The Pittsburgh Post.

16412

Jam[illegible] Editor & Proprietor.

SATURDAY MORNING, NOVEMBER 1, 1862.

Vol. XX.—Established [illegible]

DAILY POST.

IMPORTANT CORRESPONDENCE.

The History of the Crittenden Compromise—It was Rejected by the Republicans in Congress—If adopted, the South would have taken it—It would Have saved the Union and Prevented War—Letter from Ex-Senator Bigler, of Pennsylvania.

We take the following from the Harrisburg *Patriot and Union* of October 6th:

CLEARFIELD, September 27th, 1862.

HON. WM. BIGLER—*Dear Sir:* The Hon. L. W. Hall, at present the candidate of the Republican party for the State Senate in this district, in the course of his address to the people on the evening of the 22d instant, stated that some Republican members of the United States Senate had voted for the Crittenden Compromise, and some voted against it, and that it would have been carried had all the Southern men voted for it; or words to that effect. He also complained that certain Senators from the Cotton States had withheld their votes on the Clark amendment, by which the Crittenden Compromise was defeated.

As you were a member of the United States Senate at the time, and acted a conspicuous part in favor of that and other measures of adjustment during the memorable session of 1860 and 1861, and must be very familiar with the facts, we respectfully request that you furnish us, for the public use, a brief history of the proceedings of the Senate on the resolution familiarly known as the Crittenden Compromise, and of the surrounding circumstances.

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CLEARFIELD, September 29, 1862.

GENTLEMEN:—I am in receipt of your letter, and with pleasure proceed to comply with your request. In doing this I shall endeavor to be brief, though it must be obvious that anything like a full history of the proceedings of the United States Senate on the resolutions familiarly known as the Crittenden Compromise, and the occurences incident thereto, cannot be compressed into a very short story.

You can all bear me witness that in the addresses I have made to the people, since my retiracy from the Senate, I have not sought to press this subject upon their consideration in any party light; I have held that the Government and country must be saved, no matter whose folly and madness had imperiled them, that we should first extinguish the flames that are consuming our national fabric, and afterward look up and punish the incendiary who had applied the torch; but as the subject has been brought [illegible] Republican party, for partisan ends, and statements made inconsistent with the record, it is eminently proper that the facts—at least all the essential facts—should be given to the public.

It is not true that some Republican members of the Senate supported the "Crittenden Compromise" and some opposed it. They opposed it throughout, and without an exception. Their efforts to defeat it were in the usual shape of postponements, and it was not until within a few hours of the close of the session that a direct vote was had on the proposition itself.

On the 14th of January, they cast a united vote against its consideration, and on the 15th they did the same thing, in order to consider the Pacific Railroad Bill.

But the first test vote was had on the 17th day of January, on the motion of Mr. Clark, of New Hampshire, to strike out the Crittenden proposition and insert certain resolutions of his own, the only object manifestly being the defeat of the former. The yeas and nays on this vote were as follows.

Yeas—Messrs. Anthony, Baker, Bingham, Cameron, Chandler, Clark, Collmaer, Dixon, Doolittle, Durkee, Fessenden, Foot, Foster, Grimes, Hale, Harlan, King, Seward, Simmons, Sumner, Ten Eyck, Trumbull, Wade, Wilkinson, and Wilson—25

Nays—Messrs. Bayard, Bigler, Bragg, Bright, Clingman, Crittenden, Fitch, Green, Lane, Latham, Mason Nicholson, Pearce, Polk, Powell, Pugh, Rice, Saulsbury and Sebastian—28.

So Mr. Clark's amendment prevailed and the Crittenden proposition was defeated.

On the announcement of this result the whole subject was laid on the table.

This was the vote on which some six or seven Senators from the Cotton States withheld their votes, and of this I will speak hereafter.

It is true that within a few hours after these proceedings, as though alarmed about the consequence of what had been done, Senator Cameron moved a reconsideration of the vote by which the proposition had been defeated.

This motion came up for consideration on the 16th, and to the amazement of everybody not in the secret, Senator Cameron voted against his own motion, and was joined by every other Senator of his party. The vote is recorded on page 443 of the 1st volume *Congression Globe*, and is as follows:

YEAS—Messrs. Bayard, Bigler, Bragg, Bright, Clingman, Crittenden, Douglas, Fitch, Green, Gwin, Hunter, Johnson of Arkansas, Johnson of Tennessee, Kennedy, Lane, Latham, Mason, Nicholson, Pearce, Polk, Pugh, Powell, Rice, Saulsbury, Sebastian and Slidell—27.

NAYS—Messrs. Anthony, Baker, Bingham, Cameron, Chandler, Clark, Collamer, Dixon, Doolittle, Fessenden, Foote, Foster, Grimes, Hale, Harlan, King, Seward, Simmons, Sumner, Ten Eyck, Wade, Wigfall, Wilkinson, and Wilson—24.

This vote was regarded by many as conclusive against the Crittenden proposition, for the reason that the Republican Senators, after a full deliberation and consultation, had cast a united vote against it. I shall never forget the appearance and bearing of that venerable patriot, John J. Crittenden, on the announcement of this result. His heart seemed full to overflowing with grief, and his countenance bore unmistakeable marks of anguish and despair. The motion of Senator Cameron to reconsider had inspired him with hope, strong hope; but the united vote of the Republican Senators against his proposition showed him too clearly that his efforts were vain.

The final vote was taken directly on agreeing to the Crittenden proposition on the 2d of March, one day before the final adjournment of Congress, and is recorded on page 1,405 of the *Congressional* Globe, second part. On this vote every Democrat and every Southern Senator—including Mr. Wigfall, who voted against the consideration of Mr. Clark's amendment, voted for the proposition, and every Republican against it.

As for the Cotton State Senators who withheld their votes on the 16th January, so that Mr. Clark's amendment might prevail, I have certainly no apology to make for their mischievous and wicked conduct on that or any other occasion, but if they are blameworthy for withholding their votes and not sustaining the Crittenden proposition what shall we say of the Republican Senators, who at the same time cast a solid vote against it, as I have already shown. It was no half way business with them—they aimed directly at its final defeat. Some of the Southern Senators, on the other hand, who had withheld their votes on the 16th—Messrs. Slidell, Hemphill and Johnson, of Arkansas—by the 18th, had repented their error and cast their votes to reconsider and revive the compromise proposition, but the Republicans persisted in their hostility to the end.

Nor is it true the votes of the Cotton States Senators with those of all the other Southern Senators and those of all the Northern Democrats, could have saved and secured the Crittenden Compromise. They could have given it a majority, but everybody knows that the Constitution requires a vote of two thirds to submit amendments to the Constitution for the ratification of States. These could not be had without eight or ten Republican votes. But suppose the Constitution did not require, what would it have availed to have adopted a settlement by a mere party vote? It was a compromise between the two sections that the exigency required. The Republican was the dominant party in the North, and no compromise or adjustment could be successful either in the Senate or before the people, without their active support. They constituted one of the parties to the issue, and it would have been folly, worse than folly, to have attempted a settlement without their sanction and support before the country.

But no one can misunderstand the real object of the Republican orators in parading the fact that six or eight Southern Senators had, at one time, withheld their votes from the Crittenden proposition. It was to show that the South was not for it and did not desire a compromise, and hence the Republicans are not responsible for the horrid consequences of its failure. On this point the testimony is very conclusive and I shall give it at some length, please or displease whom it may. If Republicans choose to take the responsibility of saying that they were against the proposition and determined to make no settlement, however we may lament their policy no one could object to that position as matter of fact; but they will forever fail to satisfy the world that the South was not fairly committed to a settlement on the basis of the Crittenden proposition, or that the Northern Democrats would not have compromised on that ground, had they possessed the power to do so. I am aware that there are plenty of Republicans who would still spurn to settle with the South on such conditions, as there are radical fanatics who would not take that section back into the Union even on the conditions of the Constitution. They [illegible] can have no [illegible] sentiments.

When Congress assembled in December, 1860, it was obvious to every one who was at all willing to heed the signs of the times, that the peace of the country was in imminent peril; the natural consequences of a prolonged war of crimination and recrimination between the extreme and impracticable men of the North and South. The anxious inquiry was heard everywhere, "What can be done to allay the agitation and save the peace and unity of our country?" Among those who were willing to make an effort to compromise and settle, regardless of sectional, party or personal considerations, consultation after consultation was held. The first great task was to discover whether it was possible to bring the North up to ground on which the North could stand. Many and various were the propositions and suggestions produced. But it was finally concluded that the proposition of the venerable Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Crittenden), was the most likely to command the requisite support in Congress and before the people. These, together with all others of a similar character, were referred to a select committee, composed of the following Senators: Messrs. Crittenden, Powell, Hunter, Seward, Toombs, Douglas, Collamer, Davis, Wade, Bigler, Rice, Doolittle and Grimes—five Southern men, five Republicans and three Northern Democrats.

The Southern and Republican Senators were recorded as the parties of the issue, and hence a rule was adopted that no proposition should be reported to the Senate as a compromise unless it received a majority of both sides. All the Southern Senators, save Mr. Davis and Mr. Toombs, were known to favor the Crittenden proposition. On the 23d of December this proposition came up for consideration, and it became necessary for Messrs. Davis and Toombs to take their positions in regard to it, and I shall never forget the substance of what both said, for I regarded their course as involving the fate of the Compromise. Mr. Davis said that, "for himself the proposition would be a bitter pill, for he held that his constituents had an equal right with those of any other Senator to go into the common Territories and occupy and enjoy them with whatever might be their property at the time; but, nevertheless, in view of the great stake involved, if the Republican party would go for it in good faith, he would unite with them." Mr. Toombs expressed nearly the same sentiments and declared that his State would accept the proposition as a final settlement. Mr. Toombs also, in open Senate, on the 7th of January, used the following language:

"But although I insist on this perfect equality in the Territory, yet when it was proposed, as I now understand the Senator from Kentucky to propose, that the line of 36 30 shall be extended, acknowledging and protecting our property on the south side of that line, for the sake of peace—permanent peace—I said to the Committee of Thirteen, as I say here, that with other satisfactory provisions I would accept it."—*Congressional Globe, Page* 270, 1*st*.

In addition to my own testimony of what occurred in the Committee of Thirteen, I present extracts from speeches of Mr. Douglas and Mr. Pugh, bearing directly on this point.

On the 3d of January, in the course of an elaborate speech, Mr. Douglas used the following language:

"If you of the Republican side are not willing to accept this nor the proposition of the Senator from Kentucky, pray tell us what you will do? I address the inquiry to the Republicans alone, for the reason that in the Committee of Thirteen, a few days ago, every member from the South, including those from the Cotton States, (Messrs. Davis and Toombs,) expressed their readiness to accept the proposition of my venerable friend from Kentucky as a final settlement of the controversy, if tendered and sustained by the Republican members. Hence the sole responsibility of our disagreement and the only difficulty in the way of an amicable adjustment, is with the Republican party."

These remarks were made, as well as I remember, before a very full Senate, in the presence of nearly, if not quite, all the Republican and Southern Senators and no one dared to dispute the facts stated.

Mr. Pugh, on the 2d day of March, in the course of a very able speech, remarked:

"But suppose that Senator does promise me a vote on the Crittenden propositions; I have followed him for three months; I have followed my honorable friend from Kentucky, (Mr. Crittenden,) for three months; I have followed my friend, the Senator from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Bigler,) for three months; I have voted with him on all these propositions at a time when there were twelve other Senators in this chamber on whose votes we could rely; and what came of it all? Did we ever get a vote on the Crittenden propositions? Never. Did we ever get a vote on the Peace Conference proposition? Never. Did we ever get a vote on the bill introduced by the Senator from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Bigler,) to submit these propositions to a vote of the people? Never. They were not strong enough to displace the Pacific Railroad Bill, which stood here and defied them in the Senate for more than a month. They were not strong enough to set aside this plunder bill you call a tariff. They were not strong enough to beat a Pension Bill one morning. For three long months have I followed the Senator, and others, begging for a vote on these questions; never can we get it—never; and now I am to be deluded no longer; and I use that word delusion certainly in no unkind sense to my friend.

"The Crittenden proposition has been indorsed by the almost unanimous vote of the Legislature of Kentucky. It has been indorsed by the Legislature of the noble old Commonwealth of Virginia. It has been petitioned for by a larger number of electors of the United States than any other proposition that was ever before Congress. I believe in my heart, to-day, that it would carry an overwhelming majority of the people of my State; aye, sir, and of nearly every other State in the Union. Before the Senators from the State of Mississippi left this chamber, I heard one of them, who now assumes, at least, to be President of the Southern Confederacy, propose to accept it and to maintain the Union, if that proposition could receive the vote it ought to receive from the other side of the chamber. Therefore, of all your propositions, of all your amendments, knowing as I do, and knowing that the historian will write it down, at any time before the 1st of January a two thirds vote for the Crittenden Resolutions in this chamber would have saved every State in the Union but South Carolina. Georgia would be here by her representatives and Louisiana also—those two great States, which, at least, would have broken the whole column of secession."

Mr. Douglas, at the same time, said in reply: "I can confirm the Senator's declaration that Senator Davis himself, when on the Committee of Thirteen, was ready at all times to compromise on the Crittenden propositions. I will go further and say that Mr. Toombs was also ready to do so."

But if this testimony were not in existence at all, do we not all know that the great State of Virginia indorsed that proposition and submitted it to the other States as a [illegible] final adjustment [illegible] permanent peace? It was this basis on which that State called for the Peace Conference which assembled soon thereafter.

It was also indorsed by almost the unanimous vote of the Legislature of Kentucky and subsequently by those of Tennessee and North Carolina. But it is useless to add testimony. The Republican members of the Senate were against the Crittenden proposition, and the radicals of that body were against any and every adjustment. When the Peace Conference had assembled, and there was some hope of a satisfactory settlement, it is well known that Mr. Chandler, Mr. Harlan, and others, urged their respective Governors to send on impracticable fanatics as commissioners, in order to defeat a compromise.

In what I have said I have not intended to extenuate or excuse the wickedness of the Secessionists. Bad and impolitic as was the policy of the Northern radicals, it furnished no sufficient reason for Secession rebellion and war; but I believed most sincerely then, as I do now, that the acceptance of Mr. Crittenden's proposition by one third of the Republicans in Congress at the right time, would have broken down Secession in nearly all the States that now claim to be out of the Union, and it might have been accepted without any sacrifice of honor or principle. So far as the common territory of the United States was concerned, it proposed an equitable partition, giving the North 900,000 square miles, and the South about 300,000. No umpire that could have been selected would have given the North more. If, then, it was a material interest and value we were contending for, it gave us our full share; if it was the application of a political principle the Republicans were struggling for, it allowed the application of their doctrine to three-fourths of an estate that belonged to all the States and all the people. It expressly excluded slavery from 900,000 miles of this estate, and allowed it in the remaining 300,000.

The Republicans, it is true, had just elected a President, and were about to take possession of the Government; but still the popular vote in the several States showed that they were over a million of votes in the minority of the electors of the United States. Being a million in the minority, if they secured the application of their principles to three fourths of all the territory, was that not enough? Could they not on that have boasted of a great triumph? For a time these arguments and considerations seemed to have weight with the more moderate and conservative of the Republican Senators. Indeed, at one time I had strong hopes of settlement. But the radicals rallied in force, headed by Mr. Greeley, and the current was soon changed. We were then met with the argument that the people, in the election of Mr. Lincoln, had decided to exclude slavery from all the territory, and that the members of Congress dare not attempt to reverse that decision. We then determined to go a step further and endeavor to overcome this obstacle, and it was to this end, after consultation with Mr. Crittenden and others, that I myself introduced a bill into the Senate providing for taking the sense of the people of the several States on the Crittenden proposition, for the direction of the members of Congress in voting for or against its submission for the ratification of the States, as an amendment to the Constitution.

This was an appeal to the source of all political power, and would have relieved the members of all serious responsibility. The vote of the representative would have been in accordance with the vote of his constituents, either for or against the proposition. The only objection made was that it was somewhat irregular and extraordinary. But the same men could not make that objection at present. Too many extraordinary things have since been done by their chosen agents. I believed with the Senator from Ohio, as I believe still, [illegible] the proposition would have [illegible] majority [illegible] in nearly all the States of the Union, but it shared the fate of all other efforts for settlement. Would to God the country was now in the condition it was then, and that the people could be allowed to settle the controversy for themselves under the light of eighteen months' experience of war and carnage, and countless sacrifice of national strength and character.

Very truly, your obedient servant,
WM. BIGLER.

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Lucent Oil Works. DUNCAN, DUNLAP & CO., Manufacturers of PURE WHITE REFINED CARBON OILS. Office, NO. 291 LIBERTY STREET, Pittsburgh, Pa.

JOHN LITTLE, JR., NO. 106 FOURTH STREET, STOCK AND BILL BROKER. Promissory Notes, Stock Bonds, and Mortgages bought and sold.

TIERNAN & GETTY, Wholesale and Retail Grocers, IMPORTERS AND DEALERS IN TEAS, WINES, LIQUORS, &c. NORTH-EAST corner of OHIO STREET AND THE DIAMOND, ALLEGHENY CITY.

THE ELDORADO, CORNER FIFTH & SMITHFIELD STREETS, (Opposite the Post Office.) THE SUBSCRIBER [illegible] ... JOHN LEE.

WM. M. FABER [illegible] STEAM ENGINE BUILDERS, [illegible] Iron Founders ...

DAUB & CAPPELL, MERCHANT TAILORS, NO. 186 SMITHFIELD STREET. WE HAVE JUST RECEIVED [illegible] FALL GOODS, Cloths, Cassimeres, Vestings, ... ALSO—Full stock of GENT'S FURNISHING GOODS ...

CO-PARTNERSHIP. THE UNDERSIGNED HAVE ... the CARPET BUSINESS ... W. M'CLINTOCK & SON ...

CARPETS ... WALL PAPERS. WINDOW CURTAINS, &c. New Styles for Spring of 1862. A Great Variety and Fine Assortment ... For sale by THOMAS PALMER, NO. 91 WOOD STREET, Between 4th & 5th, 3d door below Diamond alley.

CORNWELL & KERR, CARRIAGE MANUFACTURERS, DUQUESNE WAY, [illegible] ST. CLAIR STREET.

[illegible] SALZELL [illegible] Wholesale Grocers, COMMISSION AND FORWARDING MERCHANTS, AND Dealers in Produce and Pittsburgh Manufactures, No. 251 LIBERTY STREET.

LAKE SUPERIOR COPPER MINES, SMELTING WORKS. PARK, M'CURDY & CO. Manufacturers of [illegible] Sheathing, Brazier's and Bolt Copper, ...

JOHN F [illegible] GUNS [illegible] ALLEGHENY CITY ...

Cornucopia [illegible] CORNER OF UNION AND FIFTH STREETS ...

PITTSBURGH [illegible] Wood Street ... Pianos ...

S. & U. P. MARKLE, BOOK, NEWS [illegible] WRAPPING PAPER, [illegible] NO. 27 WOOD STREET, ... NO. 25 SMITHFIELD STREET ...

OWEN BYRNE ... MERCHANT TAILOR ...

[illegible] NEW CROP OF FRUIT ... SMITH PARK ... NINTH WARD [illegible]