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THE CANADA AT BOSTON.

ADDITIONAL EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCE.

THE PEACE QUESTION.

Important Conditions Proposed by Russia.

SPEECH OF THE QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN, &c., &c., &c.

BOSTON, Feb. 19, 1856.

The royal mail steamship Canada, Capt. Lang, arrived at her dock here at five o'clock this evening. Her mails will leave for New York to-morrow morning by the early train.

The Canada encountered a continuation of westerly gales during the whole passage, but met with no ice unusual to the season.

THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS.

Russia is said to have made it a condition previous to her acceptance of the propositions offered to her, that *no indemnification shall be demanded, and no cession of territory exacted, except that required for rectification*, which being conceded, she agrees not to fortify the Aland Isles.

It is reported that Austria will forthwith propose to the Germanic Diet to adhere to the peace preliminaries in order that the representatives of Germany may be admitted to the approaching conference.

As the Halifax despatch contained the main facts, it is unnecessary here to give the particulars of the rumors as to how Russia selected Paris as the place for the conference to slight Austria; how the Austrian Cabinet is offended therewith; how Sardinia feels jealous of Austrian preponderance; how Russia intends, at the last moment, to demand, in the name of the general interests of Europe and in accordance with article five, *that England shall be forbidden to fortify Heligoland, and to restrict her ships of war in the Baltic to those required for police purposes only.* (The *Journal des Debats* hints as much.) Further, how Napoleon claims as Commander-in-chief, by the treaty of London, the sole right to conclude an armestice; (evidently false;) how Holland and other neutral Powers demand a voice in the conference, *and how Russian preparation for war continue as actively as those of the allies.*

MILITARY PREPARATIONS OF THE BELLIGERENTS.

Iron coated floating batteries, similar to those of the allied Powers, are being constructed by the Russians for the defence of Cronstadt. Military students are invited to enter the army of Russia as officers. Abundant preparations of paper money on State security is being provided for. A forced loan of 600,000 silver roubles, is imposed on Finland for its defence.

France and England do not slacken in their preparations for the continuance of the war.

THE PRINCIPALITIES.

The *Corriere Italiano* gives the following as the text of the plan for the re-organization of the Principalities, presented by Lord Stratford to the Porte:—

Article 1. Both Principalities to be united, and to constitute a vassal State of the Sultan.

Art. 2. A hereditary prince to be elected.

Art. 3. The prince shall be a native.

Art. 4. Annual tribute to be paid to the Porte; the amount to be fixed after the prince's election.

Art. 5. A representative government, with two chambers, to be established.

Art. 7. An adequate national army to be formed.

Art. 8. The interference of Turkey in the internal affairs of the country to be abolished.

Both France and Turkey object to article five.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH ON THE ASSEMBLING OF PARLIAMENT.

The following is Queen Victoria's address on the opening of Parliament, Jan. 31:—

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN:—

Since the close of the last session of Parliament the arms of the allies have achieved a signal and important success. Sebastopol, the great stronghold of Russia in the Black Sea, has yielded to the persevering constancy and to the daring bravery of the allied forces. The naval and military preparations for the ensuing year have necessarily occupied my serious attention; but while determined to omit no effort which could give vigor to the operations of the war, I have deemed it my duty not to decline any overtures which might reasonably afford a prospect of a safe and honorable peace. Accordingly, when the Emperor of Austria lately offered to myself and to my august ally, the Emperor of the French, to employ his good offices with the Emperor of Russia, with a view to endeavor to bring about an amicable adjustment of the matters at issue between the contending Powers, I, in concert with my allies, agreed to accept the offer thus made, and I have the satisfaction to inform you that certain conditions have been agreed upon, which I hope may prove the foundation of a general treaty of peace. Negotiations for such a treaty will shortly be opened at Paris. In conducting these negotiations, I shall be careful not to lose sight of the objects for which the war was undertaken, and I shall deem it right in no degree to relax my naval and military preparations until a satisfactory treaty of peace shall have been concluded, although the war in which I am engaged was brought on by events in the South of Europe. My attention has not been withdrawn from the state of things in the North, and in conjunction with the Emperor of the French, I have concluded with the King of Sweden and Norway a treaty containing defensive engagements applicable to his dominions, and tending to the preservation of the balance of power in that part of Europe. I have also concluded a treaty of friendship, commerce and navigation with the Republic of Chili. I have given directions that these treaties shall be laid before you.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS:—

The estimates for the ensuing year will be laid before you. You will find them framed in such a manner as to provide for the exigencies of war, if peace should, unfortunately, not be concluded.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN:—

It is gratifying to me to observe that notwithstanding the war, and the burdens and sacrifices which it has unavoidably imposed upon my people, the resources of my empire remain undiminished. I rely with confidence on the manly spirit and enlightened patriotism of my loyal subjects for a continuance of that support which they have so nobly afforded me; and they may be assured that I shall not call upon them for exertions beyond what may be required by a due regard for the great interests, the honor and the dignity of the empire. There are many subjects connected with internal improvements which I recommend to your attentive consideration. The difference which exists in several important particulars between the commercial laws of Scotland and those of the other parts of the United Kingdom has occasioned inconvenience to a large portion of my subjects engaged in trade. Measures will be proposed to you for remedying this evil. Measures will also be proposed to you for improving the laws relating to partnership by simplifying these laws, and thus rendering more easy the employment of capital in commerce. The system under which merchant shipping is liable to pay local dues and passing tolls has been the subject of much complaint. Measures will be proposed to you for affording relief in regard to these matters. Other important measures for improving the law in Great Britain and in Ireland will be proposed to you, which, I doubt not, will receive your attentive consideration. Upon these and all other matters upon which you may deliberate I fervently pray that the blessings of Divine Providence may favor your councils, and guide them to the promotion of the great object of my unvarying solicitude—the welfare and happiness of my people.

The opinions of the press respecting the Queen's speech vary.

The London *Times*—Lord Palmerston's present organ—of course praises it.

The *Daily News* says the speech was short, and ought to have been shorter.

The *Morning Herald* calls it evasive, unsatisfactory and indecently brief.

The *Morning Post*, *Advertiser* and *Chronicle* praise it.

The opinion in regard to it on 'Change was not favorable, and consols receded, it having been expected it would have spoken more definitely of peace or war.

The protectionist opposition, under Lord Derby in the Lords and Disraeli in the Commons, are prepared to play a bold game for office, and it is thought they, regarding the dissolution of Parliament during the present session as inevitable, will get up some appropriate rallying cry to appeal to the country in the elections.

It is rumored that Sir George Grey will soon resign the Home Office in favor of Attorney General Cockburn; also that Chief Justice Jervis will be made a life peer, and be succeeded on the bench by Sir Frederick Thesiger.

The question of creating lords for life, without hereditary dignity, has made considerable sensation among the nobility, and the subject is to be discussed in the House of Lords. The case of Baron Wealeysdale is the precedent referred to.

Mr. Layard had delivered an address to his constituents at Aylesbury, on the war.

A democratic meeting was held in London to protest against the proposed peace, as inconsistent with the dignity of the country. The meeting was chiefly supported by the sympathisers of Mazzini and Kossuth.

A soirée had been given at Manchester to John Bright and Milner Gibson.

GERMANY.

It is almost needless to say that the peaceful aspect of affairs is hailed throughout the States of Germany with unbounded satisfaction. Commercialists foresee returning prosperity, and the different governments hope for a return of that lethargy which acts as a safeguard against democratic troublesomeness. Anxious outsiders, however, apprehend danger to the German future from a dissolution of the Anglo-French alliance, and this no improbable coalition of Russia and France.

DENMARK.

The Diet of Holstein on the 22d ult., adopted a petition that the King should grant a constitutional representation to the Duchy. The result will be either a retirement of the ministry or a dissolution of the Diet.

SWEDEN.

The War Department has drawn a million of francs from the treasury for the immediate urgent defence of the kingdom.

GREECE.

The government has raised the duty on breadstuffs from one to five per cent.

Fires in New York.

FIRE IN SEVENTH AVENUE.—About three o'clock on Tuesday morning a fire broke out in the premises No. 289 Seventh avenue, occupied by Mr. William Jacques, trunk, carpet bag and hobby horse manufacturer. The fire spread rapidly, and as there was much difficulty in getting water—the firemen having to burn around the hydrants to thaw the ice—the whole of the building was consumed. Mr. Jaques estimates his loss at about $4,000. Insured for $3,000 in the Fulton, Hamilton and Farmers' & Mechanics' Insurance Companies. The building was owned by J. Beaver, and insured in the Citizens Insurance Company.

FIRE IN TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET.—About the same time the fire occurred in the Seventh avenue, another broke out in a grocery store at No. 111 East Twenty-eighth street, occupied by Daniel Burke—loss about $700, No insurance. The building is owned by Mr. Felix Duffy. Damage to building about $200. Loss covered by Insurance in the Farmers' & Mechanics' Insurance Company, of Philadelphia.

FIRE IN WASHINGTON STREET.—About 7 o'clock last night a fire broke out in the hay loft of a stable owned by Mr. E. T. Cregan, and occupied by cartmen, rear of No. 656 Washington street. From this stable the fire spread and damaged the building of George Perkins, pork and lard dealer. The fire then extended to a two story brick building, used as a blacksmith shop, No. 658 Washington street. Damage about $100—no insurance. It belongs to Mr. Thomas Kiley. From thence the flames spread to a range of frame stables, fronting on Amos street, No. 186, and destroyed them. They were owned by Jonas Sparks, and occupied by different cartmen. Loss about $500—no insurance. On Amos street the fire spread to No. 188, a two story frame dwelling, occupied by two families, named Frederick Dunbrush and Gustavus Fuller. The damage will amount to about $50—no insurance. The building is owned by Mr. Sparks.

BURNING OF TWO SHANTIES.—Between 1 and 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon the alarm of fire in the Second district was caused by the burning of two shanties in Sixty-fifth street, between Sixth and Seventh avenues. The fire was caused from the stove pipe. They were owned by Charles Hublanden. No insurance.

FIRE IN BEEKMAN STREET.—Between 9 and 10 o'clock last night a fire took place in a dry goods store, No. 256 Beekman street, kept by A. Girvan. Damage about $600.

Court of Common Pleas.

Before Hon. Judge Daly.

SUIT TO RECOVER THE AMOUNT OF AN ALLEGED FORGED CHECK.

FEB. 19.—*Robert H. Lamont, Assignee of Chas. B. Ransom, vs The Broadway Bank.*—The plaintiff in this case sues as assignee of Chas. B. Ransom for $2 500, which had been lodged by Ransom in the Broadway Bank. I appeared from the evidence that Mr. Ransom kept an account in the Broadway Bank in the year 1855. In March of last year, a check for $2,500, made payable to Thos. J Van Alstyne, and signed by Chas. B. Ransom, was presented at the bank, where it was pronounced good. The money was not then demanded, but the check, together with $150 more, was deposited in the Bull's Head Bank by a boy, in the name of Thos. J. Van Alstyne, who, in a few days, drew out the amount, leaving only a balance of $30, which has not since been claimed, nor has Van Alstyne been seen since by the officers of the bank. Mr. Ransom, when closing his account at the Broadway Bank in the following month disputed the genuineness of the check, which he declared was neither drawn nor signed by him, and he pronounced it a forgery, and therefore denied the right of the bank to deduct the $2,500 from his account.

Mr. Ransom was examined as a witness for the plaintiff and deposed that the signature was not in his hand writing, and that he did not know any such person as Van Alstyne. On cross-examination Mr. Ransom admitted that he had kept a "club house" at the time, but he refused to give the names of any of the parties who frequented it. The teller of the Bull's Head Bank proved the opening of the account in the name of Van Alstyne in March, 1855, and that in two days afterward the money was drawn by Van Alstyne, leaving a balance only of about $30; he never heard of him since; witness sent down to the Broadway Bank at the time and they pronounced the check good. Mr. Wheeler, for the defence, contended that the check was genuine, and if not genuine, it was so deceptive an imitation that the defendants should not be held responsible; and that they had used every effort to detect the party who had perpetrated the fraud. Mr. Gilbert Hayes, bank police agent, and other witnesses, considered as experts, were examined, and their testimony went to show that it was impossible to detect any difference in the signatures of the disputed check and genuine ones which were produced, except that the ink was not the same. Verdict for plaintiff for full amount claimed.

Superior Court—Part First.

Before Hon. Judge Woodruff.

ACTION AGAINST AN INSURANCE COMPANY.

FEB. 19.—*Thomas B. Coddington vs. The Washington Insurance Company.*—This was an action on a policy of insurance effected on merchandise in the buildings Nos. 78 and 80 Broad street, which were destroyed by fire in July, 1854. The policy had been transferred from No. 9 Bridge street to the large iron warehouse fronting on Broad street, continued by an extension of one story in height to the rear of the lot, and then communicating with the first floor of another brick building fronting on Marketfield street, Nos. 14, 16 and 18. The defendants refused to pay the loss, on the ground that the policy was on merchandise in Nos. 78 and 80 Broad street, and that it did not include the property in Marketfield street. Similar suits were tried by the same plaintiff against other offices, when the jury found for plaintiff. In the present suit the jury found for plaintiff $567 30.

Personal Intelligence.

The Hon. Joshua R. Giddings, the free soil member of Congress from Ohio, has published in the *National Era* a letter declining a re-election.

The Louisville *Courier* learns that Mr. John McMurty, of Lexington, Ky., carpenter, architect and foundry man, has failed for about $300,000, his assets not amounting to half that sum.

John W. Brett, Esq., has been appointed P. M. at Fishkill Village, Dutchess county, N. Y., in place of F. Cook, resigned.

Hon. Edward Everett will deliver an oration in New Haven this evening.

Among the throng of strangers brought to Philadelphia by the national convention, we notice George D. Prentice, of the Louisville *Journal*; Jos. Scoville, of the New York *Pick*; E. G. P. Wilkins, of the New York HERALD; C. C. Burr, late of the New York *Daily News*; and Edward E. Cross, of the Cincinnati *Daily Times*.

Mr. Richard B. Kimball sails to-day for Europe in the Persia.

ARRIVALS.

From New Orleans and Havana, in steamship Cahawba—G Alexander, Capt J Snow and lady, Capt G R Wood, Capt W C Linscott, Miss A Brown, F X Brennord, S L France, J Herritt, lady and child; J A Ostlom, Mrs Bempsey, W Murphy, D D Lord, Wm Bailey, Robt Woods, G W Turner, R J Joyce, C S Jenkins, Mrs C C Peck, J Burns, J Gould, S Sculler and lady, J K Line and lady, H Brownell, H S Benedict, J Behrens, son and servant, Robt Cook, J M'Cohen, S Valdes, B F Crane, E Hofligan, son and governess; Mrs Ann Leonard, Miss M Jury, D Kenoult, S B Springs, S Plympton, C F Lodrey, F Corbutt, L Meyer, J Miss, W Blair, M Scull, F Mines, W S Kelley.

From Savannah, in steamship Knoxville—C S Arnold, C Arnold, A Hunter, C B Hayward, S Rothschild, G Levenburg, C De Cockeville, A Heron, Jr, G S Elliott, Col D S Johnston, Capt J F Hammond, Geo Briggs, M D Wenaor, J W Stone and lady, A B Hardaway, W Denham, W S Backley, J H Sanford, L Fraud, F D Adams, B F Petty, C Hamilton, Count de Bierency, Mrs Bragg, Mrs H Worthington and infant, T McKenna, Noble Lyon, D Carolin, M Reinhard, J Herzfield, E Einstein, M A Wilders, Jas Smaddon, G S Nichols, H B David, A Willis—24 in steerage.

EXTRAORDINARY WEATHER IN FLORIDA.—Extract from a letter from a gentleman in Florida to his friend in this city:—

PALATKA, Fla., Feb. 10, 1856.

Our weather still continues cold and disagreeable, and last Monday the cold was so severe that one of our citizens, being upset in a boat on Lake George, at several miles' distance from the shore, was frozen to death before he could succeed in getting his boat back to land. Only think of such a horrible catastrophe in Florida! We have quite a number of strangers here this winter in search of health, but they are all disappointed with the climate, it not coming up to the mark as represented. I myself am disgusted with it. I have lived, in the course of my life, eleven years in Florida, and never saw a such weather as we have had this winter.

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The Pennsylvania Anti-Twelfth Section and the Louisiana Delegations Admitted—Caucusses of the Southern Members, &c.

SECOND DAY.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 19, 1856.

The Council met at ten this morning, and sat till half past one; then met at four this afternoon, and adjourned at six till to-morrow morning at ten.

The only business done this afternoon was to hear the arguments from the Pennsylvania contestants. Mr Edie and Mr. Dickie had half an hour each for the victorious delegation, and Messrs. Small and Ashmead spoke in opposition.

The Edie delegation from this State, was admitted by eighty-four to forty-five.

The South to a man voted against the Edie delegates. The Southern members consider it a test vote; but it was not exactly so, and an effort will be made to conciliate them to-morrow.

The Louisiana delegation has been admitted—not on the platform, but on its credentials—by yeas 36, nays 50.

The contested seats being now settled, we may expect that business will be commenced to-morrow, though an effort will be made to dissolve, and let all the vexed questions go over to Friday. The Council is about half full. The Southern members are holding a caucus, and there was a rumor that they will not appear in the Council to-morrow. The Southern members remained in the hall a few moments after the Council adjourned, by invitation of Col. Belling, of Virginia. They will hold another caucus to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, but one of the Louisiana delegation informs me that nothing decisive will be done. The South, although it has been partially beaten, will remain in the Council. The New York vote was about evenly divided; the rest of the vote was sectional.

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PHILADELPHIA ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

[From the Philadelphia Times, (Know Nothing,) Feb. 19.]

In conformity with the circular issued by the President of the National Council, U. S. N. A., the members of this body assembled in this city for the purpose of holding a special session for the transaction of such business as may be brought before it.

Since Friday last the delegates from the various sections have been constantly arriving, and the principal hotels are thronged with members of the National Council, and others who are in attendance upon its sessons. By some sort of unpardonable negligence, those having charge of the preliminary arrangements for the meeting of the National Council had not, up to yesterday morning, secured a room in which the body was to meet, and the delegates went from one end of the town to the other in quest of a hall, as they were directed by those of whom they inquired in relation to the matter. About 11 o'clock it was decided that the meeting should be held at Franklin Hall, and accordingly at noon the delegates proceeded to the above place, to commence their deliberations.

Shortly after twelve o'clock, and as soon as order was secured,

Mr. SMITHERS, of Pennsylvania, moved that as Mr. Barlett, the President, had not arrived, the Hon. William Sheets, of Indiana, be called upon to act as chairman *pro tem.* of the day. Agreed to.

Mr. Sheets was thereupon conducted to the chair, when he addressed the Council in substance as follows:—

Gentlemen—In thanking you for the honor you have bestowed upon me, let me trust that in our counsel and in our action we shall be moved by a spirit of conciliation and union, which are the surest guarantees of success. Let us have a unity of sentiment in all things, or, if not that, at least a unity of action for our country's good. We have met as Americans who love the country of our birth; let me hope that the true American spirit will pervade the whole of us in our actions and deliberations. We have but one foe to fight—let us meet that foe with a united front, and as one man armed with the right. So shall we ensure success by deserving it.

Mr. Sheets was frequently interrupted with rounds of enthusiastic applause, that gave evidence of the cordial feeling which pervaded the great mass of the Council.

After considerable delay and no little difficulty, Messrs. Gossler and Smithers were appointed a committee to secure a more suitable place of meeting, after which the Council adjourned over to 3 o'clock P. M.

There were about one hundred delegates present at the morning session, and the disposition seemed to be to unite on a common basis in opposition to the democracy. It cannot be doubted that there are restless and discordant spirits present, and that a movement will be made by a few to override the sentiment of union and harmony which is so desirable in the present crisis. Indeed, throughout the session of yesterday morning, many indications of turbulence and discord were manifested, and we cannot question that the proceedings of the body will be marked with the most exciting, interesting and noisy scenes and incidents.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Towards 3 o'clock the delegates began to gather in the hall, and before the meeting had been organized the excitement on all sides had attained fever heat. The American delegates and the national American delegates from Pennsylvania indulged in the most ardent and denunciatory conduct and conversation, and, at times, it was feared that the contest for supremacy between the two would end in an open and personal conflict. Those from other States looked on the wrangle with amazement, and without understanding, in the smallest particular, the exact cause or meaning of the belligerency of the Pennsylvanians, and some ventured to assuage the bitterness of feeling and stay the discord between the two.

In the midst of the noise and confusion, the President, pro tem, Mr. Sheets, ascended the platform and called the convention to order.

Hereupon a scene of the utmost confusion prevailed. Mr. Charles D. Freeman, Vice President of the National Council, came forward and claimed to be, in the absence of the President, the presiding officer of the Council. He urged his claims at some length, and contended that the Council had no right to select Mr. Sheets for that position.

Mr. SHEETS said he was willing to retire if it was the wish of the Council. (Cries of "keep where you are;" "hold on;" "don't give up;" "we'll stand by you;" noise, turbulence and applause.)

During the whole of this scene of disorder, excitement, personal and partizan feeling, and miscellaneous cries, a motion was made to adjourn, which prevailed with great unanimity, and amid shouts of applause.

In a short time afterwards the members from abroad left the hall in charge of the Pennsylvania delegates of both sections, a portion of whom indulged in the most disgraceful scenes.

Last evening the delegates from the several States held caucuses at the different hotels, in reference to the contested seats in each, and other matters of minor importance.

The Council will meet at Sansom street Hall this morning at ten o'clock.

CAUCUS OF THE SOUTHERN DELEGATION.

The members of the National Council from the Southern States held a caucus at Seventh and Sansom streets, last evening. Quite a large number of gentlemen were present, and took part in the proceedings, which were of the most animated and resolute character.

The Hon. Thomas Hart Clay (the eldest son of Henry Clay) presided on the occasion, and Col. Albert Pike acted as secretary.

The object of the caucus being to decide upon the movements of the Southern members in the National Council, during its session, quite a general expression of feeling took place among those present.

After considerable discussion, a resolution to stand in the twelfth section of the national platform, adopted in June last, at all hazards, was agreed to with great unanimity.

While a number of those present have expressed their hostility to the introduction of that section into the platform, it has been urged on all hands, so far as the South is concerned, not to relinquish it, be the consequences what they may.

From the tone and character of the speeches, conversation and purposes of the Southern delegation, it requires no prophet, nor son of a prophet, to foresee a most intense and exciting debate upon the propositions to abrogate the obnoxious section when it shall have been presented. We trust to be enabled to present to our readers a full, fair, unbiassed and reliable report of the scenes and sayings on the occasion.

PHILADELPHIA NEWSPAPER OPINION.

[From the Philadelphia Times, (Know Nothing,) Feb. 19.]

There are several points connected with the action of the National American Convention, about to assemble in Philadelphia, worthy of the serious attention of the delegates who have already arrived, and which we shall not hesitate to commend to their notice.

In the first place, it would be well to remember that the last National American Convention was a mistake and a failure, and that its action has done incalculable injury to the American party. The introduction of the slavery question into that convention, as we showed yesterday, was a fatal act, and scattered the American party into fragments. That party had nothing to do with the slavery question—has nothing to do with it—can have nothing to do with it. The original platform of the American party was the most simple and grand platform ever put forth by a political organization—Americans must rule America. This platform had nothing to do with the South or the North, the East or the West. Leaving all local and sectional questions to be settled by States and Territories, by Congress, or by the Supreme Court, it turned its attention solely to the great points of re-asserting our Indian nationality, and rescuing the control of public affairs from the hands of aliens, who cared nothing for the country—of protecting American industry, American skill and American products—and of purifying the ballot box from the enormous and monstrous abuses to which it had been subjected, through the efforts of demagogues, both whig and democratic, to secure the foreign vote, in a body, to their partisan nominations.

What had all this to do with the question of slavery? Nothing—literally nothing. That question had already been provided for by the constitutional authorities. It did not, in any direct way, depend on the existence or action of the American party, and has not been influenced by it.

The American party entered upon its career under more favorable auspices than any other that ever existed. It had a great national object to accomplish, and its doctrines elicited the sympathies of the American people throughout the Union—in the South as well as in the North; and everywhere a feeling of brotherhood was aroused, which had not existed since the early days of the republic.

But the National Convention in Philadelphia destroyed this beautiful and harmonious action of the American party. The introduction of the twelfth section, or any other section touching the question of slavery, was not demanded by the real public sentiment of the Southern States, and was only a demagogical pretence. Its adoption drove a large portion of the Americans of New England and the North from the American standard; while the secession of the Northern members excited the suspicions and cooled the enthusiasm of the South. The consequences were, the virtual dismemberment of the great National American party. And the example of the National Convention was followed by the States, until, at the present moment, we have two rival State conventions in our city, differing on no essential point of doctrine or principle, but totally unprepared to act in harmony and concert.

It is under these circumstances that the National American Convention of February is about to meet. What are its duties? What is it to do? To nominate a candidate for President, forsooth! Bah! To nominate a fiddlestick! What power or force would exist in such a nomination? What single State in the Union would abide by it, sustain it, or elect a ticket in support of it? Would Massachusetts? Scarcely. New York? No. Pennsylvania? See the returns of the last State election. Ohio? Not unless the candidate were an out-and-out republican. Kentucky? Possibly, if the nominee were a Western man, acceptable to the local sentiment of the State—not otherwise. And how about Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi? Let us not ask. There will not be a candidate before the National Convention who could carry either of those States. If the convention does nominate a candidate for the Presidency, he will be a mere scarecrow, set up to be shot at and pulled to pieces. He will not even rise to the dignity of being defeated—he will be sacrificed. And yet, we understand that a large number of delegates have come here with a nomination, as a foregone conclusion, determined upon. If this is so, all we can say is, that we sincerely pity the nominee, whoever may be the unhappy man. From the moment of his nomination he may consider his political death warrant signed and sealed.

The elements of opposition to the democratic party, throughout the Union, are still in early chaos. They are like the brawling mountain streams descending into the plain, and have not yet united to form a strong, deep and resistless current. A nomination by the National Convention, at the present moment, would be of no more worth or weight than a weed thrown into the torrent—it would never be heard of more. The mischief already done must be undone—the elements of the opposition must be combined and harmonised and inspired with a single impulse.

All this is the work of months; and it will not be possible, sooner than the early part of summer, to hold a truly national convention, and agree upon a nomination that will secure the support of all sections of the Union.

What, then, is the National American Convention, which meets Friday next, to do?

Two thing it is imperatively called upon to do:—

First—it must, as far as possible, retrieve the errors of the past, and re-adopt, and re-assert the platform of Americanism, in its simplicity and purity—"unmixed with baser matter." It must reject, positively and unconditionally, all attempts to introduce the subject of slavery and to re-insert it in the American platform. This platform is a grand and simple one, and will be joyfully accepted by the American people.

1st. None but native born American citizens to be elected or appointed to office, either at home or abroad.

2d. The extension of the term of naturalization to twenty-one years.

3d. The extinction of all religious tests and the abrogation of all politico-religious institutions or organizations.

4th. The open and public action of all political bodies, and the abolition of all secret associations, of whatever character, for the purpose of exercising an influence over nominations and elections.

The other thing that the convention has to do is to give a cordial invitation to all the conservative elements of the Union to unite with the American party, upon terms of fairness and reciprocity, for the purpose of putting down and forever extinguishing the present administration and the foreign fed political organization which supports it.

On this basis everything can be accomplished. New England will be sure against the piebald and paltering democracy. New York, and Ohio, and Pennsylvania, will return triumphant majorities for the national electoral ticket; while Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia and Louisiana, in the South—and Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois, in the West—can be confidently counted on. With such an array, the question of the next Presidency is already decided, and the battle is won before it is commenced.

But if the infatuated few who have rushed to Philadelphia to forestall public sentiment and to overawe the action of the convention by pre-occupying the ground, insist upon carrying out their plans, and forcing a premature nomination upon the country, the game is lost, and the whole affair is a farce. The American movement of 1856 will follow the American movement of 1840 to the tomb of all the Capulets, where it will sleep undisturbed for many a long year to come—leaving the country, meanwhile, a prey to the warring factions of North and South, of East and West, until mankind will begin to suspect the efficacy of a free government, and look upon universal suffrage, and the rule of the majority, as one of those illusions which beacon the turbid streams of history, and serve but to show where human hopes have been shipwrecked and lost.

It is really disgraceful to see the reporters of the daily press running about town in search of special friends, in order to get at the proceedings of political bodies in session among us. Publicity and the press were born together—twins at one birth from the fertile womb of time. Publicity is the law and palladium of security and liberty. It is only tyrants and despots that plot in secret. We want no Councils of Ten—no Naval Retiring Board—no Holy Vehme—no Chamber of the Inquisition—to discuss and decide upon our political destinies. We do not want our rulers selected for us by the lantern dimly burning; we require that all candidates and nominations shall come fully and fairly before the people; and as to those who cannot stand the light of such free investigation, let them retire, and remain secure within the walks of private life. The country owes power, office and distinction to no citizen. Those to whom these honors are offered must be eminently deserving of them. Secrecy and Americanism are totally incompatible terms—the one has nothing to do with the other.

Jersey City News.

COMMON COUNCIL.—A regular meeting of the Jersey City Common Council was held last evening at the Lyceum—Alderman Lyon, President of the Board, in the chair. Mr. Samuel R. Tyrrell, re-elected as an Alderman of the Fourth ward to fill a vacancy occasioned by his expulsion in January, appeared immediately after the organization of the Board and took his seat. The lobby of the Council chamber was filled with an eager audience, who watched with much interest the proceedings. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

Alderman THOMPSON then moved a suspension of the rules of the Board, which being carried, he offered a preamble and resolution relative to Mr. Tyrrell.

The preamble refers to the fact that charges were preferred against Samuel R. Tyrrell, then an Alderman of this Board, for corrupt conduct and a violation of the rules of this Council, upon which he was subsequently tried, convicted and expelled, by a vote of twelve to two. No further evidence having been adduced before this body to relieve him from these charges, they remain in full force. He now claims a seat in this Board by virtue of his re-election. This claim if acceded to would nullify the action of the Common Council upon those charges, and would render unavailing the power given by the charter to the Common Council to expel an Alderman. The Board believes that the power given by the city charter to the Common Council is the same as that of the constitution of the United States, which declares that legislative bodies are the judges of the election returns and qualifications of its own members, may determine the rules of its proceedings, and punish its members for disorderly behavior; and by a two-third vote expel a member. The same provision is also embodied in the constitution of the State of New York. Reference is also had to the opinion of Judge Story, that a member may be expelled for any misdemeanor which, though not punishable by any statute, is inconsistent with the trust and duty of a legislator. To this preamble was attached the following resolution:—

Resolved, That the President of this Common Council be directed not to appoint Samuel R. Tyrrell upon any committee of this body, and that the Clerk do not call the name of Samuel R. Tyrrell among the list of members in any action, vote or proceedings of this Common Council; and that he be not allowed to take part in any debate on any question which may come before this Board of Aldermen.

Before the vote was taken, Alderman TYRRELL addressed the Board, protesting against their proposed action, and giving notice that he would contest their action. He had been expelled, had gone back to his constituents, had been re elected, and he claimed his seat.

The preamble and resolution were then adopted as follows:—

Ayes—The President, Aldermen Davenport, Clark, Griffith, Thompson, Edge, Wilson, Erwin, Hoffman, Cobb, Hill and Insley—12.

Nays—Aldermen Rappelyea and Tyrrell—2.

Absent—Alderman Keeney.

Excused from voting—Alderman Greene.

Alderman DAVENPORT offered a preamble and resolution. The preamble refers to rumors that the building of Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 cost more than the contract specified, and some of the members of the Common Council were directly or indirectly interested in it and in the sale of articles. The preamble, together with a resolution authorizing an examination into this matter, was adopted.

Aldermen Davenport, HILL and Griffith were appointed a Committee of Investigation and were instructed to report to this Board on Tuesday evening next.

The Board then proceeded with its regular business.

THE STEAMER PERSIA.—A larger number of persons visited the Persia yesterday than on the day previous, and a larger proportion were ladies than the preceding day. Probably sixteen thousand persons or more visited the steamer on the two days, by which about $2,000 will be realized by the city missionary for the benefit of the poor. The visitors have come from New York, Brooklyn, Newark, Rahway, Elizabethtown, New Brunswick, Paterson, and other neighboring places.

CHURCH DEDICATION IN NEWARK, N. J.—The Methodist Episcopal church, situate in Broad street, Newark, N. J., will be appropriately dedicated on Friday the 22d inst., Washington's birthday. The services will be impressive. Bishop Simpson will preach in the morning, and Bishop Janes in the evening. The order of ceremonies to be observed is advertised to-day.

The Theatres Last Night.

"HERNE THE HUNTER" AT THE BROADWAY—ACCIDENT TO THE WEIRD SPIRIT AND HIS STEED.—The above play was produced at the Broadway theatre, for the second time, last evening, when the famous black steed was ridden by Mr. Sylvester, an accomplished circus performer. During the tournament scene in the second act, in which the Hunter Spirit wheels for a grand tilt with his pursuers, Mr. Sylvester's horse backed rather near to the edge of the stage, when, being reined up for the shock of the approaching combat, he fell over, with his rider, on the partition which separates the orchestra from the parquette. Great alarm prevailed for a moment or so in the house, but Mr. Sylvester was soon removed from his rather dangerous position, and the horse also extricated. Medical attendance was soon at hand, when it was found that the rider had sustained some pretty severe flesh wounds on his legs and thighs. The steed was also much hurt by coming in contact with the iron spikes which top the partition alluded to. None of the performers, either in the orchestra or on the stage, were injured, and all the instruments were found safe. The audience regained its usual composure after a short time.

NIBLO'S GARDEN.—THE "ELF KING".—Spectacle, pantomime and fairy burlesque seem to be all the rage at present, the legitimate drama being for a time set aside, to give place to these more brilliant but less satisfying productions. Three of our largest theatres—Broadway, the Bowery and Niblo's—are each performing spectacles for the edification and amusement of their patrons, with decided success, and with the most gratifying return to their respective treasuries.

The pantomimic spectacle of the "Elf King" was played for the second time last evening, at Niblo's, and drew a large, and what proved at the close, a gratified audience. In this production the different *artistes* and actors excelled themselves, and for brilliancy, grotesque situations, completeness of whole and of detail, the "Elf King" has never been equalled, even in this establishment, where the production of pantomimic spectacles has been a *specialité*.

So far as plot is concerned, the "Elf King" has none worth mentioning. There is a rich father, in a bag wig, who has a pretty daughter, in blue satin and powder, that is loved by a poor devil of an artist, with a large pair of breeches and a scant moustache. Then there are two strolling vagabonds, who are getting into all kinds of mischief and mirth-moving scrapes, and who endeavor to thwart the lovers, whom the Fairy Queen, Titania, eventually befriends and makes happy, and punishes their persecutors by turning them into beasts. Then, scattered through these, are any quantity of magical transformations, gorgeous scenery and effective tableaux, to interest, astonish and delight. A pantomime, to be effective, requires that the two most opposite emotions of which we are conscious—the sublime and the ridiculous—should be appealed to successively, and alternated, so as to produce the broadest contrast to our minds, thus producing the keenest sensations mere sensuous and scenic representations can afford. Thus, in the pantomime under consideration, a gorgeous scene in Cloudland, with all the brilliant and dazzling accompaniments, is followed by one in a street, where two rogues amuse themselves by cutting up all manner of antic frolleries, and the delighted auditor is carried from earth to heaven with all manner of strange adventures by the way, without knowing or analyzing the philosophy of the performance that so intensely interested and amused him. The Ravels, in the "Elf King," have very happily blended the beautiful and the grotesque, and as a consequence the impression left is one of unalloyed pleasure. The scenery and mounting of the "Elf King" is deserving of all praise. A landscape scene at sunrise, with Mount Blanc in the distance, is really delicious, a perfect gem in itself. The golden light breaking on the peak of the mountain, and gradually stealing down to the valley below, and beaming palely on the quiet river glistening at the base; the change from dawn to daylight, were full of fine and accurate atmospheric effects, and places the artist in the front rank of scenic painters. Another scene, representing the sharp contrast between wealth and poverty, was well done, and showed remarkable resources in the way of machinery. The abode of the Elf King, the last scene of all, is a wonder in its way, and the disciples of "Sam" can see in it, if they wish, a bird that takes down even the American eagle. On the whole, the pantomime is a marvel in its way, and shows to what wonderful perfection stage machinery and scenic effects can be brought. It is a question whether the performance could have been better done in Paris. The "Elf King" will be repeated this evening.

LAURA KEENE'S VARIETIES.—Goldsmith's well known play, "She Stoops to Conquer," was presented at this place last night. The cast of the play was excellent. Laura Keene as Miss Hardcastle, made the most out of the part possible, and in her disguise as the bar-maid, she was so natural that almost any one would admit she really understood the business. Mr. Bass as Mr. Hardcastle, was the simple, old fashioned gentleman that we would suppose the author had in his mind when he gave birth to this production. Mr. Jordan rather overdid the business as the modest young Marlow. To express modesty or embarrassment in the presence of a young lady does not require one to be constantly bowing with one's back turned plump upon her all the time. Mr. Johnson as Tony Lumpkin, and Miss Reignolds as Miss Neville, both played well. The performance of the evening closed with a new divertisement, called the "Judgment of Paris," performed by Mlle's Frank and Tilman and Mons. Tilman, who personated Juno, Venus and Paris. It consists simply of groupings by the three, Venus and Juno struggling for the apple which Paris holds in his hand. It was short, which was one merit it possessed, although we would not say this was the only one. The audience was very respectable in numbers, but was not near so large as this house and the company engaged here deserves.

Police Intelligence.

THE CASE OF MRS. CROCKER.

The case of Mrs.