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PITTSBURGH, PA.—ARTHURS & RIDDELL, Attorneys-at-Law.
TOWSONVILLE, PA.—WM. B. SMITH, Attorney and Counsellor.

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Patriot Union

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THE CHEAPEST PAPER PUBLISHED IN PENNSYLVANIA! THE ONLY DEMOCRATIC PAPER PUBLISHED AT THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT!

FORTY-FOUR COLUMNS OF READING MATTER EACH WEEK! AT THE LOW PRICE OF ONE DOLLAR AND FIFTY CENTS!

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We have been compelled to raise the club subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents in order to save ourselves from actual loss.

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A LONG AND VERY SUCCESSFUL MEDICAL PRACTICE justifies him in promising full and ample satisfaction to all who may favor him with a call, by the House of Representatives or any other nature.

Prepared to furnish to order, in the very best style of workmanship, Spring and Hair Mattresses, Window Curtains, Lounges, and all other articles of Furniture in his line, on short notice and moderate terms.

Large Pier and Mantle Mirrors, Square and Oval Frames of every description made to order. Regulating doors. Agency for Howe's Sewing Machines.

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The Patriot & Union.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 29, 1863. SHOULD SOLDIERS VOTE BY PROXY?

This question has been before the Legislatures of Pennsylvania and New York, brought forward, we have no hesitation in saying, by base men for a base purpose, and has received some attention from the press and been talked upon by the people.

We never had a doubt of its exceeding impropriety, of its great danger. We do not think that any honest man, clearly understanding its liability to abuse, and properly appreciating the entire dependence of republican institutions upon the purity of the ballot, would advocate such a measure.

And yet it was advocated and is advocated still—Abolition Senators and the Abolition press did and do advocate it. But who will pretend that they were honest? None but the most hopeless fool. Who would suspect Lowry and his fellow-Senators, Forney, Deacon Berger, and their associates of the Lincoln press, of cumbering their hearts with so humble a virtue as honesty? No, these men were not honest in their advocacy of the measure—they played the hypocrite—they acted from base motives for a wicked purpose.

Their design was to pollute the ballot-box—to control by force or fraud the army vote, and cheat the majority out of their rights, and it is not their fault that the well-laid scheme was defeated.

In order that the subject may be fully comprehended in all its bearings, we present our readers with three articles, which we think cover the whole ground.

The first article, from the Boston Daily Advertiser, presents the views entertained by that respectable and honorable portion of the administration party which pretends to preserve some respect for the Constitution and some repugnance to encouraging fraud, or becoming slaves.

After premising that the question has been mooted in Massachusetts, and therefore they can speak impartially and dispassionately, the Advertiser says:

"When the scheme is thus viewed with reference solely to its merits, it appears to us that it is open to objections which our friends elsewhere are not in a condition to weigh as they should. It will hardly be possible, we suspect, to frame the details of such a measure so as not to open the door to many frauds and deceptions.

The actual presence of the voter is by no means a complete security against such evils; and when to the practices to which he is subjected there are added the chances of unfairness or fraud on the part of the other agencies necessarily brought into action by absentee voting, the probability that the purity of a system is preserved under such a system is greatly diminished.

This evil has been experienced, we believe, in other States which have undertaken to collect the votes of soldiers. In those cases the details of the scheme may have been imperfect, but with the best plan that ingenuity can devise, we suspect that the evil will be found to be inherent and ineradicable in any system of voting which does not proceed upon the actual presence of the voter at the place of election.

"It is no disparagement to the character of our soldiers to inquire whether they are exactly in the condition for the free exercise of their franchise as citizens. For an honorable purpose they have voluntarily placed themselves under the control of others. They are no longer masters of their own motions, but are bound to render an unquestioning obedience to others. Although their political judgment may be sound, then, will it be possible for them to exercise it without the suspicion of influence on the part of their officers? Will it be possible for them in a great many cases to escape this influence? If the officer cannot compel the soldier to vote against his own judgment, may he not by a thousand, easily imagined expedients, not capable of being reduced to a matter of actual interference, prevent his voting at all? It was supposed by many to be necessary, even in this Commonwealth, a few years ago, to resort to extraordinary measures to prevent undue influence over the soldiers in the employ of others. Will not the danger then apprehended become real and serious, and difficult to be remedied, when the voter is necessarily in such subjection to the will of another as a private is to that of his officer?"

"A more serious difficulty, however, as it appears to us, is that arising from the need of discussion preparatory to an intelligent vote. The men who are to vote must have the proper facilities for information and for the examination of both sides of the questions presented to them. The ordinary means of information are the political newspapers, pamphlets and speeches. But there are very few, we trust, who would be willing to see the camp made the scene of political harangues, debates, and the passions naturally excited by such means. There are very few who would be willing in the fall, our best season for military operations, to see our soldiers, who should have but a single thought and purpose, divided by the political debates which distract us here at home. The incongruity would be painful, the danger palpable; and yet what escape is there from this danger, except to have our soldiers either forbear voting, or vote in comparative ignorance of the issues which they are invited to decide by their ballots?"

"Such, as it seems to us, are some of the considerations bearing upon the original question as to soldiers' votes, which are not likely to be taken into account in New York as matters now stand. It is well for us, however, at this distance not to forget the dictates of political prudence, which circumstances have silenced elsewhere."

The next article to which we invite attention is the veto message of Gov. Seymour, which, with the article that follows from the New York World, we think will satisfy the masses of all parties, and the soldiers themselves, that the proxy vote proposed was an infamous scheme, intended to accomplish an infamous purpose, and was therefore rightly rejected.

STATE OF NEW YORK, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, ALBANY, April 24, 1863.

To the Senate: I return without my signature the bill, entitled "An act to secure the elective franchise to the qualified voters of the army and navy of the State of New York."

It is so clearly in violation of the Constitution, in the judgment of men of all parties, that it is needless to dwell upon that objection to the bill. While it only received in the Assembly the number of votes necessary to its passage, some of those who voted for it openly stated their opposition to the measure. After

its passage, that branch of the Legislature, with great unanimity, and without regard to political differences, adopted the resolution for an amendment to the Constitution, to secure the objects of this bill in accordance with the recommendations of the message which I lately sent to the Legislature on this subject. I do not doubt that the Senate will also pass the resolutions with the same unanimity, and then the whole subject will be disposed of with the assent and approval of all and in a mode free from all doubts and uncertainties.

This bill is not only unconstitutional, but it is also extremely defective and highly objectionable. The time yet remaining of the present session will not permit me to specify all the objections to its details. It does not require the proxy of the soldier to be proven before the representative of the State, but gives the power only to field officers or regiments who have been recently brought within the operation of the most arbitrary rules of military government; it does not permit the soldier to choose the friend in whom he would most confide as his proxy, but requires him to select one from the class of freeholders who are not recognized by our Constitution as entitled to special privileges; it subjects the person appointed (though without his consent) as a proxy to the penalties of a criminal offense, fine and imprisonment, for refusing or neglecting to deposit the vote he receives, though he may believe that it is not genuine; it provides no means of verifying the polls the authenticity of proxies; it requires the inspectors to deposit in the ballot box, under the penalties of a criminal offense, the ballots received with any proxy, however much reason there may be to doubt his authenticity; it allows proxies and ballots to be sent by mail or otherwise, which permits a messenger to be selected by other persons than the voter; it does not require the messenger to be sworn; it does not require him to deliver the proxies and ballots to the persons named as proxies, but permits him to destroy or change the proxies and ballots or deliver them to any unworn and unauthorized person he may select; it does not make the change or destruction of the ballots, except by the person appointed proxy, a criminal offense, or punish such an act in any manner; it fails to protect the secrecy of the ballot; and it requires the person named as proxy to deposit in the ballot box the ballots delivered to him with a proxy by an unknown person, although they may be different from those he knows were sent by the voter. This brief statement will be sufficient to satisfy all of the many opportunities this bill affords for gross frauds upon the electors in the army and upon the ballot box at home. The deposit of a ballot is a final and irrevocable act, and the people will never permit ballots to be received unless with abundant guarantees that they are, beyond doubt, the free act of the electors.

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