

MATTERS IN KANSAS.

NEBRASKA CITY, N. TERRITORY, August 27, 1856.

Editor of Leader:

The late activity in Kansas history having been reported to me directly by some of those who were enactors of it—my principal informant having been for the last twelve months publicly identified with the interests of Freedom on the theatre of glorious struggle, I shall attempt to give you a reliable account of it, trusting that at this point, which is the key of Kansas on the land side, where the din of war is faintly heard, and the passions immediately developed by its trying scenes are wakened only to healthy sympathy, an unbiassed opinion can be expressed, and the thousand variations of rumor reduced to certainty. Though near, we are not engulfed in the whirlpool of despotism and anarchy; though remote, we do not feel uninterested in the trials and fate of our neighbors and brethren in Kansas.

There have been in the late series of skirmishes and surprisals—actions. The first was near Westport, Missouri. A number of robberies and several murders had been committed in that part of Kansas lying in the neighborhood of Westport, which were traced to a band of men who had established themselves in a fortified post. From this they issued to maraud and pillage, to terrify isolated settlements, waylay wagons of merchandize, capturing horses and cattle, the wagons and the loads, and compelling, in some cases, the alarmed drivers to accompany them. Here they returned to rest, elude pursuit, defy capture, and plan new outrages. But the hour of justice overtook them. A company of Free State men ferreted them to their den, attacked and routed them. This was *afair the first*. The next was at the town of Franklin, not far from —, August 12th. It has been charged that the attack here was made by a portion of the newly arrived company of emigrants. This is not the fact. On the contrary, at the time of the onset and capture, the company of emigrants were not less than 75 miles from Franklin, and 30 miles from Topeka, so that this affair did not come off with the aid of "Lane's men." Only a band of settlers, determined on routing a guerilla party who were infesting the country round about, came against a fortified log house defended by 100 men well armed and provided with a cannon, stormed their battery, fired it by means of a load of dry hay, took the fort and burned it, releasing the men. The cannon, one hundred guns, (rifles, muskets, &c.) and ammunition, were taken, and another centre of outrage demolished. This was the second act of the drama. On the 13th of July Major Hoyt, a resident of Lawrence, (formerly of Boston, Mass.,) was murdered in cold blood near Washington Creek fortification, two and a half miles from the pro-slavery camp. This place is called Saundser's Fort, and is entrenched. From fifty to sixty men were collected in it. Satisfactory evidence, obtained in the vicinity, shows that the deceased was murdered by a party of men from this camp, his horse was found in their possession, and his person had been stripped of valuables. A larger party from the same camp came and buried him in a hole four feet long, covering the body with a foot of earth. His pockets were turned inside out, his boots cut from his feet, and a cloth was laid over his face, with a preparation on it to expedite decomposition, and baffle all attempts to identify the body. Three bullet holes were found on his person. The *post mortem* examination was made by four or five physicians in presence of the gentleman from whom I learn these facts. A committee of nine was deputed to wait on Major Sedgwick, the commanding officer of United States troops at Lecompton, and lay before him facts concerning the fortified and entrenched posts, and the robberies and murders committed by bands of men who are encamped in them, and ask him to disperse those at Washington Creek and bring them to justice. They were answered by the Major that he had no orders to disperse any party or break up any camp; that his only order was to aid the civil authorities in making arrests when warrants or writs were actually issued; that it was not his object to assist one party more than another. This was in the forenoon of Friday, July 15th. In the afternoon of the same day a party of settlers moved from Rock Creek where they had collected to ferret out some outrages, and made a descent on Fort Saunders, after hearing the report of the committee appointed to wait on Major Sedgwick. They came 4 miles to the fort, but found only one man. This was a negro man, who had fled on sight of the approaching Free State party. The dinner smoked on the board in the spacious building, which was built of hewed logs, was fortified and entrenched, in a spot selected for its capabilities of resistance. The locality was well chosen, for fifty resolute men, with the means of defence auxiliary to the main post, could have kept at bay and repulsed five hundred. Around the central building were tents sufficient to accommodate a large number of men. These had been occupied by Southerners, Carolinians, Georgians, &c., who left behind them, in their precipitate retreat, sixty stand of arms. This fortification was burned to prevent a repetition of robbery and murder. Men had been seen in the uniform of United States troops passing to and from this camp, and were, at first, supposed to be stationed there, but Major Sedgwick said there were no troops South of the Waukarusa by his orders, that there was a company on the Waukarusa and some of the men had visited this fort, had acquaintances there whom they knew in Georgia and other States South, but they were there without orders.

This Fort Saunders (sometimes called Fort Washington, from the creek of that name,) the Free State men destroyed, and then returned to Rock Creek. Here they received a dispatch from Lecompton stating that six or seven young men, who were traveling from Topeka to Lawrence had been directed by the wrong road leading by Lecompton, and had been captured in the vicinity of the last named place, and were to be hung that night, unless rescued. As they had arms, they were suspected of being "Lane's men," and were in the hands of Capt. and Col. Titus at Fort Titus. To rescue these young men, the Free State men left Rock Creek for Lecompton. It was after night-fall. At about 11 o'clock in the night, scouts were sent ahead in different directions. Those bearing east came on a party of men, wheeled and returned, followed by twenty mounted men, pursued closely and fired at several times. They came to their friends in reserve, and a conflict ensued. One pro-slavery man was killed, one taken without injury, and two horses. The Ruffians then run, one of them cowered. The man taken prisoner, W. H. Clowes, of Alabama, an intelligent young man, said the party was from Lecompton, and was headed by General Clark, Indian Agent, and Col. Titus, who started out to scour the country, and supply themselves with horses, which they had done in the vicinity of the engagement. In one instance, they had stolen the horses of a pro-slavery man, though warned by him to leave them. They cursed him when he came to claim his property, and ordered him to shut his mouth, &c., and telling him the horses were *their's now*.

At this place the Free State men encamped, Coon Point, the celebrated pro-slavery encampment of last June, the scene and neighborhood of so many thefts, robberies, and outrages, committed, many of them in open day. The next morning, at break of day, they started for Col. Titus' Fort, one mile and a half from Lecompton. As they approached they surrounded the house. They were discovered by the men lying around in the numerous tents near the building, who broke for the main building, seizing their guns and firing as they run. As they advanced to invest the place, one of the young men, arrested the day before at Lecompton, taking advantage of the confusion, broke from his captors, and rushed to the arms of his friends. He passed untouched amid a shower of balls from the guns of both parties. The engagement lasted two hours until the cannon came up to the assault. Of six rounds five balls passed through the house, at a distance of eight rods. The balls were made of type from the press of the *Herald of Freedom*, destroyed at Lawrence in June. The besieged fought like tigers, and had the advantage of walls, with port-holes for the rifles, but were compelled to cry for quarter, which was readily granted. They surrendered and laid down their arms. They lost three men killed in the house before they gave up. The cannon used in the attack was the one taken from the pro-slavery fort at Franklin on the 12th. Prisoners nineteen, two wounded, Col. Titus and Halsey—Titus two wounds, both bad, fifty stand of arms taken, and this well fortified place was destroyed—burned down. On the Free State side six were wounded, of whom one died, Capt. Shombre, from near Richmond, Indiana, a young man of great promise, who has left many friends. After the victory, they left for Lawrence, with the prisoners, who were well taken care of, the wounded receiving every possible attention. This was on the 16th. The next day (Sunday) the Territorial authorities, Governor Shannon, &c., accompanied by Major Sedgwick of the U. S. Army, (perhaps as body guard to ensure the safety of the party,) came down to Lawrence and sued for peace.

The demands made by the Free State men were these: that the authorities should dislodge and oust all bands of Southerners throughout the Territory, who were sorted up and committing so many outrages; that they should surrender the cannon taken by the mob at Lawrence in June last; and that there should be an exchange, *without trial*, of prisoners taken a few days before by civil process, (the U. S. troops assisting in making the arrests,) for the prisoners just taken by them at Fort Titus; and that the exchange of prisoners and return of cannon should take place at Lawrence. These terms were agreed to by the Territorial authorities, who fulfilled their promise by sending their prisoners and the cannon to Lawrence on the 18th, the next day, under an escort of the U. S. Soldiers. All that remained to be performed was the dislodging, &c., of which my informant cannot guarantee the fulfillment, but is of the opinion the treaty was made, on the part of the authorities, no less than of the Free State men, with sincerity, and that the influence of all the more respectable of both parties is pledged to the expulsion or punishment of the outlaws, who, under the name of Law and Order, have become the pest of the country. The authorities were informed that if they did not carry out their agreement, in the spirit of it, the Free State men would be obliged to take the responsibility into their own hands of seeing it done.

My informant left on the 19th for Topeka, at which date there was great excitement along the Missouri river, as the news of the treaty had not reached the river, and none but the most exaggerated reports had been allowed to be circulated. On Sunday, the 19th, two murders were committed between Lawrence and Leavenworth City. One of the victims was scalped; the body was warm when found; his horse stood by his body, and his pulse had not ceased to beat.—Such is the reign of squatter sovereignty in the Territory, now held as a feudal fief or appendage of the great and gallant State of Missouri. Such is the political and social millenium enjoyed where Democratic ascendancy becomes synonymous with slavery extension.

The latest dates from Lecompton, to Saturday, 2 P. M., 23d, represent that all the military forces now in the Territory, were concentrated at that point. For what purpose, remains to be seen. Maj. Sedgwick occupies the same position that Col. Sumner did,—Acting Commandant.

The Slave States of this Union, inferior in numbers, in wealth, in enterprise, can produce and display one fruit of their soil, their climate or their institutions in greater abundance than the Free States,—vagabonds, outlaws and assassins; but when the spirit of the people of the whole North shall be once awakened, it will be found that in the production, equipment and maintenance of men, prepared for every emergency in western life, the race between free and slave communities is unequal.

P. S.—Aug. 29.—A gentleman, who left Leavenworth City on the 24th, by the river, for this place, brings later news than I have given you above. He, and all other Free State men, were ordered to leave the Territory under threats of death if they disobeyed. "Conservative pro-slavery men" were included in the warning.—1500 Missourians had crossed the river at Leavenworth and Kansas City, well armed and equipped for a campaign. This gentleman is known in this place and is reliable. He was shot at before he left. Another man was shot at six times, and his clothes pierced with balls.

Among the 1500 invaders, 300 were South Carolinians, under Major Wilkes, well mounted. In Missouri the rally extends from opposite the Kansas and Nebraska line as far south as Glasgow, a length of three or four hundred miles along the river. They calculate to have soon in the field and on the soil of Kansas *three thousand men* or more.

At a public meeting at Leavenworth City, on the evening of the 23d, resolutions were passed, one of which was as follows:

"Resolved, That a complete extermination of the Free State party shall at once take place, and all who shall refuse to leave the Territory shall be put to death."

Judge Lecompte, while Court was in session Dealwre City, on the 20th, took up Gen. Richardson's Proclamation, calling on his division to rendezvous at Doniphan and Leavenworth City, and read it aloud to all present, as soon as it came to hand. Atchison, Stringfellow and others had just called him out and had a private parley with him. After reading it, he stated to the Jury and all officers there, on business or otherwise, that he did not wish to adjourn Court, but if there were any there who wished to obey the call, they would be excused from Court, as they might belong to the military companies called on, and that if there were any who had causes pending in Court, and would like to obey the call, they would also be excused, and their causes would be continued.

In fifteen minutes the whole Grand Jury left to obey the call. My informant was there and saw and heard all that was done and said.

The man who murdered and scalped the Free State man near Leavenworth City, is a cousin of Sheriff Todd of that County, and from Platte County, Mo. He came into a saloon, after reaching town, flourishing the bloody scalp like

a savage, saying to his comrades, "Away, boys, to your duty! I have done mine, and what I came to do; and here is the fruit of it."

The most inflammatory circulars have been sent out, signed by D. R. Atchison, B. F. Stringfellow, J. C. Anderson, W. H. Russell, A. G. Boone, &c., calling for a foray of Missourians into Kansas. Where is the Government of these United States! Where is the spirit of the American people! S. M.

The Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser has the following with reference to Mr. Sumner, by way of comment on a letter which was published in the Evening Post the other day. It is copied into the Richmond Enquirer. Both papers support Buchanan. It is very much in the spirit of one or two paragraphs that have appeared in the Plain Dealer.

"What a pity! what a pity! 'If he essays to walk, his lower limbs refuse their office.' Possibly they are ashamed to propel the contemptible carcass of the cowardly cur. The most satisfactory test to which his 'lower limbs' could be subjected would be to set Preston S. Brooks after him with a good cane."

FITS! WHY PROMINENT.—For a long time there was a paragraph making its regular weekly appearance in our columns, with the brief, but emphatic words "Fits! Fits!" always at the head, to some an offensive caption, but not so to the benevolent and humane, who could sympathize in the sorrows of others. Some persons are shocked at our indication of disease, and are even thrown into nervous excitement on witnessing a hearse or a coffin. Such are to be pitied. We should always strive to look disease and even death in the face with calmness, and especially take every opportunity for alleviating disease. Viewed in this light, the advertisements of S. S. Hance, of 104 Baltimore street, Baltimore, Md., possesses a certain interest, and those who know of any one suffering from Epilepsy, Spasms, or Fits of any kind, should feel it a pleasure to cut out his advertisement, or in some other way send word to the afflicted of the great value of his remedial. They can be sent to any part of the country by mail. Price, \$3 per box Two, \$5. Twelve, \$24. sep5-d&w262-1m

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