

The nations of Europe have seen nothing like the present vast and energetic preparations for war since the days of the first Napoleon. The singular spectacle of the armies and fleets of England and France, side by side, and in the closest amity, preparing to meet the gigantic power of Russia, adds interest to the scene. A late arrival brings the following among other items of interest:

There were rumors that the British fleet of forty sail, under Vice Admiral Sir Charles Napier, on its assembling at Spithead, would be joined by the French fleet of ten sail of the line, fifteen frigates (of which five are steamers,) and fifteen corvettes, (all steamers;) and that the allied fleets, thus numbering eighty sail of the most magnificent ships in the world, would be reviewed prior to their departure for the Baltic by the Queen and Prince Albert; and that the Emperor Napoleon would cross from Cherbourg in his imperial steam yacht Reine Hortense, to be present at the spectacle.

The appointment of Sir Charles Napier had been received with the greatest satisfaction.

Hobbs's Lock Picked.

There can be no doubt of the fact that "Day & Newell's American Lock," under the care of Mr. Hobbs, now in London, has been successfully picked by Mr. Goater, foreman of Chubb's establishment. A long correspondence has in consequence taken place between Mr. Hobbs and the successful picker of his lock. The London Mechanics' Magazine is very severe upon our countryman, for endeavoring to bring English locks and lockmakers into disrepute. It accuses him of asserting in one lecture that his lock could not be picked, and again (after he heard it had been picked) making the statement that it could be picked. It therefore endeavors to fasten the charge of tergiversation upon him. The following is Mr. Goater's reply to Mr. Hobbs; it presents the English side of the question:—

"The question is, did I or did I not fairly pick, last week, four of Hobbs's new American locks, each lock when sold by Mr. Hobbs being accompanied by his printed guarantee that it was 'secure against picking'?"

"An objection is taken by Mr. Hobbs, that I have only operated on one sized lock, and that a small one. To this I reply, the size or shape of the lock makes no difference to me, except that the larger the lock, the easier it is picked, and it can be opened as easily, fixed as unfixed.

"Mr. Hobbs says he had some locks at the second meeting, with improvements in them to baffle my operations. After he had explained these, I told him plainly, before all the civil engineers present, that they would not stop me, and I could pick them as readily as I had done the others.

"In conclusion, Mr. Hobbs really has no right to complain of this exposure; he began the war against the English locksmiths in 1851."

There is no necessity for any controversy on the subject. The simple question is, "has the Hobbs lock been picked?" If it has, and that fairly, it settles the whole matter. There does not seem to be any doubt of the fact, and this shows us that the unpickable lock has yet to be invented.—[Scientific Am.]

BIG TREES.—There is an apple tree in Litchfield, Conn., owned by Solomon Marsh, which measures fourteen feet around the trunk, is 130 years old, and produced last season, twenty bushels of apples, of a delicious quality. Previous to 1835, it had yielded near 100 bushels per annum for ages. The tree was brought from Hartford by some of the early settlers of Litchfield.

Henry Ward Beecher tells of a pear tree in Illinois, about ten miles from Vincennes, Ind., that bore 184 bushels of pears in 1834, and 140 bushels in 1840 of large sized pears. One foot above the ground it girths ten feet, and nine feet above, six and a half feet, and its branches spread over a space sixty-nine feet wide. It is said to be about one hundred years old.

The following is said to be the most execrable conundrum ever perpetrated:

What reason is there to suppose Cain was a liquor seller? Because Abel was stewed at his grocery.

Anti-Nebraska State Convention.

This convention met in Columbus on the 22d ult., and was organized by the appointment of Judge J. R. Swan of Columbus, as president, with a long list of vice presidents and secretaries. Addresses were made by Hon. D. K. Carter, Hon. S. P. Chase, Hon. Jacob Brinkerhoff, Hon. B. F. Leiter, Hon. Mr. Collins, of Cleveland, (formerly member of congress from the Lewis county district, N. Y.,) Hon. Samuel Lahm, Judge Spaulding, Samuel Galloway, and Mr. Blackwell of Cincinnati. The number in attendance is estimated at 2000. Letters were read from Hon. Thomas Ewing, Hon. B. F. Wade, and Charles Reemelin. We cull the following paragraphs from the letter of Mr. Ewing.

Missouri, which, except a small gore, lies north of 36 deg. 30 min., was admitted as a slave state. All the residue of the Louisiana territory north of that parallel, was opened to the emigration from free states and foreign countries, by the agreement and declaration that there should be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude within it. All south of that parallel remained as slave territory, open to southern emigration. With this both grand divisions of the Union were content. Agitation ceased, excitement was calmed and quieted, and we had a return of peace and kindness. The new territory was believed to be fairly and justly apportioned, and an equal field opened to the emigration of both sections of the Union. The principle which governed this compromise, and which is to be deduced from it, is not that then and in all future time the parallel of 36 deg. 30 min. should be the dividing line between slavery and freedom in newly acquired territories, for if that had been the case, slavery would have been excluded from Missouri; but it was that a due proportion of newly acquired territory should be open to the unobstructed occupancy of each section of the Union.

It is said, however, that all the territories of the United States ought to be free to all its citizens, south and north, to come into it with their property, and when there to make laws for their own government. This is plausible in theory, but it would be unjust in practice. Free labor will not voluntarily mingle itself with slave labor. The free laborer will not migrate to a slaveholding country, where he must work in the field or shop with slaves, and associate with them on terms of equality, unless he be driven to it by stern necessity. Therefore if the municipal law do not exclude slavery from a territory, a law of our social and moral nature does exclude free laborers from it, and with them those whose business depends upon such labor.

It is said too, the distinction contained in the prohibition in the Missouri compromise is disparaging to the south. That the northern man may go where he will with his property, while the slaveholder is denied the privilege of taking his property into the northern territories and states.

This may be disparaging to the slave, not to the slaveholders. It is to them merely an inconvenience, and one which we cannot obviate if we would. The free and slave territory must be separated, by a law prior to its occupation, or it will at no distant day separate itself in a manner greatly more injurious to the peace and good order of society. We cannot ask our free laborers to mingle and associate with slaves, without forgetting the dignity and importance of labor as a social and political element in our northern communities.

The Missouri compromise makes this separation. It was a wise and well considered measure. Its repeal would be a great wrong and a great evil. As such we ought to resist and if possible avert it. On this the PEOPLE of the north almost as a body, and a goodly portion of the south will unite. Let us engage in it in a manner becoming the object; with calmness, prudence and consideration, and by no means suffer ourselves to be defeated in this, which we all feel to be right and just and necessary, by blending with it, or suffering to be involved with it, any other object, however desirable to many. Let us

take this single and alone. In any departure from the plain straight forward path to the one sole object, there is danger,—danger of division, and with division defeat.

We can probably prevent the infliction of the anticipated wrong; if not, we can certainly in due time and by constitutional means redress it.

The following are the resolutions adopted unanimously by the convention. We commend attention to the 6th especially. Its truisms are very pertinent just now.

Whereas, the 8th section of the act of March 6th, 1820, commonly called the Missouri Compromise, embraces in its limits about four hundred and eighty-five thousand square miles of free territory, which is not included in any State or Territorial organization, being an area of more than twelve times the extent of the State of Ohio, as great as that of all the free States of this Union, excepting California, and capable, as we believe, of sustaining a population of more than fifty millions, and which section of said act is as follows:

Sec. 8. *Be it further enacted*, That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, not included within the limits of the State contemplated by this act, (Missouri,) slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than as the punishment of crimes, shall be and is hereby FOREVER PROHIBITED.

And whereas, by the bill now before Congress for organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, it is proposed to repeal the said eighth section of said act of March 6th, 1820, therefore,

1. Resolved, That the said eighth section of the said act of March 6th, 1820, is a part of a solemn compact between the free and slave States of this Union, and that we protest against any American statesman aiding, directly or indirectly, in its violation.

2. Resolved, That there can be no doubt that slavery will, if permitted to do so, enter the territory lying north of 36 deg. 30 min. north latitude. To say nothing of Delaware and Maryland, the States of Virginia, Kentucky, and nearly the whole of Missouri, lie north of this parallel of latitude, and in all of them slavery not only exists, but is increasing. The slave population of the State of Missouri, more than doubles its numbers every twenty years. Until the laws of nature abolish slavery in Missouri, they will not prohibit its existence in Kansas and Nebraska.

3. Resolved, That the bill now before Congress, for organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, was deliberately and carefully framed with a view to permit the extension of slavery into these territories. To accomplish this purpose, its friends seek to repeal the Missouri Compromise. In order to make that repeal effectual, they refuse to submit the question of the existence of slavery in these territories to a popular vote, untrammelled by the vetoes of slaveholding Governors—refuse to permit the people to elect their own Governors, and Judges—nay, as a crowning act of defiance, not only to the principle of popular sovereignty, but to the uniform practice of the Government, refuse to permit foreigners, who have declared their intention to become citizens, to vote within these territories at all. This may be slaveholding popular sovereignty, but it is not the popular sovereignty of the Democracy of the North.

4. Resolved, That in the language of the joint resolution of the Legislature of the State of Missouri, passed February 15th, 1847, "the peace, permanency and welfare of our National Union, depend upon a strict adherence to the letter and spirit of the eighth section" of the said act of March 6th, 1820; and we say deliberately, on behalf of an immense majority of the people of the State of Ohio, and as we believe of the whole North, that they will under no circumstances whatever, suffer slavery to obtain a foothold, in the proposed territories of Kansas and Nebraska. The heart of this continent is the choicest heritage of free laborers of the United States. These slaveholders are not equal in numbers to the voters of the State of Ohio. We say to

these misguided men: Be not deceived—you are sowing the wind, and you will reap the whirlwind.

5. Resolved, That we approve fully of the conduct of our Senators in Congress, in opposing the passage of the bill referred to, through the Senate of the United States, and we look for a unanimous vote against it, on the part of our Representatives.

6. Resolved, That the Government of the United States is a free Government, not a slaveholding Government—that the Constitution of the United States was framed for the purpose of securing the blessings of liberty, not to extend the curse of slavery—that under it, liberty is the rule, slavery the exception—that liberty is national, slavery is sectional—and that we recommend to the people of Ohio, of all parties, to be faithful to the principles of this resolution, at all times, under all circumstances, at all hazards.

7. Resolved, That copies of these resolutions be sent to the President of the United States, and to our Senators and Representatives in Congress; and also to the newspapers of the city of Columbus, for publication.

THE KISSANE TRIAL.—Some idea of the state of feeling at Helena may be formed by the following incident in the trial: While Mr. Palmer, who is the leading attorney for the prosecution, was making some remarks, Kissane smiled at him. Mr. Palmer turned to him and said, "A man that has been guilty of what you have been, would smile with the halter around his neck—but you are not in Ohio now—you are in Arkansas—in Phillips county, and we are going to try you here, and we are going to hang you here. You may laugh at this, but you will not laugh when the Devil gets you in Hell."—Kissane at this became ghastly pale, and did not smile again during the speech. Cole tried to laugh at the matter but Palmer turned and used some personal remarks, to him, not so severe as to Kissane, but severe enough to check his merriment. Something of the state of public feeling here may be inferred from the fact that this remark, savage as it may seem to us, was received with marked satisfaction by the audience.—[Cleve. Leader.]

WHAT IS DIRT?—Old Dr. Cooper of South Carolina used to say to his students: Don't be afraid of a little dirt, gentlemen.

What is dirt? Why, nothing at all offensive, when chemically viewed. Rub a little alkali upon that "dirty grease spot" upon your coat, and it undergoes a chemical change and becomes soap. Now rub it with a little water and it disappears; it is neither grease, soap, water nor dirt. "That is not a very odorous pile of dirt" you observe there. Well, scatter a little gypsum over it, and and 'tis no longer dirty. Everything you call dirt is worth your notice as students of chemistry. Analyze it. It will separate into very clean elements.

Dirt makes corn; corn makes bread and meat, and that makes a very sweet young lady that I saw one of you were kissing last night. So, after all, you were kissing dirt—particularly if she whitened her skin with chalk or Fuller's earth. There is no telling, gentlemen, what is dirt. Though I may say rubbing such stuff upon the beautiful skin of a young lady is a dirty practice. "Pearl powder, I think, is made of bismuth—nothing but dirt."

SPLENDID MULE.—We saw on Monday last the finest mule that was perhaps ever exhibited in our city. It was bred by B. B. Groome, Esq., of Clarke, was sired by the celebrated jack Black Sampson, is only eleven months old, and is full sixteen hands high. Its dam is only fifteen hands two inches high. We doubt whether a finer animal of this species was ever foaled.—[Lex. (Ky.) Observer.]

The N. Y. Express cautions purchasers to weigh the barrels of flour that they may purchase, for while the price rules so high there is strong temptation to commit fraud. In some cases, the weight has been found to fall some 20 pounds below the standard. Just now, when prices are so extravagantly high, this is a consideration not to be overlooked.