Pittsburgh Gazette.

S. RIDDLE & CO.,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

Publication Office, Fifth street, near Smithfield.

Morning and Evening Editions daily, and Sunday the Latest News up to the hour of publication.

TERMS:

Morning Edition—$6 per annum in advance, or 12c. per week from carriers.

Evening Edition—$3 per annum in advance, or 6c. per week from carriers.

Weekly Edition—Single copies, $2 per annum; five or more, $1 25; ten or upwards, $1 per annum, invariably in advance.

ADVERTISING AT REASONABLE RATES

PITTSBURGH:

FRIDAY MORNING, JAN. 25, 1861.

MR. BIGLER'S AMENDMENTS.—Upon a closer examination of Mr. Bigler's scheme for saving the Union, we find that it does *not* propose to amend the Constitution by the popular vote, but to submit his proposed amendments to a vote of the people, and if approved by a majority, to send them if afterward approved by Congress in the regular constitutional manner, to conventions in the several States for ratification. If ratified by three fourths of the States, they become a part of the constitution; if not, then not.

There is one question connected with this scheme, however, we have not seen mooted. The Constitution requires that all proposed amendments of that instrument shall first receive the assent of two-thirds of both branches of Congress, and shall then be submitted to the *legislatures* of the several States for ratification. Mr. Bigler, on the contrary, proposes that the amendments shall be submitted, finally, to *Conventions* in the several States. This is a fatal objection. The Constitution cannot thus, by a mere act of Congress, be set aside in one of its plainest provisions.

We desire, also, to call attention to the preamble to Mr. Bigler's bill. It sets forth, as will be seen, that it is impossible for his proposed amendments, under present circumstances, to obtain the assent of two-thirds of both Houses, and yet provides that the assent, thus impossible of attainment, shall be had before the amendments are submitted to the States. It reads as follows:

WHEREAS, the Union is in imminent danger of final dissolution, in consequence of the protracted strife and agitation about the institution of African slavery; and whereas it is believed that the legislative remedies are insufficient to meet and remove the cause of the impending disaster, and as amendments to the Constitution can only be submitted by the vote of two thirds of both Houses of Congress, and owing to the unhappy divisions existing in those Houses it is not believed that the assent of two thirds of the members of either House can be had for such amendments to the Constitution as would reconcile the differences between the North and the South; and whereas it is the cardinal principle of our representative system that the representative shall obey the will of the people, it is deemed necessary to ask the opinion and judgment of the people of the several States on the proposed amendments of the Constitution, with a view to their submission by a vote of two thirds of each branch of Congress for the ratification of the States, as provided in the Constitution, thereby restoring our distracted country to its accustomed peace and prosperity: therefore &c.

The idea here very awkwardly held out is that the assent of two-thirds of two Houses cannot now be had to the proposed amendments, but that it may be obtained after submission to a vote of the people. May be so, and then again, may be not.

The programme of Mr. Bigler, therefore, is this:

First—To submit the amendments to a vote of the people, on the 12th of February next;

Second—If approved by a majority of the people, to obtain for them, if possible, the assent of two thirds of both houses of Congress; and

Third—If thus assented to by the constitutional majority of both houses, to submit them to conventions in the several states for their sanction. Mr. B. is not willing to trust the legislatures of the several states, which, alone, have the constitutional right to pass upon such amendments.

The amendments of our modest and retiring Senator will have, therefore, four gauntlets to run. They have first to obtain a majority in both branches of Congress; next, a majority of the popular vote; then, two-thirds of both houses of Congress; and finally, the sanction of three fourths of the states.

We are thus particular in pointing out the substance of this proposition, because we have before spoken of it from a hasty glance at its contents, as an attempt to incorporate amendments into the Constitution by a mere vote of the people, without the interposition of any other method.

Having made this correction, we may as well give the proposed amendments themselves. We attach but little importance to them, but the public are entitled to see and consider them for all.

ARTICLE 1. That the territory now held, or that may hereafter be acquired by the United States, shall be divided by a line from the east to the west on the parallel of 36 degrees 30 minutes north latitude.

ART. 2. That in all territory north of said line of latitude, involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crime, is prohibited; and in all territory south of said line, involuntary servitude as it now exists in States south of Mason and Dixon's line is hereby recognized, and shall be sustained by all departments of the Territorial Government; and when any territory north of said line within such boundaries as Congress may prescribe shall contain the population requisite for a member of Congress according to the then Federal ratio of representation of the people of the United States, it shall then be the duty of Congress to admit such Territory into the Union on terms of equality with the original States.

ART. 3. Congress shall have power to abolish slavery in places under its exclusive jurisdiction, and situate within the limits of States that permit the holding of slaves; nor shall Congress have the power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia so long as it exists in the States of Maryland and Virginia, or either of them, not without just compensation being first made to the owners of such slaves.

ART. 4. That, in addition to the provisions of the third paragraph of the second section of the fourth article of the Constitution of the United States, Congress shall have power to provide by law, and it shall be its duty to provide, that the United States shall pay the owner who shall apply for it the full value of his fugitive slave in all cases where the marshal, or other officer whose duty it was to arrest the said fugitive, was prevented from so doing by violence or intimidation of a mob, or riotous assemblage, or when after arrest of such fugitive, he was rescued by force and violence, and the owner thereby prevented and obstructed in the pursuit of his remedy for recovery of his fugitive slave under the said clause of the Constitution, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, and in all such cases when the United States shall pay for such fugitive, they shall have the right, in their own name, to sue the county in which the said violence, intimidation, or rescue was committed, and to recover from it, with interest and damages, the amount paid by them for the said fugitive, and the said county, after it has paid the said amount to the United States, may, for its indemnity, sue and recover from the wrong doers or rescuers by whom the owner was prevented from the recovery of his fugitive slave, in like manner as the owner himself might have sued and recovered.

ART. 5. Congress shall have no power to prohibit or hinder the transportation of slaves from one State to another, or to territory in which states are by law permitted to be held; whether the transportation be by land, the navigable rivers, or by sea; but the African slave trade shall never be revived, except by the unanimous consent of both branches of Congress.

ART. 6. That, hereafter, the President of the United States shall hold office during the term of six years, and shall not be eligible to re-election.

ART. 7. The Constitution shall not be hereafter amended so as to destroy the effect of the third paragraph of the second section of the first article of the Constitution; nor the third paragraph of the section of the fourth article of the Constitution, nor so as to authorize Congress to interfere with or destroy any of the domestic institutions of the States, without the consent of all the States.

We can never, for one, give our vote in favor of any such propositions. The amendments are drawn in a loose, slipshod manner, are undigested in tone, and would mar the general harmony of the instrument they propose to amend.

SECESSION AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.—The Louisville, (Ky.,) *Journal* says:

"A distinguished gentleman, just from Charleston, informs us that a fearful reign of terror prevails there. The secession authorities, knowing exactly what all the rich men, merchants and persons engaged in business of every kind, generally have in bank, and what means of other kinds they are supposed to have at their command, continually levy upon them accordingly, no man daring to resist the levy, inasmuch as the wild and infuriated mob is ready to execute vengeance upon every man deemed refractory. Our informant says that the deepest distress and the deepest alarm go hand in hand, and that all the railroads and other roads leading from South Carolina are thronged with persons escaping from the State, as if they felt that a rain of fire and brimstone was already falling upon it. If South Carolina be but left to herself a little longer, the spirit of rebellion and revolution will perish within her borders like a rat in an exhausted receiver."

FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23.—Chief Justice Taney has returned, through the clerk of the Supreme Court, the application of *E. C. Treadwell, of New York*, for writs to bring before the court certain prominent secession leaders, on a charge of treason.

A telegram received to day from Pensacola, states that the combined forces of Florida and Alabama amount to four thousand men, and they are ready to attack Fort Pickens. A battery of heavy columbiads is in position to storm in the walls of the fort.—*N. Y. Com. Adv.*

Dispatches to the Philadelphia *Press* says:

Colonel Chase, commanding the Alabama and other Secession troops, who have been threatening an attack upon Fort Pickens, telegraphed to this city last night that no attack would be made. This suspension of hostilities, I learn, was advised by Southern Senators, who telegraphed Colonel Chase to that effect.

The amendment to the bill admitting Kansas, which was placed on it in the Senate, providing for the establishment of a juuicial district, was effected through the incessant efforts of Senator Fitch, of Indiana, with the aid of Senators Bigler, Pugh, John S. Thomson, and Latham. The object of the amendment is said to be the anxiety of the Senators from Indiana to induce Mr. Buchanan to appoint the celebrated Judge Pettit United States Judge for life in the new State of Kansas, prior to the close of his administration.

I am disposed to believe at this moment that our friends may put the Morrill tariff bill through tomorrow. They are in high hopes as I send off this dispatch.

We will have plenty of United States troops here on the fourth of March. General Scott is providing for all emergencies that may possibly turn up. There will be here three companies of light artillery; two companies of light dragoons; and five companies of infantry; making a total of about eight hundred men. Other troops are stationed in the vicinity; some are in Fort Washington, below Alexandria, others in Fort McHenry, near Baltimore.

The telegrams of the *Tribune* say:

I learn from a source high in authority at Charleston that Col. Hagner, of the army, formerly of South Carolina, is the chosen leader of the party of gentlemen of the first families of Virginia who have formed an organization for the purpose of seizing Washington by a *coup de main*.

The party who informed the rebel authorities at Charleston of the sailing of the Star of the West, is Dr. Alexander Jones, the market reporter of the N. Y. *Herald*. He sent a dispatch to that effect to the managers of the Charleston *Mercury*.

The news of the erection of powerful batteries at Memphis, on the Mississippi river, fires the representatives of the whole Northwest.

Every effort will be made to shape the Southern government as soon as practicable, with a view of presenting a formidable organization before the 4th of March. It is to be called The Confederacy of North America. The present constitution of the United States will be adopted, with an amendment extending the period of naturalization to twenty-one years.

A dispatch was received by Col. Hayne to-day from Gov. Pickens stating that Major Anderson had free access to the Post Office and supplies, and good feeling between him and the authorities were established.

Six or seven hundred bags of newspapers were circulated at the New Orleans Post Office on the 12th, which had been lying there for several weeks, under the pretext that there was not sufficient clerical force to assort and forward them. An order had been issued directing their immediate distribution, and demanding an explanation of this shameful detention. Mr. Slidell's men are too much engaged with secession to regard their public duties.

The mail between Charleston and Fernandina, Florida, has been cut off, because the steamers on that route were withdrawn and appropriated to purposes hostile to the Government. Florida is beginning to feel the benefits of secession, which her leaders promised would follow so rapidly.

Dispatches to the N. Y. *Times* say