

SUFFERINGS AND WRONGS OF THE STATE PRISONERS IN KANSAS.

To the American People.

POLITICAL PRISON, LECOMPTON, K. T.,
SUNDAY, Oct. 19, 1856.

It is well known to the whole civilized world that previous to the arrival of Governor Geary in Kansas, this Territory was the scene of a most direful civil war. It is equally well known that in all that terrible drama the people of Kansas were alone the sufferers, and that organized bands of robbers and murderers from the adjoining States were almost the sole perpetrators. In the beginning they had wrested our government from us and made our laws, but finding us unwilling to fawn to their dictates and to acknowledge them as our lords (as people who had once tasted liberty should be) they used fire, starvation and the sword to bring us to submission. We were all taken prisoners that night, by a detachment of United States dragoons, under command of Captain Word. Our forces numbered one hundred and one. No resistance was made to the troops. After being deprived of our arms, a strong guard was placed upon us.

The next day we were marched to Lecompton, where we were, for the first week, under guard of the federal troops. We were then marched to the prison house, where we now are, guarded by the Territorial militia, nine-tenths of whom are non-residents and intend leaving the Territory as soon as the time of their three months enlistment under Geary shall have expired. A number of other prisoners have been brought in since, charged with various offenses. A number have escaped from this den of horror, a few have been discharged, and one was released this morning by the Great Deliverer. Our number is now ninety-eight, eighty-seven of whom are held on the Hickory Point charge. The remaining eleven are suspected of having been engaged in feeding their starving families with bread forcibly taken from those who were endeavoring to destroy them. Time after time has Governor Geary said that no action should be taken concerning political offenses committed previous to the issue of his proclamation, yet more than once since has he used that portion of the Federal army under his command, to make seizures of persons so charged. We are all held either against this promise, or for following the advice of one supposed to speak by authority, and during all this time *not a pro-slavery man has been arrested*, although Gov. Geary and the U. S. Marshal cannot help knowing that murders and other crimes without number, have been committed by the leaders of that party. Even Geary's militia after the murder of David Buffum, passed through Lecompton under a black flag, the emblem of pirates, no one daring to molest them.

A portion of our number have families depending upon our earnings for support. We have also, many of us, outstanding crops of great value going to waste, or suffering heavy loss.

We come now to speak of a subject too vital to admit of our passing it unnoticed, yet too full of horror to dwell upon. We allude to our treatment and condition since our confinement here, any description of which must come far short of the terrible reality. A few of our guard will ever be remembered by us with emotions of the deepest gratitude for their kindness, but the greatest portion of them are drunken, brawling demons, too vile and wicked for portrayal.—Times without number have they threatened to shoot us or stab us, and not unfrequently have they attempted to carry out their hellish threats. Several nights have the guards amused themselves throughout their different watches by cursing us, throwing stones at the house, and breaking glass, sash, &c. Two large cannon stand planted but a few yards from our prison, and two nights has the match been swung several hours in the hands of the gunners with orders to fire both cannon (loaded with shot and slugs) upon us, in case our friends should come in sufficient force to avenge our wrongs. These, however, are only slight, compared with other insults and sufferings heaped upon us daily.—Most of us are poorly clad—few have any bedding—our prison is open and exposed, and is surrounded with filth. Within all is covered with vermin, and everything is mixed with misery. In childhood we listened with doubt to the dark stories of the Jersey prison ships and the Black Hole of Calcutta, never dreaming that we should at last be actual prisoners in their counterpart. More than once have we prophesied to each other, that all would not leave this charnel house alive. Our assertions have been verified. Several have been sick—dangerously sick—one has died. His name was Wm. Bowles, formerly from St. Charles, Missouri. He labored with us nobly in defending our God-given rights, and it was with feelings of unutterable sorrow that we parted with him. After an illness of two days he left his sufferings this morning at 1 o'clock. Before his death we requested the officer of the guard to have him removed to a place of quiet. We talked and became tired, yet nothing was done. Last night all the physicians in town were sent for, and each refused to come. Dr. Jno. P. Wood, who is a Justice of the Peace and a Judge of Probate, could not come "because he was sick;" yet he was seen that evening, as well as the following morning, doing hard labor. Others had reasons, we know not what. Dr. Brooks was sent for five times, but as he was at a card table playing "poker," he swore that he "would not leave the game to save every G—d d—d abolitionist in the Territory." Many thanks are due, however, to Mr. Caldwell, a pro-slavery man, and Mr. Marshal, of the town of Lecompton, for the kind aid they gave us.

The Governor paid us a visit yesterday morning, which is the third since our incarceration. We showed him young Bowles and told him we feared this was the beginning of an epidemic which would prove fatal to not a few. We showed him our scanty clothing. He said that the Grand Jury which was in session all last week would probably finish its business by night, that all against whom no bills were found would be immediately released, and that although he was going away and should be absent several days, yet he should leave orders that all those retained should be provided with every comfort that could be procured. But the Grand Jury has not ended its examination and none can tell when it will. Sickness and death of the most horrid forms are in our midst—the scrapings of pandemonium surround us. We can see nothing left us but an appeal to the last Tribunal with God as our Judge, and our Jury the great American people. We are willing to suffer if necessary for the cause of Liberty and of Kansas, but is it necessary? Will you answer to God and let us hear your decision?

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| <p>ILLINOIS.
Thomas Hawkins, Dover,
Aaron D. Roy, Linden,
Thos. Leeson, Rock Island,
J. G. Keicham, Bloomington
G. N. Ness, do.
A. V. Vickers, Bath,
J. W. Jordan, Ayle co.,
A. S. Gates, Hamilton,
John W. White, Farm Ridge,
Thos. J. Alliff, Carlisle,
G. Tower, Goodall,
Isaac Gray, Chicago,
Geo. Smith, Wilmington co.,
W. H. Gill, Elizabeth,
Adam Bauer, Schuyler co.,
William Cline, Peoria,
James Conley, Half Day,
P. Stevens, Bloomingdale,
A. M. Humphrey, Bristol,
C. Hay, Oswego,
Jesse F. Pyle, Schuyler co.</p> <p>OHIO.
J. H. Kagi, Bristolville,
S. Voglesong, Hanoverton,
H. H. Easton, Island co.,
E. R. Falley, Mt Gilliead,
Thos. Bowers, Chillicothe,
J. G. Fuller, Oberlin,
J. T. Yonker, Warsaw,
Thos. W. Porterfield, an old
soldier under Gen. Jackson
aged 72,
A. G. Payne, Cleveland,
W. S. Ware, Eaton,
C. A. Sereton, Wilmington,
E. Cottingham, Eaton,
Giles Smith, Delaware,
A. F. Bereaw, Kirtland.</p> <p>IOWA.
J. Fleher, Jefferson Co.
R. Fuller, Wiscotta.
E. A. Jacobs, Okaloosa.
G. A. Eberhart, Muecatine.
Oliver Langworthy, Grinell.
O. D. Lewis, Davenport.
D. H. Montague</p> <p>INDIANA.
A. G. Patrick, Greencastle.
John Laurie, White Co.
S. Dolman, Grant Co.
Wm. Updegraff, Fulton Co.
W. G. Porter, Brookston.
J. Linex, Richmond.
John Ritchey, Franklin.
H. Hoover, Huntingdon.
N. Grifflth, Hancock Co.</p> | <p>MASSACHUSETTS.
C. L. Preston, Worcester.
A. C. Soley, "
L. D. Coleman, Southampton.
E. D. Lyman, "
Henry Hurd, Lowell.
A. W. Dole, Fitchburg.
John Lague, Springfield.
S. G. Pratt, Boston.
H. York, West Brookfield.
A. H. Parker, Clinton</p> <p>NEW YORK.
T. J. Dickinson, Newburg.
C. J. Auchinpole, Buffalo.
H. N. Dunlap, "
J. J. Howell, N. Hartford.
Jared Carter, Saratoga.
H. N. Bunt, New York.
C. C. Hyde, Hornellsville.
A. Custer, Monroe Co.
J. R. White, Morrisiana.
G. H. Powers, Onelda Co.</p> <p>RHODE ISLAND.
E. D. Whipple, Providence.</p> <p>PENNSYLVANIA.
J. P. Brown, Alleghany Co.
G. R. Pinney, Rockdale.
J. J. Boyer, Coatesville.
Wm. Kerr, Cannonsburg.
Jos. B. Haines, Philadelphia.
Milton Kinzie, Lebanon.</p> <p>MISSOURI.
Thos. Varner, Buchanan Co.
David Patrick, Lexington
N. G. C. Boyman, Cooper Co.
M. J. Mitchell, Liberty.
J. H. York, Buchanan Co.
Jos. Hicks, Platte Co.</p> <p>WISCONSIN.
C. S. Glenson, Albany.
R. D. Nichole, Koskrong.
W. Florintine, Rock Co.
E. Jenkins, Spring Prairie.
W. Butler, Sauk Co.</p> <p>MICHIGAN.
Sam. Stewart, Detroit.
John W. Stone, "
Roswell Hutchins, Troy.</p> <p>MAINE.
T. B. Swift, Brunswick.
Thos. Bickerton, Portland.
C. H. Calkins, Hainesville.</p> <p>VERMONT.
O. M. Marsh, Woodstock.
John L. King, Brattleboro.
Alonzo Crawford, Union.</p> |
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