

The Patriot & Union.

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Catching at Straws.

The eagerness of the public mind to seize on anything giving promise of relief from the present political imbroglio, is evinced by the importance attached to a single expression at the close of Gov. Pickens' message to the South Carolina Legislature, which reads as follows:

"The act passed to provide a sum military force may involve a sum of \$50,000, and provision has been made for raising \$400,000 more for the purchase of arms and munitions. This is a severe sum amount to \$1,400,000. It is hoped that circumstances may arise which will give a pacific turn to events, but the legislator shall be made to understand that the expenditure of the whole amount, but the more certain way to produce a pacific turn to events is, to be thoroughly prepared to meet any emergency."

What the "pacific turn" may be, is a question the public is anxious to have answered as soon as possible. If it is based on the result of certain propositions supposed to have been made to the President, by the South Carolina Commissioners, we shall soon know more about it.

Greeley as a Prophet.

Some people think Greeley a wondrously wise man, a sagacious politician, &c. Here is an evidence of it. The following is an extract from the Tribune in October last:

"It will be pleasant and instructive to see what a quiet effect, like that of oil poured upon the waters, the election of Lincoln will have upon the agitation just now of the political elements. They (the Southern people) have set the alights, but they will be given up to the winds. The cause of secession or forcible resistance to the inauguration and administration of Lincoln, out of which some of our city papers are striving to create a panic. The election over, they will hasten to another, and all the trouble will be past. The anti-slavery Abolitionists will bring about a peace. The slave Abolitionists will be scattered, while the great bulk of the southern politicians will be too busy in looking forward to new elections, and other difficulties, to think of any influence in the North to have any time or thoughts to spare for domestic projects. After the storm we shall have a calm."

This is the sort of stuff with which the people were industriously plied before the election, not only by Greeley but by the whole Republican press. They were cheated with the delusion that the South was not in earnest, and that the election of Lincoln would calm the disunion agitation. False before the election, the Republicans are equally false since their purpose has been accomplished. Having led the country into a fatal snare, they seem determined to afford no opportunity of extrication, and to admit of no settlement of the difficulties they have brought upon the country except by the sword. Will the people submit to be swindled first and butchered afterwards for the gratification of the Republican party?

What they are Asked to Yield.

There is some virtue in a man or party yielding something to which he or they possess an undoubted right, for the sake of preserving the public peace. But we can't see that a party is making very enormous concessions when it yields a mere claim to something which it does not, and cannot, legally call its own. When the Republicans are asked to consent to the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, with an understanding that slavery shall not exist north of the line and shall be protected south, they exclaim against it as a humiliating concession—an abandonment of the principles of the Chicago platform—a giving up of the fruits of their victory. Now, this is decidedly cool, considering that the Supreme Court has decided that the Southerners have a constitutional right to take his slaves into any Territory, and Congress has no right to prohibit him. The South is willing to give up that right in all Territory north of 36° 30'—to yield a substantial right which they possess under the Constitution as expounded by the Supreme Court—and the Republican party of the North is not willing to abandon a naked, arrogant, unscrupulous claim to prohibit slavery where the Supreme Court has determined they have no right to do so. Talk about surrendering the right to prohibit slavery in the Territories—why the Republican party had better establish that right before they make a merit of abandoning it. They are asked to do nothing more than yield an unfounded claim. If any man supposes that he has a good title to a piece of property, and resorts to legal proceedings to establish his claim, and the courts decide against him in favor of some other claimant, he ought, as a good citizen, to give up and submit quietly. But suppose he is a turbulent and dangerous neighbor whom the successful man feared, and for the sake of compromising all difficulties and avoiding disturbances, the man generously offers to divide the disputed possession with him, upon condition that he shall allow him to retain peaceful control of the other half, we should think the defeated party very unreasonable to insist upon having the whole. This is precisely the position of the Republican party with reference to the Territories, and the proposition to divide them by the Missouri line. The Supreme Court has decided that Southerners have a constitutional right to carry their slave property into any or all the Territories, and that Congress cannot prohibit the exercise of this right; but for the sake of peace they are willing to abandon all the Territory lying north of a certain degree of latitude. To this very fair and reasonable proposition the Republicans, like the turbulent man who lost his lawsuit, insist that they must have everything, and that the party who has violated his legal rights in the whole, shall have nothing. This is Republican modesty for you. When the Republicans talk so indignantly about the humiliation of abandoning their rights for the sake of pacifying the South, they had better show that these rights have some existence. We have

already shown that what they object to yielding is merely an unfounded claim, judicially disallowed.

Defeat of the Crittenden Resolutions—Mr. Corwin's Report.

The defeat of the Crittenden resolutions in the United States Senate by the solid vote of the Republican Senators, indicates a determination on the part of the Republican party to make no concessions for the sake of preserving the Union, and also a conviction that it would not be safe to submit the question to a direct vote of the people. If the Republicans were as confident as they pretend to be of the firmness of the North against any proposition to settle the accession difficulties by compromise, they could lose nothing by taking the sense of the people. On the contrary, they would gain renewed courage to persevere in the work of pushing their sectional doctrines to extremes, by demonstrating that the Republican ranks remained firm in the face of the terrible consequences of the election of a sectional President. But as they decline to put the issue of Union by compromise, or disunion with civil war, to the test of a popular election, and prefer to assume that the people sustain their course, when the truth could be easily ascertained by an election, we must conclude that they appear to be against them.

The House Committee, of which Mr. Corwin is chairman, has submitted a report together with the following propositions for settling existing difficulties:

PENNA. LEGISLATURE.

SENATE.

THURSDAY, Jan. 17, 1861.

Senate called to order by the Clerk. Mr. SMITH called to the chair. Prayer by Rev. Mr. HAY.

The SPEAKER laid before the Senate a communication from the Governor announcing the appointment of Eli Shifer as Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Also, a communication from Eli Shifer, announcing the appointment of Samuel B. Thomas as Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth.

The standing committees reported a number of bills as committed.

BILLS IN PLACE.

Mr. YARDLEY, a supplement to the act incorporating the Spinnerville and Goshenhoppen turnpike company.

Mr. FINNEY, an act authorizing the settlement of the account of E. C. Wilson.

Mr. HIESTAND, a supplement to an act, entitled "An act to encourage the manufacture of iron by coal, coke and other mineral substances."

Mr. NICHOLS, a supplement to an act incorporating the Gap mining company.

Mr. PENNEY, an act to incorporate the Andresco oil company.

ORIGINAL RESOLUTIONS.

Mr. BLOOD offered a resolution that three thousand copies of the reports of the banks made to the Auditor General be printed for the use of the Senate; which was agreed to.

Mr. CLYMER offered a resolution calling upon the Auditor General for information as to the amount of taxes, if any, assessed upon the Delaware Division, North Branch and West Branch canal companies, and if no taxes have been assessed, the Auditor General is required to communicate to the State whether, in his opinion, said corporations are liable to taxation. Agreed to.

Mr. HALL moved that when the Senate adjourns to-day, it adjourns to meet on Monday next, at 11 o'clock, which was agreed to.

Mr. PINNEY moved that the Senate now proceed to nominate a candidate for State Treasurer, which was agreed to.

Mr. CONNELL nominated Henry D. Moore.

Dr. CRAWFORD nominated O. James.

Mr. PENNEY nominated Daniel Negley.

Mr. GREGG nominated Robert Baldwin.

BILLS ACTED ON.

Mr. BLOOD called up the supplement to the act for the relief of Nancy Lord, Nancy Wilkinson and others, which passed finally.

Mr. YARDLEY called up the supplement to Spinnerville and Goshenhoppen turnpike company, which passed finally.

Mr. CONNELL called up the bill in relation to saving fund and trust companies, which was slightly amended, and passed finally.

There being no further business before the Senate, on motion of Mr. IRISH, adjourned until Monday morning at 11 o'clock.

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, January 16, 1861.

Yesterday Mr. Polk, of Tennessee, made a speech in the Senate on the crisis, and to day Mr. Green, of Missouri, made one on the same subject. Both these gentlemen are anxious that the Union shall be preserved, if that can be done in such manner as to save the South her rights under the Constitution; but if this cannot be accomplished, then they are in favor of peaceful secession, with the hope that, at some future period, when the feverish excitement of the present shall have subsided, a reunion may be effected upon a new and, perchance, a more enduring basis.

Both of the gentlemen named are in favor of the Crittenden propositions, if they can be carried. I fear that the Crittenden propositions cannot be carried, because the ultra Republicans are not disposed to favor them.

The next propositions that seem to meet with any kind of favor are those contained in the bill offered by Senator Bigler yesterday. It is understood that Missas. Cameron, of Pennsylvania, Ten Eyck, of New Jersey, Dixie, of Connecticut, Anthony, of Rhode Island, and Grimes, of Iowa, on the Republican side of the Senate, will support Mr. Bigler's bill, because it provides for a reference to the people directly and speedily. In the House quite a number of Republican members will support it also; so that its success is considered almost certain. It will not do to put the evil day off much longer; the issues involved in this struggle must be met promptly, or all is lost. Surely every good man in the nation would be rejoiced to see the dark clouds of secession and ultimate dissolution give place to the bright sun of hope for the future welfare of our country, and for that reason I fear warrant in presuming that the people of Pennsylvania, and of the North generally, will fail with delight the propositions of Senator Bigler at such a trying hour as the present.

The stories that have found their way into the public prints about the arming of the different departments of the government in this city, with a view to preserve them from threatened sudden assault, have been greatly exaggerated. It is nevertheless true that precautions have been taken to guard the public buildings from any attempt that might be made, from any quarter, to seize them in the event of surprise from those who contemplate such surprise, if, indeed, any such thing is intended. About one hundred and fifty stand of muskets have been placed in the Patent Office building for its defense. What precautions have been taken to preserve the other public buildings I am not informed of. That the Government have some well-grounded suspicion on this subject does not admit of a doubt, else arms would not be supplied for the use of those who are charged with the safe-keeping of the Department of the Interior.

The government is very active just now, in all the departments, in arranging matters, in view of the imminent danger of a collision between the North and the South, or rather the Federal authorities and the Republic of South Carolina. All the operations of the Government are being conducted with the utmost secrecy, in order that what is done may be effective when the time comes. New overtures have been made by South Carolina, to our government, but of what nature it is impossible to find out just now. A few days must develop the plans of the Administration with regard to what shall be done at the South. The task which Mr. Buchanan has to perform is one of extreme delicacy. Desirous of avoiding the shedding of blood, whilst impious necessity and stern duty require that the property of the government must be defended and preserved, it requires no ordinary sagacity to arrive at a correct conclusion as to what line of policy should be adopted.

Mr. HECK offered a resolution tendering the sympathies of the House to the bereaved family of the late William C. A. Lawrence, late Speaker of the House, respecting his death, eulogizing his life, and requiring the members and officers of the House to wear the badge of mourning for the usual time.

Mr. HECK asked the indulgence of the

House to adjourn, and proceeded to deliver a eulogy on

such an emergency as surrounds him at present. That he will do his whole duty I never had a doubt, but what that duty is I am at a loss to divine.

The Pacific Railroad bill is up in Senate to-day, with a pretty fair show for its passage. While I write, Gen. Lane, of Oregon, is making a speech on the bill. He is in favor of extending the road roads to Oregon, as far as the Columbia river.

Mr. Bragg, of North Carolina, is in favor of referring the bill to a select committee of five Senators,

to examine it with care, before it is presented to vote, but the friends of the measure, who appear to have a majority in the Senate, are opposed, to the reference, because they fear if it should be referred it will be strangled in committee.

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