THE PROTEST.

The Louisiana Outrage Fully and Fairly Discussed.

Last Night's Indignation Meeting.

Citizens of All Parties Rebuking Autocratic Usurpation.

THE VOICE OF ASSEMBLED THOUSANDS.

America Not Yet Ready for the Reign of Cæsar or Cromwell.

NO PARTY IN PATRIOTISM

"What Is Done to One State Can be Done to Every State."

NEW YORK SUSTAINS LOUISIANA.

Firm Denunciation of Military Meddling with Legislative Procedure.

"LET US HAVE PEACE."

Speeches by William Cullen Bryant, William M. Evarts, George Ticknor Curtis, William E. Dodge, James S. Thayer, Mayor Wickham, Governor Salomon, August Belmont and Others.

Long and patiently our people have borne with the unsettled condition of affairs at the South. They have sent their eyes to the terrible misrule that has caused it, hopeful of wiser ruling and broader statesmanship in the future. It needed but the scene enacted on Monday last in New Orleans, it needed but this open violation of constitutional law, to rouse at once and thoroughly the people. How the popular heart has been touched and how our people feel about it was demonstrated in the unparalleled gathering assembled last evening at Cooper Institute. There has never been such an assemblage in this city before, such deep-felt and earnest protest against subservience of civil liberty to military despotism.

THE CROWD.

Long before the time fixed for the meeting the crowd began to gather, and fully an hour before the doors were opened the streets and avenues encompassing Cooper Institute were nearly compact with people seeking admission to the meeting. It was something frightful to see the pouring in of these crowds at the various entrances as the doors were opened. It sounded like the rushing of many waters. That no one was injured in the impetuous scramble for seats was only a miracle. In a few moments, the doors having been opened exactly at seven o'clock, the vast hall was filled to its utmost capacity, each seat, aisle, alcove and possible standing place being occupied. Of course, in a matter touching so deeply the masses, there were among

OUR LEADING CITIZENS AND BUSINESS MEN

making up so largely the meeting a bountiful sprinkling of the so-called "great unwashed," whose enthusiasm could not at all times be kept down to the point deemed *en regle* at a meeting where such grave issues were to be discussed. But, if a little irregular in their demonstrations, it was well meant, and had earnest feeling and

ENTHUSIASM AS ITS BASIS.

Meantime the deepest, though rather boisterous, enthusiasm prevailed. There were occasional uproarious episodes over persons struggling to get out and cheering each newcomer to whom more favoring, though not always more deserved, fortune assigned seats on the platform. As Mayor Wickham made his appearance these cheers rose to a deafening shouting, which, though a seeming impossibility, however, became more intensified in its outburst as one after another—William Cullen Bryant, the venerable poet, and Peter Cooper, the philanthropist—came on to the stage.

At a few minutes past eight o'clock the platform was filled and the officers and orators of the evening were in their duly assigned places. And now began the work of the evening. There was some tumult as August Belmont undertook to initiate the evening proceedings by a speech preliminary to the taking of the presidential chair by Mayor Wickham. While the latter was speaking there was additional tumult and it continued even through the speech of Mr. Bryant. A little firmness at length on the part of the President put a quietus on the disturbing demonstrations, though such they can hardly be called, as there was really no disturbing element in the meeting. The unanimity of sentiment shown on the reading of the resolutions, and the utterance by the speakers of views in harmony with the meeting, showed a most cordially accordant spirit. This was likewise shown in the equal

UNANIMITY OF HISSES

greeting the mention of the names of President Grant, General Sheridan and Governor Kellogg. Take the meeting altogether, consider the immense crowd in attendance and the diversity of political opinions prevailing among them, and there has not been a meeting of more force, weight and dignity, though at times democratically demonstrative, at any time in this city. As the evening advanced, as the various speakers recited in earnest and eloquent phrase the outrages to which the people of the South have had to submit, as the result of the military despotism culminating in sending armed soldiers into a peaceful legislative hall was vividly traced and brought home to those present, there was more earnest attention to the speeches, a heartier indorsement of the resolutions and a fuller realization of the deep gravity of the issues involved and a painful appreciation of what the signal might be as affecting human rights and civil liberty in this country in the future.

The meeting was called to order by

MR. AUGUST BELMONT,

who said:—

FELLOW CITIZENS—Fourteen years ago our brethren of the Southern States rose in arms against the flag of the Union, and then the people of this quiet metropolis, discarding all party ties, in mass meeting assembled proclaimed with one voice, and which found an echo in every patriotic heart, that the Union must and shall be preserved. There is nothing dearer to every man—dearer to every American citizen—nothing dearer than his country; and what than life itself to every citizen than civil liberty. This is the most precious boon to patriots in every clime and through all ages, and for which the purest and noblest in every land have shed their blood. This is the great and priceless blessing which is threatened in our own free land, and which our glorious people confided to the safe keeping of the men of their choice. OUR RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES HAVE AGAIN BEEN THREATENED in our day, and the citizens of New York, with the same unanimity of feeling and the same forgetfulness of party as before, in the hour of the country's danger, *proclaim thoughout the land that civil liberty must and shall be preserved.* (Cheers.) We have come here to give expression to the solemn protest of the Empire State against the acts of federal administration in Louisiana. The Chief Magistrate of the city of New York has consented to take the chair and preside here to-night, and it now becomes my privilege to present to you Mayor Wickham.

MAYOR WICKHAM'S SPEECH.

Upon taking the chair, Mayor Vickham spoke as follows:—

It gives me great pleasure to preside at a meeting where so many of the citizens of New York have assembled without distinction of party, to protest against an outrage upon constitutional liberty.

After what has occurred in Louisiana we are not only confronted with the possibility that free government in the State of New York may be subverted by the army acting under orders from the War Department, but we are without guarantee that the President may not, upon the election of his successor, attempt by the same instrument to disperse even the Congress of the United States, and establish himself as a Dictator.

I shall attend, as you do, upon the eloquent words of the speakers who at this evening to utter the feelings natural to freemen in contemplation of such possibilities. There will be no doubt that "we all of us approve" what they shall say, and the military chieftain in New Orleans who has reported that the "atmosphere (there) is impregnated with assassination" will realize that here the air is alive with indignation.

GOVERNOR M'ENERY'S TELEGRAM.

At the close of his speech Major Wickham said he knew of no more opportune moment than the present to read a telegram which had just been handed to him. He read as follows:—

[Telegram from Governor McEnery.]

To Hon. WILLIAM H. WICKHAM, Chairman Louisiana Mass Meeting:—

Louisiana sends greeting to New York. Our people will not be goaded into conflict with United States troops. A committee is preparing evidence to refute the slanders of General Sheridan. We rely on the moral support of our sister States to restore to us as American freemen our right of self-government. JOHN McENERY,
Governor of the State of Louisiana.
LEWIS A. WILTZ,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

SPEECH OF WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

A few days since the intelligence was brought us that the armies of Spain had turned against the Republic, had overthrown it and placed Don Alfonso, the son of Isabella, on the throne, ejecting the President, Serrano, who had fled to France. We rejoiced that we belonged to a country where such proceedings were unknown, and where the government changed hands only in obedience to the will of the people, peacably expressed at the polls. We were, however, almost at the same moment astonished to hear from New Orleans that General Sheridan, lately sent to New Orleans by the President, had occupied the hall of the Louisiana Legislature, and purged it of the conservative members, as they are called, by thrusting them into the street.

MY FRIENDS, SUCH A METHOD OF CHANGING THE GOVERNMENT OF A STATE MAY DO FOR SPAIN, BUT IT WILL NOT DO FOR THIS COUNTRY. A few years since, while Isabella was yet on the throne, General O'Donnell, dissatisfied with her Ministry, sent his soldiers to turn them out, and they did it. He replaced the obnoxious Cabinet with one of his own, and the government went on in new hands. WE ARE IN THE HABIT OF MANAGING THINGS DIFFERENTLY HERE, AND, BY GOD'S HELP, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO DO SO HEREAFTER.

We have a constitution, my friends, and by that instrument the President has no right to intermeddle in the affairs of a State save in two cases—first, to protect the State from invasion, and, secondly, on application of the Legislature or the Executive, when the Legislature cannot be convened, to protect the State against domestic violence. These are the only cases in which the President of the federal Republic can interfere with an armed force in the cause of peace. When domestic violence is threatened the Legislature or Executive of the State must ask for his interference, or he cannot move without violating the constitution, which he is sworn to observe and obey.

What authority, fellow-citizens, is there in these provisions for the President to set himself up as a judge of elections and drag from the legislative chamber those whom he chooses to regard as having no right to their seats? He should have left this to the courts of law. He might as well, if he should be candidate for a third term of the Presidency, send his minions to disperse the electoral colleges in those States which shall refuse him their vote. *He might as well send another Sheridan to pull the gentleman whom we have just elected Governor of this State out of the executive chair. He might with just as good a warrant disperse this meeting by sending a band of armed men to clear this hall at the point of the bayonet.*

How happens it that men educated to the profession of arms at our national military school seem not to understand what are the rights of the citizen and what the due limits of the military power? If General Sheridan, that daring soldier, but despiser of civil rights, had either been properly trained or had not forgotten his training he would never have obeyed the mandate which ordered him to New Orleans on that guilty errand. He would have said:—"I owe my education to this Republic; I was brought up to be its soldier and servant and not the vassal of the President. I have taken my life in my hand and gone into the civil war to defend and preserve the constitution of my country, and I will not raise my hand to violate it. I would almost as soon cut the throat of my mother. I would tear off my epaulettes and break my sword and fling the fragments into the Potomac sooner than go upon so impious an errand." That is what he should have said.

A former application of Governor Kellogg, of Louisiana, made to the President for military aid four months since is used as the pretext of this invasion of the legislative chamber of Louisiana. That application had its effect at the time the President issued his proclamation of warning, and the people submitted. There were four months of peace. A new state of things has arisen, and if it was attended with danger of domestic violence the President should have been requested to interpose. But no such request was made—in fact, there was no danger on which to found the request. It is nonsense to say that turning five members out of the legislative chamber is a protection against domestic violence.

How long is such an application as that made by Governor Kellogg in force? If good for four months it is good for forty—good for a century. Let me relate an anecdote which will illustrate this point:—Some seventy years since there lived in Berkshire, Mass., a lawyer noted as a humorist and known as Major King. A client of his was prosecuted for killing a horse. This was in the time of the insurrection called the Shays war, and all the evidence produced against him was that he was seen in the road half a mile from the field in which the horse was pastured, and that he shouted "Hurrah for Shays!" "Then," said Major King, rising to address the Court, "if shouting 'Hurrah for Shays!' can kill a horse at the distance of half a mile, then is my client guilty, otherwise he must be acquitted." Fellow citizens, if we are to belive that Kellogg's application for military aid in September authorizes this violence of the federal soldiery in January we may as well admit at once that calling out "Hurrah for Shays!" may kill a horse at the distance of half a mile.

Great stress is laid upon Sheridan's assertions that the whole State of Louisiana is given over to lawlessness and anarchy, and that murder is the natural and usual form of death in that State.

This is solemnly denied on very high authority; but how is this state of things improved by putting five members of the Louisiana Legislature out of their seats and turning them into the street? Sheridan promises to send on a list of murders lately committed. Well, I suppose that if an account of street and tavern brawls in this city were to be made up for the last year—this city in which, by night and day, I have walked for the last fifty years, as I thought, in perfect security and without fear—quite an unpleasant show of bloodshed might be made out; but how would the matter be mended by sending a body of federal troops to pull five members of the Common Council of the city out of their seats?

No, my friends, the wrong done has no possible extenuation. I regard this question solely as a solemn question of constitutional law. No matter who desired the interference of the military, it should not have been given but in the way of the constitution—otherwise it is an act from which no citizen has a right to withhold his condemnation. It must be rebuked the instant it is perpetrated. The evil must be crushed in its infancy, while its bones are yet in the gristle, and before it becomes formidable as a precedent. These practices, which contemplate the subjection of local politics to the federal authorities by the exercise of the military power, must be denounced, must be stopped, must be broken up forever.

Let me say in conclusion that the proceedings of this meeting, so far as the great proportion of those who take part in them are concerned, have no party purpose or object. Far from us be the petty and narrow policy which could so pervert them. A SINCERE DESIRE TO PRESERVE THE CONSTITUTION FROM VIOLATION AND TO PREVENT AN ACT OF ARBITRARY POWER FROM BECOMING A PRECEDENT IN FUTURE, IS AND SHOULD BE OUR SINGLE MOTIVE.

When Mr. Bryant had concluded his remarks the following list of vice presidents and secretaries was read by John A. Beall:—

VICE PRESIDENTS

William C. Bryant,	Peter H. Watson,
Oswald Ottendorfer,	Edward Cooper,
Peter Cooper,	Dr. J. T. Metcalf,
Howard Potter,	James Stuart,
William M. Evarts,	Charles O'Conor,
Whitelaw Reid,	William H. Neilson,
E. L. Godkin,	Samuel L. M. Barlow,
Manton Marble,	August Belmont,
William E. Dodge,	John Taylor Johnston,
Parke Godwin,	John T. Agnew,
Morris K. Jesup,	George W. Lane,
Franklin Edson,	James S. Thayer,
John J. Cisco,	Charles A. Dana,
Erastus Brooks,	William H. Appleton,
Charles P. Daly,	William Adams,
James W. Beekman,	Gilbert M. Speir,
George Cabot Ward,	Richard Lathers,
William Butler Duncan,	William Allen Butler,
Alfred Pell,	Charles F. Southmayd,
Dr. Wm. A. Hammond,	Francis G. Shaw,
Wm. D. Shipman,	David Salomon,
Eugene Kelly,	Ivory Chamberlain,
Wilson G. Hunt,	James Stokes,
Charles Donohue,	Hiram Barney,
John D. Jones,	Townsend Cox,
Daniel Kingsland,	James Emott,
Theodore Roosevelt,	Hugh J. Jewett,
Arthur B. Graves,	Dr. H. P. Gasckenbos,
Robt. B. Roosevelt,	John Kelly,
Carlos Cobb,	John E. Ward,
Chas. H. Van Brunt,	C. C. Baldwin,
E. P. Fabbri,	Gen. Joseph J. Bartlett,
Simon Sterne,	Charles P. Kirtland,
John L. Mucaulay,	John E. Williams,
Augustus Schell,	Robert L. Cutting,
James F. Newman,	Henry Hall,
Elijah Ward,	D. Willis James,
Richard M. Henry,	James Brown,
Dr. Austin Flint, Jr.,	Frederick E. Gibert,
F. F. Marbury,	John McKeon,
Henry Havemeyer,	Alex. Hamilton, Jr.,
Colonel Richard Vose,	Charles M. Fry,
Henry Hentz,	Gen. Wm. W. Averill,
Charles Tracy,	Jeremiah Devlin,
Frederick R. Coudert,	John D. Van Buren,
William C. Prime,	George Shea,
Sidney Webster,	William G. Lyon,
Dr. Louis Elsberg,	Benjamin Hutton,
Montgomery H. Throop,	James T. Kilbreth,
William Watson,	Thomas E. Stewart,
John E. Develin,	J. S. Bosworth,
Colonel Josiah Porter,	Ernest Beyer.

SECRETARIES.

E. Randolph Robinson,	John E. Johnson,
J. Evarts Tracy,	General M. T. McMahon,
David B. Williamson,	John Crosby Brown,
William B. Bend,	Henry F. Verhuven,
Peter B. Olney,	Wheeler H. Peckham,
Charles A. Easton,	Henry E. Knox,
Charles E. Whitehead,	A. J. Vanderpoel,
William C. Whitney,	Henry Wilder Allen,
John Hay,	Dr. Woolsey Johnson,
Dr. Stuyv't F. Morris,	Joseph W. Howe,
Frederick H. Betts,	William D. Hennen,
William T. Pelton,	Theodore Schultz,
Col. Jacob Sharp,	Joseph Blumenthal,
Francis Lynde Stetson,	Horace Barnard,
Alfred Wagstaff,	J. B. Stilson,
Stephen B. Olin,	Charles D. Ingersoll,
A. M. Browne,	Edward L. Paris,
William H. Ely,	Horatio N. Twombly,
James H. Skidmore,	Thomas R. Fisher,
Gen. Herman Ohl,	D. S. Ritterband,
J. McLean Nash,	T. Tileston Bryce,
James M. Ball,	Gen. Louis T. Barney,
Burton N. Harrison,	Theron G. Strong,
John J. Thomason,	Colonel C. H. Bartlett,
D. R. Casserly,	Horatio J. Brewer,
Augustus W. Reynolds,	Ernest G. Stedman,
James P. Lowrey,	Emmet R. Olcott,
Adolph L. Sanger,	John Adrian Bush,
Julius J. Lyons,	Hugh L. Cole,
E. Graham Haight,	J. Raymond Reynolds.

The Vice President and Secretary having been approved by the meeting Mr. Simon Stern then read the following

RESOLUTIONS.

Whereas it is a fundamental principle of parliamentary law, underlying all free representative institutions, and which our national and State constitutions embody and enforce, that a sovereign Legislature is the sole judge of the qualifications of its members, and that even judicial interference is not tolerated with that high and all-important privilege; and

Whereas there is nothing in the laws of the United States, nor in the constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, which in the least excepts the legislative body of that State from the operation of this ancient natural and undoubted principle of government; and

Whereas caution and foresight in the exercise of federal interference with the concerns of the States lately in rebellion are made doubly desirable at this moment by the fact that nearly half the voters of that region are persons only now receiving their first lessons in politics, and who as yet possess no familiarity with the dangers to which constitutional government is exposed, with the means by which it is maintained and defended, and no knowledge of the sacrifices by which past generations have created it, and who, as a matter of fact, look on the federal administration as their best friend and most trustworthy political instructor; therefore

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this meeting, any use of the federal authority which teaches these newly made voters to believe that political problems can be solved by arbitrary processes or displays of physical force better or more readily than by labor, patience and conciliation is an offence against the national safety and welfare which calls for the severest condemnation.

Whereas all intimidation of a Legislature, and especially that form of intimidation which consists in military interference with its organization or debates, or in the display of military force in or about the place of meeting, is sure eventually to convert representation into a farce, by making the Legislature in a greater or less degree the creature or servant of the Executive; therefore

Resolved, That we cannot too warmly express our disapprobation of the part which the military forces of the United States have been allowed more than once to play in the organization of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana.

Whereas on the first of these occasions, in 1872, the federal troops took possession of the State House in New Orleans, and permitted no person to enter the Legislative Chambers except those pointed out to the sentinels by the United States marshal, the occurrence was rightly considered by the whole country a scandal and disorder of the gravest kind; but nevertheless as it took place under cover of an order of a United States court it was felt by many that the officials engaged in it might honestly plead ignorance of the enormity of the transaction, in spite of the fact that the order in question was on its face, to use the language of the committee of the United States Senate which examined it, "most reprehensible, erroneous in point of law and wholly void for want of jurisdiction;" and

Whereas this occurrence and the discussion it called forth cannot have left the administration or its officers in the dark as to the serious nature of the objections to the military interference of the federal authorities with the machinery of State governments; therefore

Resolved, That we have heard with surprise and alarm that the State House of Louisiana was taken possession of and garrisoned by a federal brigade prior to the meeting of the Legislature on the 4th day of January last; that the members had to make their way, under examination, to their places through lines of armed sentinels, and then proceed to the discharge of their duties inside, under the eye of a military commander not subject to their authority and holding the very building in which they sat as a fortified post; that when disputes subsequently arose between the two parties into which the Legislature is divided over the organization of the House of Representatives, this officer took upon himself to answer the appeal of one side and assume the duties of the Sergeant-at-Arms and of the police by repressing a disturbance within the building; and that when subsequently a minority of the House, being dissatisfied with the vote or with the mode of taking it, or with the qualifications of some of those who participated in it, refused to seek the settlement of the controversy by the ordinary and long established methods of parliamentary law, but appealed to the Governor of the State to interfere with the proceedings, the troops of the United States, at the Governor's unlawful request or command, entered the legislative hall, and then and there settled by force the purely parliamentary question of the qualification of several persons present for seats in the House by expelling them violently from the building.

Whereas no occurrence of this kind has been recorded in the history of free government without being stigmatized, and rightly stigmatized, an act of revolutionary violence, and though, owing to the peculiar condition of the Southern States and to the multiplicity of our State Legislatures, it may seem an event of less moment in Louisiana in our day than it has seemed in other places and at other times, it assumes a character of the utmost gravity when we rememoer that if it be permissible in Louisiana, whether it shall take place or not in New York or Massachusetts becomes a question, not of legal right, but of Executive discretion; therefore

Resolved, That for this reason, above all, we emphatically protest against it, and declare our solemn conviction that it were better that legislative bodies should be forbidden to meet at all than to be forbidden to meet under their own rules and surrounded by their own officers, because nothing is more dangerous or demoralizing than arbitrary rule veiled by constitutional forms; and that the citizens of New York, without distinction of party, here assembled, appeal to their fellow citizens of the whole country to unite with them in this protest; and

Whereas the recent despatch of the Lieutenant General of the Army, addressed to the Secretary of War, suggesting that Congress should pass an act, or that the President should issue a proclamation, in imitation of the dragonnades of Louis XIV., declaring an indeterminate number of his fellow citizens "banditti," and authorizing him to hunt them down with an armed force, might be passed over as the hasty and ill-considered language of a soldier who, however gallant in the field, has allowed himself to remain inexcusably ignorant of the usages and laws of his country, were it not that it has received the prompt approval of the War Department, accompanied by an intimation that the President and the other members of the Cabinet approved of it; therefore

Resolved, That we cannot refrain from expressing our heartfelt reprobation of the despatch itself, of the atrocious imputation it casts on a large body of our countrymen, and of the Executive sanction which it has received.

Whereas the outrages on legislative independence, against which we have met to protest, have no legal relation to the problem of reconstruction, properly so called, and do not arise out of any recent legislation of Congress regarding the States lately in rebellion; and

Whereas federal military assistance is to be rendered upon his responsibility by the President, under and by virtue of a provision of the original unamended constitution, and in answer to a call which the Legislature of any State, or, if not in session, the Governor of any State, may; make therefore

Resolved, That the manner in which the federal troops have been employed in Louisiana constitutes an abuse of authority which is dangerous to public liberty in an equal degree in every part of the Union.

SPEECH OF WILLIAM M. EVARTS.

Mr. Evarts was the next speaker, and on coming forward was loudly cheered. He said:—

FELLOW CITIZENS—I am sure that no republican in the land can honestly complain that in the call and purpose of this meeting his party has not been treated with absolute consideration. (Cheers.) If there ever was an occasion when an opposition party might ask to make a demonstration on their own behalf and to the prejudice and disaster of its opponent that opportunity was offered to the democratic party by the conduct of the government in the matter. (Cheers.) The federal government is all republican. The President and both Houses of Congress and all the subordinate officers of the government throughout the Union and in the State of Louisiana itself are all republicans. Now, then, under the ordinary principles of political responsibility, the republican party, being ostensibly RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS HIGH-HANDED ACT OF MILITARY SUPPRESSION OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT, our fellow citizens of New York have the understanding that patriotism and love of liberty and obedience to the constitution are not in the possession of any political organization, that there are limits to their political competition and their antagonisms which no political party shall safely pass. *That when men vote, and when their chosen officers meet, and when, without violence and without demonstration of insurrection, they undertake to conduct the affairs of their political government, no soldiers can interfere.* (Cheers.) This nation emerged ten years ago from a great war, in which unmeasured contributions of blood and treasure were poured out in the maintenance of the government of the United States. And why was this? Because the people of the United States were determined that the integrity of their territory should be preserved. And why do they wish to preserve the integrity of their territory but that THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE UPHELD AND PRESERVED? (Cheers.) And now every officer of the State and every officer of the United States takes the solemn oath to sustain the constitution of the United States. But there is one officer who takes the single oath prescribed by the constitution of the United States, and that officer is the President of the United States. (Hisses.) And his oath is not the common oath I have named, but the oath to preserve the great authority confided to him by the whole party—that he will sustain, protect and defend the constitution of the United States. And now the constitution, made for troublous times as well as peaceful, undertakes to furnish the measure of power to be given to the federal government in respect to interference in the government of the several States of the Union. There are two very distinct, firm lines of limitation, which, observed, will protect the machinery of the government for the people—forty millions of people to-day and one hundred millions hereafter—that is, that the sole intervention of the federal power within State authority shall be to suppress violence, and that their office after that shall not assume to go further, unless when invited by the supreme authority of the State. (Cheers.) And that supreme authority of the State is named in the federal constitution, and is the Legislatures of the several States; and only in the casual condition, when the Legislature is not in session can the Governor represent the State so as to demand federal intervention in the political affairs of the State—but only on the condition that the Legislature cannot be convened—as in the State during the recess or an adjournment from April to January the Governor of the State of New York has no authority under the federal constitution to invoke the intervention of the federal power except in an emergency that would not permit of his convening the Legislature in extra session. And now the situation in Louisiana was that the State Legislature was in session—(cheers)—and the Governor had no power whatever to represent the State in a demand for federal intervention. (Cheers.) Were the people of the State informed by General Sheridan or by the Cabinet at Washington, did he or they proclaim that an application had been made by the assembled Legislature of the State for federal intervention to turn some members out? I think not. But it is only in an insurrection, or in the existence of that degree of violence that comes to insurrection in effect, that the constitution of the United States has authorized such intervention, and it is only in support of that intervention that the legislation of Congress in 1795 and 1801 has armed the President with authority. Now if General Sheridan—(hisses)—fellow-citizens, for reasons I will state to you I do not ask that any special share of your disapprobation shall be visited on him, I should think it but fair to take his own statement of the occasion, and the manner of his intervention. It is unquestionably this, that there was insecurity and alarm, and that there had been some disorders in the State, and then he uses this uncommon phrase in American politics, that the "military were present as conservators of the peace." HERE WE HAVE A NATIONAL GENDARMES INSTEAD OF A CIVIL POLICE. The Legislature of Louisiana was then in session, and one party having elected a Speaker, whether by loudness of voice or a majority of members, they having elected a Speaker, and there being disorder thereupon and confusion, the Speaker asked that some United States officer would speak to the crowd and disperse them quietly. General de Trobriand asked if this was his wish, and he (the Speaker) said "Yes;" and thereupon the General spoke to them, and in a moment there was peace. So that if there had been an insurrection it was over. (Cheers and laughter.) And the thanks of that orderly body of the Legislature of Louisiana was offered to General de Trobriand for his gallantry in maintaining the peace, and thereupon Governor Kellogg, outside of the Legislature—for he is not a member of the Legislature—asked General de Trobriand to take a file of soldiers and go to the Legislature and take out five men that were acting as members of that body and he did it. Now, I might be disposed to animadvert with some severity on this act of the inferior officer, General de Trobriand, but for the superior, General Sheridan—was I not met with the proposition, in a Latin phrase, *respondent ad superiorem?* The authority that avows and maintains the action of the subordinates shall be held responsible. "The President of the United States and all of us." (Laughter.) This can be said about the situation of the United States itself; but about the authority of all of us? (Laughter.) And it is to be supposed that General Belknap assumed a share of the glory, though he does not assume a share of the responsibility; but the President has apparently approved of this action. Now, Governor Kellogg if he gave that order, and it was executed, deserves impeachment by the Legislature of Louisiana. (Great cheers.) I would like to see Governor Tilden send in a file of New York soldiers to take out the republican majority in the Senate when it assembles to vote for United States Senator next week. (Cheers.) We would see whether a democratic house in Albany, as it is now, would stand patiently by and see the privileges of the Legislature violated by the Governor, because his opinion in the matter inclined to the minority of the House as against the majority. But Governor Kellogg had no authority for wielding this power, and all his assumption of that authority must show that the constitution of the United States justifies it, or he must answer for it. We must not be unconcerned about this action in Louisiana, for it may be repeated in New York. (Cheers, and cries of "No, never.") I tell you that when it is done in one State it is done in all States. (Cheers.) The Legislature of Louisiana is as much a vital part of the government as the Legislature of New York. (Cheers.) And while it is vital as a universal power, shattered and broken in on, it is broken in all. But, again, we must learn to generalize. Suppose this intervention of military power to be broken, that the action of independent State authority should be open to be exercised in Louisiana, Missouri or in any State, to take out the majority in that Electoral College while we were choosing a President and by a special vote of any one State one man should be chosen instead of the other, is not that an attack upon all the States? And what have you then but civil war, engaged in by the multitude of men, fighting over and disputing a Presidency? But you never can have that, because then that courage and common sense that makes every government possible, permanent and strong, will step in and see that that surpasses the limits of political power and agitation. For I submit, the moment that we make a compliance of this nature to one side that profits by it our liberties are gone. All elections are useless, for usurpation can step in, and it will become a question whether the party will sustain the usurpation or not. It is for that reason that this crowd is here to-night. It is not democratic, it is not republican, but it is American. (Cheers.) Thus far we have only the fact that the President has approved, for Secretary Belknap's "all of us" is mere surplusage. BUT IF THE REPUBLICAN MAJORITY IN CONGRESS APPROVE; IF THEY HAVE NO VOICE, NO ACTION, NO AUTHORITY BUT TO ADOPT AND SUSTAIN AND MAINTAIN THE RIGHT OF A FILE OF SOLDIERS TO DECIMATE A LEGISLATURE, *even then I'll admit the republican party is to be held responsible for that action till you have given us republicans a chance to see and do what we will see and do in the premises.* (Cheers.) I have observed a growing disposition on the part of the depositaries of political power to separate themselves more and more from the popular support of the party that gave them their authority. I see the first evidence of that is a warning to them on the silence of our voters that has placed the democratic party apparently in a majority in the most powerful States. *But if the depositors of power in the republican party are ready to put themselves before the country on the constitutional proposition that a file of soldiers can empty a State Legislature* under any of the circumstances proposed by anybody as prevailing in Louisiana, I think that this representation of power of the republican party will find that it has few supporters in their own party. (Cheers.) So, in the democratic party, they will find it as easy to convince the people of the United States that they may carry their project against those made in maintaining their authority as many people found in supposing that the people of the North could carry their projects against the method of the Lecompton constitution. I remember in speaking in 1856 at a meeting called to protest against the agitation which led to subsequent great trouble in the country. Even six months after that in the city of New York the sentiment, the opinion and the ticket that was represented at that meeting had only six thousand votes; but how many years was it before it had votes enough to control every State in the Union, and had armies and the treasure of the United States, without distinction of party, carrying it out to a triumphant victory for the maintenance of the constitution of the United States. *In that struggle two things were gained and came to be a part of our political creed—that the American people never would submit either to have their territory mutilated or their constitution corrupted.* (Applause.) *Now, the laws of Congress require that whenever a state of violence exists in a State to which federal suppression should be applied that the exercise of that authority must be combined by a proclamation requiring the insurgents to disperse.* Now, I believe, a proclamation of that kind was issued some time ago, and that the parties all dispersed. How long will it be, fellow citizens, if the federal authority thus pronounced will be peacefully obeyed by a malcontent people with great grievances to complain of? They learn that the next thing the government does, after they have dispersed, is to use violence itself in suppressing demands for their constitutional rights. *Their experiences in this line will only be to make it possible for the federal government to do by violence with a squad of soldiers what if the insurgents had held together the federal government would need to do by a whole army.* (Applause.) Now, I have detained you too long. (Cheers, and cries, "Go on!") There are other troubles at the South, in respect to which and their suppression the federal government is armed with extraordinary power. By the late act of 1871, whenever any combination or conspiracy exists in a State against the State law to the extent of suppressing any of the rights, privileges or immunities of any of the citizens of the United States, and the constituted authorities of the State are unable to protect those rights, or for any reason refuse protection to the citizen, then it is lawful for the President to use the militia and the army and navy to maintain those violated rights. If when the Legislature was held there were organized bands, combining and conspiring to intimidate the voters—to intimidate the black voters—then was the time for the President to have interfered and suppressed those violent combinations and conspiracies that trampled on the rights of suffrage, though it was the meanest voter in the land. I hope it will be long before the State of New York, without distinction of party, will not respond with the same voice and energy as it does to-night against any combination or conspiracy in any Southern State formed with the purpose of intimidating the voters of the South in the exercise of their rights. I will be as ready to speak with my associates here of the democratic party at a meeting of that kind as now. *But we do not want, after an election is held, and when there is no violence, no combinations, no conspiracy and no authority to suppress anything, to have that authority exercised by a Legislature because a military officer of the President thinks that somebody was prevented from voting.* (Cheers.) This fundamental right of a Legislature to control and determine the qualifications and constitution of its own body is of the very essence of legislative government. What use is it to give the purse and the sword to the House of Commons or to the House of Congress *if the King or President by military power* can determine what shall be the constitution of the House of Commons or the House of Congress? And that is what they fought for in England—the indubitable and ancient rights of Parliament to hold the purse when in danger from the claims of royal power. For a while the House of Lords assumed the power and right to determine the qualification and membership of the House of Commons; but in 1624 the House of Commons determined that the qualification of its members was at its own final disposal; that the ancient liberties of the House of Commons required it, and that no king and no House of Lords has questioned this power of the House of Commons from that time to this. (Applause.) And for this reason the people of the United States are justified in seeing that supreme civil power shall dominate over the military, and that no merging of them or interference with them shall be permitted; to see that there shall be an independent Legislature, with an absolute absence of federal power, *except on the invocation of the Legislature for the suppression of actual violence and its immediate* withdrawal when the violence is suppressed. Now, I don't know whether there is to be a sequel to this matter or not. I think not. But Lord Bacon said long ago that soldiers in peace were like chimneys in summer, and that only when fires were lighted they came to be of any use. I should be sorry to think that the people could be inflamed, or that they could be so only after a long and virulent agitation that belongs to civil strife. But if there be any such sequel in any man's mind, let us see that it is summarily dismissed from it, and that the voice of this people touches all its rulers; that as in times past, all the power, all the authority, all the officers and all the magistrates, are servants of its laws. (Applause.)

Mr. Simon Stern then came forward and read the following letters and telegrams:—

TELEGRAM FROM FRANCIS KERNAN.

UTICA, N. Y., Jan. 11, 1875.

TO AUGUST BELMONT, New York:—

I regret that I cannot be with you personally this evening and shall be there in spirit, to unite with the citizens of New York in their protest against the bayonet thrust at liberty in Louisiana.
FRANCIS KERNAN.

TELEGRAM FROM CLARKSON N. POTTER.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan 11, 1875.

Hon. AUGUST BELMONT, Chairman, New York:—

I thank the committee for their invitation. That your meeting is not a partisan one I understand. The danger and illegality of Executive interference, whether State or federal, with the organization of a State Legislature is a question in no way dependent, as I think, upon the condition of affairs in Louisiana. But as the late interference there is sought to be justified or excused by that condition, and as I am one of the sub-committee of Congress on that subject, I do not now think I ought to speak upon either question in advance of their report.
CLARKSON N. POTTER.

TELEGRAM FROM JAMES E. HALSEY.

JACKSON, Miss., Jan. 10, 1875.

Hon. WILLIAM WICKHAM, Chairman Citizens' Meeting, New York:—

May the merchants of the commercial metropolis speak in unmistakable tones at your meeting to-night against military usurpation, as well as opposition to those who, under the plea of insuring freedom to negroes, make liberty for white men impossible. As a citizen of the city and county of New York, temporarily visiting Mississippi, I hereby bear testimony to the loyalty of the people, their sincere desire for peace and for the prosperity of our common country. A paralyzed commerce and financial uncertainties demand from the patriots of the North, as security in the future to the merchants of both sections, the restoration of civil liberty in place of military despotism.
JAMES E. HALSEY.

LETTER FROM JUDGE COMSTOCK.

SYRACUSE, Jan. 9, 1875.

AUGUST BELMONT, Esq.:—

DEAR SIR—I have received your despatch and I most deeply regret that I cannot attend this meeting at Cooper Institute on Monday evening next. The gravity of the occasion cannot be overestimated. Mingling but little in party politics, I am conscious of no party feeling or bias in reference to the present transactions in the oppressed and downtrodden State of Louisiana. But some part of my life has been spent in the study of the principles which are involved in those events that have so suddenly startled and aroused the country, and I do not hesitate to declare it as my deliberate judgment that the President of the United States is justly liable to impeachment for his offence in upholding by military power the spurious government of a State and interfering by armed force with the peaceful organization of a State Legislature.

We are warned by the whole history of the past to meet this first step toward military despotism with a firm resistance. I trust that your meeting will sound the alarm and that its voice will be heard by the country. Yours truly,
GEORGE F. COMSTOCK.

LETTER FROM HENRY R. SELDEN.

ROCHESTER, Jan. 8, 1875.

Hon. AUGUST BELMONT:—

DEAR SIR—Your telegram in behalf of the committee inviting me to speak at the meeting to be held at Cooper Institute on Monday next in regard to the recent military proceedings in Louisiana is received. Engagements in court here will prevent me from going to New York at that time. My information in regard to the grounds assumed in justification of those proceedings is very imperfect; but the facts, so far as I can gather them from the telegraphic accounts, furnish no warrant for the intervention of the military power. However well intended the acts of the military authorities may have been the precedent, if sustained by the people, will be fraught, as it appears to me, with the utmost danger to republican institutions. Every instance of the unrebuked exercise of unlawful power, even when harmless in its immediate effects, becomes a dangerous example in after times. I am glad that the movement to which you call my attention has been made, and hope that those engaged in it will calmly and firmly, not as partisans, but as citizens, express their condemnation of this unwarranted exercise of military power, not doubting that the whole people, with rare exception, will join in such condemnation. Very respectfully yours,
HENRY R. SELDEN.

After reading these letters, Mr. Stern, in response to a great many vociferous calls for Horatio Seymour, said that Mr. Seymour was prevented by illness from being present. Mr. James S. Thayer was then introduced and gree