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MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 5, 1858.

THE NORTHERN MAIL came through yesterday with the latest dates.

WHITEWASHING.

It is recorded in English history that one of the monarchs of the realm was constitutionally so full of ruth and tenderness that whenever the inexorable claims of justice required him to sign the death-warrant of some desperate criminal, he burst into tears and refused to be comforted. The members of the House of Representatives of the United States overflow with even more of the milk of human kindness than the humane and merciful Edward. They cannot endure the thought of inflicting punishment at all. Their sympathetic souls revolt at the idea of chastising official delinquency, and in the abundance of their charity they extend a free pardon to offenders, bidding them, in the language of Scripture, "Go and sin no more."

Certainly this boundless mercy is, abstractly speaking, worthy of the highest admiration. Practically, it may be attended with some inconvenience. Society and the public might complain of the practice of letting evil-doers go unwhipped of justice, and might argue that severe example is occasionally necessary, if only to deter others from evil. But then leniency and indulgence are such lovely qualities; charity towards error and sin indeed carries with it something so attractive that the matter-of-fact objections of your unsympathizing and HOUNDSTOOTH are deemed hard-heartedness and cruelty, and we should therefore be all such stern and wordy reasoners into a generous sympathy for the successful felon whom a timely pardon rehabilitates and re-establishes in reputation.

The popular branch of Congress has just furnished another signal and striking illustration of its illimitable philanthropy. OSBORNE BENJAMIN MATTESON, a member of that body, was expelled by an implacable justice, and subsequently elected to the present Congress has been on trial for alleged corruption. The same incontrovertible evidence adduced on a former occasion was again brought forward, and a mass of proof, crushing and overwhelming, seemed to threaten the accused with a repetition of punishment. But the members were touched with the quality of mercy; they felt for the suffering sinner; they understood human weakness; they knew how prone they were to be assailed by the same temptations which had beset him, and how easily they would be to succumb, as he did. They resolved, therefore, to take a large and liberal view of his case. They could not resist the testimony, but they strangled it. They could not pronounce the culprit innocent, but they suppressed the evidences of his guilt. This was accomplished by an ingenious device which the wits of some of the representatives, quickened by sympathy, had devised. They referred the affair to a special committee, with instructions to inquire whether the offenses committed by the said O. B. MATTESON, having been tried and punished by the preceding Congress, could be again considered in the present one. The committee, after several weeks of profound and self-sacrificing investigation, unanimously reported that the House had nothing whatever to do in the matter, and that it was incompetent to take further action in the case. This view coincided precisely with the fraternal and friendly sentiments of the majority. True, one or two unrelenting and fanatical advocates of honesty did contend that the House had a right to protect itself against scoundrelism, and against such as with a man whose reputation was infamously corrupt—but such a scurvy effort to arrest the torrent of kindly sympathy failed, as it deserved to do, and the House, by a decided 95 to 69, adopted the report of the committee.

Words Mr. MATTESON is thus legally and honorably absolved from guilt. Though his sins were as scarlet they have been made to appear white as snow. This immaculate gentleman immaculate now, as he has been duly purged from the dross of corruption—resumes his seat in the House of Representatives, and will re-enter into loving communion with the fellow Black Republicans. The horde of speculators and rat-catchers who wait on Congress as a hound waits at his master's table, picking their chops and anticipating the bits in which will fall into their expectant gullets, may take comfort. They have no ideal to future scrutiny into their pure and private. They may bribe here, there and everywhere; pay roundly for Congressional speeches for any bauble intended to gull the community and enrich themselves, whether a railroad, a grant of public lands, or a subvention to lines of steamers. If they work hard and disgorge freely, they shall have a first-rate chance of success. At all events the case of MATTESON clearly shows that those who are screened against all unpleasant consequences. The House enjoys the privilege of whitewashing rascality. As the wolf-dog bear each bush, an officer, so do Congressmen instinctively endeavor to shield any member of the gang who may get into difficulty, or who is in danger, if pushed to the wall, by the hot-hounds of the State's evidence and explode the whole concern.

MORRIS & CHILAS' GOODS.—The gentleman's furnishing emporium of S. N. MOODY, corner Canal and Royal streets, presents strong claims to attention. Fine linen shirts, ladies' and gents' handkerchiefs at 25 per dozen, and a variety of fine garments of every description, cut and manufactured with great taste, may be obtained at MOODY'S. See advertisement.

THE FAIR for the benefit of the Asylum and Industrial School under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Cross will begin this day, the 5th inst., at the United States Hotel, Bienville Fields, Third District. We commend the patronage of this benevolent enterprise to all charitably disposed persons.

SINGER'S SEWING MACHINES.—These valuable sewing machines, which have fully and satisfactorily stood the test of time and experience, may be procured at WARREN EASTON'S, No. 33 Camp street. The advertisement in our columns details more particular the value and utility of these instruments.

AUCTION SALE OF STORE AT AUCTION.—It will be seen by our advertising columns that the entire stock of the Manuel Blanco drug store, situated No. 51 Chartres (late Condé) street, will be sold on the premises this day at 10 o'clock, by FRANCIS FERNANDEZ. The sale will be made in block, and the terms are easy at this date.

FINE BOOKS AT WHITE'S.—By reference to our advertising columns it will be seen that THOS. H. WHITE, No. 105 Canal street, has received a supply of highly interesting and valuable works, among which are PARTON'S biography of AARON BURR, ABBOTT'S Life of NAPOLEON, Madame LE VERT'S Souvenirs of Travel, &c. &c. WHITE has constantly on hand the standard publications of the day.

SPRING AND SUMMER FASHIONABLE CLOTHING. A very fine assortment of fashionable clothing, adapted to spring and summer wear, and made up in the newest styles, has just been received by FRANCIS FARRE & CO., corner St. Charles and Common streets. Those desirous of procuring the outer man may now provide themselves with fine habiliments, at moderate prices, by calling at FARRE & CO.'s.

CONFEDERATION BONNETS.—The *Confederation* learns from Colonel Garrett, agent of the Creek Indians, who lately passed through Montgomery, that Billy Bowlegs and his warriors (fifty-seven in number—have all agreed to remove, and that Sam Jones and party, (some forty in number) being the remainder of the tribe, will, in all probability, consent also to emigrate. This will terminate the twenty-two years' war with the Seminoles. The prices agreed upon each are $1000 to the chiefs, $600 to the warriors, and $200 to the squaws.

The Madison (Fla.) *Messenger* has reliable information that Billy Bowlegs has surrendered his sword, and is now at Tampa with his whole party, waiting the consummation of arrangements now being made, to be transported to the West."

Serious apprehensions are entertained for the recovery of Colonel BEATON, who has been suffering for some time past with cancer in the stomach, but who still preserves his love of love—the work with which his name will be as much identified in times to come—though prostrated and confined to the bed.

[For Texas in No Success in Mexico, or rather as presented sources. The Galveston *Weekly Journal* says we made, all their discoveries, and all that is known of real value in the case of gold has been discovered by them. He also found the most valuable, lowest colored, and richest gold ore. He goes to work and invents the best machine which we had ever seen in the country, and which he sells to companies, thus relieving them of an enormous monopoly of it solely by reducing it cheaper, better, more perfect than any body else. Of course he could expend that of all the others, and they would have sought him beside and made it their interest.—*The Orleans Crescent.*

THE QUARANTINE.—New York, April 3.—The quarantine is rigidly enforced. All vessels and goods are subject to a visit from the health officer.

Democratic Caucus.

A caucus of the Democratic members of the House of Representatives was held on the evening of the 27th ult., and was attended by between sixty and seventy members. Mr. Cochrane, of New York, was called to the chair, and Mr. Seward, of Georgia, was appointed Secretary.

Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, stated the object of the meeting to be to confer together—the Lecompton and anti-Lecompton Democrats—and see if some arrangement could not be made to unite the discordant elements. He was ready to hear any suggestion from those gentlemen upon this Kansas difficulty. He had never yet been able to ascertain what those gentlemen desired. He, for one, was for unity and harmony, and desired above all things to preserve the party intact; and he believed it could be done if a proper spirit was manifested.

Mr. English, of Indiana, then offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That a special committee be appointed by the chair, to consist of ten Lecompton and ten anti-Lecompton Democrats, whose duty it shall be to confer together, and ascertain whether any thing can be done to secure harmony and concert of action in reference to the question of admitting Kansas into the Union; and that said committee report the result of their deliberations to this caucus, for its consideration, on Tuesday evening next, at 8 o'clock, to which time the caucus will adjourn.

Mr. English said he was not in the habit of obtruding his opinion, but he felt that great responsibility rested upon every Democratic Representative. He concurred in what Mr. Stephens had said in reference to the importance of promoting harmony in the Democratic family. He liked the conciliatory spirit of his speech, and deeply regretted that such a fraternal spirit had not been earlier manifested. If it had been, much of the existing trouble and bad feeling would have been avoided. He spoke of the danger to the Democratic party likely to grow out of this question if it were not settled, and urged the committee from each side to meet on terms of equality, and as members of the same Democratic household to counsel together. Good might come of it; and, at all events, if no agreement could be effected—matters would be no worse than they now are. He could scarcely think of a greater calamity than the division and overthrow of the Democratic party, and the elevation to its place of one purely sectional. The question with him was not so much what ought to have been done with the question originally, as what could be done with it in the position to which it has drifted.

The resolution was then adopted, and the caucus adjourned to meet on Tuesday evening next.

The regular troops in Kansas and on the Western frontier will start for Utah between the 30th of April and 10th of May, mustering in all about 3000 effective men. Five regiments of volunteers, proposed by the bill now before the Senate, will be accepted and organized whenever the bill is passed. No force less than a regiment will be received from any State, but offers are already made, directly or contingently, which cover the whole force authorized. They will be taken according to the date of application. One regiment is especially appropriated for Texas.

THE VANDERBILT OPPOSITION LINE PURCHASED.—The Southern Steamship Company, we learn, have purchased the opposition steamships of Vanderbilt, which have for some time past been running in our waters, and will, therefore, henceforth have exclusive control of the Texas lines, of the Vera Cruz line, and of the Florida lines. The reflective will rejoice at this, for, however much a brief, unreasonable competition may benefit a few merchants and shippers, capitalists and the general interests of a community are more than proportionately injured by it; and we are sure that the Southern Steamship Company will manage their lines with a fair regard for the public interest, as well as for their own.

Mr. E. J. Hart, the President of the Company, went to Berwick's Bay this morning. We understand, to take possession of the steamships running between that place and Galveston in connection with the Opelousas Railroad.—*Picayune.*

Our cotemporary is correct in announcing the purchase of the Vanderbilt line of Texas steamships, though it is not yet ascertained whether the purchase has been effected by the Southern Steamship Company, or by CHARLES MORGAN, Esq., of New York. In either event, however, the interests of the two lines will be substantially identified.

STEAM GROUND COFFEE.—D. LOPEZ, 95 Chartres street, corner of Conti, offers for sale, at wholesale and retail, fresh steam ground coffee of the best quality. See his advertisement.

CONGRESS.

WASHINGTON, March 27.

Senate.—The Senate was not in session today.

House.—The House proceeded to the consideration of the report of Mr. MATTESON, of the committee on the Matteson case, which concludes with a resolution that it is inexpedient to take further action in regard to the resolution for his expulsion.

Mr. Seward argued in favor of the views expressed in the report. The House has, by the constitutional power to punish a member for disorderly conduct, and by a vote of two-thirds may expel a member, but it never was designed that the charge should be revived at a subsequent Congress, because there is no power to limit or restrict the sovereignty of the people in the choice of their representatives.

Mr. Craige, of North Carolina, asked whether any legislative body had not a right to protect itself against scoundrelism and against associations with a man whose reputation is infamously corrupt.

Mr. Seward replied that there was some diversity of opinion as to what constitutes a gentleman. He should like Mr. Craige to fix the legal standard.

Mr. Craige said the House could protect itself when a man's character was pronounced infamous, and about which there was no diversity of opinion.

Mr. Seward remarked he was not here as prosecutor or defender of Mr. MATTESON, but he was endeavoring to explain the law as he understood it. He asked Mr. Craige to put his finger on the record and show that Mr. MATTESON was interested one cent in the transactions investigated by the previous Congress.

Mr. Craige said by universal consent Mr. MATTESON was not a fit associate for any man.

Mr. Seward observed that the gentleman from North Carolina was not bound to associate with Mr. MATTESON more than he was. There is nothing to show that Mr. MATTESON was engaged in bribery, or was bribed.

Mr. Ritchie moved to lay the whole matter on the table. Agreed to—yeas 96; nays 69.

Mr. Smith, of Virginia, yesterday made a statement in the effect that Mr. MORRIS, of Illinois, informed him that at the commencement of the present session of Congress the Democratic portion of this Illinois delegation had a conference, and came to the conclusion that the only chance of Judge Douglas for re-election to the Senate of the United States was for him to oppose KANSAS under the Lecompton Constitution.

Mr. Shaw, of Illinois, to-day alluded to this statement, and denied knowledge of any such conference; certainly, he did not participate in any.

Mr. Morris denied that a conference was held, although he recollected a private conversation in which he freely made his Democratic views of his views on political questions, and sought to effect some arrangement by which to avert division in the Democratic party. He said that Mr. Smith had wholly misapprehended his remarks.

Messrs. Robert Smith and Marshall, both of Illinois, said that no such conference was held.

Mr. Burnett, who evidently rose with reluctance, as he did not wish to be mixed up in this matter, finds a general concurrence in the statement of Mr. Smith.

Mr. Morris remarked that the conversation between Mr. Shaw and himself grew at private one, in the presence of Mr. (Mr. Burnett's) family, and called how would any gentleman like a private conversation to be repeated in public?

Mr. Smith replied, in explanation, that he had no desire to injure any one, and would be sorry to see any difference between public men and public acts. But if a conversation were under the injunction of confidence he, of course, would not repeat it.

The House went into committee, when Mr. LOVE, of Georgia, made a speech in favor of the admission of Kansas under the Lecompton Constitution; and

Mr. HALL, of Missouri, spoke against it, and in defence of the Topeka Fathers.

The House adjourned.

Another Correspondence Attempt at Assassination.

On Saturday night, about 11½ o'clock, as Steve Lewis, messenger at the United States marshal's and Register in Bankruptcy, stationed as an engineer in the fire department, were quietly conversing on the pavement near the corner of Fulton and Ann streets, in the Fourth Ward, they met two villains, who attempted to pass off the pavement on the Ann street side. Lewis, who was in the act of turning around, was struck on the left side of the head with a heavy bludgeon, which he had just had time to parry with his left arm, when a second blow was aimed at his head, which he also parried with his left arm, when a second blow was aimed at his head, which he also parried with his left arm, when a second blow was aimed at his head, which he also parried