Bradford Reporter

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THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

We present to our readers this week an authentic copy of the new constitution, and bespeak for it a careful perusal by every voter in the county. We hope to find room before the day of election for the old constitution, so that our subscribers may be able to compare the two documents, and then vote understandingly.

There are some features of the new constitution of which we do not approve, but as a whole we think it a great improvement upon the old one.

We believe the Convention erred in not submitting the instrument in separate sections. Again, the application of the principle of minority representation, or "free vote," we believe contrary to the spirit of our institutions. In a republican government the majority should rule, but by this system of voting, which is nearly as bad as BUCKALEW's cumulative system, a small minority can have nearly as much influence in shaping the policy of the county or State, as the large majority. Neither do we endorse the action of the Convention in doing away to a great extent, at least, with the secret ballot. Every member of the election board can under the system adopted, know how every man votes. This provision will be regarded as an attempt to tamper with the secrecy of the ballot.

The section which provides for additional members of the Legislature, is in our opinion imperfect. The number has not been increased sufficiently to do away with the evil sought to be remedied. The additional expense incident to the increase, however, has been averted by providing for biennial sessions. But there are grave doubts whether, one session in two years will meet the wants of a great State like ours.

We have adverted to the above faults of the Constitution, not for the purpose of inducing any one to vote against it, because, we said in the outset, we are decidedly in favor of it, and hope to see it largely adopted, because it does away with all special legislation, thus removing from the legislative halls a great source of corruption, and giving the time now devoted to local laws, to the consideration of public affairs. The Harrisburg *Patriot*, in a fair and candid article on this subject, says:

"But as the new constitution is submitted as a whole body of law, it becomes necessary for the intelligent citizen to weigh in the scale against these objections the genuine and essential reforms which it proposes. Among these the most important are embodied in Article 2d, on Legislation. The abuses of special legislation, covering the statute book annually with an innumerable brood of bad laws on every conceivable subject have long been acknowledged, and many futile efforts have been made to suppress them. A few sessions ago Speaker Wallace and Secretary Jordon sought to put in force the general law transferring to the courts much private and special legislation, and last winter Attorney General Dimmick renewed the effort, but they succeeded in giving only a temporary check to the flood. The new constitution, closely following the text of that of Illinois, not merely lops off the luxuriant branches, but cuts up the roots of this Upas of special legislation.

The seventh section of Article 2, prohibits the Legislature from passing any local or special laws regulating the affairs of counties, cities, boroughs, townships, wards or school districts; for changing the names of persons or places; for laying out roads or streets; locating or changing county-seats; incorporating cities and boroughs, or changing their charters; for conducting elections or changing the places of voting; for granting divorces; changing the law of descent or succession; regulating the practice of courts, or the proceedings of public officers; regulating official fees affecting the estates of minors or persons under disability; regulating trade, labor, mining or manufacturing; creating corporations or extending their charters, or granting special privileges or immunities.

All this and much more special legislation which grows each year into a larger volume, is provided for by general law affecting the whole Commonwealth, or transferred to the municipal legislatures, or swept into the courts. The occupation of many statesmen in securing divorces, laying out lanes and alleys, and regulating the prices of fox scalps, will be gone. There will be an end of the petty routine of legislation, by which the public time is consumed and the important business of the commonwealth impeded. The legislator will have an opportunity to address his attention to the real interests of the people. A higher order of statesmanship will be required than is necessary to snake through the Legislature a bill for the erection of a bridge, or to change the name of a constituent; and thus by a law of political selection or evolution, the character of the Legislature itself will be vastly improved. The practices of the lobby will soon be numbered among the Lost Arts in Pennsylvania. Sales of acts of assembly, once so profitable, will cease. Rings for the procurement of corrupt legislation will be broken up, since the opportunity for plunder is effectually destroyed.

Such are the vital reforms which may be anticipated under the article. It is the salt of the new constitution.

MR. MYER is favorably spoken of by the Republican press all over the State as the candidate for Speaker of the House this winter. In noticing his candidacy, the *Beaver Radical* says: "HERDIC's opposition to MYER of Bradford, for Speaker, is making him friends, and his chances for the nomination are improving every day."

HON. JOHN P. HALE died in Dover, N. H., on Wednesday evening.

THE OUTRAGES IN CUBA.

The righteous indignation which is so universal with our people over the Spanish brutalities, reminds one of the feeling which penetrated and took possession of the heart of the North, on that day in the autumn of 1860, when a rebellious gun fired on Fort Sumpter. The feeling has increased in intensity, for each despatch from Havana seems to add to the enormity of the crime. Many journals it is true have taken the part of demagogues in their discussions of the subject; but a journal as reliable and cool in its discussions as the *Evening Post* speaks of Spanish Cuba in these words:

"There is no alternative but to topple their infamous and impotent provincial government into the sea, and take possession in the name of outraged humanity."

THE State Tanners' Association met in Harrisburg last week. The following statistics which were gleaned from the reports of the convention are of interest: The tanneries of Pennsylvania represent a capital of about $12,000,000 and a yearly business of $40,000,000. There are nearly 900 establishments in the State, whose products realize to the owners annual receipts ranging from $25,000 to $500,000.

The State Tanners' Association was organized last summer with a membership of probably 30, which number has been increased to about 70, 22 new firms having signed the constitution recently. The members of the association represented nearly half the tanning capital and business of the State and considerably more than that proportion of the oak tanning interests. Very few manufacturers of leather from hemlock bark are members of the association.

The largest tannery in the State and country is located in Elk county. With it are connected about 1,000 vats, while the average is 100. A car load of leather is turned out daily, and the business of the manufactory amounts to several millions yearly. Extensive tanneries are also located at Shippensburg, Lewistown, Philadelphia and other points.

The annual capacity of the tanneries represented in the State association is about 316,000 hides, and the products of last year amounted to nearly 300,000—two-thirds domestic and one-third South American. The insurance is about $800,000, and during the past five years the losses have reached $28,000 and the amount paid to insurance companies over $50,000.

TIMELY WORDS.—The *Graphic* has the following timely words of courage: "It is the clear duty of the country press to make a vigorous and united effort to restore public confidence. We have had our panic and are reaping its effects, but there is no reason why there should be this long-continued fear of undefinable future calamity. Every one knows that our crops are abundand—more so, probably, than they have been for years. Our coal mines, timber forests, and cotton fields have not suffered from the panic, and the wants of people everywhere remain the same that they were two months ago. Europe must have our grain, and our own people must have the products of our manufactories. There is no reason that cotton mills and locomotive works should close their doors, as though clothing and locomotives were never again to be in use. If necessary, let prices and wages be adjusted in accordance with the new conditions brought about by the panic, and let mills run on half time; but do not let us present the spectacle of a people too much frightened to do anything but stare one another idly in the face, and thus bring about the distress that a little coolness and courage can avoid. There is abundance of work for every one in this country; and if the press does its part to revive courage and confidence, so that capitalists and workingmen will resume labor, we need dread no further financial panic."

JUSTICE TRIUMPHANT.

After nearly two years of effort, WM. M. TWEED, of New York, has been convicted of fraud on 204 different counts. The virdict, and the prompt manner in which it was rendered, augurs a better state of affairs at the Metropolis. It is hoped TWEED's conviction may be followed by that of his companions in crime.

The New York papers reflect the surprise produced by the verdict. The *Post*, under the head of "Justice Not Dead," says: "Every lover of his country, every one anxious to see society advance in good ways, every reformer of politics, will rejoice that the reform, begun so spontaneously and earnestly two years ago by the people, is not to be without its final fault."

The *Commercial* says: "So after two years of struggle, the responsibility for some of the stupendous operations in and around the City Hall, is fixed by a legal adjudication."

The *Express* says: "The verdict is a just one, and the jury has honored itself."

SOME of our exchanges are laboring to make the people believe the new constitution reinstates tax on real estate. The section does not bear such a construction. We shall refer, next week, to this subject and some other points in the constitution.

DR. SHUBLOCK, of Beaver county, will be a prominent candidate for Clerk of the House of Representatives, at the approaching session. He would make an excellent officer and serve the State with credit.

CAPTURE OF THE VIRGINIUS.

Reception of the News in Havana—Speech of Varona when captured—Reported Attitude of the Government towards Cuba.

HAVANA, Nov. 15.—The news of the Virginius having fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, was received here on the morning of the 5th. By the Peninsulars it was hailed with the most demonstrative joy, but the Cubans received it with the greatest consternation. At once it was over the town. The papers printed special supplements, giving the telegram as received by the Commander General of the Navy, and the streets were hung from end to end with the national colors.

On the afternoon of the 31st, the Tornado corvette, while cruising near the Aserradere, sighted a steamer whose appearance looked suspicious, and at 2:30 the chase commenced, the Tornado going at the rate of thirteen or fourteen knots an hour, and gaining steadily on the flying steamer. Night came on, but the moon shed her light over the waters, and made the forms of both vessels distinctly visible. The chase lasted until ten at night, and by this time the steamer was within cannon-shot of the Tornado. The corvette then fired a gun as a summons for surrender, but no notice was taken. Three or four others followed, and the capture was complete, being effected within a very short distance of the Jamaica coast. The commander of the Tornodo gives it at twenty miles.

Not the slightest resistance was offered by those on board the Virginius; all were made prisoners, and brought on board the Tornado. The Spaniards say that when Barnabe Varona came on board he expressed a desire to speak with the Spanish commander, and his request having been granted, spoke as follows: "I congratulate you on the capture which you have just made, and the importance of which you cannot well appreciate in this moment. You are not aware of the materials which we were bringing, nor do you know the effect which they would have produced had they been spread through the island. The capture of the steamer Virginius may quite well put an end to the insurrection."

During the chase the Virginius was engaged in throwing overboard everything that could help to lighten the vessel, and hams, tallow, and petroleum were used for the furnaces in the vain endeavor to escape. This has reduced the value of the prize to the steamer and prisoners. The Tornado, with her prize in tow, arrived in Santiago de Cuba about 5 P. M., on the 1st inst., and the excitement when the capture became known may be imagined. People scarcely knew what to do, perhaps from the absolute want of practice in receiving such trophies. Steamers with steam up blew their whistles, all rung bells, and several crews cheered. At intervals, the Spanish vessels in the harbor hoisted more flags, as fast as they could hunt them up. The chief demonstration was made by the Don Juan de Austria, a sort of cross between a gunboat and a bathing machine, and only remarkable for its extreme antiquity. This noble vessel fired five guns; no doubt to celebrate the capture and its own retirement into private life until the next expedition. The Virginius was brought in with the Spanish flag flying, the American flag, which had been hoisted during the chase, being twisted about the taffrails. On the return to Santiago, it was found that she was making so much water that it was necessary to run her on shore.

The prisoners' trial as pirates was commenced in court-martial on the morning of the 2d, and by the time the news of the capture reached us in Havana, the fate of four was decided. The following telegram, which contains all the particulars we have as yet, was received on the evening of the 6th, at the moment when the Captain General was receiving the volunteer officers who had gone to congratulate his Excellency on the capture.

The Government seems to be more earnest than heretofore in protecting the waters between the United States and Cuba from Spanish molestation. The Madrid Government being unable to enforce its authority in Cuba, that of the United States will be compelled to assert its power in all cases where the interest of the citizens of this country and its own honor require decisive action. The President and all the members of his Cabinet are in accord on this subject. It is not believed in official quarters that the contest in Cuba has at any time assumed the conditions which amount to a war in the sense of international law; or which would show the existence of a *de facto* political oraganization of the Insurgents sufficient to justify a recognition of belligerency; but, as President Grant said in one of his annual messages, the principle is maintained that this nation is its own judge when to accord the right of belligerency, either to a people struggling to free themselves from a government they believe to be oppressive, or to independent nations at war with each other.

THE CAREER OF THE VIRGINIUS --LATEST ACCOUNT OF THE CHASE AND CAPTURE.

A Non-Resistant Crew Tried and Condemned as Pirats.—The American Flag Hauled Down.

The side-wheel steamer Virgin, now called the Virginius, was built on the Clyde in the year 1864, intended for a blockade runner, and was reported to be, when launched, one of the most rapid vessels ever constructed, her lines being mostly symmetrical and her engines remarkably powerful for her size. After a successful career in running our Southern blockade, she was eventually captured at Mobile, cotton laden, when the Union forces took that city. Subsequently, the Virgin was brought to New York, and was transferred by the Navy Department to that of the Revenue, but after she had entered the service of the United States she was found unsuitable for her work, and she was sold at auction to Mr. Isaac Roberts, a son of Mr. Marshall O. Roberts, of New York, but was subsequently transfered to Mr. John F. Patterson, of New York. She was then fitted up as a privateer and blockade-runner, in the interest of the Cuban insurgents. She was a very desirable vessel for that purpose, not merely on account of her great speed, but on account of her small draught of water—only eight feet when loaded with four hundred tons of cargo—which gave her unusual facilities for running close in shore on the Cuban coast. On July 20, 1871, General Rafael Quessada being in command, she was successful in landing a cargo on the Cuban coast, near Santiago de Cuba. On the 7th of July last, under the same command, she succeeded in landing another cargo on the southern coast of Cuba. Both those cargoes were obtained in Venezuela, and the Virginius, although she has continued to fly the American flag, has not been in an American port since 1871. During her filbustering career she lay for some time in the port of Colon, where she was closely watched by the Spanish war vessel Pizerro, but received the protection of the American Minister to Columbia, on the ground that her papers were regular, and that she could not be molested for an unlawful voyage after the unlawful voyage had been definitely completed. At the time of her capture she was under the command of Capt. Joseph Fry, a native of Louisiana, and a graduate of the Annapolis Naval Academy, who was engaged in running the blockade during the rebellion.

The most remarkable feature of the capture of the Virginius, is the absolute non-resistance of her crew when overhauled by the Tornado. But one account of the chase and capture has been made public. These facts were all gleaned from Spanish sources, for the men on the Virginius were not allowed to speak, and it is a question for the future to decide whether the few who still survive the Spanish butchery will ever have an opportunity to give their version of the gloomy tragedy to the world.

The Tornado, which made the capture, was cruising on the 31st of October, under sail, about eighteen miles from the Cuban coast. In the afternoon she sighted a steamer about six miles distant heading toward her. The Captain at once ordered steam to be got up, and soon observed that the strange steamer had altered her course and headed for the coast of Jamaica, distant about 100 miles.

The Spanish Captain at once suspected from this unusual proceeding that the steamer was the Virginius. He ordered the engineers to get up all the steam possible, even if they burst the boilers, and to drive the engines at their utmost speed.

The Tornado, under full headway, showed such speed that it was clear in a long chase she would certainly overhaul the stranger. She gained steadily on her, but as night was coming, the Spanish Captain feared he would lose sight of the vessel. The moon rising, however he was enabled, by keeping all hands on deck, at the masthead, and in the rigging, to keep a sharp lookout. The steamer was kept in sight until the corvette had neared her sufficiently to bring her guns to bear on her.

The scene on the deck of the Spaniard was one of intense excitement. The fugitive steamer, for it was now quite evident that for whatever reason she was very anxious to escape, was observed to throw cargo overboard, and empty boxes and other material floated past the Spaniard.

A shot was fired, but the stranger made no reply, and four others were fired in succession. The last shot was fired at 10 P. M., and immediately the steamer, which had led the corvette a chase of nearly eight hours, hove to.

Two boats were lowered and manned and pulled alongside. They met with no resistance in boarding the steamer, which they had now discovered, beyond a doubt, to be the Virginius. They took possession of her by hauling down the American flag, which the Virginius had displayed throughout the chase, and hoisted the Spanish flag instead.

Capt. Fry, of the Virginius, in the usual manner, handed over the steamer's papers for the examination of the officer in command of the boarding party, and that officer at once took charge of them, and both vessels headed for Santiago de Cuba.

On the 1st of November, at five o'clock in the afternoon, they arrived at Santiago de Cuba. Proceedings were immediately begun against the captives as pirates, and, notwithstanding the protest of the United States Vice Consul at that port, were condemned, and on the morning of the 4th of November four were shot.

A naval court-martial was then organized for the trial of Capt. Fry and the crew of the Virginius. They were, of course, condemed, after a most expeditious trial, and on the 7th the Captain, first mate, second mate and thirty-four seaman were shot.

On the 8th twelve of the so-called "expeditionists" were shot, and on the 10th fifty-seven more were put to death.

The latest report from Santiago de Cuba is that only eighteen of the entire ship's company, consisting originally of 169, will be saved. Some of these are engineers, and it is assumed that they were not aware of the nature of the voyoge, and the others are boys.

Only four, it is now stated, will escape without suffering some form of punishment, and the remainder of those not shot will be condemned to the chain-gang.

[For the REPORTER.]

DID YOU VOTE?

If you are a voter, and did not vote, just stop a moment, and let me pound you. Perhaps you were sick. That is a valid excuse, the only one that will be taken into consideration, and the only one that will avail you.

You were not at home?

It was your business to be there, and a part of the day at the polls. You knew when the election would take place, and you should have planned your business so as to be there to exercise a freeman's privilege and discharge a freeman's duty.

You don't want to hear anything about the dignities and duties of American citizenship?

Well, then, you had better go to Russia or Turkey, where political duties won't trouble you, and the quicker you start the better for the country. The sturdy emigrants who are crowding to our shores, will fill your places better than you are doing it. They have felt the tyranny of the Old World, and know how to prize the freedom of the New. They will *vote*, not always intelligently, but generally conscientiously, and they will vote every time.

The politicians are all dishonest, and the parties are all corrupt?

So much the more need then for honest, incorruptible men, like yourself, to gird up your loins, put on your immaculate armor, go down into the political arena, and drive out the unclean beasts and corrupt politicians you are talking about. If they are there, and are exercising a controling influence, you are responsible for it, and by the neglect of your duties have encouraged and allowed it.

You have got enough to do to attend to your own business, without attending to politics?

Perhaps your time is more valuable than other people's. In a government constituted like ours, where all power emanates from the people, and the votes of the people decide all the great questions of governmental policy, it is necessary that every voter should endeavor to inform himself on the principles at issue between parties, and then give expression to his opinion at the ballot-box.

If he has no opinion, like a sworn juror, it is his duty to listen to the evidence and study the case until he has formed an opinion, and then hand in his sealed verdict at the polls.

You did not think one vote would make much difference?

You had no right to think that. Because your party has a large majority in the county, is no reason why you may safely stay at home. Remember that it is the majority of those who vote which determines elections, and that the votes of those who stay at home are seldom counted even in New York City, where voting and counting have been reduced to an exact science.

"What if the drop of rain should say,
"So small a mite as I
Can ne'er refresh the parched fields;
I'll tarry in the sky"?

CASTELAR.