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From the N. Y. Journal of Commerce, April 8

Important from China.

70,000 MEN REPORTED KILLED—MORE POISONING ATTEMPTED.

Macao, January 59th, 1857.—All foreign business is not only suspended, but entirely at an end, both here, at Hong Kong, and at Canton. Since my last letter, the greatest part of the Western suburbs of the latter city, in which were situated nearly all the warehouses, shops, &c., concerned in foreign trade, have been consumed. Of the total destruction of the foreign factories, you will have heard by my last letter. The Chinese compute their losses in houses, go-downs, shops, &c., at over 4000 buildings, up to the present time; and in merchandise, and the value of the above property, they state their losses at ten millions of dollars, which is probably not far from the truth.

We cannot of course know very accurately the damage sustained by the city of Canton since the bombardment began, 28th October last, but as the latter had been kept up with more or less pertinacity, to within a few days ago, when the English admiral retired with his forces from before the city, it is fair to suppose that the Chinese do not over estimate the loss in life when they state it at 70,000, of all ages and sexes. Everything favors this calculation, as it is well known, that the streets are exceedingly narrow, the population of great density, the means of the power to move within the reach of comparatively few; while the custom of closing the gates of every street, during a period of public danger, creates immense loss of life by any sudden movement of the populace.

To say nothing of the other distresses which have been riveted upon them and which are inseparable from such a condition of things, the total destruction of the trade of the places, the interruption to all the daily avocations of the people, &c, are very oppressive in their effects. Still, up to the present moment, the Chinese do not make the slightest concession. The Viceroy, Yeh, in all his official documents is as firm at this moment as he was when the "Arrow" lorcha was seized by his officers on the 8th of October last. The people, too, are even more bitter and exasperated against the English, and perhaps all foreigners—and notwithstanding their distresses and their sufferings, their opposition to everything which bears the appearance of reconciliation or terms of any kind is greater than ever.

At Hong Kong, a most comprehensive scheme to poison the whole foreign community was planned by a China baker named ESing, who mixed a large quantity of arsenic in the bread baked for the consumption of the 15th inst. Upwards of 400 persons were poisoned; many had most narrow escapes from death, the sufferings of all were dreadful—but, providentially, it is ascertained that not a single person died. The quantity of arsenic was *too large*, so that immediately after eating the bread, sickness and nausea followed, and the poison was thus ejected from the stomach. The effects, however, are many and up to the present time may still be seen.

Since then another attempt has been made, but on a much more moderate scale, through poisoned oranges, a quantity of which (about 5,000 in number) was introduced into the colony. It failed, however, in this instance, as too little of the poison had been absorbed by the fruit, altho' two deaths took place and they Chinese.—The Chinese have a method of poisoning oranges, by piercing them in the first instance with minute holes, then placing them over the vapor of the poisonous substance, which they then cause them to inhale.

Attempts have also been made to fire the settlement. That the Chinese are subtle enough to create some great catastrophe, is well known, but how or when no one can divine. The consequence is, that the whole community is living in a state of complete and most painful anxiety and alarm. There is a large force there afloat and ashore. Still, the mode of circumventing their enemy, by the Chinese is always hidden and secret; and while every street and every pass is guarded, either poison, kidnapping, or assassination, strikes terror throughout. In the latter sin the Chinese are great adepts, as you will see, if you take the trouble to read the newspapers I have ordered to be sent to you.

At this place, Macao, on the other hand, we enjoy the most perfect peace and security. The Portuguese, who have held this now more than 300 years, know the Chinese people well. They live on terms of mutual good will—so far as any Chinese can possibly be with anything foreign—and there is a registered population of the latter people of nearly 30,000, who have inhabited the peninsula for many successive generations. The consequence is that their families, their dwellings, their tombs and temples and property being all here they are fully as much identified with the place as their rulers, the Portuguese, and, therefore, as much interested to preserve it in all its present integrity.

There is, moreover, no question between the Chinese and the Portuguese governments. They are on excellent terms, which it is the object and the wish of both to preserve. Of foreigners, there are about 70 Americans here, including women, and children; of English, not more than 12 or 15 in all; of Spanish, French and German, and European Portuguese, not including the garrison and naval force, there may be about a hundred. The defences of the place are several judiciously placed forts, all built over 225 years ago about 300 artillerymen, a brig of war of 16 guns, and an armed lorcha of six.

In the meantime, Sir Michael Seymour has been obliged to withdraw all his forces from the city of Canton, and he is now establishing his headquarters about three miles from the city, to the southward, in a small fort taken from the Chinese, built on a rock in the middle of the river, called the Macao Passage Fort, and by the English, very absurdly, the Teetotum Fort, from its being circular with a tall pagoda in its centre.

The Chinese take great courage for this act of retiring, when they reflect that the Admiral's force consists of no less than 13 men-of-war, nearly all steamers, and very heavily armed. Thus, he intends to wait for reinforcements, but the delay is most prejudicial to him in every respect. Already the Chinese have attacked the fort and the men-of-war stationed around about it, with great energy and unexpected daring. When the reinforcements arrive, there is no doubt but that Canton will be in the military occupation of the English, and then the Chinese must either bend or submit to a long and desperate struggle with their masters, as the former must then become.

☞ Dred Scott the distinguished colored individual who has become a celebrity as identified with the trial Scott *vs.* Sanford, the Missouri Compromise, and the judges of the U. S. Supreme Court, is a resident not "a citizen" of St Louis, having located there some thirty years ago.—The St. Louis News thus sketches his personal history:—Dred Scott was born in Virginia, where he belonged to Capt. Peter Blow, the father of Henry C. and Taylor Blow of this city. He was brought by his master to St. Louis about thirty years ago, and in the course of time became the property of Dr. Emerson, a surgeon in the army, whom he accompanied on that trip to Rock Island and Fort Snelling, on the ground of which he based his freedom. The wife of Dr. Emerson was formerly Miss Sanford, and is now Mrs. Chaffee, wife of the Hon. Mr. Chaffee of Massachusetts. He has been married twice, his first wife by whom he had no children, having been sold from him. He has had four children by his present wife—two boys, both dead, and two girls, both living. Dred was at Corpus Christi at the breaking out of the Mexican war, as the servant of Capt. Bainbridge, whom he speaks of as a "good man"

On his return from Mexico he applied to his mistress, Mrs. Emerson, then living near St. Louis, for the purchase of himself and family, offering to pay part of the money down, and giving an eminent citizen of St. Louis, an officer in the army, as security for the payment of the remainder.—His mistress refused his proposition, and Dred being informed that he was entitled to his freedom by the operation of the laws regulating the North West Territory, forthwith brought suit for it. The suit was commenced about ten years ago, and has cost Dred $500 in cash, besides labor to nearly an equal amount. The suit was defended by Mr. John Sanford, as executor of Dr. Emerson's will.

Dred does not appear to be at all discouraged by the issue of the celebrated case, although it dooms him to slavery.

He is about 55 years old, though he does not know his own age, is of unmixed African blood, and as black as a piece of charcoal. For two or three years past no one has exercised ownership over him or put any restraint on his movements. If he were disposed to make the attempt he could gain his freedom at a much less cost than even one-tenth of the expense of the famous suit. He will not do so, however, insisting on abiding by the principles involved in the decision of the suit. He declares that he will stick to his mistress as long as he lives. His daughters, Eliza and Lizzie, less conscientious about the matter, took advantage of the absence of restraint on their movements, a year or two since, to disappear, and their whereabouts remain a mystery.

Dred, though illiterate, is not ignorant. He has traveled considerably, and has improved his stock of common sense, by much information picked up in his journeyings. He is anxious to know who owns him, being ignorant whether he is the property of Mrs Chaffee, or Mr. Sanford; we presume, there is no doubt that the former is his real owner. He seems tired of running about with no one to look after him, while at the same time he is a slave. He says grinningly, that he could make thousands of dollars, if allowed, by travelling over the country and telling who he is.

UNIFORM CURRENCY.—During a debate in the House of Congress upon a resolution to provide for ascertaining the relative value of the coinage of the United States and Great Britain, and the fixing the relative value of the unitary coins of the two countries, Mr. Tyson moved an amendment that the units should not only approximate in relative value, but that the whole should be on the *decimal system*.—This amendment was adopted, and an agent will be appointed to confer with European commissions, and report upon the subject of an international coinage.—One object of the commission is to neutralize the present inequality between the respective standards of value in the coin of Great Britain and the United States, an inequality which is expressed by that commercial figment—the par of exchange, or adding nine per cent., to our money.—The adoption of a common standard would make five of our dollars amount to a pound sterling, and put an end to the existing inequalities in silver as well as gold coins. The decimal system now prevails, by law, in many parts of Europe—England, Germany, and Russia excepted. In the former two countries a favorable impression prevails in regard to it. It is also in force in Chili, Columbia, and New Granada, in South America, and a feeling exists in favor of it in Mexico. If it could be adopted in every country, it would greatly facilitate the transactions of trade and be almost as convenient as a universal language. Mr. Tyson deserves the thanks of the mercantile community for giving this movement the right direction.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*

CHINA.—The reigning Emperor of China is said to be forty-six years of age. He is the seventh Emperor, of the present dynasty, or Tartar-Mantchou dynasty, whose chief, Tchoun Tchi, was proclaimed in 1644. According to the Chinese historians, the organization of the celestial empire dates from 3000 years before our Saviour. The family of the reigning Emperor is composed of four sons and a daughter. The elder—Yih-Wei—heir to the throne, is now eighteen years of age His mother died in giving him birth. The young prince is said to be well educated; but he professes, like his father, a profound hatred for foreigners. The second son is named Yih Chun; he is fifteen years of age; the fourth is Yih-Tsung. The Emperor's daughter who is said to be an accomplished princess, is fifteen years of age. She was married last year to a nephew of the Emperor, Prince Ting-Tsin Wang, who has the reputation of being highly educated. The Emperor has three brothers—Yung-Trum, Mien-Wang and Mien Hin; the latter was degraded during the preceding reign, deprived of all his dignities and banished from the Court.—He was accused of having been affiliated with a secret society for the purpose of seizing the crown. Twenty of his accomplices in the capital were tortured and put to death, and 600 in the provinces. The ministers of the Emperor form a distinct category, and possess enormous power.—They are fourteen in number, and are divided into two distinct classes.

☞ It is a remarkable fact that all the inaugural speeches of Mr. Buchanan's predecessors, though he is now the fifteenth President of the United States, have been delivered since he was born, so young are we as a nation. Washington delivered his first and only inaugural speech to the Senate, as did both Adams and Jefferson, but he delivered none on his second election.—Though Jefferson delivered his first inaugural in the Senate chamber, it was addressed to his "Friends and Countrymen." Since his time the inaugural speeches of the Presidents have been addressed to the people, and have been delivered from the portico of the Capitol.

THE MASSACHUSETTS BOOT AND SHOE TRADE.—The value of the Boot and Shoe Trade of Massachusetts is estimated in amount at upwards of $45,000,000 for the past year. The wholesale jobbing houses have done a full average business, while the profits of the manufacturers have been small, and a large body of operatives have worked on low wages, notwithstanding the high price for food. The manufacture of women's work has been fairly remunerative, while profits on men's heavy goods have been quite small. The collections at the South have been fair, but the interior trade of the Western States has paid as promptly as usual.

Free Soil in St. Louis.

The Intelligencer (American) says of the recent Emancipation victory in Saint Louis:

"We have at no time doubted that St. Louis is 'Free State' in sentiment by a heavy majority. This fact has long been notorious here. It has been the case for years; but the proverbial sensitiveness of a Slave State community to any discussion of Free State principles has heretofore kept the Free State feeling in abeyance. It has been evoked at last, and rises at once into political ascendency. This ascendency, it strikes us, is likely to be permanent; for while it is true that hundreds of men voted for Mr Wimer who are not in favor of Emancipation, it is also true that hundreds did not vote for him who are as thorough Emancipationists in sentiment as he is.

"The election of the Wimer ticket is, therefore, only the emphatic declaration of the city of St. Louis, not only on the expediency, but the *certainty*, of the early extinction of Slavery in Missouri. For it were very foolish in St. Louis to proclaim a policy that was of doubtful strength, and thus provoke isolation to herself from the rest of the State.

"*The Consequences.*—It is not now easy to calculate the effect that the election of Monday will have on St. Louis and Missouri. The result was sped through the land Monday night, and we shall soon have the expression it will evoke. It is the first instance in the history of the country of a Free State party boldly taking the field in a Slave State, and bearing to the ground the strong prejudices that such a movement is calculated to arouse.

"In the New England and Middle States the result will be received with a shout of joy. In the South it will probably cause a shiver of pain. The Fremont party will strike their spears upon their shields in token of delight. The Southern nullifiers will gloat over a coming agitation and utter new curses on the Union.

"*In Kansas* the effect will be strikingly manifest, no doubt. The Free State party will grow doubly strong in moral courage, and the Pro-Slavery party must cringe under such an "attack in the rear." With this powerful commercial metropolis in the field for Free Kansas and Free *Missouri*. Slavery propagandism cannot thrive on the border.

"*The Causes.*—While the preferences of the masses of St. Louis are the remote and all sufficient cause for the formation and success of the Emancipation party, the immediate causes may readily be perceived by any acute observer.

"The immoderate and proscriptive course of the Anti-Benton agitators of the State, who could never be done howling about "niggers," and abusing decent men who would not howl with them—who could never be satisfied with a pro-slavery victory and a calm, but must follow up every success with some new pro-slavery "finality"—who could not be easy with electing Mr. Buchanan and carrying Missouri by an immense vote, but must agitate immediately after by passing Carr's resolutions at Jefferson—these miserable, pestilential demagogues, whose presence curses the State, have precipitated this new issue on the State, *and lost it.* "LOST IT," we say, and say advisedly. Missouri will never recover *abroad* her pro-slavery rank, no matter what we may think and know *here.*"

THE SHIPS ON THE PLAINS.—The camels which have been imported by the United States Government, to be used on the plains which lie between us and the western ocean, for the carrying of the mails, are reported to be in the second Cavalry, in Texas, and in most excellent condition.—A Texas paper, speaking of the subject, says, that it has always been ascertained that more can be done by six camels in five days, than by six mule teams in ten days. The camels make a trip from Camp Verde to San Antonio, sixty miles, and back in six days, with more loading than two wagons possibly could carry; and the wagons usually take ten or twelve days for a trip.

The Commerce of the Ohio River.

The following statistics of the commerce of the Ohio River we take from an interesting report by Capt. W. R. Palmer, of the corps of Topographical Engineers:

At high water the true length of the Ohio river is set down at 950 miles. It drains an area of from two hundred to two hundred and twenty thousand square miles, very nearly equal to double the area of Great Britain and Ireland. Its natural resources are great; its navigation is by steamboats, barges, and flat boats, mostly built on the river. The aggregate number of boats built on the river prior to 1842 was 1,656; since that period to 1855 the number is 622; total 2,278; alive and fit for service 900; lost, destroyed or worn out 1,378.

The flatboat commerce is valued at $4,500,000 annually; the steamboat at $134,130,000. The number of passengers in 1851 to and from Louisville, Cincinnati, Wheeling and Pittsburgh is set down at 958,711; the number for the year ending the 30th of June, 1856, at 1,150,453. The total value of the commerce by land and water of the Ohio valley is estimated at $371,255,836. The value of imports at Cincinnati is stated to be $80,571,288; of exports $54,374,553; total value $134,945,831. In addition to the ordinary imports there are taken to Cincinnati, for consumption, coal, boards, and produce amounting to $6,310,000.

These figures give less than half of the entire commerce of the Ohio valley, the residue being carried on by canals and railroads. A large portion is for domestic consumption, and do not reappear as articles of commerce on the river.

POSITION IN SLEEPING.—It is better to go to sleep on the right side, for then the stomach is very much in the position of a bottle turned up-side down, and the contents are aided in passing out by gravitation. If one goes to sleep on the left side, the operation of emptying the stomach of its contents is more like drawing water from a well. After going to sleep, let the body take its own position. If you sleep on your back, especially soon after a hearty meal, the weight of the digestive organs, and that of the food, resting on the great vein of the body, near the back bone, compresses it, and arrests the flow of blood more or less. If the arrest is partial, the sleep is disturbed, and there are unpleasant dreams. If the meal has been recent or hearty, the arrest is more decided, and the various sensations, such as falling over a precipice, or the pursuit of a wild beast, or other impending danger, and the desperate effort to get rid of it, arouses us; that sends on the stagnating blood, and we wake in a fright, or trembling, or perspiration, or feeling of exhaustion, according to the degree of stagnation, and the length and strength of the effort made to escape the danger. But when we are not able to escape the danger, when we do fall over the precipice, when the tumbling building crushes us what then? *That is death!*—That is the death of those of whom it is said, when found lifeless in their bed in the morning: "They were as well as they ever were the day before;" and often is it added, and *ate heartier than common!* This last, as a frequent cause of death to those who have gone to bed well to wake no more, we give merely as a private opinion. The possibility of its truth is enough to deter any rational man from a late and hearty meal. This we do know with certainty, that waking up in the night with a painful diarrhœa, or cholera, or billious cholic, ending in death in a very short time, is probably traceable to a late large meal.—The truly wise will take the safer side. For persons who eat three times a day, it is amply sufficient to make the last meal of cold bread and butter and a cup of some warm drink. No one can starve on it, while a perseverance in the habit soon begets a vigorous appetite for breakfast, so promising of a day of comfort.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

The Sonora Expedition.

PARTICULARS OF THE FATE OF CRABB'S PARTY.

A gentleman who arrived at San Diego from Fort Yuma, on the 6th of May, furnishes the Herald of that place with the following particulars of the sad fate of the Crabb expedition:

The expedition into Sonora under the command of H. A. Crabb, has had a most disastrous end. Late in March, Crabb's party left Sonoita, and marched to Cavorca, a small Mexican town near Point Lobos, on the Gulf of California. The first intention was to have proceeded to Altar, but news of its partial fortification and susceptibility of a strong defence caused the diversion on Cavorca. On the morning of the 1st of April, the party of Americans entered the suburbs of the town.—They were met by a body of Mexican troops commanded by Rodriguez. It is said Rodriguez advanced to speak to Crabb, when the Americans opened fire and killed the Mexican commander and several others. The Mexicans immediately retreated some to the mountains, but the majority to the church, which had been placed in a state of defence, and had at the time Crabb entered the town, a number of beeves roasted whole in front of it to feed the Mexican troops.

It appears that here occurred Crabb's first and fatal mistake. Instead of at once charging and taking the church, which would have given him the town, he occupied several houses on the corner of the Plaza, in front of the church.

The Mexicans at first deserted most of the town, but gradually being emboldened, returned and gradually hemmed the Americans in. Fighting continued eight days, with a loss to the Americans of twenty-five killed. The Mexican loss is reported by themselves to have been twenty-five, but is supposed to have been much greater—as high as two hundred. On the eighth day an attempt was made by two of Crabb's men to blow up the church, by placing a keg of powder under the portico and firing it. The devoted men who attempted this, were both killed, and Crabb is said to have been wounded in superintending it. It is said an offer was made by Crabb to retire if the Mexicans would allow it. He had refused to retire when the offer was made him, after the fighting had continued two days, and now the Mexicans, confident of his weakness and their triumph, refused.—The Americans were gradually but surely caught in a snare, from which they saw no escape.

By breaking through the wall of the adjoining houses the Mexicans forced Crabb and his men into the corner buildings which they repeatedly set on fire, but which the Americans as often extinguished. At last a Papago Indian shot into the roof of the main building occupied by the unhappy fillibusters, a lighted arrow. The flames caught the roof and in a few moments the fire was dropping in great flakes upon the doomed men within. Worn out with constant fighting, exhausted with anxiety, famished by probably days of starvation and thirst, and without ammunition, Henry A. Crabb and fifty-eight men marched out of the burning house, with a white flag before them, laid down their arms and surrendered. It is supposed unconditionally. This was in the night or towards morning. They were immediately tied, their hands behind them, taken to a corral near the Alcade's office, where they were kept until morning, when they were taken out in squads of 5 and 10 each and shot. In the first executions it was found that the calmness of the Americans discomposed the executioners and they shot too high or too low, in many cases only wounding their victims. The backs of the fated men were then turned to the troops, and they succeeded with better effect.

McCoun, (may he rest in peace,) owing to his great stature, was saved this torture; a ball struck him full in the breast at the first fire and he fell dead. Crabb alone was reserved for a solitary death. He was taken to the Alcalde's office questioned, allowed to write a letter to his wife, and to have an interview with a Dr. Evans, a prisoner in the hands of the Mexicans, who had been in confinement some weeks on suspicion. The hour of his execution having arrived, he was led out, his hands stretched above his head and tied to a post in front of the building he had occupied, *his face to the post*, and his back to his executioners. At the word "fire," at least a hundred balls were fixed into his body, and all that was mortal of Henry A. Crabb hung dead, swinging by his tied hands.—A Mexican stepped forward and with a large knife severed his head from his body—the warm blood spirting half way across the street. The head was placed on a table in front, or in the office of the Juez, exposed to the jeers of the populace. It was then placed in a jar of mescal for preservation. Is there not something peculiarly terrible in such a fate for a man who has once controlled almost the destiny of a great State like California?

Two of the Ainsa's, (brothers-in-law of Crabb,) are said to be killed, and also Rasey Biven. My informant, an intelligent man and an eye-witness of these horrors, says Crabb died as a gentleman should, as calmly and quietly as if he were going to a pleasant home.

Four men, sick, had been left at Sonoita by Crabb. They occupied the house owned by E. E. Dunbar, Esq., *on the American side of the line.* On the 18th of April, at night, a party of 25 Mexicans came up from San Juan, went to Dunbar's house, took these poor sick men out of bed, tied them, and at dawn of day carried them to the foot of the hill, *shot them like dogs, on American soil*, and left them to rot. A party of Papago Indians, more merciful, buried them, and four solitary mounds now appeal, lone witnesses of a beastly crime, to the American Government for revenge.—Will such an appeal go unheard?

Mr. Dunbar just escaped massacre, having left Sonoita on the afternoon previous. The Mexicans were furious at his escape, although he had nothing to do with the party except to offer shelter, on American soil, to four sick men, in his own house.

A party of about 30 recruits, under Capt. Grant Orrey, started from Tueson to join Crabb at Cavorca. When within fifteen miles of the latter place, they were attacked by about 200 Mexicans. Capt. Orrey retreated, fighting, and regained the American line with a loss of only 4 killed. The Mexican loss was about 40. Capt. Orrey deserves great credit for his skill.—At every watering-place the Mexicans attempted to check him and subdue him by thirst, but he routed them on every occasion. The last eight miles was a continued running fight, and his fourth man lost was killed just at the line. Another party of the same strength, which left Tubac, has not yet been heard of. It is believed that if Capt Orrey had been with Crabb a different result might have been anticipated. All was bad management, want of experience, and a clear rushing upon a deadly fate. Crabb entered Cavorca with 84 men. All these were killed except the youngest, said to have been spared by the Mexican commander, Garcia. The name of the survivor is unknown, but he is said to be a boy of sixteen or seventeen. The Mexicans at Cavorca were about 500 strong.

Maj. Bob Wood and Maj. Tozer are safe. They were with Capt. Orrey's party. Col. R. N. Wood, late Fillmore elector, is among the dead.

The influence of this affair upon Americans is very bad. Our prestige is entirely destroyed—the Mexicans are loud in their boasts—our dreaded invincibility is gone,