

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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TERMS:

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POLITICAL.

SENATE CHAMBER

Harrisburg, Feb. 11, 1843.

To the Editors of the "Republican Farmer."

Dear Sirs:—I have observed in your paper of the 8th inst. the proceedings of a 'democratic Van Buren meeting,' in which are contained two resolutions, reflecting upon my course in the Senate, relative to allowing the banks to issue small notes. As these resolutions are couched in pretty severe terms, I have felt it due to myself to make a response through the columns of your paper.

The individuals composing that meeting, are respectable men, and their opinions are entitled to consideration and respect, and hence their censure, when embodied in the form of public resolutions, not only invites, but claims from me a candid avowal of my sentiments. I hold myself at all times amenable to the people. They delegated to me the trust I hold, and much rather would I resign into their hands that trust, and retire forever from public life, than be guilty, knowingly, of misrepresenting the wishes of my constituents. The last part of the first resolution is as follows:—'we cannot refrain from acknowledging, that we have witnessed with great surprise and mortification, the assertions of Mr. Kidder in the Senate, that his constituents were all in favor of the issue of small notes.' I never read my remarks as reported. I did not make use of the strong language indicated by the resolutions; but I did say that, as far as I was acquainted with public opinion in my district, I believed a large majority were in favor of the issue of small notes, for a limited period, and to a limited extent redeemable in specie; and this I gathered, not only from personal intercourse with the people, before the meeting of the Legislature, but from numerous letters since received, from individuals residing in various parts of my Senatorial district. If I have entirely mistaken public opinion, I feel anxious and happy to stand corrected.

I will now proceed to give my own views in reference to the measure in question.—If mad legislation had not destroyed our currency, and flooded our commonwealth with irredeemable and legitimate trash, I should be decidedly averse to the issue of small notes by the banks; but how stands the case? By the act of the 4th of May, all banks that accepted of its provisions and issued notes in pursuance of the same, acquire an entire and absolute exemption from specie payments for a period of five years. About two thirds of the banks in the Commonwealth accepted of the provisions of the act aforesaid, and became what are called relief banks—thus placing themselves in a position where no legislation could reach them for five years, unless their loan to the Commonwealth was repaid, for their acceptance of the relief law is regarded in the light of a contract, and under the Constitution, the Legislature can pass no law impairing the obligations of a contract. The matter being thus situated, the Legislature passed a resumption law at its last session, imposing heavy penalties on banks that refused to resume specie payments; but, for reasons already stated, this law did not,

could not affect the relief banks, for they had been placed beyond the pale of legislation by the act of the 4th May, 1841. Those banks alone, that did not issue relief notes, have been forced to resume, while nearly two thirds of our own banks remain in a state of suspension. This has had the effect of building up two currencies in Pennsylvania—one based upon specie payments, and the other upon promises to pay—the latter, of course, constantly fluctuating, and always at a ruinous depreciation. As long as there is one dollar of the relief issues of a bank in circulation, or in possession of that bank, by the terms of the act of the 4th of May, it cannot be compelled to resume within the period limited. Now, under such circumstances, the anxious inquiry is, what is to be done?—Shall we resign ourselves to this state of things without an effort to escape from a hopeless suspension into which we are plunged? Or shall we cast about and seek to extricate ourselves, and the currency from our present deplorable and almost hopeless condition?

Having thus briefly stated the case, I will now advert to the proposition submitted by myself to the Senate, which has elicited the censure of some of my fellow citizens. It is to give the Banks permission to issue small notes redeemable in specie, to an amount not exceeding twenty five per cent on their capital stock actually in existence; on condition, that such Banks will resume specie payments on all their liabilities; and the Relief Banks, before they can enjoy the privilege, must resume specie payments—relinquish their unexampled immunities under the relief law, and thereafter become subject to all the laws of this Commonwealth, relating to banking institutions. In other words, they must come out from behind their protective shield, and place themselves in a position where they can be reached by legislation and law.—Should they afterwards suspend their charters can be immediately forfeited, under the provisions of the act passed at the last session. Connected with this, is the provision that the law shall expire by its own limitation, on the 4th May, 1846.

I would ask the respectable gentlemen who passed the vote of censure upon me, if the foregoing proposition is so monstrous as to call down censure so unqualified?—We are now cursed with a small note system, in the most odious form. It cannot be dignified with the name, and hardly with the semblance of a currency, and my object is to get rid of this and in place of it, if we must have paper issues, have them based upon specie, and if the banks cannot pay specie to place them in a situation where they can be reached by the law of the land.

Another view of this subject—a law has been passed, the present session of the Legislature, providing for the cancellation, at the Treasury, of one hundred thousand dollars of these relief issues per month.—There is now about seventeen hundred thousand dollars of these issues in circulation. As this amount is gradually withdrawn from circulation, now is its place to be supplied? Not, certainly, by our country banks, as long as they are in a state of suspension, and I have already explained that, as long as there is one dollar of their relief issues uncancelled, they can, with impunity, remain in a state of suspension. If therefore, small notes, redeemable in specie, can take the place of relief issues, gradually withdrawn by cancellation, and thus fill up the channels of circulation with a specie basis currency, I would ask in all candor, would not our condition be improved?

There is still another view of the subject:—all the States surrounding us have permitted their banks to issue small notes; and when our currency is on a level with other States, we are flooded with these foreign issues, and all legislation has as yet failed in preventing their circulation. If small notes must circulate, would not the people of this commonwealth prefer a circulation

by our own banks, the true conditions of which can be known, to that of foreign banks about which they are ignorant?

But this measure is denominated by the resolutions in question, as an "odious federal measure!" Now this meeting was composed of the avowed friends of Martin Van Buren, assembled for the express purpose of promoting his interest for the Presidency. Is it possible that these gentlemen have forgotten, that the political and personal friends of Mr. Van Buren carried this same measure through the Legislature of New York in 1837? And that, by the provisions of that law, the banks of that State have since been permitted to issue small notes, without stint as to quantity or limit as to time? An "odious federal measure," when the present democratic Legislature of Virginia, as a matter of policy and expediency, have granted to all the banks this privilege! An "odious federal measure," when every democratic State in the Union has extended to her banks the same privilege, among which is New Hampshire, one of the most uncompromising in her democratic faith! Really we have fallen in evil times, when a humble member of the Legislature cannot bring forward a measure calculated to reform a miserable and worthless currency, without having it branded by a meeting of his fellow citizens as an "odious federal measure!"—This is harsh language, and to me entirely unexpected.

I have no hesitation in saying that the present banking system in Pennsylvania, is a bad one; but the evils of former legislation cannot be eradicated at a blow. In reference to our present currency, we are forced to take things as they are, and stare them in the face. Without credit and without currency, we are constantly imposing heavy taxes upon the people, whilst the same redeemable paper, constantly fluctuating in value with every wind that blows. Are we not called upon by every consideration of honor and common honesty to reform this currency? The whole question resolves itself into one of expediency, and if I am wrong, I am not so obstinate in favor of my own opinion, as to persist in an error. If either of the gentlemen who voted for these resolutions of censure, will suggest a better measure, it shall receive my most respectful consideration. If the views expressed in the foregoing communication are in opposition to the wishes of my constituents—if I can be satisfied of that fact, I shall not feel at liberty to advocate them further upon the floor of the Senate; but until then, I feel bound to abide by them as the conscientious dictates of duty.

Very Respectfully,

L. KIDDER.

FINISHING TRADES

When a young man has finished his trade, the world before him looks bright and promises fair; and every thing seems to conspire to fill his bosom with those prospects, which alas, too often vanish away. But if during his apprenticeship, the youth has maintained that undeviating integrity, that unswerving course of morality, which is so valuable a trait in the character of youth, he will find no difficulty in obtaining a good stand in society; with promising hopes of success in his business. As he commences life, he must be cautious that he contracts no friendship with those individuals whose characters are doubtful, and who would lead him unawares, in the path of vice and sin, to the neglect of his business, and the disappointment of his customers. At once he must declare himself the friend of morality and virtue, and be diligent and faithful in his business. He must expect to begin in a small way, and not venture to much in the outset of life. Some young men think it too humiliating, when they begin the world, if they cannot commence largely and branch out conspicuously. And here is where they err, and in the end, it is often the case that such persons are led to see their folly and confess the erroneousness of their course.

The young man should also remember that he is to occupy a station in life, where his influence, in a greater or less degree must be felt by all those with whom he may come in contact. He should therefore, aim to have his daily actions correspond with the Scriptures, that his influence may be exerted on the side of truth. Begin the world thus young man, and we are satisfied you will never regret the course you pursued, to the latest period of life.—Portland Tribune.

THE SHOEMAKER.

The shoemaker then, he hammers and sweats,
And toils all the time, to pay off his old debts,—
You shall have it next week if my existence is spared,
But when the time comes he is never prepared.—
Old Song.

The shoemaker is a most singular mortal, though a very different one from that described in the song above quoted. He is represented there as being a shiftless fellow—forever in debt—no means, to pay—no prospect of anything—promising with the utmost confidence, and always falsifying the promise at maturity. At the time our text was written, it is probably, however, that it contained 'more truth than poetry.' The shoemaker then, was a cobbler—a quiet, easy, lazy; greasy sort of chap, who had no money, and wanted none,—who had no ambition, and but little self-respect. He mended old boots and old shoes,—never paid his debts, and was the wag of the village; He could tell more comic songs, and make more fun than any other two men in the place. He could live make more friends, and abuse them more,—could tell more lies and believed—could happier and die poorer than another person known in the vicinity of his habitation.

Who would acknowledge him to be of the least importance in society, and yet, all were his friends, and all liked him. But a shoemaker now is quite another thing, as the neat cottages of many villages in Massachusetts bear good testimony. The trade is no longer disgraceful, and the craft is no longer poor. The shoemaker is now a man—a man that respects himself, and thinks for himself, and acts for himself. There is perhaps no trade which affords so much time for thought, as this, and consequently there is no class of workmen so intelligent as shoemakers. Shoemaking is now a social trade. Many work in a shop together; and fun and frolic, joke and repartee, are the order of the day. The shoemaker while at work, thinks and talks, and sings, and whistles; he discusses theology and politics and philosophy; he plans vast schemes for future action, and determines that one day he will arrive at some distinction, provided the world goes right, and if it goes wrong, he knows it is useless to complain, and resigns himself to fate, without a murmur.—Dedham American.

TOUCHING CASE.

The Salem, Mass. Register gives the following specimen of what may truly be called the romance of the poor house:

It seems there has been in the Ipswich Alms House, or House of Correction, for about twenty years, an insane man who was sent there from Salem, and who has always gone by the name of "Captain." Of his real name and residence nothing was ever known by the authorities, nor has anything been discovered till within a few months. The man is perfectly harmless, his malady tended rather to idiocy, and has long been allowed to go about freely, sometimes wandering into the neighboring towns, but always returning in safety. A month ago, the keeper presented a card to him, and said "Captain, will you give me your address?" The Captain very readily took the card, and writing upon it, in an elegant hand, a gentleman's name, with name of a town in the State of New York, returned it. As it was somewhat uncouth if this was really his name, a few days

afterwards another card was handed to him with the request that he would give his father's address. He immediately wrote the same surname and town, with another christian name. It was then supposed that he might have given his real address, and to ascertain the fact, a letter was accordingly forwarded to the place mentioned, directed to the person whose name was given as the father, with a request to the postmaster, if such a person had ever resided there and had removed, to forward the letter to the present place of residence of the gentleman or his family, if it could be ascertained.

Nothing further was heard until a few weeks ago when a letter was received from New York on the subject. The letter was shown the "Captain," and as soon as his eyes fell upon the superscription, his countenance changed, his eyes were suffused with tears of joy, and he cried out in the most touching tone, "My mother! My mother!" It was in fact a letter from his mother—his father having been dead a number of years. She wrote that nothing had been heard of this son for twenty three years, he was supposed to be long since deceased. The "Captain" was extremely affected on perusing the letter. The mother is at present residing with another son in the city of New York. A further correspondence has taken place between the parties, and some of the relatives are expected to come on shortly and take the lost, restored home. With what fervor can this mother exclaim, when she greets the wanderer, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

CHIVALRY.—BY QUILL.

"Wake snakes and come to law," exclaimed a nobleman, as he leaped down to the guards. It would be a comfortable thing if I knew where I was bound for.—Up street's got mixed with down street, and there is no such thing as cross the street at all. The moon's cross eyed, and keep's winkin' as if she had her eyes full of Macaboy. Now what am I to do? If I stand still, there is a very pleasant chance of going to bed standing. If I go to stir hang me if I know which way I's travelling.—However I'll take a runnin' jump at it, and away he started but he had scarcely taken half a dozen steps, when he staggered full again; a fire plug.

"Hullo!" roared he, "who's that?—If that's your game, my name is fight!" and he squared himself scientifically.—"Come on darn you, come on! You won't yet Now you'll molest an honest citizen again, will ye? You don't get off so easy, now mind! Just mind! Just mind! Just stand still I hit you a bat along side of the head. Whoop.—Lookout, I'm cumin'."

"Look here, my tulip," said that instructive personage (except a watchman, you're making a leetle too much noise."

"Stand by, and see fair play; and bless me if I don't swallow that fellow."

"Now don't," said Charley, "it might hurt your digestion."

"Digestion be kissed! Who's afraid!—Just stand aside a minute, and if I don't knock that convey into a three cornered continental cocked hat, burn my old shirt and two trowsers."

"Come," said the watcher, "I'm afraid if leave you exposed to the night air and dew you'd spile; and as you are an original with big boss would like to be handng you to-morrow."

"Watcher, I'll go to the devil with you if you'll only let me have a dig at that fellow's water melon."

"Can't do it; that fellow belongs to the corporation."

"Who cares!"

"Don't speak so loud, you'll hurt yourself. Indeed you must not say out a longer, you'll spile I know you will."

"Well, it's cussed hard a man can't have a quiet fight, 'specially when he's ins't I'll recollect you, Charley; and if I see feller giving you particular gas, blow me I ever help you."

The door of 'bosse cut' tho't his furd' audacity.