THE WEEKLY ARIZONIAN.

VOL. 1. TUBAC, ARIZONA, MARCH 31, 1859. No. 5.

THE ARIZONIAN,

A WEEKLY PAPER,

DEVOTED TO THE GENERAL INTERESTS OF ARIZONA.

— TERMS: —

Three Dollars per annum, in advance.

RATES OF ADVERTISING:

One Square, of 10 lines, or less, one insertion,	$2 00
" " " " " three "	4 00
" " " " " one quarter,	10 00
" " " " " one year,	30 00

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The Late Washington Tragedy.

The Eastern papers are filled with details of the Key and Sickles tragedy. Public journals take sides upon the subject and pour forth their opinions with their usual freedom. All things considered, the high social condition of all parties, and the prominent political positions of both men, it is an affair which has a deep significance. It is a natural, and almost inevitable outgrowth of Washington society—the most corrupt and licentious in the Union. Our only wonder is, that this case, with half a dozen others of a similar character, did not come to an exposure, in Washington, a year ago. This is not the first case of the kind (all but the murder,) that has been hushed up in the "polite circles" of Washington. Rumor has been busy with the fame of Mrs. Sickles ever since she was married—before, even, while the character of her husband has long been of the most despicable sort. Lavater says that women have no abstract character of their own, but partake of the nature of the man with whom they are most intimately associated. If this be true, Mrs. Sickles only acted out the pattern she received from her nearest friend. But were married women true, virtuous, and like Cesar's wife, "beyond suspicion," these terrible life-tragedies would seldom occur. There is something in the air and manner of a pure and truly virtuous woman, which repels even a thought against her honor, and she may move unscathed among the most corrupt society.

Public opinion has greatly changed, and very much for the better, in regard to these "seduction cases." There is less disposition to make an interesting martyr out of the "injured female" who so far forgets her early love, her faith, her honor, and her marriage vows, as to bring eternal shame upon her head, and blast the manly heart she has promised before God to love and cherish forever!

We subjoin a few particulars of the tragedy, and the causes that led to it:

THE WASHINGTON TRAGEDY.

NEW YORK, February 28.—The Washington correspondent of the Times gives the following account of the domestic difficulties of Mr. Sickles, which led to the killing of Key:

On Friday, Mr. Sickles received an anonymous letter, stating with precision so minute, as to make suspicion, imperitive, that Mr. Key had rented a house on fifteenth street, above K street, from a negro woman, and that he was in the habit of meeting Mrs. Sickles there two or three times a week or oftener. The person and dress of Mrs. Sickles were accurately described and the usual time of the interview specified. Accompanied by a friend, Mr. Sickles went to the house designated, and found everything as the writer stated. Mr. Key had rented the house, and he had constantly met there a lady resembling very closely the description of Mrs Sickles. Mr. Sickles still clung to the hope that the person who had stooped to the business of making such charges under the veil of secrecy, might have thoroughly deceived, him, and that Mrs, Sickles was not the lady in question.

He accordingly requested his friend, Mr. George Wooldridge of New York, to watch the place from the window of a house just opposite. On Saturday no meeting took place, and the woman in charge seems to have stated that none had occurred since last Wednesday.

On Saturday evening Mr. Sickles resolved no longer to play the spy upon his honor, and determined to confront his wife directly with his terrible suspicions. At first Mrs. Sickles strongly denied her guilt, but on her husband asking her whether on the Wednesday previous she had not entered the house on Fifteenth street in a certain particular dress and concealed by a hood, she cried out:

"I am betrayed and lost," and swooned away, Mr. Sickles calmly said he would not injure her, since he believed her the victim of a scoundrel, but that he had a full right to a confession.

Two ladies in the house were sent for as witnesses, and in their presence Mrs. Sickles made a full full statement in writing, stating that her connection with Mr. Key had commenced in April last, under Mr Sickles' own roof, but that Mr Key had since hired the house in Fifteenth street in which they had constantly met.

Mrs. Sickles' confession was made in the midst of the bitterest contrition and misery.—Her husband simply asked her to give him back her wedding ring, and desired her to write to her mother to come and take her from his house forever.

Mr. Butterworth states as follows, relative to the conduct of Sickles and the shooting of Key:

I advised him to send his wife to her mother at New York—that, as it was now near the close of the session it would excite no remark; that during the time intervening between the close of this session and the commencement of the next, he could go to Europe for a few months and in the meantime a separation could be arranged between himself and wife; that I presumed the affair was known only to two persons beyond mere surmise, and that for the honor of his little daughter, and his wife's friends, this course should be pursued,

To this Mr. Sickles replied, "My friend, I would gladly pursue this course, but so abandoned, so reckless, have Key and my wife been, that all the negroes in the neighborhood, and I dare not say how many other persons, know all about the circumstances!

I then left Mr. S. in his bed room, and on going down stairs I met in the Library Mr. George B. Wooldredge, a Clerk of the House of Representatives. I said to him this is a terrible affair! He then handed me the written statement made by Mrs. Sickles of her guilt, which was written and signed, as I was then informed, by Mrs. Sickles in the presence of two females, and witnessed by them. I read the statement, laid it down on the table, and said "I will go down for awhile, and return here again," and requested Mr. Wooldridge to say so to Mr. S. if he should enquire for me.

I saw Mr. Sickles for the first time since leaving the house, coming rapidly down Sixteenth street on the side next the square, and then near the corner.

I had walked about thirty feet on my way to the Club, when I heard Mr. S. exclaim, in a loud voice, "Key, you scoundrel, you have dishonored my house—you must die!"

I turned immediately, and saw Key thrust his hand in his vest or side-coat pocket and take a step towards Mr. Sickles, and simultaneously I heard the discharge of a pistol. Key then rapidly advanced on Sickles, seized him with his left hand by the collar of his coat, and seemed to make an effort to to strike with something in his right hand, which I then supposed to be a weapon. Mr. S. succeeded in extricating himself from Key's grasp, drew a pistol from his overcoat pocket, and presented it at Key, who retreated backward up Sixteenth street, toward the Club, and threw something at Sickles. Sickles followed, and when within ten feet, fired. I saw that Key was wounded. He staggered towards the sidewalk, saying, "Dont shoot me!" He leaned for a moment against a tree, when Sickles advanced upon him, exploded a cap, and then fired a third time.

The correspondent of the New York Times, writes:

"Mr. Key was a particularly noticeable man in point of personal appearance; tall, well formed, a much more athletic man than Mr. Sickles, and especially fond of exercise on horseback. He rode an iron-grey horse; and scarcely a day has passed since the return of Mr Sickles to the capitol on which his tall figure, his white riding-cap, his well trimmed moustache, and iron-grey horse might not have been seen two or three times in the course of the morning on the circuit of President's square, or at the door of Mr. Sickles' house which stands quite alone on the north side of the square, and is a very conspicuous building of white stucco. It was but on Tuesday last, (so swift and fearful a dream does the whole seem,) that, on visiting Mrs. Sickles, Tuesday being her day of reception, I found Mr. Key there, his horse waiting for him at the door. The rooms were filled with a pleasant company; the soft sunlight poured in at the open windows; and Mrs. Sickles herself, in all her almost girlish beauty, wearing a bouquet of crocuses, the firstlings of the year, seemed the very incarnation of spring and youth, and the beautiful promise of life.

Mr. Sickles, Congressman for the Third District of New York, is a native of this city, and was originally a printer by occupation. He is a man of nearly forty years of age, of good presence and graceful manners. As a member of the State Senate, as well as in the House of Representatives, he had made himself remarked by a quite unusual coolness and self-possession, which gave him great advantages in debate, and had acquired for him a well deserved reputation as a rising young leader of the Democratic party.

In 1853 Mr. Sickles was married to his wife, a daughter of Mr. Bagioli, the celebrated music teacher in New York, now ruined and heartbroken, then a young girl fresh from her school life, and remarkable then, as now, for something especially soft, lovely and youthful, in the type of her very peculiar beauty. She is of Italian origin, and possesses all the Italian lustre and depth of eye, united with a singular delicacy of feature.

THE MURDER OF KEY AT WASHINGTON.

The Evening Post is very severe upon Sickles for the murder of Key in Washington. It says—the character of the husband too often corrupts that of the wife, particularly at the impressive period of early youth. Curses, it is said in the old proverb, come home to roost, and so it may be said with equal truth do adulteries. Sickles was excluded from decent society in this city long ago, and it would be almost a miracle if in the school to which he took his young wife with her character yet unformed, she should have preserved her innocence. There are states of social existence in which mutual toleration is the rule of conduct, and Sickles, in acquiring so perfectly the morals, should also have acquired the philosophy of the class to which he belonged. It ill becomes him who is so careless of his own conduct, to set on foot investigations into the morals of others, and to avenge a false step with death.

Message of a Sonora Governor.

We have lately seen sundry extracts from a message of Gen. Pesqueira, who claims to be the lawful Governor of Sonora. From the specimen before us, it must be a rich document.

He charges bad faith on our government, in not preventing the incursions of the Apaches into Sonora from our territory, and recommends a demand be made on the United States for the damage they have done. The Governor offers 2,000 Sonorians to punish these Indians, for which the United States are to pay. The message proposes that we pay a premium for every Apache captured. He says it will cost no more to support 2,000 Sonorians than to feed those gigantic horses of the dragoons, alone!

It is difficult to perceive how there can be bad faith on the part of the United States, when Mexico *sold* her right to protection, along with the Territory of Arizona, for ten millions of dollars! The idea of the United States employing "two thousand Sonorians" to defend the frontiers of their own country, is decidedly novel, and no doubt will receive from our government the consideration to which it is entitled. The impudence of the proposition is actually sublime! With "two thousand Sonorians" on our frontier, it would be almost impossible to keep anything in the shape of a horse or mule—better by far suffer from Indians than Mexicans, although it is difficult to say which are the most troublesome thieves. Gov. Pesqueira's countrymen have such a high appreciation of those same "gigantic horses of the dragoons," that they steal them whenever occasion offers, and such horses, known to be stolen, are actually driven around the streets of Hermosillo, by wealthy Mexicans. Such an essentially Mexican document as Governor Pesqueira's message, ought to be very popular at home, and no doubt is.

The Closing Hours of Congress.

Great confusion prevailed during the last hours of the session, the House and Senate disagreeing upon every important measure.—Several appropriation bills came very near being defeated, and were only got through upon the strength of a message from the President, appealing to Congress to preserve the credit of the country. It was the last day of the session and no appropriation had been made to pay the outstanding Treasury notes. From information furnished the Secretary of the Treasury, it is manifest that the present receipts will scarcely meet the ordinary expenses of Government. By the end of the fiscal year there will be nearly eighteen millions of dollars due, for the payment of which no means were provided. Thus the American republic would be dishonored before the world. It was impossible to avert such a catastrophe unless provision be made by Congress within the few remaining hours. If it were the first, instead of the last session, Congress might be immediately called together, but if it be at once assembled thirteen States would be unrepresented, and it will be impossible to assemble all before the Treasury must stop payment. The urgency of the case not only required but demanded a sepapate bill, to save the credit of the country.

Thus appealed to by the Chief Magistrate, and feeling the responsibility of the occasion, a compromise was effected, and the Treasury Note Bill, with other essential appropriation bills, allowed to go through.

The New State.

Oregon is an immense region. It contains 185'000 square miles, which is as much as four or five of the Eastern States put together, and larger than all New England and New York. So distant will its capitol be from its borders, ultimately, when emigration has settled it throughout, that it will probably need to be devided once or twice more.

There are three natural divisions of the country, the approaches, between the Sierra and Rocky Mountains, the middle region, extending from the Blue to the Cascade Mountains; and the lower region, on the sea coast. Each of these would make a large State by itself.

In respect to natural advantages no Eastern State is so highly favored. It has a mild and healthy climate, adapted to produce all the grains cultivated in the Union. Its sea coast is three hundred miles in length, with numerous harbors. Its fisheries, of salmon, &c., are apparently inexhaustible. It is already prolific of furs and lumber. Its whole soil, except its mountain peaks, is adapted to cultivation and grazing, (probably no country is better adapted for wool, flax, hemp and fruit.) Its mountains are covered with abundant and excellent timber, and will furnish large supplies of iron and coal. Nor is it unlikely that it will prove a gold producing region, for the same ranges of rocks that are filled with gold in California and Bitish Columbia pass through Oregon. The smaller streams furnish an abundance of water power, and the larger ones inland navigation throughout the State. Take it all in all, no region in the United State is better adapted for the support of a dense population.

INTERESTING FROM MEXICO.—The Steamship Tennessee, with dates from Vera Cruz to the 22nd inst., arrived here this evening. Miramon was still at Orizaba with four thousand men, and was collecting forced loans everywhere.—He had formed a Cabinet, with Larrauzar as Minister of Foreign Relations, Zagateca as Minister of Finance, and Castillo as Minister of War. Four thousand Liberals were at Zacatecas, and another body at Morelia.

The Progresso of the 16th inst states that the French and English notified the Captain of the United States Sloop of War Saratoga that they should board the Tennessee to see if any filibuster were on board. The Captain of the Saratoga intimated that such a thing should not be done while the Saratoga was near enough to prevent it. The foreign ministers at the capital had not recognized Miramon. The English and French squadrons were in hostile attitude before Vera Cruz, and were favoring Miramon. The Church party will attack the city from the sea, while Miramon attacks from the land side.

The English and French merchants had renounced the protection of their own flags, and placed themselves under the American flag.

N. O. Picayune.