Washington Sentinel.

EDITED BY
WM. M. OVERTON, CH. MAURICE SMITH,
AND BEVERLEY TUCKER.

JUNE 21, 1855.

A MYSTERY EXPLAINED—THE "WASHINGTON UNION'S" TENDER CONSIDERATION FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

It is well known to our readers, and the public generally, that the Washington *Union* has rarely condescended to notice its "neighbors of the Washington *Sentinel*." It is equally well known that the *Sentinel* has never omitted to *notice* the Washington *Union*. We have too high a respect for that orthodox journal—too kindly a consideration for the grand position it occupies to the present Administration—and too great an interest in the welfare and integrity of the Democratic party, to think of withholding from our readers the rules by which the *Union* is governed, and its anomalous construction of the principles of the Democratic party. In this respect, we have at least returned good for evil, and may take comfort in our humiliation, that we have done much good in drawing it back more than once from the error of its ways. We were disposed to quarrel at first with our neighbor for its utter neglect of us, which we could not, in the absence of better motives, ascribe to anything but spite and jealousy. We often thought, too, that a sense of gratitude—a rare human virtue, we admit—to us, for our timely interposition in saving it from the shoals and quicksands towards which it was madly drifting, would have commanded its acknowledgments. Hence we did feel unamiable, if not angry, at the *Union's* sullen course towards *us*, its truest friends; and had well nigh made up our minds to retaliate in kind. We are, however, spared the necessity of this ill-natured resort, by an article which appeared in the Washington *Union* on Friday last, heading a communication from a friend in Virginia, who, kindly to it, and courteously to us, seeks to protect it against our exposure of a previous article in the *Union*. That communication we think we have fully enough answered, and shall not refer again to it—at least, for the present.

We here give the *Union's* article concerning ourselves, and we wish we could envy either the amiability or sincerity which prompted it:

"OUR POSITION ON THE SLAVEYY QUESTION.—To avoid the possibility of disturbing in any respect the harmony of the Democratic party, we have adhered constantly to the resolution to engage in no political discussions with our neighbors of the *Sentinel*. We intend to carry out this resolution, for the same reason that it was originally adopted. In yielding to the request of a friend to insert the article below, which appeared in the Richmond *Enquirer* of the 13th instant as a communication, we do so because we desire to acknowledge our obligations to the writer, who has so clearly and accurately construed our position, but with no view of departing from the rule which we have heretofore followed."

As for its sincerity, we refer our readers to the *Union's* article upon the Charleston *Mercury*, upon the same subject—a paper admitted by the *Union* to be a good Democratic paper. And if the reason be good for not noticing the *Sentinel* for fear of "disturbing the harmony of the Democratic party," why should it not be equally good for ignoring the Charleston *Mercury*, a leading Democratic southern journal? So much, then, for the *sincerity* of its avowed motive.

But here we have the explanation of the course of the Washington *Union* towards the *Sentinel*; and we feel half inclined to pardon it in the *patriotic* motive which seems to have induced it "*to avoid the possibility of disturbing the harmony of the Democratic party;* we have adhered constantly to the resolution to engage in no political discussions with our neighbors of the *Sentinel!*" Well, this is really a fine sentiment, and far more grateful to us than the idea that we have been ignored because we were not worthy of notice. To proud men, nothing could be so mortifying as this, for although we feel that it is something to occupy the relation we do to the United States Senate, and not a little thing to have had our course approved and endorsed by most of the leading men of our party, yet, to have been deemed too insignificant for the condescension of the organ of the Administration, was a blow of no little severity. But our sage and experienced neighbor should remember that we are "youthful" yet, in our vocation, and that we cannot hope at one bound to leap into the full stature of political manhood. We are yet in the rudiments of our political faith, and have not learned to enlarge upon it as our neighbor seems to have done.

We have, for example, been brought up under the strictest tutelege of the Democratic State-rights Republican School, and we cannot in a day forget its teachings. The Washington *Union* must have patience with us, for it may be we shall, under the influence of its example, ere long doff the scanty mantle of State-rights, for the broader folds of Federalism and Centralism, which *it* so gracefully wears about it. The Washington *Union* refuses to "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party by engaging in political discussions" with us. *We*, on the other hand, choose to render our humble aid in *preserving* "the *harmony* of the Democratic party," by (since we are denied the honor of a "political discussion" with the *Union*) exposing its dangerous fallacies. *We* will not "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party" by advocating mammoth schemes of Internal Improvement, in contravention of its long established principles. We will not do this, *even* for the meed of praise so generously awarded to the Washington *Union* by our venerated contemporary of the *National Intelligencer*. Much as we honor the memory of Henry Clay and freely as we give our humble tribute to his greatness and patriotism, we have no ambition to have our articles mistaken for *plagairisms* from his most Federal lucubrations upon this subject!

We will not "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party" by aiding or abetting any scheme or schemes for the absorption of the rights of the States, by the interference of the Federal Government in their domestic concerns!

We will not "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party" by tampering with Freesoilers and absolving them from censure for not supporting a measure—the Nebraska bill—in which was involved the most vital principle not only of the *Democratic party*, but of the Constitution of the United States!

We will not "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party" by endorsing the dangerous principle of protection in the late annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury, so diametrically opposed to the free-trade doctrine of the Democratic party!

We will not "*disturb* the harmony of the Democratic party" by endorsing the official conduct of a Governor of a Territory who has used his position for the purpose of abating the rights and privileges of one class of its population, and thus securing the advancement of another class, and that other, the wicked emissaries of Massachusetts "Emigrant Aid Societies." In a word, we will not *disturb* the harmony or *equilibrium* of the Democratic party by advocating one set of principles to-day, and an entirely different set tomorrow. These are things that we will *not* do, but we will strive to the best of our ability to preserve the creed of our party pure and free from any heresies whatever, and its integrity in tact, and without stain.

We have given this much of our space to-day to this subject, because we do not choose that the natural effect of such an article shall be produced upon any mind, without notice of us. The Washington *Union* has with a show of courtesy to us, and *profound loyalty* to the party, intimated that a notice of us would produce *disturbance* in the party.

We claim the right to read the *riot act* to the Washington *Union* and *its* supporters, and shall treat them as *disturbers* of the political peace of our party. In this connection, we challenge the Washington *Union* or its friends to show a single instance of a departure from the true faith, and we challenge it to a refutation of any of the counts in our indictment against it. Hence we shall continue *not* to "*disturb*" the harmony of the Democratic party, by not noticing the Washington *Union*, and exposing, as far as our circulation extends, it dangerous vagaries. We therefore dismiss the Washington *Union* to its self-complacency—let it go—and, like the Pharisee standing *afar off* from the true faith, thank its God that *it is not as this poor publican!*

GOV. REEDER—GEO. W. MANYPENNY—KANSAS AFFAIRS.

Our readers will remember that we have studiously refrained, in our comments upon the affairs of Kansas and the official conduct of the Governor of that Territory, from any animadversion upon, or even allusion to, the charges made against that gentleman's connection with speculations in the Indian reservations. Indeed, we chose to hope that such was not the case, and hence confined ourselves to a criticism purely of his official course and his general administrative policy. These we dealt with unsparingly, because we believed that Governor Reeder's course was highly reprehensible, and dangerous in its results to the peaceful, safe, and fair settlement of that Territory according to the provisions of the bill organizing it. Tuesday's *Union*, however, publishes in full the correspondence between Governor Reeder and Mr. Manypenny, the Commisioner of Indian Affairs, and all the collateral correspondence that necessarily grew out of the difficulties which for some time have surrounded the affairs in Kansas. We give the whole correspondence, because we wish the public to see for themselves that it was no unnecessary alarm we were exciting upon this critical subject of discussion.

We do not intend to go into a minute dissection of this most curious correspondence. To aid our readers in forming correct views upon it, we simply mean to lay before them a few facts, to show that an unnatural policy is never a wise policy, however patriotically it may have been intended.

To do this, we first reiterate, assuming the adoption of such a policy to have been in good faith, that, to our minds, it was objectless, purposless, and therefore unwise and inexcusable, to place a *free State* man, governor of a *slave territory!* What *could* follow, but dissension, strife, bloodshed? What do "*antecedents*" amount to in these evil days? Benedict Arnold had his *antecedents*. Judas Iscariot had his antecedents!! and to come down to things political, and of more modern date, Martin Van Buren had his *antecedents!* Of what value are they to us *now?* Stripped of the prestige which Van Buren acquired under the great Jackson, and removed from the influence of his sage and patriotic counsels, he became a traitor to his party and a traitor to his country!!! Madam Rowland, when executed within view of the Temple of Liberty, turned her undaunted eye towards it, and exclaimed, "Oh liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

So of antecedents and compromises—all the mischief, all the error, all the evil which have come upon the country, find their source in the too great resort to, and reliance in, them. Once a captain, it is said, always a captain. Not however, once a saint, always a saint. If it had been UNCONSTITUTIONAL to have appointed a *Southern man to a Southern Territory*, then it would have been wise and eminently proper to have looked to the *antecedents* of a Northern man. But when there was no reason, none given and none conceivable, why a Southern man should not be appointed to live in his own clime and to govern *his own institutions*, in the name of common sense why was it not done? *Is* there a man in the broad limits of our land, who doubts that if this *had* been the policy, that all would have been peace, quiet, and tranquillity in our beautiful territory of Kansas But we wander from the point, for really we cannot write with patience upon the distressing effects of a policy founded upon neither reason nor right.

The correspondence is characterized, as will be perceived, by an unusual degree of personal and official asperity. In this respect it is highly objectionable. It is no excuse for the employment of vituperative sentiments, that they are clothed in graceful language. For two high officials—the one the Governor of a Territory—the other, the head of one of the most important departments in the Government, to deal in imputations upon each other's personal honor and truth, is truly mortifying and disgraceful.

But Mr. Manypenny is not left the painful task of *convicting* Governor Reeder of the most improper speculations in lands in the Territory over which he was appointed to administer justice and fair dealing. Governor Reeder confesses the soft impeachment, and makes a miserable defence of himself for so doing. In our opinion, a Judge would not be more reprehensible to speculate in the cases submitted to his judgment. *Avoid the appearance of evil*, should be the motto of every responsible agent of the law or the Government.

As bad, however, as all this seems to be, and is, it is not half so outrageous as the course Governor Reeder has pursued towards the proslavery men in Kansas. The charges of Mr. Manypenny affect the personal character of Governor Reeder.

We have but little to do with this: howbeit, we have our own opinion of the propriety of the Governor's course in dealing in lands at all. But when Governor Reeder showed himself to be a sympathizer with the emigration *opposed to slavery*, he, in our belief, as we have frequently said before, committed an act which required his removal. It is *this* that constitutes the *gravamen* of Governor Reeder's offences. It is *this* which involves a far greater evil than the purchase of thousands of acres of land, because *it* strikes at the Constitution of the country and at the rights of one half the States of this Confederacy.

We are glad to see at last a manifestation of interest in this subject by the Administration. We have invoked it to look to this question; and we know that if Governor Reeder had been removed long ago, much trouble would have been saved and much strife averted. Even now, however, it is impossible to feel secure that anything will be done in time to prevent an exaggerated recurrence of these difficulties. The mere return of Governor Reeder to Kansas in his official position is a thing deeply to be deplored. It must have the tendency of exciting the majority of the people of the Territory who have been so much outraged. The letters of Mr. Marcy and Mr. Cushing to Governor Reeder are proper, if not *timely*, letters. We should have preferred, however, that they had been more decided, more peremptory, and should have conveyed his positive recal. Governor Reeder's reply was offensive to them and to the President. He says he is *en route* day and night for Kansas, and that his *official duties* will be grossly neglected by longer delay! Thus he is permitted to return; he is to resume the discharge of those duties which have made him so obnoxious to the Territory, and, it would seem *now*, to the Administration!

We hope for the best, however, and now that there is a *promise*, at least, of the President's pursuing the right course, and correcting an evil which an erroneous policy created, and to which, without vanity, we believe we had much agency in opening his eyes, we are willing to await his action. We pray that that action may be prompt, and that the sad experience of the past and present may teach him that the plainest and most natural policy is always the best.

Noble Letter from Senator Douglas.

The District Committee of the Democratic party invited the Hon. S. A. Douglas to be present at the celebration of the victory in the Old Dominion. His reply is too good to remain unpublished:

CHICAGO, June 7, 1855.

GENTLEMEN: I deeply regret that it will be impossible for me to be present and participate with you in celebrating the glorious victory, recently achieved by the Democracy of Virginia over the most intolerant, proscriptive, insidious, and dangerous political organization ever formed against the constitution and liberties of a free country. In all the elections which have taken place in the Northern States during the last twelve months, Know-nothingism has not only been the firm ally of Abolitionism, higher-lawism, and mob-lawism, and all the other baneful isms of the day, but has been the controlling power which combined, directed, and led all these allied factions in their savage and brutal warfare against the Democratic party, its principles and organization.

Let us not be deceived by their repeated changes of name. It matters not whether they call themselves "Know-nothings," or "Know-somethings," or the "sons of the sires of '76," or the "order of the Star Spangled Banner," or the "children of *Sam*," or the "sons of *Jonathan*," or by any other name they may assume when they have disgraced the previous one, their secret organization and clandestine proceedings, their intolerant and proscriptive spirit, their unlawful and horrid oaths, their unconstitutional and unholy purposes, remain unchanged. It is the duty, and, I firmly believe, the destiny, of the Democratic party, under the guidance of Divine Providence, to confound, overwhelm, and utterly annihilate this secret, insidious, and dangerous organization

To accomplish this great work, it is only necessary that we should be true to ourselves, to our principles and our party, whose triumphs have ever been identified with the interests, honor, and glory of the republic. Let there be no concessions to the enemy—none to faction—none to the allied fanatical isms of the day, under whatever name or form they may appear. The Old Dominion has shown herself true to her principles, her history, and her renown. Her Democracy have fought the battle faithfully, gallantly, gloriously. With you I rejoice in her triumph. May Kentucky imitate the example and rival the achievements of her illustrious mother! All eyes are now fixed upon your noble State. A similar victory in old Kentucky would overwhelm the enemy with dismay and despair, while it would carry joy, hope, and confidence to the heart of every friend of religious freedom and constitutional right throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Pardon the length of this letter, and accept for yourselves and those you represent my grateful acknowledgments for your kind invitation.

I have the honor to be, very truly, your friend and obedient servant,

S. A. DOUGLAS.

Messrs. F. S. J. Ronald, W. Tompkins, G. L. Harrison, J. P. Fulwiler, Democratic District Committee, &c.

THE RAILROAD CONNECTION AT THE OHIO RIVER.

A correspondent has communicated the following facts, which both duty and inclination prompt us to publish:

Editors of the Washington Sentinel:

Your readers may remember that a communication appeared in your paper some weeks since from Judge Daniel, of the Supreme Court, in which he rehearsed the annoyances to which he had been subjected at Benwood, in his journey from Louisville to Washington. Benwood is a station on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, four miles below Wheeling, and opposite Bellaire, the eastern terminus of the Central Ohio Railroad, which was finished last winter. The intention of the two companies to connect at this point being thwarted by the city of Wheeling, through its restraining legal injunction, the buildings, tracks, and other provisions needed for the comfort of travellers, were obliged to be left undone; and consequently the place was unfit for the purposes of passenger transfer which is made at Wheeling.

As soon as the mistake of those who transferred the passengers at the time of Judge Daniel's trip was made known in proper quarters, and before his card appeared, the authorities were at work in effecting such changes and providing such arrangements as were calculated to remove all cause of complaint in future. These arrangements being now fully perfected, it is but justice to the Baltimore and Ohio and Central Ohio Railroads to say, that they have acted in the most prompt, efficient, and successful manner in improving and perfecting this most important point in their whole line. Travellers may, therefore, with every confidence, take this excellent route in their journeying between the east and west. The known ability and energy of the new superintendent of these important roads is a safe reliance that the route will soon further increase its already strong claims upon the travelling public.

☞ The following ticket has just been nominated by the Whigs and Know-nothings of Kentucky:

For Governor—Charles S. Morehead.
For Lieutenant Governor—James G. Hardy.
For Attorney General—James Harlan.
For Treasurer—Richard C. Wintersmith.
For Register—Andrew McKinley.
For Auditor—Thomas Page.
For Pres. Board Int. Imp.—David K. Haggard.
For Superintendent Public Inst.—Rev. John D. Mathews.

MASSACHUSETTS KNOW-NOTHINGS.—Boston, June 18.—An extra session of the State Council of Know-nothings will be held on the 28th inst., to receive the report of the delegates to the National Council recently held at Philadelphia. The secret obligation will then be thrown off, and a grand mass convention will be called to meet at some central locality, to take action on the course to be pursued in the existing political crisis.

Testimonial to Commodore Perry.

The presentation of plate which was voted by the General Assembly of Rhode Island to Commodore M. C. Perry, as a token of appreciation of his distinguished services in the Japan Expedition, took place on the steps of the State House at Newport, on Thursday last, in the presence of a large assembly of ladies and gentlemen. The occasion was entirely a civic one, Commodore Perry having requested that there should be no military display. The testimonial consists of only one piece of plate—a silver salver weighing 320 ounces, of the most beautiful workmanship, and bearing the following inscription:

Presented to
COMMODORE MATTHEW CALBRETH PERRY,
In the name of the People of the State of Rhode Island, by their General Assembly, in testimony of their appreciation of his services to his country, in negotiating a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with Japan;
and in acknowledgment of the honor he has conferred upon his native State; in ever maintaining the renown of the name he bears, and adding to the triumphs of his profession, those of humanity and peace.
Feb. 28, 1855.

Governor Hoppin, in presenting the plate, made an appropriate address, to which Commodore Perry responded as follows:

Your Excellency:—It is impossible for me to express the feelings of gratitude with which my heart responds to the flattering expressions you have this moment uttered in your capacity of Governor of the gallant little State of Rhode Island, and as the organ of both branches of its legislative body.

You may well imagine my pride and satisfaction in being permitted to stand before this assembly, and upon a spot sanctified by the most agreeable associations.

It was in my earliest boyhood, before the introduction of steamboats or railroads, that I often watched upon the shore for the first glimpse of the daily decorated packet-sloop that in those days annually brought the Governor from Providence to this town, and witnessed with child-like delight, in sight of this very edifice, the pomp, the parade, and festivities of "Election Day."

Since then I have traversed almost every part of the globe, in the prosecution of the duties of a profession of which I am justly proud; and now after a lapse of nearly half a century, when in declining life, to be called by the Representatives of my native State back to these hallowed precincts, here to receive from the lips of its Chief Magistrate the commendation of my fellow-citizens, is an honor I little expected, when as a boy midshipman 46 years ago I first embarked upon an element then and always the most congenial to my aspirations for honorable enterprise.

And should I not feel doubly honored in finding my services associated with those of a lamented brother, the memory of whose heroic deeds has so far been, and I trust ever will be, fondly cherished by every true-hearted Rhode Islander.

In conducting the mission to Japan, which a confiding government entrusted to my sole charge, I was fully impressed with the magnitude of the responsibility imposed upon me; and true to this generous reliance upon my judgment and discretion, was the more ambitious to accomplish an object which to many seemed unattainable. You have just now, sir, told me how these services are appreciated by those of my compatriots who are nearest and dearest to me, and I am satisfied.

The valuable testimonial, now presented with so much eloquence and grace, shall be preserved in my family as an heir-loom, to commemorate an event to be remembered by all who may be allied by the ties of blood to the grateful recipent, who begs to tender to your excellency and all here present, his profound and heart-felt thanks.

The Mammoth Ocean Steamer.

The new steamer Leviathan, which is now being constructed in London, promises, when finished, to be the wonder of the age. To grasp the idea of a vessel measuring more than an eighth of a mile in length, with a capacity of twenty thousand tons, and room enough besides for four thousand passengers with all their luggage, certainly requires some mental effort; but to conceive of such a monster grappling with wind and tide, and triumphantly forcing its way through the mighty billows of the Atlantic, becomes a task quite sufficient to stagger any ordinary intellect, and more than sufficient to exhaust the faith of the most credulous. If the Leviathan shall be able to show a full list of passengers for her first visit to our shores, it will certainly appear that the people of this day have more confidence in art and science than their ancestors whom Fulton attempted to "humbug" with his "foolish invention." But science has achieved so much since the time of Fulton, that any want of faith in the success of this great enterprise, would smatter of "old fogyism," nevertheless, in view of the fact that the sea has a way of knocking to pieces sometimes vessels of all sizes, and leaving no possible way of escape for humanity, a little hesitation in a matter of this kind is pardonable.

The engines of the Leviathan, although said to be of 2,600 horse power, will in reality be capable of being worked up to 10,000 horse power. The united strength of 10,000 horses seem to be power enough to move a small size globe; and if not such an one as ours, at least an asteroid. It is confidently predicted that, notwithstanding the great length of this steamer, she will be enabled to pass through the water at an average speed, in all weathers, of fifteen knots an hour, and with a smaller power in proportion to tonnage than ordinary vessels now require to make ten knots. The contract speed of most ocean mail-carrying steamers is eight knots. A ship of this huge capacity can carry 12,000 tons of coal—quite sufficient, it is stated, for her consumption on the outward and homeward voyages. She will be launched unlike any other ship—broadside on the water, by means of hydraulic power, and early in next spring is expected to make a trip to the United States and back, in a fortnight.

[*Baltimore American.*

Remarkable Balloon Ascension—Three Hundred and Fifty Miles Travelled in Four Hours.

William D. Danmistle, of Adrian city, Michigan, ascended, on Friday afternoon, in a balloon, from that place, at 10½ o'clock in the morning, and descended in Clarion county, Pennsylvania, at 2½ in the afternoon, making the computed distance of three hundred and fifty miles in the extraordinary short time of four hours.

This is the second trip, and an experimental one with a balloon of unusually large size. It is thirty feet in diameter, contains over six hundred yards of silk, and is capable of holding nineteen thousand cubic feet of gas. After his ascent to the distance of three miles and a half, the aeronant struck the eastern current of air, which, he says, is continually blowing in one direction. It carried him south of the lakes, through Central Ohio.

His intention was not to descend until dark, as he was above the rain clouds in a clear upper sky, but the excessive cold to which he was exposed brought on the accustomed drowsy sensation, which prevented him from properly managing his balloon. He was in that sleepy state when his "craft" anchored in a tree in Red Bank, having descended in consequence of the evaporation of the gas. The cold was so severe that his feet were completely frozen.

KNOW-NOTHING PANIC IN CANADA.—The late request of the English Government for the setting apart of a million of acres of wild lands, to be distributed among the soldiers now serving in the Crimea, has developed a sentiment somewhat akin to Know-nothingism among the Queen's Canadian subjects. The Montreal *Advertiser* says that the results of former military colonizations are strongly against the present attempt, and that one of two things would happen—either there would be no settlement at all, the lands being bought up by speculators; or a large, turbulent population, unacquainted with Canadian government and institutions, would threaten their security. In fact, the country would be exposed without remedy—so it maintains—to the invasion of ten thousand armed banditti.

THE LATE DUEL IN CANADA.—Officers Moore and Ross left this city last Monday, with warrants issued by Justice Pearcy for the arrest of Messrs. Leavenworth, Breckenridge and others, who were accessory to the late duel on the Canada side of the Niagara river. Leavenworth was found, with his physician, at the house two miles from Niagara, where his wound has compelled him to remain since the duel. He could not be removed to New York, but sent a letter to a friend, who yesterday appeared before Justice Pearcy and became his bondsman. The other parties implicated have not yet been taken.—*Journal of Commerce of Saturday.*

From the Washington Union of June 19.

AFFAIRS IN KANSAS.

Governor Reeder to Commissioner Manypenny.

SHAWNEE MISSION, KANSAS TERRITORY, March 30, 1855.

SIR: On the 10th January last four contracts made with Hon. S. W. Johnson, for the sale of four tracts of land in this Territory reserved to half-breed Kansas Indians, were submitted to you as the head of the Indian bureau for report thereon, with memorials of the reserves praying that the contracts might be confirmed, and they allowed to make the deeds. These contracts were, for convenience sake, made in the name of Judge Johnson, although it was well understood that Judge Ellmore, Colonel Isacks, and myself were equally interested. The grantors were Joseph James, Louis Papin and wife, Francois Aubrey and wife, and Moses Belmard and wife.

In your report to the President, of January 15th, you recommend that these contracts be not confirmed; you allude to them as "disreputable attempts of certain official functionaries to speculate on these lands;" you characterize them "as having a demoralizing tendency upon the inhabitants of the Territory, both Indians and whites;" you state that "these purchases are the result of a systematic plan to forestall competition in the purchase and monopoly at low prices of these reserves;" you stigmatize them as marked "by indelicacy and impropriety;" you undertake to quote from, and endorse as "entitled to the fullest credit," a letter in which it is said that grantors have been "cheated;" and at the close of your report, in speaking of these agreements, you say that "they disclose a condition of things among the federal officers which, if not soon rebuked, must produce a state of demoralization in the Territory, the effects of which will be as lamentable as the acts themselves are disgraceful." This report of yours you have given to the public in the shape of a congressional document, under a resolution of the House of Representatives calling upon your department for information, which resolution, I have reason to believe, was offered by your procurement under other circumstances. The law and the logic of your report would make a fruitful and amusing theme, but matters of a grave import exclude discussion. You have thus raised an issue between yourself, on the one hand, and myself and three of the territorial officers on the other, which must be settled, not in a corner, but in the full blaze of day, and before the whole public; and it is no less grave a question than whether, on the one hand, we are dishonest, dishonorable men, guilty of revolting fraud, or whether you are a vile and unscrupulous slanderer, who does not recognize the binding obligations of truth and justice or the sacredness of private reputation. You have deliberately and publicly asserted the one side of that issue, and I now as deliberately and publicly assert the other, and before I am done with you, sir, I intend to do with my proposition what you have not attempted to do, and cannot do with yours—establish it by competent proof. A controversy of this kind is to every man of well-regulated mind, or delicacy of feeling, a most distaseful occupation; to the innocent man who does not repel it with defiant indignation it is an imputation of base cowardice; to the man who wantonly, and without foundation, provokes it, it is the ineffaceable brand of injustice, brutality, and falsehood. That you have been in this business only the credulous tool of other men, who have for their own purposes used you to traduce me, cannot alter the course which my self-respect requires me to pursue. If they have duped you into a difficulty from which you cannot be extricated, it is no concern of mine. I am equally bound to defend my reputation against your ferocious assault, whether it be dictated by malice or stupidity. As a set-off to your wholesale charges of fraud, I will, before coming to the main object of this letter, state a few facts which, *for the present*, I rest on my own assertion. First, however, I assert what I supposed no sensible man will deny—that an individual by accepting a public office does not forfeit his right to buy land, and make profit if he can, provided the vendor is fully competent to manage his own affairs, and make his own bargains, and no fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation is practised upon him. The man who denies this proposition I shall not attempt to convince. He is welcome to believe what he pleases, and I shall undertake no such Quixotic task as to supply his deficiencies of common sense. With this preface, I assert that these vendors, whom you have probably led the public to regard as wild, untutored savages, are, in truth, as competent to manage their their own affairs as you or I. Louis Papin is a white man—a shrewd and intelligent Frenchman, who speaks the French and English well, and is quite at home in all the ordinary transactions of life, and who is so far from being an Indian that he has not the slightest mixture of Indian blood, and, I think, cannot even speak the language. Aubrey is precisely the same, and no more of an Indian than yourself. Their wives are the daughters of Louis Gonvil, a French trader, and his Indian wife, quite as intelligent as their parentage and station would indicate, and with whom the French is their daily and domestic language. Joseph James is the son of a white father and Indian mother, and with his brother Baptiste, the United States interpreter, is among the most intelligent of his tribe. He (as well as Papin, Belmard, and Aubrey) follows, on a small scale, farming and raising stock, buys and sells when necessary, speaks English, Indian, and, I think, some French, and is quite as shrewd and keen in his bargains as though he were a full-blooded white man instead of a half-breed. His contract was made after several days' reflection and full consultation with his brother, the United States interpreter. Belmard is a Frenchman, who speaks French and English; is an intelligent man, fully competent to all the ordinary business of life, and with not the slightest mixture of Indian blood, or any knowledge of the language. His wife Adele is a half-breed daughter of Clement Lasett, a French trader, has all the manners and habits of a white, is acute and intelligent, and converses well in probably two more languages than yourself. Indeed, if I am allowed to venture an opinion, I should say that Mr. and Mrs. Belmard are quite as competent to superintend your bargains as you or your agent is to superintend theirs. The prices fixed by these persons were simply accepted by us, and are four and fivefold the amount which you had just before, in your treaty with the Shawnees, agreed to pay for better lands; and I have yet to learn that code of morality which considers the Indian fairly paid for choice lands by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at sixty cents an acre, and is shocked at the injury inflicted on a white man with half-breed wife when an individual pays him three dollars. That these lands could have been sold for a little more money had they been hawked about in the market and efforts made to get purchasers, and the sale delayed till the country filled up, is very possible; but that proves nothing, and is common to all contracts. The price was more than we had intended to give—more than had ever been offered before, although it was well known the vendors were anxious to sell—was the price fixed by the owners themselves, after consultation with each other and their friends, and was all that any man could afford to give at that time to make it a desirable investment. Three, at least, of the venders, being white men, could have pre-empted quite as good land at one dollar and twenty-five cents an acre, and intended, on consummation of these sales, to do so. No approach to fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation was practised upon them. The contracts were to have no effect, nor any possession taken, till ratified by the Government, and the purchase-money was to be paid in cash when the deeds were made.

But to return to the object of this letter. My colleagues are absent from the Territory, and I cheerfully assume this defence upon myself. Your report on these contracts makes, as I have shown, fierce charges of fraud. If they are true, I am a dishonest man; if false, you are a slanderer. One of us, then, disgraces the office he holds, and it is time to know which is the man. In view of this, I propose to you, sir, a compact, that if you shall, before the first day of October next, make good these charges to the satisfaction of the President, he shall at once remove me from office; and if you fail, the same penalty shall be meted out to you. You have sown your miserable, baseless, inexcusable calumny broadcast over the Union, and now I solicit, I challenge, I defy you to this test. If there is a spark of manliness in your composition, you will not shrink from it. I desire to goad you to its acceptance. Office, in my estimation, is of little value; reputation is priceless; and my only fear that you will decline this offer is based upon the cogent evidence that your estimate of these commodities is in an inverse ratio to mine.

I shall make this letter public, and await your early reply, addressed to Easton, Pennsylvania. I express the hope that your reply will be a categorical, distinct, and positive acceptance or refusal of my proposal, without any evasion of the point or creation of new issues. I will make no other issue, and enter into no discussion with you until this is disposed of; and your reply, if not published by yourself, will be published by me.

Respectfully, &c.,
A. H. REEDER.

G. W. MANYPENNY, Esq., Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Commissioner Manypenny to Governor Reeder.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.
Office Indian Affairs, April 27, 1855.

SIR: I received on the 23d inst. your letter of the 30th ultimo, in which, to my surprise, you arraign me for my official action in respect to the reported speculations of certain governmental officials in Kansas, in Kansas half-breed lands, although that action, as is evident from the documents which accompany the report from the Secretary of the Interior of the 1st of February last, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, was predicated upon the official reports of Agents Clarke and Whitfield, dated in November last, and calling my attention to the subject. As both these gentlemen addressed me in their official capacity as Indian agents, and as they derive their appointments from the same source as you and myself, and seem to speak from personal knowledge of the facts they communicate, it is somewhat singular, especially as they reside in your vicinity, that you should have deemed them unworthy of notice in your chivalric zeal in defence of yourself and official associates in the territorial government, from what you are pleased to denounce as a "slanderous" attack. Had not your passion entirely eclipsed your better judgment, it would have been obvious to you that I, as the legal guardian of the rights of the Indians, was not at liberty to blink at or gloss over charges emanating from such high official authority, especially when, as in the cases referred to, they appeared to be corroborated by letters and information derived from respectable private sources. Although the transactions wore rather a bad aspect, I had no idea that the most material of the charges (the speculation of territorial officials in these half-breed lands) would have been so soon admitted, and that, too, over the signature of one of them, the governor of the Territory himself candidly confessing its truth! Still less, sir, did I expect that, whilst making this confession on behalf of yourself and associated speculators, you would have had the boldness and bad taste to attempt a defence of the morality and propriety of the act. "Those contracts (I use your own words) were, it appears, *for convenience sake*, made in the name of Judge Johnson, although it was well understood that Judge Elmore, Col. Isaacs; and myself (yourself) *were equally interested.*"

This is a candid and full confession of the facts which constitute the gravamen of my complaint; and as your controversy with me turns mainly upon the point of the *propriety* of such speculations in lands so circumstanced, I will, without condescending to bandy epithets or retort the vituperative language with which you assail me, say a few words, by way of explanation, upon that subject.

Under the sixth article of the Kansas treaty of 1825, there was reserved "from the lands ceded" one mile square of land for each of certain half-breeds of the nation, and twenty-three individuals are mentioned in the treaty for whom as many sections of land are reserved on the north of the Kansas river. Similar language is employed as to the reservations made under the Pottawatomie treaty of the 20th of October, 1832; and it will be seen by the opinion of the Attorney General of the United States, given on the 20th of September, 1833, that that officer considered that the original Indian title to these reservations was not extinguished on the ratification of the treaty.

The Kansas half-breed lands, however, being situated within the Indian country, no question as to the nature and extent of the grant had arisen until *after* the date of that opinion; but when the question did arise, this department uniformly held that the principles of that decision were equally applicable to the Kansas as to the Pottawatomie reserves. From that time, as parties have presented the question by submitting deeds for approval, the uniform opinion of the Indian department has been adverse to the power of the Kansas half-breeds to sell or alienate their reserves; and hence, sir, my opinion of "the indelicacy and impropriety" of high official functionaries in the Territory engaging in attempted speculations therein, in violation of laws, regulations, and decisions which, from their exalted position, they should be the first to uphold, and the last to violate. When those who should have been the conservators become the violators of the laws, I leave it to that public to which you so confidently appeal to judge if the *example* thereby set has not a "demoralizing tendency." I leave it to all candid men, also, to say if such conduct on the part of official functionaries is not "disreputable," and, under the circumstances stated in the report to which you take exceptions, "marked by indelicacy and impropriety." It is a maxim that "ignorance of the law excuseth no man." How much less, then, does ignorance or recklessness of the laws applicable to the government and protection of a large portion of the inhabitants of a newly organized Territory excuse those appointed to be the executors and judicial expounders of such laws? To him whose sense of propriety is so obtuse as to induce him to think that such a disregard of the laws and regulations provided for the protection and guardianship of the Indian wards of the general government is innocent in itself, and involves no moral turpitude or "demoralizing" effects, I have not a word to say. Such a casuist can have no just conception of the distinction between right and wrong, and, of course, moral truths can have no effect either in quickening the susceptibility of his conscience, or in enlightening his understanding. He that cannot see, in the bare recital and unblushing acknowledgment of these attempted speculations by government officers, in the face of law, enough to shock his sense of official propriety, must have a conscience impervious to reason, and which no language can reach.

You lay much stress upon the competency of the grantors and the fairness of the consideration proposed to be paid, and dwell with much self-complacency upon the intelligence and accomplishments of three of the vendors—Messrs. Louis Pipin, Francis Aubrey, and Moses Belmor, (or Belmond)—all of whom you say are *white* men, and the husbands of three of the half-breed owners of the reserves. Had you been as deeply versed in the mysteries of Indian conveyancing as you doubtless are in other branches of law, you would have known that it was the intelligence or competency of the reservee, or his or her heirs, and not that of whites who may intermarry with either, which it was incumbent on the grantee to establish as a condition precedent to the approval of the sale of an Indian reserve in his favor. But if all you say about the extraordinary sharpness and trading capacity of your vendors was true, still, if the right to sell was conceded, as they inherit their lands as Indians, they must be treated as Indians, and their lands, whenever sold, be disposed of subject to the rules and regulations prescribed for the government of the department in cases of Indian conveyances. The fact of a witness to the execution of such an instrument of writing being, as in *these* cases, an *interested* party, would, if known, vitiate as well as invalidate the transaction. The competency of the vendors and the fairness of the consideration paid, or agreed to be paid, must also be established by *disinterested* testimony; nor can the rule which requires the execution and acknowledgment of Indian deeds in the presence of the agent of the tribe be in any case waived where such agent exists. Although you seem quite positive as to the fairness and adequacy of the consideration agreed to be paid in those cases, the disinterested evidence of Agents Whitfield and Clarke as to the true value of these lands is, under the rules of evidence universally recognized, entitled to more respect than the unsupported assertions of an interested party, no matter how high his official position. I will remark, however, in passing, that if it is true, as you state, that "three, at least, of the vendors, being white men, could have pre-empted quite as good land at $1 25 per acre," you have, in agreeing to give them double that sum for their land, exhibited a degree of disinterested benevolence and self-sacrificing liberalty which, permit me to say, has few parallels in the history of speculations in Indian lands.

You maintain that an "individual," in accepting public office, does not forfeit his right "to buy land and make a profit by it." This sir, depends entirely upon circumstances. If the land is fairly in the market, open to sale and free competition, and no special prohibition, either expressed or implied, exists, no one can justly question that right; but even in such cases questions might arise rendering it of doubtful propriety. If, however, as in the case of the Kansas half-breeds lands, you contend that the Government functionaries have a right to set the laws and the regulations of the department at defiance, and treat them as nullities, then we differ entirely, and I take issue with you upon the subject. So long as the right of the reservees to make such sales, or of citizens to purchase these lands, is decided adversely by the constituted authorities, it is the duty of every Government official, high and low, to set an example of obedience and respect for the laws and regulations as interpreted by the proper department.

You say "my colleagues are absent from the Territory, and I cheertully assume the defence upon myself." This is certainly creditable to your spirit, if not to your discretion. So far, however, as this championship relates to Judge Johnson or his contracts, I protest against the assumption on your part of his defence. That gentleman has lately been in this city, and during his stay here several interviews took place between us, in which we freely discussed the facts connected with these transactions; and I must say his statements and mode of defence differ materially from yours, and he did not