



RIGHT OR WRONG.

WHEN RIGHT, TO BE KEPT RIGHT, WHEN WRONG, TO BE PUT RIGHT.

EBENSBURG: THURSDAY.....NOVEMBER 7. Thanksgiving Proclamation.

The following is a correct copy of Gov. Curtin's proclamation appointing a day of Thanksgiving, that previously published having been considerably mutilated:

PENNSYLVANIA, SS: In the name and by the authority of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, ANDREW G. CURTIN, Governor of said Commonwealth.

PROCLAMATION. WHEREAS, every good gift is from above and comes down to us from the Almighty, to whom it is meet, right and the bounden duty of every people to render thanks for His mercies:

Therefore, I, ANDREW G. CURTIN, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do recommend to the people of this Commonwealth, that they set apart THURSDAY, 29th of NOVEMBER NEXT, as a day of solemn Thanksgiving to God, for having prepared our corn and watered our furrows, and blessed the labors of the husbandman, and crowned the year with His goodness, in the increase of the ground and the gathering in of the fruits thereof, so that our barns are filled with plenty; and for having looked favorably on this Commonwealth, and strengthened the bars of her gates, and blessed the children within her, and made men to be of one mind, and preserved peace in her borders; Respecting Him also on behalf of these United States, that our beloved country may have deliverance from those great and apparent dangers wherewith she is compassed, and that the brave and loyal men now battling in the field for her life may have their arms made strong and their blows heavy, and may be shielded by His divine power, and that He will mercifully still the outrages of perverse, violent, unruly and rebellious people, and make them clean hearts, and renew a right spirit within them, and give them grace that they may see the error of their ways and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and heretofore, in all godliness and honesty, obediently walk in His holy commandments, and in submission to the just and manifest authority of the republic, so that we, leading a quiet and peaceful life, may continually offer unto Him our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State, at Harrisburg, this Sixteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and of the Commonwealth the eighty-sixth.

A. G. CURTIN. BY THE GOVERNOR: ELI SLIFER, Sec. of the Commonwealth.

Our Government.

The question of government has always been a popular one, but it has become especially so to the people of the North since their brethren of the South have undertaken, by force of arms, to carry out their odious doctrine of Secession. We believe we have not hitherto written anything bearing directly upon this topic, and it may not be amiss, therefore, to glance briefly at some of the principles which underlie the institutions of our Republic. Our government is an exceedingly complicated fabric, and well deserving of much more careful study than it receives from a large portion of those who exercise the privileges of citizens.

What, then, is the character of the peculiar form of government which the founders of the American Republic aimed to establish?

It has been asserted by a "Southern gentleman," that "all government begins with usurpation, and is continued by force," but the great charter of our independence declares, that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Unquestionably the latter declaration is the correct one, so far, at any rate, as our own government is concerned. The "just powers" vested in the government of a free republic, are neither more nor less than the result of a voluntary abandonment, of individual freedom—a surrendering up of what can be of no great value to the individual—in return for the benefits of security, the enjoyment of property, and the preservation of order. A government so constituted is a union of the people, for the accomplishment of mutual benefits and advantages, and without which they cannot be secured. Experience has shown that the people of a country are ever in danger of having outrages perpetrated upon them, by rapacious nations, and of having their liberties imperiled through the ambition and avarice of their fellowmen. The great aim of an honest government, therefore, is to defend its people from these and kindred dangers, and this object was never successfully attained until after the formation of our Republic. It has been accomplished through our institutions, in a much greater degree than any other, and our people, it cannot be denied, have enjoyed more security and

more peace, and have endured less oppression than have those of any other country.

All this results from the fact that our government is divided into different departments, each intended to check and balance the other. The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law, and is so declared in that instrument, as framed and ratified by the people of each State. It withholds to the several states, all but the specifically granted powers, and distributes the exercise of these between the Legislative, Executive and Judicial authorities. Thus, the President, as Commander-in-chief, has the direction and control of the military power, but he can use it only in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the laws; and without the consent of Congress he has no supplies to render it efficient.—Congress, as is well known, is composed of two bodies. One of these represents the people, and the other the State, and either is powerless to act without the consent of the other. Paramount to Congress is the Supreme Court of the United States. To that judicial tribunal is given the power to expound the law, and especially that supreme law called the Constitution, and when its decisions and interpretations are rightfully made, they are entitled to the highest consideration and respect.

It is manifest, therefore, that the power of the President is limited, and that, in the exercise of his functions, he is subject to many salutary checks. This is very well, and tends to show the wisdom and foresight which characterized the framers of our glorious Constitution. It will be generally conceded that the administration of JAMES BUCHANAN had quite as much power in their hands as it is safe to trust to such ambitious rulers. In the present crisis, however, we could almost wish that ABRAHAM LINCOLN had greater power than that conferred upon him by the Constitution, as we feel confident it would be judiciously used; still we would not desire to see the power of the office enlarged, because if his successor should happen to be a reckless or designing man, he might use it to deprive the people of their liberties.

One of the great excellencies in our government is, that the Federal Constitution provides in itself a mode for its amendment, in which such an object may be attained peaceably and readily, and yet not without proper care and deliberation. How unwise and impolitic therefore in the people of the South to resort to secession and rebellion as a remedy for their fancied grievances, rather than the peaceful mode of redress here pointed out in the Constitution! Bear in mind we offer no argument against the "right of secession." We utterly repudiate and ignore all such trumpery, and if we did not, the time to argue with the knaves who assert the monstrous heresy has long since passed. But, supposing such "right" to exist, how wicked and unpardonable in its advocates to attempt to enforce it, by an appeal to arms, without first endeavoring to attain their ends through legal and constitutional means! It seems to us, that, if there is one place in the infernal regions, set apart expressly for the worst men the world has ever seen, that place will be occupied by the villains who are now attempting the overthrow of the federal government.

The Traitor Breckinridge.

We publish elsewhere an article from the Louisville Journal, touching the resignation by this vile traitor, of his seat in the United States Senate, and we ask our readers to give it a careful perusal. We especially recommend that our neighbor of the Democrat & Sentinel give it at least a casual reading, and should he like the style and temper of it, to insert it in his columns. It may give his readers some adequate idea of the sort of man he supported for President last year—a man whom, so far as we know, he has never yet said aught against, though he has been plotting treason for years! Last winter after the work of secession had fairly commenced; when its high priests were meditating forcible resistance to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, and many a knife was being whetted for the fray, it was eloquently asked by a Democrat, in Congress, if the candidate of the secessionists, Hon. John C. Breckinridge, did not favor these plots, and if he were not for a dismemberment of the Union, why did he not speak out? Why not lift his potent voice above the storm, and say to his followers: "Stay your hands. Imbrue them not in fraternal blood, or in the blood of your government!" In the name of liberty, in the name of his ancestors, in the name of humanity, he was beseeched to do so. Had he no mother to plead with him as Coriolanus had? and would it have been too much for him to say: "Mother, you have saved Rome, but lost a son?"

But no. Breckinridge would not speak. He would not utter a word in behalf of that Union which had honored him so much; he would not utter a word in condemnation of the miscreants who were seeking its destruction. He kept his lips hermetically sealed on this vital, this all-absorbing topic. But treason was ranking in his breast all the while; indeed, it may be said that—

"The culture of treason feeds In the bosoms of such men."

Of all the scoundrels who have directly or indirectly participated in the business of secession, we consider Breckinridge the worst. His term of office as Vice President did not expire until several months after the work of secession had practically been commenced, and he immediately took his seat for a full term in the United States Senate. Had he been inclined to do right, he could have made these positions tell mightily in behalf of the Union. But, with his oath to support the Constitution yet fresh upon his lips, he saw fit to sell himself to the enemies of his country. And now, after prostituting his high office to the dirty business of collecting information to be used by the rebels, and making his treason so apparent that he dare not go back to Washington, he resigns his senatorial position, and goes square into the rebel camp. Well, let him go. He will fill the measure of his infamous career in due season, and under a wise economy of Providence, he will go down—

To the vile dust from whence he sprung, Unwept, unhonored and unsung.

Put Them Through.

Privateering under the letters of marque of Jeff. Davis is piracy, and the penalty of piracy is death. A number of the scamps engaged in this nefarious business having been tried and convicted in the United States' Courts, the question arises, what disposition will be made of them by the government? That they "ought to be hung, and well hung at that," will, we feel sure, be the general feeling in the North; but then there are other considerations connected with this matter which must not be overlooked.

It is well known that there are a number of brave and good men from the North now imprisoned at the South; and, as our government cannot exchange prisoners, without tacitly acknowledging the independence of the Southern Confederacy, it is quite likely that most, if not all of these unfortunate will be detained there until peace is in some way re-established. It is feared, therefore, by many, that the South would retaliate upon these men, if our government should inflict death upon the piratical convicts; and it is urged that a humane administration ought rather to permit the guilty to escape their deserts, than to involve the innocent and worthy in ruin.

It is not always practicable to punish bold violators of the law promptly, without inflicting great distress upon innocent people, and we readily admit the trying position of the administration in the premises. But, upon the whole, we think the majesty of the law ought to be vindicated, and these malefactors punished. "Every tub should stand on its own bottom." The government has now an opportunity of setting an example—of showing the ignominious fate which awaits all who would trample upon its laws with impunity—and we hope it will embrace it. These convicts are not only pirates but traitors! and ought to swing, let the consequences be what they may. Fiat justitia ruat cælum say we: "Let justice be done though the heavens should fall."

Fremont Removed!

The latest news, received yesterday, indicate that Gen. John C. Fremont, commander of the Western Military Department, has received an unconditional order from Washington relieving him at once from his command. The intelligence created intense excitement and indignation among his officers and men, many of the former signifying their intention of resigning at once. His successor has not yet been designated.

The agents of the Government, says the New York correspondent of the Philadelphia Ledger, are still busy in buying up steamers and transports, wherefore it may be inferred that the great naval expedition now on its way to Secessionia will be followed by others in due time.

The Senate and Representative chambers of the State Capitol are now undergoing a complete renovation, preparatory to being fitted up for the next Legislature, on the first Tuesday in January.

Brigadier General Thos. W. Sherman, the commander of the great Naval Expedition, is the founder of the celebrated "Sherman's Battery."

Resignation of Gen. Scott.

The following letter from Gen. Scott, announcing his purpose of retiring from the command of the army, was laid before the President on Thursday afternoon:

"HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY, Washington, Oct. 31, 1861."

"To Hon. Simon Cameron, Sec'y of War."

"SIR—For more than three years I have been unable, from a hurt, to mount a horse or walk more than a few paces at a time, and that with much pain. Other and new infirmities—drowsy and vertigo—admission me that a repose of mind and body, with the appliances of surgery and medicine are necessary to add a little more to a life already protracted much beyond the usual span of man. It is under such circumstances made doubly painful by the unnatural and unjust rebellion now raging in the Southern States of our so late prosperous and happy Union, that I am compelled to request that my name be placed on the list of army officers retired from active service. As this request is founded on an absolute right, granted by a recent act of Congress, I am entirely at liberty to say that it is with deep regret that I withdraw myself, in these momentous times, from the orders of a President who has treated me with distinguished kindness and courtesy, whom I know, upon much personal intercourse to be patriotic, without sectional partialities or prejudices, to be highly conscientious in the performance of every duty and of unrivalled activity and perseverance. And to you Mr. Secretary, whom I now officially address for the last time, I beg to acknowledge my many obligations for the uniform high consideration I have received at your hands, and have the honor to remain, sir, your obedient servant.

WINFIELD SCOTT"

A special cabinet meeting was convened on Friday morning, at nine o'clock, to take the subject into consideration. It was decided that Gen. Scott's request, under the circumstances of his advanced age and infirmities, would not be declined. Gen. McClellan was thereupon, with the unanimous agreement of the cabinet, notified that the command of the army would devolve upon him. At four o'clock in the afternoon the cabinet again waited upon the President, and attended him to the residence of Gen. Scott. On being seated the President read to the General the following order:

"On the 1st day of November, A. D., 1861, upon his own application to the President of the United States, Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott is ordered to be placed, and hereby is placed, upon the list of retired officers of the army of the United States, without reduction in his current pay, subsistence or allowances. The American people will bear with sadness and deep emotion that General Scott has withdrawn from the active control of the army. While the President and the unanimous Cabinet, express their own and the nation's sympathy in his personal affliction and their profound sense of the important public services rendered by him to his country during his long and brilliant career, among which will ever be gratefully distinguished his faithful devotion to the Constitution, the Union and the flag, when assailed by a paralytic rebellion.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

Gen. Scott thereupon rose and addressed the President and Cabinet, who had risen, as follows:

"President—This honor overwhelms me. It overpays all the services I have attempted to render to my country. If I had any claims before, they are all obliterated by this expression of approval by the President with the unanimous support of his Cabinet. I know the President the country has placed its interests in this trying crisis in safe keeping. Their councils are wise; their labors untiring as they are loyal, and their course is the right one. President, you must excuse me; I am unable to stand longer to give utterance to the feelings of gratitude which oppress me. In my retirement I shall offer up prayer to God for this administration and for my country. I shall pray for it with confidence in its success over its enemies, and that speedily."

The President then took leave of Gen. Scott, giving him his hand, and saying that he hoped soon to write him a private letter, expressive of his gratitude and affection.

The President also added: "General you will naturally feel solicitude about the gentlemen of your staff, who have rendered you and their country such faithful service. I have taken that subject into consideration. I understand that they go with you to New York. I shall desire them, at their earliest convenience after their return, to make their wishes known to me. I desire you, however, to be satisfied that, except the unavoidable privation of your counsel and society, which they so long enjoyed, the provision which will be made for them will be such as to render their situation as agreeable hereafter as it has been heretofore."

Each member of the administration then gave his hand to the veteran and retired in profound silence.

The following is the response of the Secretary of War, to the letter of Gen. Scott:

"WAR DEPT., Washington, Nov. 1. "General—It is my duty to lay before the President your letter of yesterday ask-

ing to be relieved under the recent act of Congress. On separating from you I cannot refrain from expressing my deep regret that your health, shattered by long service and repeated wounds received in your country's defence; should render it necessary for you to retire from your high position at this momentous period of our history. Although you are not to remain in active service, I yet hope that while I continue in charge of the Department over which I now preside, I shall at times be permitted to avail myself of the benefits of your counsels and sage experience.

"It has been my good fortune to enjoy a personal acquaintance with you for over thirty years, and the pleasantest relations of that long time have been greatly strengthened by your cordial and entire co-operation in all the great questions which have occupied the Department and convulsed the country for the last six months. In parting from you I can only express the hope that a merciful Providence, which has protected you amidst so many trials, will improve your health and continue your life long after the people of the country shall have been restored to their former happiness and prosperity. I am, General, very sincerely, your friend and servant.

"SIMON CAMERON, Sec'y of War. "To Lieut. Gen. Winfield Scott."

On Friday, the noble old soldier, accompanied by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of War, left Washington for New York, from whence he will shortly depart for Europe. His family is now in France.

Military Collection of Debts.

The decision of Judge Freeze, if confirmed by the President, will be a precedent of vast importance. Messrs. Bowen, Holmes & Co., of New York, and Messrs. M. L. Hallwell & Co., of this city, have sued Witmer & Co., of Alexandria, in the Provost Court, for debt due them. General Porter is the Provost General, and J. R. Freeze, Assistant Adjutant-General U. S. A., is the Provost Judge.

The decision is unequivocal that the goods remaining at Alexandria, part of them having been removed, shall be given up to the plaintiffs, that they make good their claim. One of the partners of Witmer & Co. was present, and defended the case. The principal ground of defence is that the court had no jurisdiction in the case, and the defendants ask that if the decision be against them, the matter be referred for final adjudication to the President of the United States. Judge Freeze decides that he has jurisdiction, that Alexandria is under martial law, and other courts suspended, there would be no redress for honest creditors if the Martial Court refused to act, and that this would be giving aid and comfort to the rebels, by allowing them to retain the property of loyal citizens in their hands. He refuses to allow quibbles or delays, but suspends the decree of the court for five days, until the President can be consulted.

The question is one of great interest and importance. The military power is gradually overshadowing everything, notwithstanding our traditional dread of standing armies. It is truly remarkable that the abuses have been so few. And yet there seems no escape from the conclusions of Judge Freeze. Justice must be done in the best way we can. A state of war is an anomaly, and we cannot allow advantage to be taken by traitors of quibbles to escape justice. We shall look for the decision of the President and Cabinet with much interest.

Buying Hay.

We have been much pleased with the course of General Cameron in stopping the exorbitant charges of certain speculators at Washington. Unless some of our officers are greatly belied, vast sums of money have been spent, very unnecessarily, in paying high prices for every sort of article purchased for the army in that portion of the enemy's country through which our troops have passed. This has proceeded sometimes from an amiable disposition to show that the Government was paternal and not oppressive, and sometimes from a culpable weakness, which allowed itself to be imposed upon for want of moral courage to resist.

In Washington recently, it is said certain speculators bought up all the hay that was to be had and refused to part with it except at high prices. After several trials at negotiation, avarice still holding out against decency and propriety, the Secretary of War ordered the hay to be seized in as large quantities as was needed, and then assessing it at the fair market value of forage, directed so much and no more to be paid to the owners.

We hope to see this example followed. There has been too much disposition to prey upon the Government. A little skill, common sense and moral courage would save millions of dollars to the nation.

The National Intelligencer has a letter from an officer in the United States ship Powhatan, in which the writer says: "My opinion is that the Sumter will finally turn pirate against all commerce. She has a crew composed of all nations, the greater portion being Portuguese, Spaniards and English!"

Returns from New York indicate the success of the People's Union Ticket by a heavy majority. The election was held on Tuesday.

No war news of interest has transpired the present week.

Resignation of Breckinridge.

We have heard that John C. Breckinridge has published a manifesto to the people of Kentucky, dated at Bowling Green, the Rebel headquarters, but we have been unable to get a sight of it. The St. Louis Republican appears to have been more fortunate and gives us some insight into its contents. Mr. Breckinridge says it is written at the first moment since his expulsion from home that he could place his foot on the soil of Kentucky. This is a most impudent perversion of the truth, for he never was expelled from home; he left Lexington impelled by his guilty fears of arrest, and his retreat was lighted by the burning self-consciousness of his complicity with treason.

When the mock "Duke" of Tabin's Comedy is compelled to lay aside the borrowed robes of authority he does it with a constrained grace "as a well-bred dog walks down stairs when he sees preparations making for kicking him down," and in the same spirit Breckinridge resigns his seat as a member of the Senate of the United States, saying, "I exchange with proud satisfaction a term of six years in the United States Senate for the musket of a soldier." This is the bluster of the "Ancient Pistol," for we all know that the service of the ex-Senator, if he serves at all, will be in some honorary position, with sword and on a charger. Our St. Louis cotemporary says the address would fill two of its columns, and is made up of misrepresentations. Breckinridge says there is no longer a Senate of the United States within the meaning and spirit of the Constitution—"the United States no longer exists—the Union is dissolved."

But Kentucky is still one of the United States; his deceived and betrayed constituents are still loyal; they recognize proudly the existence of the Government of their fathers, and they deny that the Union is dissolved. By what argument can Mr. Breckinridge assert that the Union is dissolved now more than it was in August last, or that the existence of the United States has been imperiled since the session of Congress, when he occupied his seat as a senator of the United States from the State of Kentucky, and drew his pay from the Federal Treasury for his services? If Mr. Breckinridge believed, when he took the Government's gold, that the United States no longer existed, and that the Union was dissolved, he acted like a petty larceny thief and a swindler. He knows that his course is indefensible; he is self-convicted of the vilest treachery to the State which has honored him; and, being unwilling to face the indignant people of Kentucky, he has sneaked away from their presence, and, surrounded by cutthroats and thieves, incendiaries and felons, as a body guard, has issued his impudent manifesto.

We do not care particularly about seeing the text of this last dying speech and confession of John C. Breckinridge. We know that he cannot justify his conduct, but that he has the insidious talent to conceal his real purposes beneath glittering sentences and honeyed words. The Republican calls them "frivolous and unjustifiable excuses for a bad act. But the trial and condemnation of Mr. Breckinridge were held and pronounced before the jury of popular opinion months and months ago. While he was holding the second office in the gift of this people and presiding over the Senate of the United States; while he was afterwards a candidate for the Presidency, and while he was exercising the duties of a United States Senator, he was plotting to betray his country and was in league with the infamous traitors who organized the Government.

Of all the persons engaged in this nefarious work, he achieved the lowest depth of degradation, for he allowed himself to be used as a fourth candidate, to distract and divide the vote of the country, with the full confidence that it would lead to the election of Mr. Lincoln, and thus present to the Southern malcontents a pretext for their acts of secession. While those who were his fellows in this treachery left their seats in Congress, he remained there, and gave aid to them in opposing every appropriation of men and means to resist the rebellion, although it was menacing, within five or six miles, the very Federal Capital where he was sitting. No man is more deeply and terribly responsible for the blood and pillage and crime and horror of the last six months. He knows it, too; he knows that he is as guilty as Cain after the first fratricide, and he flies from the vengeance that awaits him. He is a refugee from his native State, with the brand upon his brow and the gnawing vulture of remorse at his heart. His fate will be that of a traitor.

In the last battle, Borne down by the flying, Where mingles war's rattle With groans of the dying, There shall he be lying.

Monster of perfidy, ingrate and fiend, his name will be eternally linked with those of Judas and Arnold, and when history seeks to recount the damning deeds of those who have entitled themselves to the execration of mankind, that name will be foremost in the scroll, which was borne by one who, in the very spirit of the arch-demon, thought it "better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."—Louisville Journal, Oct. 29.

No news has been heard of the great naval expedition that sailed southwardly last week. The fleet was the largest ever dispatched on a similar errand in this continent, and will most likely make itself felt when it strikes. Charleston is supposed to be the destination.