

AN INCIDENT OF PRISON LIFE AT LECOMPTON.

From Our Special Correspondent.

LAWRENCE, K. T., Dec. 1, 1856.

As the numerous escapades of the prisoners at Lecompton threaten to leave but few of the gallant band arrested under arms, in defense of the rights of Free Kansas, in their imprisonment, every incident connected with this most tyrannical and irregular legal persecution becomes invested with more than usual interest.

One of the days of weary imprisonment had drawn to a close. The prisoners, like the caged beasts of a menagerie, had varied the monotony of their confinement, now by walking impulsively and sullenly through the cell, and now by sitting down on the filthy floor of the prison (there being nothing to sit on,) with hands clasped on their forehead; partly to balance their uneasy position, and partly to press down the little world of thought in their aching brain, which dreamt of happier days, for them and freedom, when our government should once more become just and republican. They dreamed thus even while all around them would have shut out everything like hope from such a picture; but thus they hoped while another day of light and misery wore away into darkness, and left them to think or grope in the prison gloom.

Col. Titus and his militia were then guarding them, and these partisan jailers watched with a hawk-like vigilance, which found pleasure in every pang wrung out of the sons of freedom, and who felt a gratification in thus making like caged beasts, the brave prisoners whom they dared not and could not have captured. Guards surrounded the house, and beside these one guard remained in the prison near them to see that all remained right inside, and that no attempt at escape was made. The force detailed that night was from that one of Titus's companies which was armed with the dragon arms, saber and revolver, and some of them had carbines. The night wore later, and the prisoners sought respite for their weariness, and forgetfulness for their woes in sleep, while the man on guard within paced backward and forward through the prison. Perhaps he might have been pettish at his disagreeable duty, or in bad humor from want of liquor, or misfortunes at cards, or, what is more likely, cursed with the meanness of a malignant disposition. As the prisoners began to sink into quiet repose, the wickedness of his disposition made him unwilling that they should thus enjoy a temporary respite in sleep, or sip the waters of Lethe even in such uncomfortable slumber. In his promenade he began to stamp and kick his feet on the floor, while he made a rattling noise with his saber. This weapon he would take and rattle up against the ceiling, and then strike against the floor till he succeeded in waking and keeping awake all of the unfortunates. Like other petty malicious minds, he did not "weary in well-doing," but perseveringly continued his task of annoyance with a perseverance which would have made the duty onerous had he been ordered to do it.

Now it is very tantalizing for a lot of men to be kept awake by the malicious folly and wickedness of one scoundrel. There was grinding of teeth and angry muttering, and at last, as the annoyance seemed interminable, one of the prisoners requested the guard to desist and allow them to sleep.

"You G—d d—d Abolition dog," was the furious response, "we get no sleep, and you shall have none;" and the "saber march" was continued more actively.

This was past endurance, and, after a little, Mr. Gates of Illinois and Mr. Butler of New-Hampshire rose and went to him, and told him calmly but sternly that he must desist. Imagine a Border Ruffian thus bearded, and in a rage. He stamped, and he swore, and exhausted his vocabulary of abuse on them. One thing he did not do—use his weapons—for he had sense enough to know that such a proceeding might not be very safe; but he wound up his tornado of abuse by calling vociferously on the guard and the officer of the guard.

Soon the guards entered the prison with lights, that revealed their shining weapons in threatening attitudes. The guard inside was so furious with rage that he could not or would not explain the matter, but swore that there was one man (Butler) whom he would shoot.

Some of the prisoners explained the circumstances to the officer of the guard, in hopes of putting a stop to the annoyance, but it was in vain. When the complaint was made the officer swore more loudly and profanely than his inferior, and declared that they had a right to wear their sabers where they pleased, and do with them what they pleased, and that no "d—d Abolitionist should attempt to dictate to them."

The inside-guard still continued to swear that he would kill Butler, and, getting a light, he called, with vociferous oaths, that the prisoner should be brought before him, so that he could see his face and be able to recognize him outside. Thus summoned, the prisoner, who was not sure that the threat to kill him would be postponed beyond the present moment, stepped up, and, face to face, these men looked at each other. The bloated face of the guard, still more red from rage, with eyes flashing in fury, and the stern face of the prisoner, pale from confinement.

LATEST ITEMS OF NEWS.

From Our Special Correspondent.

LAWRENCE, K. T., Dec. 2, 1856.

One of the prisoners taken at Osawatimie about a week ago has been tried and convicted at Tecumseh. He has been sentenced to a year's labor with the ball and chain. Mr. Partridge's trial was to have commenced to-day. He will either be convicted or sent to prison until he can be.

Yesterday the Supreme Court was in session at Lecompton, Gov. Geary's suspension of Judge Lecompte to the contrary notwithstanding. As there are only two Federal Judges in the Territory, Judges Cato and Lecompte, the Supreme Court consists of them, Judge Lecompte being Chief Justice. The only case before the Court is that of Judge Elmore. Judge Elmore, it will be remembered, was removed by President Pierce at the same time that Gov. Reeder was removed. Judge Elmore resists the action of the President in removing him, on the ground that the organic act gave the President no power to remove Judges before the expiration of their term, and that he could derive his power, in the premises, from no other source. The two Judges differ in opinion on the subject; Chief Justice Lecompte sustains his old associate, Judge Elmore, while Judge Cato takes exceptions. The case will go up to the Supreme Court of the United States, and this hearing was understood merely as a preliminary step.

Another of the prisoners got away from Lecompton. Three of them were under the floor attempting to make their escape, when the alarm was raised and the prison entered to see if the

prisoners were all there. As an illustration of the accuracy of such investigations all was reported right. Shortly after, one of the prisoners removed a stone from the bottom wall at the end of the house. A guard was stationed there. He waited there until the guard had his back turned and then dashed off. The guard bailed him, and as he still fled, sent a bullet after him. He escaped unhurt, but his two companions were taken from under the house, and lodged once more in prison.

The land sales at Leavenworth have progressed without anything of unusual interest. The land has been sold as far east as the vicinity of Stranger's Creek. It will be at least two weeks before it reaches the neighborhood of Kickapoo, Leavenworth, or Delaware. When it does, there will be more likelihood of difficulties occurring. As high as \$4 per acre has been given for the land, and for the last few days it has ranged from \$2 75 to \$4 per acre. There are purchasers of all politics, but the Pro-Slavery men continue to buy a great deal. The only incident of note originated in a slight, but common mistake. A man who was paying for what he called his "claim," at the valuation price, when questioned by the Commissioners, gave his residence as Platte County, Mo. The Commissioners asked how he could live in Platte County if he had a "claim" in the Territory? The agent for the sales, who either did not comprehend this peculiar phase of Border Ruffianism, or who did not like it made so public, appointed a Pro-Slavery Commission to investigate and report on such claims. Wm. Russell, of the firm of Majors & Russell, a rabid Pro-Slavery man, and agent for the Southern Aid Society, was the Chairman of the Committee. Of course, they reported favorably to the Pro-Slavery man from "Platte," and will, of course, in all similar cases.

Messrs. Hyatt and Army, of the National Kansas Committee, are here. Mr. Eldridge has retired from connection with the Disbursing Committee. The latter are actively engaged in distributing the articles of clothing to those of the people in need.

THE NEW-YORK CITY KANSAS GUARDS.

To the Editor of The N. Y. Tribune.

SIR: It is proposed by the New-York City Kansas Guard to hold a meeting at the Tabernacle on Saturday next, for the purpose of raising a sufficient sum of money to equip and provision twenty-five men, who intend to leave the metropolis immediately for the "outpost of Freedom" west of the Missouri.

A great deal of money, donated for the relief or protection of the squatters, has already, necessarily or unnecessarily, been wasted or expended before it reached the Territory—necessarily, by the blockade of the Missouri River and the length of the overland journey; unnecessarily, by the villainy of fraudulent or dishonest agents, who pocketed the money and never repaid it.

It is desirable that every dollar subscribed hereafter should be so expended as to strengthen our cause and sustain our party. Experience has demonstrated that money expended in paying the passage of emigrants to Kansas is disbursed with very inadequate return. It is the worst policy that was ever adopted. Rather let us arm and provide for the squatters already there than forward another company to a cold and howl, like Col. Harvey and his friends, at the distribution of clothing, or the agents of the friends of Kansas in the North.

If, again, emigrants are to be sent there free of expense, it would be better to send young ladies than young men—for the girls would remain there and induce, I have no doubt, an equal number of squatters—who may return at any moment—to stay there also, and settle down for life.

A worse time for emigration than the present could not have been selected. The Missouri River is closed. Do the New-York City Guards imagine that the Missourians would permit them to pass undisturbed through their State? If they do, they know nothing of them. Do they purpose to go by way of Iowa? If they do, Heaven pity them. They will find that camping out in the snow-covered prairies is a very undesirable and unromantic experience.

I regret that I feel compelled to cast cold water on a praiseworthy purpose; but patriotism without foresight and prudence is always mischievous in its operations and disastrous in its results.

These views—what I say about the emigration of ladies excepted—are the opinions, also, I am authorized to state, of Amos A. Lawrence, the Hon. Eli Tnayer, Dr. Russell, Dr. Cabot, Dr. Webb, and other equally prominent friends of Free Kansas in Boston.

Boston, Dec. 10, 1856.

JAMES REDPATH.

VINDICATION OF FREEDOM IN THE TERRITORIES.

SPEECH OF HON. JOSHUA R. GIDDINGS.

Delivered in the House of Representatives of the United States, Dec. 10, 1856.

[The question being on the adoption of a resolution to print fifteen thousand copies of the President's Message.]

Mr. GIDDINGS—Mr. Speaker: One thing is established by our current political history, that is, that we are destined to continue the agitation of the great question which, according to all past annals, has agitated the world. The rights of man are still the themes of discussion. From the time when the barons of England, under King John, at the point of the sword, extorted from the British Crown concessions to the rights of the people, that question has continued to occupy the attention of their descendants. When our American fathers felt the hand of oppression; when they saw that injustice was done to these thirteen colonies; when those colonies united in resistance to the enforcement of British power; when Americans met Englishmen upon the fields of Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill; when American and British blood flowed together upon those fields—the civilized world, the Christian world, demanded the cause why men, believing in the same religion, speaking the same language, trusting in the same God, were thus butchering each other upon those fields of bloody conflict. It was a pertinent enquiry—one which the Continental Congress held to be important. Then South Carolina and Massachusetts, Georgia and Connecticut, and all of the original States, counseled together and made answer with united voice.

The reason for their going into that seven years' struggle was placed in letters of living light before the world, written by the inspired pen of Jefferson. Is the member from South Carolina [Mr. Keitt]—who has just resumed his seat—prepared to stand by the solemn declarations made on that auspicious occasion? The Republican party have responded to this question; they have reaffirmed those principles, the great, the immortal, the heaven-born truths then proclaimed, that all men are, by their Creator, endowed with certain inalienable rights—among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. These rights came from our Creator, not from the President, nor from Congress, but from the Omnipotent mind. On this great undying principle they based their vindication before the civilized world. Is the member from South Carolina ready to stand by them? If he is not present, I ask any member of the Democratic party, North or South whether that party is ready to stand by these doctrines? I pause for an answer. I hear no reply. But, Sir, such is the response which I always get to my well-defined interrogatories. Men from the South unequivocally deny this truth; men of that party in the North dare not speak in the affirmative. There they sit. If they were to answer in the negative they would be cast off by their constituents; if in the affirmative, they will be repudiated by the South. Thus they vibrate between heaven and hell, uncertain in which they will land [Laughter]. From my soul I pity them; I pity any man who dares not avow honestly the sentiments which God has implanted in his bosom.

The self-evident truth that all men are created with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, was, in the other wing of the Capitol, by a leading member of that party pronounced to be a "self-evident lie." There the members of the Democratic party sit in silence, giving their tacit consent to the correctness of the sentiment, which I regard as nothing less than a libel upon those patriot fathers around whose names the glorious recollections of our early history now cluster. In this Hall we had, during the last session, a long argument from the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. Stephens], to the effect that slavery was an institution sanctioned of Heaven and estab-