

Destructive Fire in San Francisco—Some Thirty Houses Consumed—Several Lives Lost—Loss of Property estimated at \$1,000,000.

Our citizens were alarmed, yesterday morning about 6 o'clock, by the appalling cry of fire. The prevalent rumor is, that it originated from a spirit lamp, in the lower bar of Dennison's Exchange.

There was a very slight breeze at the time, from the northward, and the fire spread rapidly from the United States Restaurant and the Exchange to the Parker House, and but a few moments elapsed before the El Dorado was in a sheet of flame.

As the fire spread from the El Dorado down the south side of Washington street, which runs at right angles with Kearny street, wet blankets were applied successively to the fronts of the buildings opposite, and although the buildings sustained much damage from the intense heat and from water, yet the fire was by this means stayed, at Washington street, in its northward course.

The most critical point of time during the conflagration, was when the flames had completely enveloped the El Dorado, the large public house at the corner of Kearny and Washington streets.—There were but few men working on the buildings upon the opposite corner, and although the entire front of the new building at the north-west corner of Washington and Kearny streets, was covered with wet blankets and carpets, yet the heat was so intense that the men were driven from its roof and at one time the blankets began to scorch.

At this critical juncture, however, the wind lulled, the frame of the El Dorado fell in, and the owners of the buildings opposite were enabled to renew their efforts to save them.

About 11 o'clock in the forenoon, the fire was fairly subdued. The following is a list of houses consumed on Kearny street: the store of Messrs. Hughes, Noel & Crenshaw, the United Restaurant, Dennison's Exchange, the Parker House, and the El Dorado. Every building on the south side of Washington street, between Kearny and Montgomery, is also destroyed.

banking house, sustained, we understand, but little damage. On the upper side of Montgomery street, south of Washington, the large store of Jewett & Melhado, the drug store adjoining, and an unfinished building next to the drug store, were also partially destroyed.

The Merchants Exchange, owned by Mr. Edw. E. Dunbar, was the first building blown up, by order of the Alcalde, and very little of the stock or furniture was saved. Mr. Dunbar estimates his own loss at thirty thousand dollars.

Thus it will be seen that the burnt district comprises the block of buildings bounded by Montgomery, Clay, Kearny and Washington streets, excepting the houses fronting immediately upon Clay and about half of those fronting on Montgomery; excepting also the New Delmonico's and the Florence Dining Saloon, which stand at the south-west corner of Clay and Kearny streets, and fronting on the Square.

The lowest estimate which we have heard, of the entire loss of property caused by the fire, is placed at a million of dollars. We have been enabled to gather only the following rough estimates of individual losses. Mr. McDougal, owner of the Parker House, loss, \$100,000; T. J. A. Chambers, owner of the El Dorado, loss, \$60,000; United States Restaurant, Burgess & Ames, less-ees, loss, 16,000 dollars; Hughes, Noel & Crenshaw, grocers, loss 20,000 dollars; the proprietors of the Florence Dining Saloon sustained damages, by fire and water, to the amount of about 4000 dollars; Rosenbaum & Shaffer, about 15,000 dollars. It is stated that most of those houses fronting on the square, which have been consumed, having been occupied partially as gambling rooms, paid as high rent probably, as any buildings in the world, covering the same area.

The following is a list of casualties which has been handed to us by Dr. J. W. Palmer, who, we understand, offered his professional services gratuitously.—A man on Washington street received a severe wound in the knee joint, from an axe; another received on the same street, a compound fracture of the arm, and a third had his leg fractured. An individual on Montgomery street, supposed to be the person who fell from a house, dislocated his ankle. Two persons were burned by an explosion of powder, on Washington street, one of them having had his arm and side badly shattered.

We are also informed that a man sustained a very serious injury by falling from the roof of Ward & Co's new building, on Montgomery street. A person was seen standing at a window on the second floor of the El Dorado, at the moment the flames burst into the room. It is probable that he perished.

The public authorities and the police were of course upon the spot in the discharge of their appropriate duties, yet, owing to the great scarcity of wells in the city, our want of engines and hook and ladder companies, and the entire absence of any organized fire department, we cannot but look upon the saving of one half of our city, as little less than a miracle. The fire was subdued by individual effort almost entirely.

in conjunction with the persons in their employ, by their praiseworthy efforts also saved from destruction the new building on the opposite corner to the Verandah. We hope to be able hereafter to particularize more fully other instances of meritorious individual effort and daring. We understand that amid the great exposure of property which necessarily took place, several petty larcenies were committed, but the general disposition of the crowd was orderly and peaceable.

It would be idle to deny that the occurrence of a scene so terrible as that presented in the conflagration yesterday morning, in a new community like this, where there can be but little, if any insurance, a very serious calamity.

Since the above was in type, we have received for publication, from the Alcalde's office, an advertisement, which will be found at the head of our advertising columns, showing that the Council have already, and with great promptness, resolved to take such measures, both of relief and precaution, as the case before them demands.

We are indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. Berford & Co's Express, and also to the attention of several gentlemen who arrived on Sunday morning, 23d inst., from San Jose, in advance of the mail, for the following particulars of the organization and action of this body.

Both houses met on Monday, the 17th inst., nearly all the members of both being present. The Senate organised by the election of E. K. Chamberlain, of San Diego, as its President, pro tem., and J. F. Howe, as Clerk. Mr. Austin was elected Sergeant-at-Arms.

Dr. White, of Sacramento, was chosen Speaker of the Assembly, on the first ballot. Messrs. Thorp and Sandford were chosen Clerk and Assistant Clerk, and Mr. Mitchell Clerk of the Engrossment of Bills. Mr. Houston was chosen Sergeant-at-Arms.

Mr. Tingley, of Sacramento, introduced a bill for the immediate removal of the seat of government to Monterey, which was laid over. Nothing of interest transpired on Tuesday or Wednesday, though as we learn, short sessions were held on both days.

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each successive vote, until one should be chosen, when, of course, only a single vote should be afterwards given. Each member was to rise in his place and give his vote upon the calling of his name by the Clerk. It was understood that the members of each House would remain in joint ballot, and proceed in the voting until both Senators should be chosen.

When the nominations were called for Col. J. C. Fremont and Hon. Wm. M. Gwin were first nominated, by Hon. D. T. Douglass, Senator, from the San Joaquin District.

Capt. H. W. Halleck, Secretary of State under Gov. Riley, was then nominated, by Hon. S. E. Woodworth, Senator from Monterey.

Hon. Thomas Butler King was nominated by T. M. Walthall, of Sacramento.

Hon. Thomas J. Henley was nominated by G. B. Tingley, of the Sacramento District.

Robert Semple, of Benicia, was nominated by a member of the Sonoma delegation.

Col. J. W. Geary was nominated, by Hon. Nelson Taylor, Senator, from San Joaquin, who had previously nominated Col. J. D. Stevenson, whose name was withdrawn, by authority, from the contest, by Edmund Randolph, Esq.

The results of the balloting were as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Name, Votes. FIRST BALLOT: John C. Fremont 24, Wm M. Gwin 22, H. W. Halleck 12, T. Butler King 10, John W. Geary 5, Robert Semple 3, Thomas J. Henley 11. SECOND BALLOT: Gwin 24, Halleck 14, King 2, Henley 7, Geary 1, Semple 1. THIRD BALLOT: Gwin 24, Halleck 18, Henley 3, Geary 1.

So there was no choice on the 2d ballot. Hon. John C. Fremont having, on the first vote, a majority of six votes, was declared to be duly elected.

The Senate then withdrew and the House and Senate adjourned. The elections for State officers were to take place the next morning.

Wm. V. Voorhies, of San Francisco, has been nominated, by the Governor, as Secretary of State. The Message of Gov. Burnett will probably be delivered this day.

We have just learned, that the nomination of Mr. Voorhies, as Secretary of State, has been confirmed by the Senate; that Mr. — Houston has been elected Comptroller; Major R. Roman, Treasurer; E. J. C. Kewen, Attorney General, and Capt. Whiting, Surveyor General.

Granting the City Lots.

It will be seen, by the official advertisement, in another column, that Dr. Colton, the newly appointed Justice of the Peace, for San Francisco, entertains a view as to his official power to grant unoccupied lots in the city to those who may petition for them, widely different from that which the Town Council are disposed to sanction.

We learn that there is no small difference of opinion among intelligent men who profess to have examined this matter; but it seems to us, at the first glance of the subject, in view of the recent resolution of the City Council, conferring the power to make such grants exclusively to the Alcalde, that the Justice will find it hard to make out his case.

Resolved, That on account of the disastrous fire which occurred this morning, and the large amount of property now exposed to depredation, the Alcalde be authorized to empower the chief of Police to employ a sufficient number of persons to guard the burnt district, so as to render full protection to the property of the sufferers, and to retain them as long as necessary for that purpose.

HORRIBLE MURDER.—JUSTICE COLTON held a Coroner's inquest yesterday upon the body of a man found on the road to the Mission, about a mile from the city. The body was first discovered by a Spaniard, on his way to town with milk, who called the attention of several Americans to it. No clue could be obtained as to the name or residence of the deceased, or to the perpetrators of the horrid deed.

DEATH FROM AN OVER-DOSE OF LAUDANUM.—On Sunday afternoon last, Justice Colton held an inquest upon the body of J. G. Warriner, at the Verandah Restaurant, who came to his death very suddenly, and as it appeared in evidence, through a mistake in taking an over-dose of laudanum.

To the Editors of the Pacific News: I have perceived by hand-bills posted up about town, that by a resolution passed by the Town Council, December 21, 1849—A. C. Peachy, Esq., the City Attorney, has been directed to institute legal proceedings against me, to restrain me from exercising the right of selling, granting and disposing of lots within the limits of the said town.

TO THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA. It having been ascertained, by the official census, that the Constitution submitted to the people on the 13th day of November, was ratified by the almost unanimous vote of the electors of this State: Now, therefore, I, BENNET RILEY, Brevet Brigadier General, United States Army, and Governor of California, do hereby proclaim and declare the said Constitution to be ordained and established as the Constitution of the State of California.

NOTICE. At a special meeting of the Town Council to take into consideration the necessity of making immediate arrangements for the protection and assistance of the sufferers by the conflagration of this morning: Present—Messrs. Stuart, Price, Ellis, Harris, Green, Brannan, Turk, Davis, Simmons and Harrison. Hon. Jno. W. Geary, presiding.

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POLLARD & CO., Auction and Commission Merchants and Real Estate Brokers.

DR. S. PARSONS, Dentist, Adelpi Hotel, corner of Clay and Montgomery streets.

Commission Merchants, San Francisco, Cal. Agents: J. H. Polhemus, Valpo, Child; G. R. Ward, New York, U. S.; N. Y. Board of Underwriters.

DR. BREAKENRIDGE, Commission Merchants, Sacramento street, near Montgomery.

BURLING & THOMAS, Commission Merchants, Sacramento street, near Montgomery.

Auction & Commission House, At Sacramento City, California.

THE undersigned have established themselves in Sacramento City as General Agents for the transaction of any business in their line that may come to hand, and having an extensive acquaintance with the mining companies will enable us to make ready sales and close consignments with dispatch at auction or at private sale.

SELM FRANKLIN, MERCHANT, Jackson, two doors below Kearny street.

OAKLEY & BOUTON, Brokers and Commission Merchants, Montgomery, between Jackson and Washington streets.

W. FELL & CO., Shipping and General Commission Merchants, Montgomery st., San Francisco.

GALBRAITH & CO., Auctioneers & Commission Merchants, Montgomery street, between Washington and Jackson streets.

SWIFT & BROTHER, Commission Merchants, Sacramento st., near Montgomery.

BERFORD & CO., United States & California Express, AND INDEPENDENT MAIL COMPANY.

LOSEE & GALLAER, Merchandise Brokers, Montgomery street.

EVERETT & CO., Importers & Commission Merchants, Theo. Shillaber, San Francisco, Alta California.

JOHN D. MUMFORD, ATTORNEY AT LAW, Office, No. 5 Ward House, Portsmouth square.

LIPPITT, McALLISTER & TURK, FRANCIS J. LIPPITT, HALL McALLISTER, FRANK TURK, Attorneys and Counsellors at Law.

HERVEY SPARKS & CO., Brokers and Commission Merchants, Corner of Montgomery and Jackson sts.

O. C. OSBORNE, Auction and Commission Merchant, CORNER CLAY AND KEARNEY STS., San Francisco.

DR. J. H. ROGERS, (Of the city of New York.) Office, Parker House.

PHILADELPHIA AUCTION & COMMISSION HOUSE, Jackson street, above Kearny.

FERDINAND J. McCANN, LOUIS R. LULL, Attorneys at Law, San Francisco, Cal.

SUTTON, BENNETT & CO., Commission Merchants, And Dealers in Groceries, Provisions, Wines, Liquors, Lumber, &c.

JOHN N. BEACH, Shipping and Commission Merchant, Mellus, Howard & Co's. Building.

EDWARD J. SAGE, General Shipping & Commission Merchant, Clay st., between Montgomery and Kearny.

JAMES KING (of Willam), Exchange Office, On Montgomery street, near corner of Clay street.

THEO. KROOK, ALEX. KIRCHNER, KROOK, KIRCHNER & CO., Shipping & Commission Merchants, Montgomery street, between Jackson and Pacific.

EMERY TOWNSEND, Counsellor at Law & Land Agent, Boston Exchange, Washington street, (near Montgomery street.)

TURNER, FISH & CO., Shipping & General Commission Merchants, San Francisco, Cal.

PLUMMER, KEITH & CO., General Wholesale & Commission Merchants, Sacramento street, San Francisco.

BARB PLUMMER, ABIAH KEITH, J. E. STICKNEY, Messrs. Mellus, Howard & Co., Simmons, Hutchinson & Co., San Francisco.

ST. FRANCIS HOTEL, Corner of Clay and Dupont streets, (near the Post office) San Francisco.

W. H. PARKER & CO., Proprietors, Table d'Hote, Breakfast from 7 1/2 to 10 o'clock.

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W. H. PARKER & CO., Proprietors, Table d'Hote, Supper from 9 to 11 o'clock.

STEAMBOATS.

UNITED STATES MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

U. S. Steamship Georgia, of 3,000 tons burthen. U. S. Steamship Ohio, of 3,000 tons burthen. U. S. Steamship Falcon, 1,000 ton bur'n.

Freight on gold and specie, 1 per cent. Passages and berths secured here will have the preference over those taken at the intermediate ports.

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP CO. For PANAMA, touching at Monterey, San Diego, Mazatlan, San Blas and Acapulco.

TIME ALTERED—San Francisco and Sacramento City.—The steamer Senator, having made successful trips, through in 10 hours, will run between the above ports as follows.

LEAVES S. FRANCISCO. Leaves SAC'TO. City. Tuesday, 4th inst. Thursday, 6th inst. Saturday, 8th " Sunday, 9th "

THE steamer "Captain Sutter," the first of this line, being now completed, will make her first trip to Stockton on Thursday, the 15th inst.

STEAMER M'KIM. New Arrangement. This steamer will hereafter leave this place every Saturday evening, at 4 o'clock.

"GOVERNMENT RESERVES" to lease for a term of years, to suit applicants the lots comprehended under the "Government Reserve," at the foot of Jackson street, and on the Rincon Point.

WINSLOW & WHITE, Physicians and Surgeons.—Dr. Winslow, late from the Sandwich Islands, and Dr. White, of Vermont, give notice that they have associated themselves for the practice of medicine.

CUSTOM HOUSE, District of California, San Francisco, November 12th, 1849.—Notice is hereby given, to all concerned, that licenses heretofore granted to any ship or vessel—(other than "ships or vessels of the United States, entitled to be enrolled and licensed")—for carrying on trade in the Bay of San Francisco and its tributaries, are hereby revoked, and that such license is required to be surrendered.

MORRIS & REYNOLDS, House Carpenters, Steamboat and Ship Joiners, have on hand and for sale, at their Lumber Yard, on Pacific, above Powell street, 80,000 feet laurel boards.

TO LET—Several offices on Clay street, apply on the premises to Pollard & Co.

SHIPPING.

FOR Panama and Valparaiso—Passage only.—Will sail, positively, on the 5th January, 1850, the A 1 coppered and copper fastened Br. brigantine Star of China.

FOR PANAMA, with dispatch. The A. 1, very fast sailing bark Whiton, of New York, Capt. N. Brewer, will have immediate dispatch for Panama.

FOR THE SANDWICH ISLANDS. To sail on the 22d inst. The superior, copper fastened and copper pered, fast sailing pilot boat schooner Anonyma, J. Latham, master, having superior accommodations, will sail as above.

FOR Santa Cruz, Monterey, Santa Barbara and San Pedro. The fast sailing, coppered and copper fastened schr James R. Whiting, Halcy, master, will sail for the above ports on Saturday, 22d December.

FOR STOCKTON. The steamer Mimi, having undergone important alterations, will leave for the above port on Mondays and Thursdays, at 8 o'clock, A. M.

FOR Sale, Freight or Charter. The A. 1, new bark Drummond, 258 tons register, coppered and copper fastened, large capacity and superior accommodations for about fifty cabin passengers; well calculated for Panama or Columbia river trade.

FOR Sale, Freight or Charter. The ship Inez is offered as above, and is in good order for any voyage, and can be sent to sea in two days' notice.

FOR Sale, Freight or Charter.—The American barque Ann Smith, 214 tons register, well found in sails, rigging, etc., and is in fine order for any voyage.

FOR Sale, Freight or Charter.—The fine fast sailing Chilian brig "Challenge", 214 tons register, Capt. J. Henderson.

FOR SALE. The superior fast sailing bark Mazappa, in first rate order and well calculated for the Pacific trade, will be sold if applied for on or before 22th inst.

FOR Sale, Freight or Charter. Am. ship Salem, A. 1, 470 tons register. Apply to Finley, Johnson & Co. Central wharf.

Foreign Items.

It is noticed as a very significant fact that Louis Buonaparte's master of the mint has had medals struck; bearing on one side the head of Napoleon with the motto "Buonaparte, First Consul," and on the reverse a device commemorating the famous usurpation by which, on the 18th Brumaire, he subverted the Republic of 1793.

While the Prussian troops were returning from the Danish war, they must needs pass through the free city of Hamburg, and, as probably foreseen, a quarrel and melee began between them and the inhabitants. For this Prussia forthwith demanded free quarters for 6,500 troops and 800 horses, and announced that not a siver would be paid for the accommodations the unfortunate citizens are required to furnish.

The French government looks coldly upon the Peace Congress, and has ordered that no reference be made to current political events. Of course this limits the range of the debate, within very narrow bounds.

France owes a great deal to the blunt honesty of the Republican Mayor of Havre, who candidly told the President that he was suspected of traitorous designs against the republic. It is supposed that it was this speech that induced Louis to forego the review of the 150,000 troops that had been appointed to take place on the anniversary of his uncle's seizure of supreme and arbitrary power, when it was supposed that this jockey in eagle's plumes intended to make his grand coup d'etat.

It is both astonishing and lamentable to observe the utter unsoundness of the British conservative Tory journals, in respect to the plainest principles of freedom, when outraged by the tyrants on the continent. They do not hesitate to approve and exult over proceedings, which, if tolerated in Great Britain or America, would suppress every political journal existing in those countries, including themselves.

THE BANK OF FRANCE.—It would seem from the following statements under the Money market head of the London Times, that the Bank of France is making preparations for the resumption of specie payments:—

The question of the resumption of cash payments by the Bank of France is beginning to form a subject of discussion in the Paris newspapers. At the date of its suspension, on the 16th of March, 1848, the amount of notes in circulation was £11,000,000, while the specie in hand was under £2,400,000, being a proportion of little more than one-fifth. At present the circulation is £16,350,000, and the specie is £15,580,000. The Debats, in arguing for a resumption, speaks of one-third of specie being in general all that a bank requires to meet its notes.

In France, however, owing to the more common use of specie, a far higher proportion has always been necessary. In September, 1846, the circulation was £10,500,000, and the bullion £8,800,000; and it will be remembered that when, in consequence of corn importations, this sum shortly afterwards became rapidly diminished until it fell to about £3,000,000, considerable uneasiness was felt, not only in France but also on this side, and that the arrangement then became necessary for a supply of £800,000 in silver from the Bank of England, followed in the course of a few months by the advance of £2,000,000 from the Emperor of Russia.

CITY SURVEYOR'S OFFICE, Laffan's Building, Portsmouth square. The undersigned respectfully gives notice that having commenced the re-survey of the city, based upon the original survey, (made by Jasper O'Farrell, S. E.), he is prepared to give the accurate location of any lot embraced in the survey, and official certificate thereof. All surveys made by him are duly recorded in the office and become part of the records of the city. He is also bound, by the ordinance of the town council, as follows: "sec. 4. Be it further ordained, That so soon as the surveyor has obtained the locations of such streets, squares and lots as are now built, building, or about being built on, he shall be bound to lodge information to the Prefect, or Alcalde, against any person or persons who shall hereafter construct or increase any building, wall, or enclosure, in front of any street, square, or other public way, without having first applied to him (the city surveyor) to receive the locations."

WM. M. EDDY, surveyor for the Town of San Francisco.

FOR SALE—400 boxes champagne; 10,000 lbs. potatoes; 10,000 feet lumber. Apply to H. O'Donnell, Keary and Pacific sts.

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