdale, Bennett of Miss., Quitman, Shorter, Walker and Wright.

THE PACIFIC RAILROAD QUESTION.

Various parties are scheming here with reference to the Pacific Railroad, but nothing definite can be done until after the holidays; and, indeed, there is some reason to fear that the conflict of schemes may again defeat the consummation of any.—Whatever bill is passed will provide for three different roads, one North, another Central, and a third South. It is the general belief that only one road will be built; but three must be provided for, in order to allay sectional prejudices and secure the authorization of one. When that has been selected under the bill, and it becomes apparent that it will be constructed, the others will probably be abandoned, and the lands appropriated in their aid will revert to the United States Government. This general policy will doubtless be maintained in any bill which is pressed to a vote, but there is no other detail which is at all settled upon thus far.

The two wagon road bills passed by the Senate last session, stand very well in the House, and are likely to pass.

THE PANAMA ISTHMIAN TRANSIT.

There is no truth in the statement that Mr. Marcy has ever considered the proposition to purchase any portion of the territory of New Granada. The Secretary denies also that Mr. Hoadley, President of the Panama Railroad, ever made any such proposition or suggestion to him. Neither of these gentlemen have had the least idea of the procurement of exclusive control over the Isthmus. Mr. Marcy's aim is simply to make the transit perfectly safe at all times as the free highway of all nations, and when the documents connected with the pending negotiations with New Granada come to be published, this will be fully apparent. These facts are important, because they repel the anticipation of any future antagonism between the United States and Great Britain with reference to the Isthmus of Panama. There is and can be no good ground for such apprehensions.

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE, &c., QUESTIONED.

The Supreme Court has just had argued before it a very important case, involving the question of the constitutionality of the Missouri Compromise, and also the question whether a slave taken by his master into a free State and subsequently returning to a slave State, has acquired title to freedom by the temporary sojourn in such free State. The plaintiff is a negro. He claims having been emancipated, by his master having taken him to reside in Illinois, which act, it is declared by the Constitution of that State, operated to emancipate him. The Circuit Court decided against the plaintiff, on the ground that by his return to Missouri, his master's right, dormant whilst in Illinois, had revived, and that the Constitution of Illinois was a penal law which the Courts of other States were not bound to indorse. No decision has been rendered. The case was argued for the plaintiff by Montgomery Blair and ex-Commissioner Curtis of Boston, and for the defendant by Senator Geyer of Mo., and Hon. Reverdy Johnson.

THE TREATY WITH ENGLAND.

In foreign affairs there is nothing startling. The new treaty with England in regard to Central America has been communicated to the Senate, confidentially, for ratification. Its stipulations are such as I have stated in a former communication, and the chief opposition to it will be based upon the ground that it further commits the United States to England in behalf of the self-restrictive policy of the Clayton treaty of 1850. Still, I think it will be ratified.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is reported from Washington that the territory of Minnesota, through the delegate, Mr. Rice, will take steps during the present session of Congress for admission into the Union.

Fires were very destructive in the United States in the month of December. There were 22 in which the loss exceeded \$10,000; the total amounting to \$2,445,000. The principal were as follows: in Syracuse \$1,000,000; St. Louis \$400,000; New York city \$350,000.

It is stated that there are now twenty Indian treaties before the Senate, involving the cession of 122,000,000 acres of land for a consideration of about \$11,000,000. The Indians within our limits are estimated at about 300,000 souls.

Servile Insurrection in the South.

The Southern States have been unpleasantly agitated by the discovery of insurrectionary plots among the slaves in certain localities, and rumor, gaining credit from fear, has spread abroad the idea that there was a general or wide spread conspiracy extending through most of the Slave States. Slave society is always exposed to the danger of insurrection, but it is still more liable to unfounded panics.—Plots, or supposed plots, have been discovered in Louisiana, South Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia. In Tennessee there was undoubtedly an insurrectionary movement, extending through the region from Memphis, through Clarksville and Dover, to the Cumberland River. At the iron works owned by Senator Bell of Tennessee,

some slaves were accused of participation in this movement, and nine of them were hanged—four by the sentence of a Court and five by a mob. A white man, said to have been disguised as a negro, was sentenced to receive nine hundred lashes, and died under the infliction. Nineteen slaves have been hanged at Dover, not for any overt act, but for supposed insurrectionary designs. A great many slaves have been imprisoned on suspicion. In Virginia, the county of Montgomery, and the neighborhood of Williamsburgh have been alarmed with expectations of an outbreak.—The authorities of Alexandria telegraphed on Sunday last, to Governor Wise, for arms to suppress an expected insurrection. In this case, as in many others, there appears to have been a groundless panic.

It has been stated that the negroes were under the impression that "Fremont with a Northern army," was coming to liberate them, and many of the Southern papers attribute the rising entirely to the agitation against the extension of slavery, which prevailed at the North. It is more likely that the cause may be found in the exaggerated misrepresentations of the designs of the Republican party, with which the columns of these very papers teemed, and which naturally became the subject of conversation among the white people within hearing of the negroes. Every Southern Buchanan newspaper during the whole Presidential contest, did its utmost to persuade its readers that the Republicans intended to abolish slavery by force, if they had the power, and could not succeed any other way.—N. Y. Cor. S. F. Bulletin.

KANSAS QUETED.—Judge Lecompte removed.

There is reason to hope that the Kansas troubles are done and over once for all.—We hear of no more battles and sieges, marchings and counter-marchings, in that Territory, and Gov. Geary is receiving credit for his administrative ability and fairness from both Free-soilers and Border Ruffians. Property in Lawrence is said to be worth fifty per cent more than it would bring before his administration of affairs. It is expected to improve another fifty after the removal of Judge Lecompte, who has been turned out at length by Franklin Pierce, and replaced by a respectable man named Harrison. Twenty-one of the prisoners at Lecompte had escaped by digging under the foundation of the building in which they were confined.—About fifty of the remaining prisoners, says the St. Louis Democrat, are being tried by Judge Cato at Tecumseh. Governor Geary would not permit the ball and chain to be fastened on the limbs of the persons convicted of offences within the Territory. Judge Lecompte had threatened to have the Governor arrested for contempt, but had thought better of it. His Excellency the ex-Mayor of San Francisco is considered quite a good looking man in Kansas. The following from the pen of a susceptible Free-soiler appeared in the N. Y. Tribune recently:

"I saw Geary this morning, and am quite charmed with him. He is the best talking man I have met, and I cannot but think him sincere. At all events, it seems to me ungenerous to condemn him in advance. "Give the devil his due." If the Governor is a "devil," he is quite an elegant gentleman. I don't know why I thought him a gray-headed old man.—Perhaps his name conveys that idea. But, to my surprise, I found him quite an Apollo—six feet high at least, faultlessly formed, a very handsome face, jet black eyes, straight hair, fine whiskers and mustache—in short, just the sort of man to win the love of the ladies. No wonder the Lawrence girls have invited him to a Thanksgiving dinner next Thursday. My dear friend, depend upon it Geary is doing well. He has not, it is true, done all we can wish; but he has done a deal more than the other side have wished, I can assure you."

No effort has been made to recover the free State prisoners, that escaped.

The bogus Territorial Legislature, recently elected, meets in Lecompton early next month. Governor Geary is expected to do all he can to have the most obnoxious enactments repealed.

The free State Legislature, elected by the people, meets about the same time at Topeka. Interference by federal troops, or his Excellency, Gov. Geary, is not expected by many of our people. Governor Robinson and Lieutenant-Governor Roberts are both now in Kansas, and early in January they will be at Topeka, ready to act in their official capacity.—N. Y. Cor. S. F. Bulletin.

Later from Nicaragua.

By the steamer on this side we have news from Gen. Walker a few days later, —to the 8th December. Nothing further had been heard from Gen. Henningsen and his men who were besieged at Granada.

Walker had attacked Rivas, but failed to drive the enemy out, after three days' fighting. He had concentrated his troops to the number of 500 to 600 men at St. George, on the lake, two miles and a half from Rivas, and nine from Virgin Bay.—The enemy had attacked Walker twice, but were repulsed in both instances.

On the 23d November, a most brilliant naval engagement took place between the Nicaragua schooner-of-war Granada, of seventy tons, carrying two six-pound cannon and twenty-eight men, under C. J. Faysoux, Lt. Commanding, and the Costa Rican brig of war "11th April," 114 tons, carrying six 9-pound cannon, with 114 men, all well armed with Minie rifles, &c.

The engagement lasted over two hours when a shot struck the brig in the stern,

carrying it away and causing her magazine to explode.

Lieut. Faysoux immediately sent off his boats to rescue the sufferers, and succeeded in taking from the water and off the brig, before she sunk, forty-four persons, whom he brought into San Juan del Sud the following morning.

Thirteen of them were horribly burnt, among whom were the captain, second mate, Padre, second lieutenant, and not more than four of them will live.

The balance of the prisoners were sent by order of General Walker to Virgin Bay, where, with a few exceptions, they were liberated.

Too much praise cannot be awarded to Faysoux for his gallant achievement, and the humanity displayed in his endeavors to save life, regardless of securing the prize ere she sunk. Faysoux lost two men and has three wounded.

The Costa Rican brig had ninety riflemen on board, with a large amount of clothing for her army, provisions, and \$25,000 in specie.

Full Election Returns.

Full election returns, officially canvassed, are now at hand, from all the States, and the result is as follows:

Buchanan, in Free States, 1,265,966
" in Slave States, 638,350

Total, 1,904,325

Electoral votes, 174.

Fremont, in Free States, 1,353,999
" in Slave States, 1,247

Total, 1,355,246

Electoral votes, 114.

Fillmore, in Free States, 424,008
" in Slave States, 495,117

Total, 922,125

Electoral vote, 8.

Fremont over Buchanan in F. S., 89,033
Fremont and Fillmore over Buchanan in the Union, 373,046
Buchanan and Fillmore over Fremont in the Union, 1,471,204
Whole No. votes polled in 1856, 4,181,696
" " " " in 1852, 3,150,597

Increase in four years, 1,031,099

This is exclusive of about 12,000 scattering votes in 1852, and about the same number in 1856.

BENTON'S PLAN FOR A PACIFIC RAILROAD.—His road goes by the most difficult route, will cost more lands and more money than any other road by any other route, involving, among other splendid works of art, a tunnel at an elevation of nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, which is a thousand feet or so higher than the summit of Mount St. Bernard, which people make so much fuss about in climbing to the top on the back of a jackass. Pacific Railroad tunnel through the clouds!—N. Y. Herald.

The Oregon Argus.

W. L. ADAMS, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

OREGON CITY: SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1857.

Mistake.

Mr. Lovejoy stated in his speech in the Legislature upon the negro bill that Webster and Calhoun voted against the organic act for Oregon, on the ground that the slavery prohibition was unconstitutional.—This is certainly a mistake. Webster and Calhoun always occupied antipodal ground on the question of slavery prohibition in the Territories. The modern doctrine of the rights of slavery in the Territories was first introduced by Calhoun, and was called by Benton "a new dogma." Webster took the ground that slavery could not exist anywhere but by special legislative enactment, and his views have been concurred in by the great mass of statesmen of all parties, up to a very recent period.—We have not the Globe at hand containing the debates on the organic act of Oregon, but we recollect well the antagonistic positions of Webster and Calhoun on the slavery question.

The Legislature adjourned last Thursday morning, and many of the members come down on the Enterprise the same day. The repeal of the viva voce bill was lost, so was the bill submitting the seat of Government question to the people again. Smith's resolutions passed the house after some pruning. The Council struck out "Munchausen's trumpet," and carved them up in various ways, docking some, and followed our suggestion by giving more tail to others. We learn that several amendments were made in Chinook and other classics.

After the members had their own fun out of them, the Council killed the whole batch. The House afterwards took them up and passed them as House resolutions. The Legislature adjourned before any thing was done in reference to the liquor question. Some of the members are ashamed of their vote on the Clatsop contested seat, at least Avery said it was the only vote he had given that he was sorry for. We think that vote will stick to a few of the members for some time.

The resolutions reading the Standard out of the party failed to pass. The vote stood fifteen for, to twelve against, in the caucus, but absent members came in afterwards and recorded their votes against the resolutions, and the vote stands fifteen for, to fifteen against. The fifteen who voted against the resolutions are, we hear, in favor of voting Crapkey's organ out of the party. There is a very general sentiment prevailing among the democracy that this sheet ought to confine itself entirely to advertising for the Doctor, and quit dabbling in politics. They are satisfied that Leland has the more brains of the two, not going behind the ears.

Where is He?

The postmaster at Winchester writes that J. W. Miller has left the country and no longer takes The Argus from that office. J. W. Miller owes us \$8.50.

Rev. W. Blain has our thanks for that club of new subscribers.

The recent constant rains have raised the river again, so that the Jennie Clark is laid up.

Peter H. Burnett has been appointed Supreme Judge in California.

Gen. Wool has requested to be recalled from his post on the Pacific coast.

Quite a number of communications are crowded out this week,

the Republicans of Clackamas county held a mass meeting in this city last Saturday, and chose five delegates to the Territorial Convention to be held in Albany February 11th.

The following named individuals were selected:—W. L. Adams, Capt. J. S. Rinearson, Hon. W. T. Matlock, W. C. Johnson, and Leander Holmes, Esqrs.

We learn that Delusion was so drunk for several days after the Jackson Jubilee, he was scarcely able to attend to business. On one occasion in making a speech, he tickled the audience by occasionally breaking out in a big laugh, as he saw the idea he was after looming up in the distance.

Judge Deady, we learn, is figuring around after a nomination for the Delegation. He avows himself as a proslavery man, and if he should get the nomination, he would run as the proslavery candidate, being supported by the nigger driving locos and the proslavery men of the old line Whigs.

The bill which was up before the Legislature requiring bonds of the Commissary and Quartermaster to the amount of \$50,000, was defeated by a tie vote in the House. These officers are said to have a great amount of money in their hands belonging to the Territory, but these pretended democrats are not willing to make them responsible to the people. So much for clique democracy.

When the bill was under discussion requiring the Commissary and Quartermaster to give bonds, we learn that the Quartermaster was present, and took the liberty of contradicting some of the speakers. The Governor also sat as a spectator frowning upon every effort to bring the officials to an account of their stewardship.

One of the members of the Legislature, on his way home this week, told us he had become convinced that the distillery furnished the aliment on which the black democratic party lived. Take this away, said he, and it would die for want of stimulus.

We have long said that Broderick and Gwin have been elected to the U. S. Senate from California. They left for Washington on the last steamer, brim full of the Pacific Railroad project, and backed up by the united press of that State.

We shall be apt to hear more of this Railroad project before the adjournment of Congress.

The election of Broderick to the U. S. Senate for six years from California has thrown quite a damper over the exuberant joy lately manifested by the black democracy of the Douglas and Pierce school. The Weekly Times (Republican) of Sacramento seems pleased at his election, and seems to think Broderick as good a Republican as many who voted for Fremont. The Times says that thousands of republicans voted the democratic ticket last year hoping to secure the election of Broderick to the U. S. Senate. He is said to be a democrat of the old school, such as democracy was before it was budded with South Carolina nullification.

The Standard has temporarily or eternally wrinkled out. Some say that it is for want of paper, others say that the caucus resolutions killed it.

We think however it will be out again with a fresh head of steam.

Matrimony.

In today's paper will be found a matrimonial advertisement. Ladies answering the description called for, will take due notice. All letters addressed to Box 25, will be attended to, and the names of the writers will be kept a profound secret, by him for whom they are intended—a man who really wants a wife, and who, we have no doubt, will make a good husband.

Life Insurance.

By reference to advertisement it will be seen that The New England Mutual Life Insurance Company will hereafter take risks in Oregon. For further particulars, see advertisement.

Temperance Paper.

We have received the first number of the Temperance Mirror, a monthly paper, published in Sacramento California, and edited by Wm. B. Taylor.

The typographical appearance of the paper is neat, very neat, and the matter that fills its columns is fully equal to its general appearance. It is a good temperance paper, and we predict that it will be well supported.

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