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The Patriot & Union. HARRISBURG, PA., SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1861. NO. 112.

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The Patriot & Union. SATURDAY MORNING, JAN. 12, 1861. THE NATIONAL CRISIS. LETTER FROM VICE-PRESIDENT BRECKINRIDGE—KENTUCKY URGED TO CALL A STATE CONVENTION.

The Hon. John C. Breckinridge, Vice-President of the United States, has addressed a letter to Gov. Magoffin, of Kentucky, approving of his course in convening the Legislature of that State, and expressing the opinion that "no thorough and satisfactory plan will be proposed to the States by Congress."

Mr. Breckinridge next refers to the fact that the Senate committee of thirteen had been unable to unite upon any satisfactory plan, and then proceeds to speak of the propositions of Mr. Crittenden as "conceived in a spirit of patriotic concession."

"The Southern States assert, with great unanimity, the right of all the States to enter the common Territories with their property of whatever kind, including slaves, and to have it protected by the common government."

"I cannot suppose that Kentucky would consider her rights, interests and honor safe under any settlement less thorough than this proposed by Mr. Crittenden. Any attempt to circumscribe it by excluding from its scope acquired territory, or by failing to recognize and protect slave property south of the line by language as clear and explicit as that employed to prohibit it north of the line, or by veiling its provisions in ambiguous phrases, could only result in new agitations and convulsions."

"I have not referred to the Personal Liberty bills of the Northern States, because they are the subjects of State action, not to various propositions concerning the Fugitive Slave law, because they relate only to legislative action; nor to the question concerning the right of sejour and transit with slave property; nor to several schemes of constitutional amendment which demand more for the South than the plan of Mr. Crittenden. I have said that, in my opinion, no thorough and satisfactory amendments will be proposed to the States by Congress; and I have taken the plan which concedes most to the Northern States, and which presents the least that I suppose any action of the South would accept."

"At an early day in the session, a number of gentlemen fearing that no suitable guarantees could be proposed by Congress began to look to the States and the people. The Republicans having control of the Northern States, our friends there were, of course, unable to move. An earnest effort was made here to secure a Convention of all the Southern States. The plan was lost in the rapid progress of events. Next, a more hopeful movement was set on foot, looking to an immediate conference of the border slaveholding States, (embracing Tennessee and North Carolina), with the view to unite their counsels and avert the danger of civil war; but here, also, the obstacles proved insurmountable, and the time for such action has passed. Each of these States, therefore, must decide for itself the attitude it will occupy in this emergency."

Special agents, therefore, have been off the bar of this harbor to warn approaching vessels, armed or unarmed, having on board troops to reinforce your fort, not to attempt to enter the harbor. Special orders have been given to the commanders of the forts not to fire on such vessels until the throwing of a shot across their bows would warn them of the prohibition of the State. Under these circumstances, the steamer Star of the West, it is understood, this morning attempted to enter the harbor with troops, and having been notified that she could not enter, was fired into. This act is perfectly justified by me.

"In regard to your threats as to vessels in the harbor, it is only necessary for me to say that you must be the judge of your responsibility. Your position in the harbor has been tolerated by the authorities of the State, and while the act of your complaint is in perfect consistency with the rights and duties of the State, it is not perceived how far the conduct you propose to adopt can find a parallel in the history of any country, or reconcile with any other purpose of your government than that of imposing on this State the condition of a conquered province. [Signed.] F. W. PICKENS, Governor of South Carolina."

"The wisdom of the Legislature will, doubtless, provide whatever is needful; yet at a time like this it becomes the duty, as it is the right of every man to express his opinion, and as a citizen of the Commonwealth I give my voice for a State Convention. It is only by the direct action of the several States in their sovereign capacity that anything effectual can now be done; and for one, I desire that Kentucky may have an opportunity to determine, in the most solemn manner, her judgment of her rights and her attitude in the present condition of affairs. She has not been an inactive or inglorious member of the confederacy; she has not been in the presence of great and startling events, borne along by rapid currents, without the power to direct her vessel. She has had the opportunity through her chosen representatives, of deciding upon the prospect of reuniting all the States in a constitutional Union; or if that shall be impossible, let her be in a position to determine her own destiny."

HIGHLY IMPORTANT FROM CHARLESTON—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND MAJOR ANDERSON—MAJOR ANDERSON SENDS A BEARER OF DISPATCHES TO WASHINGTON FOR INSTRUCTIONS. CHARLESTON, Jan. 10.—The following is the particulars of the attempt of the steamer Star of the West to enter this harbor yesterday.

At 5 1/2 o'clock yesterday morning the steamer Star of the West approached the entrance to the harbor, and signalled the fact to the occupants of the battery on Morris Island. As soon as the approach of the steamer was signalled, Morris Island was astir with men, and all were at their posts before the orders were given. All remained in anxious suspense for some time, ready for what they believed was sure to come, a volley from Fort Sumpter.

Fort Sumpter made no demonstration, except that the guns bearing on Morris Island and Fort Moultrie were run out of the port-holes. About 11 o'clock a boat from Fort Sumpter, bearing Lieut. Hall, with a white flag, approached the city, and on landing, the Lieutenant had an interview with Governor Pickens, and afterwards was escorted to his boat and re-embarked for Fort Sumpter.

Major Anderson to Gov. Pickens, Jan. 9, 1861. To His Excellency, the Governor of South Carolina. Sir—Two of your batteries fired this morning on an unarmed vessel bearing the flag of my Government. I am not notified that war has been declared by South Carolina against the United States, and I cannot but think that this hostile act has been committed without your sanction or authority. Under that hope I refrain from opening fire on your batteries.

The decided majority of opinion was against you. At this moment the answer of the South Carolina "Commissioners" to my communication to them of 31st December was received and read. It produced much indignation among the members of the Cabinet. After a further brief conversation I employed the following language: "It is now all over, and reinforcements must be sent." Judge Black said at the moment of my decision, that after this letter the Cabinet would be unanimous, and I heard no dissenting voice. Indeed, the spirit and tone of the letter left no doubt on my mind that Fort Sumpter would be immediately attacked, and hence the necessity of sending reinforcements there without delay.

Whist you admit "that on Wednesday, January 24, this subject was again discussed in Cabinet," you say, "but certainly no conclusion was reached, and the War Department was not justified in ordering reinforcements without something more than was then said." You are certainly mistaken in alleging that "no conclusion was reached." In this your recollection is entirely different from that of your four oldest colleagues in the Cabinet. Indeed, my language was so unmistakable that the Secretaries of War and the Navy proceeded to act upon it without any further interconference with myself than what you heard; or might you have heard me say. You had been so emphatic in expressing the reinforcements that I thought you would remain in the same position. I deeply regret that you have mistaken a point of fact, though I firmly believe honestly mistaken.

Yours, very respectfully, JAMES BUCHANAN, Hon. Jacob Thompson. UNION MEETING AT BALTIMORE. A very large meeting of those opposed to any disruption of the Union of the United States was held on Thursday night last, in Baltimore, at the hall of the Maryland Institute. The meeting was addressed by Wm. H. Collins, Esq., A. W. Bradford, Esq., Hon. Reverdy Johnson, and others. The following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the unity of government, which constitutes us one people is justly dear to us; for it is the main pillar in the edifice of our independence, the support of our tranquillity at home, our peace abroad, of our safety, of our prosperity, of that very liberty which we so highly prize.

Resolved, That notwithstanding much pains have been taken, to weaken the main pillar of our independence, the support of our tranquillity at home, our peace abroad, of our safety, of our prosperity, of that very liberty which we so highly prize.

Resolved, That the government of the Union, the offering of our own choice, uninfluenced and unswayed, to make an adoption of its principles and deliberation completely free in its principles; in the distribution of its power uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to our confidence and our support, and that respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty.

Resolved, That the preceding resolutions—taken from the farewell address of the Father of his Country—contain a declaration of principles and duties, which we mean to abide, for weal or for woe; whilst, at the same time, we claim that every privilege and right guaranteed to us and to our sister States by the Constitution, can, and shall be maintained under and according to its provisions, and that we will never deprecate the fame of Washington by the destruction of the Constitution and the Union, which are the true monuments of his glory.

Resolved, That various Northern States have passed laws, usually called "Personal Liberty laws," which we believe to be the violation of the Constitution of the United States, and of the acts of Congress passed pursuant thereto, and of the sacred obligations which those States owe to our common country; and that we appeal to the constitutional duty, the patriotism, the honor, the justice, and the brotherhood of the people of those States respectively, to repeal those laws, and by every way and means in their power, to put down the aggressions of their people on the peculiar institutions of the Southern States, as the only way to remove the well-founded discontent and complaints of their brethren of the Southern States; and which, if not removed, may prove fatal to our Union, as well as to all those vital interests which ought to bind us together as one people.

Resolved, That the present condition of our country demands of all who love her a spirit of fairness, of candor, of conciliation, of concession, and of self-sacrifice, and that we hail with thankfulness and hopeful hearts the patriotic efforts now being made in Congress for the settlement, as we hope forever, of all dangerous questions at issue, on some basis of justice, and equitable principle; and that such statements and States, whether of the North or of the South, as may contribute most to this holy end, will challenge the highest place in the affections of our country; and those who may refuse to lend their aid to this holy purpose may justly expect, as they will be sure to receive, the condemnation and reprobation of the present as well as of future ages.

AN APPEAL TO THE NORTH. The New Haven Register publishes the following from a master-mechanic of that city, now in Charleston, S. C., addressed to the workmen in his employ in New Haven, at their request: CHARLESTON, Dec. 30th, 1860. To those in my employ in New Haven—

Gentlemen: Situated as I am in the midst of a people who are about to take up arms, and sacrifice their own lives, as well as the lives of their fellow men; if compelled so to do—in defence of their rights, which rights were guaranteed them by one of the most sacred compacts ever entered into by or between men or nations—but which have been repeatedly violated, not only by a few fanatics, but by thousands of Northern Abolitionists—Black Republicans—led by political demagogues; and feeling as I do, the responsibility resting upon every true American to use every effort in his power to avert the impending collision, I address to you the following petition, trusting assured that it will be responded to by every true and law-abiding man in my employ: That each of you, by personal acts and the influence you exert over others, lend your aid, feeble though it may be, in your own estimation, to every measure tending to restore peace and tranquility to this once

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Resolved, That the government of the Union, the offering of our own choice, uninfluenced and unswayed, to make an adoption of its principles and deliberation completely free in its principles; in the distribution of its power uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to our confidence and our support, and that respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty.

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