

History

1856-

New York Tribune, Monday, November 10, 1856

KANSAS.

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From Our Special Correspondent

Lawrence, K. T., Nov. 1, 1856

We have still a comparative quiet, although we live on the edge of a volcano, and any moment may precipitate us into a strife the result of which is, at least, uncertain. Gov. Geary is yet in the southern part of the Territory, and we have heard nothing from him for two days. The Court at Leecompton goes on with its work by the inch. There is a half dozen of the prisoners before them, arraigned on a variety of indictments, and for the last few days they have been at work with them. Witness after witness is examined with the most methodic slowness. Short terms (a few hours a day), laxity in the manner of urging Court business, an indifference about the hours for which Uncle Sam has to pay, and in which the hated prisoners suffer, all of these make the laggard footsteps of justice creep, and men might grow old ere *justice* had executed or even determined on her decrees. Nearly fifty of the prisoners, I understand, have been indicted for murder in the first degree. This wholesale recklessness merely indicates the failure that must result when such cases are carried into court; but when will all of these prisoners be tried? It will take them months to get through at this rate, and Border-Ruffian patience and Border-Ruffian revenge can rarely wait that long. There will be some change in the current; it would be difficult to say how or why. These fellows are too fitful to follow one particular course or one idea long. True, there is no present indication of relaxing. This is a Special Term of the Court for the purpose of trying these prisoners; but the Grand Jury have been finding bills against a multitude of others, who are still as free as those who breathe the air of conquered Kansas can be. No less than six hundred indictments are reported to have been found against Free-State men. Whether this Grand Jury, like its illustrious predecessor, has been finding bills against or presenting hotels or saw-mills or printing-presses or bridges, I know not.

As yet, Capt. Walker and Lieut. Harvey of the "Militia" have not been arrested, although they have been in hourly expectation of it. I have heard that it is not the intention of these gentlemen to allow themselves to be taken without express orders from the Governor. Deputy-Marshal Faim was in town yesterday, but did not have the Dragoons with him. He was evidently on a tour of investigation, and plotting mischief of some kind. It is not likely that many days will pass without some demonstration, and they are evidently measuring the magnitude and difficulty of the present enterprise.

On the 17th of this month the Delaware ceded landswill come into market. These lands are valuable. They include the City of Leavenworth and several other towns, and have a frontage for miles, on the Missouri River. The land is of various kinds--excellent prairie, timber land, &c. The portion to be sold is a ten-miles-wide strip of the Delaware Reserve. It was ceded in trust, to be sold at auction to the highest bidder for the benefit of the Indians. As I have said, settlements and towns have been freely made upon it. At first the Indians objected to these settlements as an infringement of the treaty, but from the improvements thus made the lands in question derive no inconsiderable portion of their value. At these land sales difficulty of some kind may be expected. Although the lands have mostly been appraised at \$2 or \$3 per acre, many of those

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who have squatted on them swear they will give \$1.25 and no more, and that they will shoot any man who dares to bid off their claims. There is still a very considerable portion of these lands that are occupied by no one--excellent lands too. It is a pity but there was some moneyed company to invest their funds in the purchase of these lands, to prevent them from all falling into the hands of similar companies in the Slave interest. What would be much better would be for such companies or associations to furnish funds for actual settlers to make the purchase, taking mortgages on the premises for the payment, and a proper proportion for the use of money thus invested in what must prove a handsome speculation for all concerned.

In a week or two the second edition of the bogus legislature will be "issued" at Lecompton. What the Barons will do this time it would be beyond the *ken* of mortals to divine. That this session will out-do the first, I am rather inclined to think. I certainly can see more of that relenting, or "backing down," which those in the East, who look with horror on the bogus laws, seem to expect. The fact is, there is nothing unnatural or out of place in the aforesaid "bogus laws." They are not only the natural fruits of the power from which they emanated, but are a necessary part of the system they are intended to bolster up. Let no one think that they were a wild freak of merely drunken, would-be law makers. The would-be law makers might be drunken, or semi-drunken, but they were sober enough to make such laws as Slavery needs and seeks. The approaching session will see them add to them, rather than lay them on the shelf. More stringent laws for the preservation of slave property *in Kansas*, will unquestionably be adopted. Laws that will still further be an insult and an outrage to all that freemen recognize as the standards of political liberty. The fact is, republicanism is merely *a name* in the Southern States where Slavery readily exists; and it must become *only a name*, or even *less* than a name; in Kansas, before the miasmatic fog of Slavery can settle on the restless atmosphere, now blowing so freely from the Rocky Mountains. And yet, when I look around me and see the deep footprints of despotism, violence and fraud, on every hand, I feel that the work has progressed fearfully, and that the Missouri-elected law makers about to assemble at Lecompton will merely have to give point to the labors of their predecessors; to reduce villain theories to hard, stabbing villain facts, and add to their fearful Draconian code by affixing the death penalty to all who dare love the freedom won in '76, in Kansas, in this year of Grace 1856-57.

By the Pro-Slavery vote thrown the 2nd of last month, it appears that a majority of the Pro-Slavery residents and Missourians who voted are in favor of having a Convention held to frame a Constitution for admission to the Union--as a Slave State of course. Here is a very pretty piece of work on hand, and it is not difficult to fancy the different stages of the Constitution which may thus be made to see the light, from the preliminary steps taken by the bogus Legislature, to the time when Missouri shall come over to vote for it.

All of yesterday the Committee were busy in Lawrence, listening to the petitions of emigrants who have suffered and lost much, and who are in want. Applicants there were from a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. Such articles as the Committee had at its disposal were distributed. While there is unquestionably a large number who need and merit direct assistance, it is also true that much good could be done by sending capital to invest, is what would prove remunerative

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business or building. The exorbitant rents paid in Lawrence, for instance, for houses of the poorest description are most inviting to capital, when we reflect that the settlement of the present difficulties will bring a prosperity which will increase rather than diminish these high rates. Again, there are saw-mills that might be erected profitably in many different places. Green lumber sells at the mill for \$3 per hundred feet, and the lowest rates I know are one half of that amount merely for sawing the logs when delivered. Then there will be a great demand for grist-mills next year; there is, indeed, a demand for them now, and on this point I would remark that this is the best country for wind mills in the United States. There are hundreds of different ways in which capital could be invested most profitably, producing more than it could, perhaps, in any other quarter, and we want it *now*--immediately--to furnish labor to those who may not be able to sustain themselves on a claim until it produces enough to live on. Kansas needs such capital to afford good labor, not only to the poor emigrants now here, but to the class of emigrants in narrow circumstances who may be coming.

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Lawrence, K. T., Thursday, Oct. 25, 1856

To the Editor of the Missouri Democrat:

Sir: In *The Republican* of the 16th inst. is a communication, over the signature of "H. T. Titus," in which my name is made to figure. If Col. Titus had not placed himself as the undoubted author of this letter, I should never have supposed it was written by him.

I have but little cause to respect Col. Titus as a man of honor, or as one entertaining generous sentiments, but I had supposed that his desire to appear as a man occupying a reputable position would have restrained him from putting his name to a communication like that. This, however, I will leave to him and his friends. It does me no harm. With those who know me, it will appear worse than folly, and with those who do not know me, I leave them with a few explanations, to the exercise of their judgments.

I have been raised an humble farmer, and have known no other life than that of industry. My habits were formed among the farmers of Pennsylvania. I lived a farmer in Ohio, and came to Kansas Territory as one, and settled down with my family on a claim about four miles from Lecompton. I built me a house, in which my family lived, and had under cultivation about twenty acres of land. I had but little to commence on, and looked with hope to the future for a competency for myself and family, from a fertile soil and the ample rewards therefrom, to industry and frugality, peace and quiet to me were everything.

When the question arose, as to whether this should be a Free State or Slave State, I, as a matter of course, being a laboring man, preferred the former. I was exposed to the manner in which the Legislature was chosen here and was opposed to the laws passed by it, but I am unconscious of ever having violated any of those laws, except those which inderdict [*sic*] the freedom of speech--a right guaranteed to me by the Constitution of the United States.

During the excitement in this country, every person was forced to take sides. My choice was with the Free-State party and I do not intend to speak here of the causes of this necessity. It is sufficient that it existed. No person knows better than Col. Titus, the grounds of the exasperation I was made to feel. We never acted but in self-defense, and that we banded together for this purpose, was in consequence of the organized bands on the other side. That we ever attacked, was with the sole view of warding off an attack--by trying to disperse those who had assembled to do us mischief. That Col. Titus was especially offensive to the Free-State party, was attributable to his brutal inhumanity toward them. He had an inebriate Governor to countenance him in it, and it was done with impunity.

When Col. Titus's house was attacked, it was with the full determination of taking his life--information having been first received that Mrs. Titus had gone to the States. His house, although it was the home of twenty or thirty of the most characterless men in the Territory, who were then there, was attacked successfully. After some firing, in which both parties suffered, Col. Titus's party surrendered. Col. Titus was found concealed in a closet; he was brought out, and seeing me, he appealed to me for protection. Although he had less

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right to appeal to me for protection--as he had offered \$500 for my head prior to this--than any other man in the crowd, still he did so. I could not see any man, wounded and bloody as he was, appeal to me under such circumstances without aiding him, if I could. I took Col. Titus under my charge at an imminent risk to myself. The Free-State party seemed unrelenting in their determination. I succeeded in getting him from among them, and took him to the stable, where I quieted his apprehensions by my promise that I would protect him. While I was thus engaged, his house was set on fire, and if he does not know that it was against my wish, he knows that it was without my agency. He was taken to Lawrence as a prisoner in the only vehicle we had at our command. He was tried by a Committee appointed for the purpose, and after a careful investigation into his previous conduct, he was sentenced to die, and he knows that it was through my earnest efforts in his favor that his life was spared, and that he was restored to liberty. So much for the relations between Col. Titus and myself.

The charm, he thinks, most potent to injure me, is to denounce me as an Abolitionist. This is generally successful. If Slavery is never interfered with until I trouble myself about it, it bids fair to endure for time. In Kansas, where I expect to live, and my children after me, I shall do what I can to make it a Free State; but to do that I will never lend a hand do what is not right--right in the sense of the strictest morals [*sic*]. But in self-defense, for the protection of my home, I will bear me as stoutly as a right arm, nerved by labor, will permit. My home has been invaded, and indignities thrust upon me that would justify any man in pursuing the course I have pursued. I am satisfied with what I have done, and I will do the same again when the same causes excite me to it.

I trust Col. Titus will not give himself too much uneasiness about the attempt of any person to put himself on an *equality* with me. If that attempt were likely to be successful, I would here enter a solemn protest myself. Col. Titus should be careful how he attacks private character. He is not above reproach himself, and the life of adventure that he has led ought to make him very forbearing. I have too much self-respect to bandy epithets with him. I understand he is on the eve of departure for Nicaragua. Should he, however, remain, and the times should make it necessary, I would be happy to treat him again as I have treated him, not as he has treated me.

Col. Titus' free use of dirty epithets, he is welcome to. They were not thought to be genteel among those with whom he was raised.

I beg you will give this letter an insertion in *The Missouri Democrat*, together with the letter of Col. Titus. *The Republican* is so unreasonable and one-sided in its representations of matters in this Territory that I doubt if it would publish my letter, although it is simply in defense against a personal attack that it has given publicity to.

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL WALKER.

From the Missouri Republican, Oct. 16.

Lecompton, K. T., Oct. 9, 1856

Messrs. Editors--In a communication over the signature of "The Constitution," contained in your paper of the 2d inst., I am most foully misrepresented, and ask of you as you value personal honor to correct the slander.

It is true that a robber, incendiary, and horse thief, who is called Captain Walker, was in command of his fellow thieves at the cowardly and disgraceful assault upon my house. It is true that he and his party robbed me of money, household furniture, horses, and other valuables, to the amount of \$12,000, and burned my house, a very comfortable one, with four rooms, a portico, and other conveniences, although I told him that they had shot me in three places, sacked my house, and asked him not to burn it, but let it stand. He replied, "God d--n you, and God d--n you house. Men, bring on the hay," and when it was in flames, he took me, dripping with blood from my own wounds, pitched me into an uncovered wagon, and dragged me through the blazing sun to their great den of thieves--Lawrence. This fellow Walker saw and participated in these acts, and insulted me when wounded and disabled. Perhaps in his little shanty, which he had deserted in order to become an assassin, was afterwards burned down during his absence by some thoughtless person. Of this I know nothing.

I did meet Walker in the "Executive Chamber," and through courtesy to Gov. Geary, when introduced, spoke to him. I am wounded and disabled, and could not have struck the dastard down if I had been so inclined; but I ask if this is any excuse for a correspondent to place me upon an equality with such a man? Our party is composed of honorable men, and we are unwilling to be placed upon a level with thieves, assassins and robbers. We are not in the habit of "mingling many tears" with tears from the eyelids of thieves. Honorable men are not in the habit of "pledging eternal friendship" to robbers and murderers--to men who

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have been reared in the sinks of iniquity and in the moral cess-pools of Abolitionism.

I am willing to submit to anything to keep peace and heal the wide breach which now exists between our friends and our Abolition invaders, except upon being placed upon an equality with them, and I know that no honorable man will ever, even for the sake of peace, demand such a sacrifice from honorable men.

Governor Geary is doing his duty to all. He is a grim[?], resolute and commanding patriot, and skillful chief executive, and if any man could bring together these discorded elements, he might; but he knows the impossibility of such a thing, and will never undertake it.

Your obedient servant,
H. T. TITUS.

Special Correspondence of The Missouri Democrat.

Lawrence, K. T., Oct. 29, 1856.

Matters here look decidedly ~~dark~~ dark, and the returns from Pennsylvania and Indiana are not very well calculated to throw sunshine into our darkness. I say this with due deference to the opinions of your journal. But the Free-State people are blessed with a large amount of hopefulness, and they are still sustained with the hope that the man who has pledged himself to make Kansas a Free State, may be elected. They regard the cry of "Buchanan, Breckenridge, and Free Kansas," as a miserable and ridiculous hoax got up for electioneering purposes at the North, in order to deceive those who are silly enough to be deceived by it.

The trials of the Free-State men for murder still go on. I was there the other day when four men were on trial for "assault and battery with intent to kill," because they happened to be in a battle with Pro-Slavery men in the north part of the Territory. They were acquitted, but before they could leave LeCompton, three of them were rearrested and charged with murder! I state these facts to show you how our judiciary is managed. If a man cannot be convicted on one indictment, they try him on another. The Court goes on very slowly, and up to this time but one man has been convicted.

I had an interview with Col. Titus, and gleaned from him some opinions about the Presidential question, and as he doubtless speaks for the whole Border-Ruffian party, I will write some of them. He says, if Fremont is elected, he will "take up his bed and walk." Good! He said further, that if Buchanan was elected (of which he had not the least doubt) he would advise every Free-State man in the Territory to do the same thing. I referred to the cry at the North of "Buchanan, Breckenridge and Free Kansas;" whereupon he assured me that Buchanan was pledged to the South to make Kansas a Slave State, and that would be the result. He admitted to me that he believed Kansas was not adapted for Slave Labor, but that it must be made a Slave State to preserve the balance of power, and that the South would have it at any cost. Titus is decidedly a good-looking man, but even according to his own showing, his life has been one of reckless adventure; and his conversation shows to the least casual observer, that he believes that might makes right. Hence he is a dangerous man. He has good points in his character, of course. I noticed that he was polite and courteous to strangers that he would listen to adverse sentiments and arguments with perfect composure. He spoke of his losses during the war with the coolness of a martyr, but he seemed to look upon the whole question here as a grand scheme in the lottery of life, and that the drawing on the 4th of November would decide who were the winners. My opinion is, that there are worse men among the Ruffians than Titus.

The prison in which the Free-State men are confined is truly a horrible place. It is a frame house, poorly inclosed, without windows, and surrounded on all sides with filth and the Titus militia. I went to see the prisoners but found I could not get in without a pass from Col. Titus. Several men came to the door to see me. I talked with them a few moments, two sentinels passing backward and forward between us the while. Presently a chap with a sword came and told us that we could not talk over the lines.

About the last of July, when coming from St. Louis to this place, I met on the steamboat a young man from St. Charles, Mo., by the name of William Bowles. He was going to the Territory in company with his brother, to find a new home. He was a Free-State man, quiet, gentlemanly and intelligent. When the last raid was made upon the settlers of the Territory, Mr. Bowles thought it to be his duty to join the Free-State army under Lane. He was among the one hundred and odd who were made prisoners by order of Gov. Geary. The miserable food and the exposure, and the loathsome nature of the prison, induced a terrible disease, resembling yellow fever, which carried him away in two days. Others grew sick, and though no more have died, yet there is no denying the fact that the sickness which ex-

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ists there, more or less, among the prisoners all the time can be accounted for in no other way than by the treatment which they receive.

Last Saturday a woman, a Mrs. Patrick, the wife of a Scotchman, passed through this city on her way to Lecompton, to see her husband in prison. Eleven weeks ago her husband left home and joined the Free-State army, and she did not hear of him till two weeks since, when she heard he was in prison. She then placed her two children in the care of a Pro-Slavery neighbor, and started on foot to Lecompton.

She and her children had lived mostly on green corn and vegetables the greater part of the time. When these failed her, she was reduced almost to actual starvation. As a last resort, she begged for some flour of a Government teamster. He had none, but gave her some coarse hard bread, upon which they lived for a long time.

This case is not an isolated one, but I mention it to show you the actual suffering from want of some of the settlers. If the Kansas Aid Societies would expend less money on arms, and more money in relieving the wants of the needy, it would subserve the cause of Freedom much better. Rifles are good in their place, but when it becomes a State's prison offense to carry them even in defense, then we think it is better to buy bread. One good man with a wife and family--one good Free-State bona fide settler--is worth more to Freedom than a dozen rifles.

The mass Convention held at Big Springs yesterday was well attended, and almost every district in the Territory was represented. The candidates were plentier than one would naturally suppose they would be; however, the very best feeling prevailed throughout. Judge Schuyler was called to preside, and after appointing secretaries, the meeting proceeded to an informal ballot, for the purpose, I suppose, of testing the relative strength of the different candidates. Marcus J. Parrott, esq., of Leavenworth, led all the rest; but as some of the candidates withdrew their names, Gov. Reeder was nominated on the first formal ballot, and his nomination was afterward made unanimous. This action, in my opinion, was creditable to the Convention, as it is due to Gov. Reeder and to the cause of Free Kansas. In an emergency which present events foreshadow, it will be found that Gov. Reeder is the very best man for us, and for our cause; and while we believe that Mr. Parrott would represent our highest interests, as a Territory, faithfully and well we also believe that the former, from his experience and ability as a statesman, and because he knows the ground, would represent us better.

A Committee was appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the Convention, who reported the following:

Resolved, That we contemplate with no small degree of pride the political career of our Delegate to Congress, Andrew H. Reeder, and the unanimous indorsement of his course to-day by his constituents must be to him, as it is to us, a subject of unmingled satisfaction.

Resolved, That Gov. Geary, in his exercise of executive functions in Kansas, by the use of the forces of the United States for the execution of the Draconian code of the Missouri usurpers--by his arrest and incarceration in a loathsome prison of over one hundred of our best citizens, without warrant or judicial process, while the invaders, whom these brave men had just conquered and compelled to agree to leave a soil which they had desecrated by their presence, remain at large--by his active cooperation with the judicial tyrants of Kansas, and his honeyed promises of driving out James H. Lane and his brave compatriots in the protection of the lives of our people, impel us to denounce him as a petty tyrant, ready to use his official power for mere purposes of party demagogism, rather than for the protection of our oppressed and suffering people.

Resolved, That we are, as ever, determined to work on actively and zealously to sustain Freedom in Kansas, hurling defence at the usurpers who have attempted to disfranchise, oppress and exterminate us.

The first and third of these resolutions were adopted; the second was voted down as inexpedient.

The Convention appointed a Committee to propose a form of election and a Committee to carry the plea into execution.

The assertion made some time ago by Gov. Geary, that he knew of every movement by a system of espionage, was generally treated as a joke. At this Convention a friend of mine pointed out to me two innocent-looking boys, one of whom was taking notes. I offered one of them a Reeder ticket, and urged him to vote. He declined, and said rather bashfully: "'Scuse me, Sir, I'm a Pro-Slavery man," and voted for Mr. Whitfield. I afterward learned that he and his comrade were Geary's spies. As I did not see Geary employ them, I cannot say that this is true. But then I should like to know what the Pro-Slavery man is going to do with the votes.

There is nothing new here. The weather is quite cool. John Smith.

Kansas.--*The Fitchburg Reveille* publishes a letter from one of the Free State prisoners at Lecompton, in which the writer says that Col. Titus, who has charge of the prisoners, "has offered any one his liberty and a free passage

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to join Gen. Walker in Nicaragua." He adds:

"Last Monday was election day; the Missouri ruffians came over and voted as usual; the militia who guard us voted twice each, and they own it, and own that they are Missourians, and do not intend to settle here, yet they are fed and clothed by the United States. *They say they came to wipe out Lawrence.* They are a very ignorant and a poor-looking set. They are expecting Congress to grant 160 acres of land to them at the next session for their services."