



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

EBENSBURG: THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21. Interesting Correspondence.

BOWLING GREEN, Nov. 15, 1861. To CHARLES D. MURRAY, Esq., Editor of the Democrat & Sentinel, Ebensburg, Cambria county, Pennsylvania.

My dear Charles:—In these days of fratricidal strife, when brother is arrayed against brother, and everything around and about us smacks of sulphur and saltpetre, it is truly refreshing to doff the more cumbersome of my military trappings, and, forgetting for a brief season the toils and cares incident to my responsible position, to hold a small confab with you. For I make no idle assertion when I say that there is not within the limits of what was anciently known as the Federal Union, a single man or woman, for whom I entertain a more tender regard than for yourself. Our acquaintance dates back many years, and during all that period nothing ever occurred to mar the harmony of our amicable relations. Of a truth, we never differed in or about anything, except this—I was always a Southern man with Southern principles, while you were always a Northern man with Southern principles;—and this difference is so small in itself, that I might not even now refer to it, were it not for the magnificent fact that it is ever a source of pleasure to speak of those things with which we are most familiar. I feel, nevertheless, that I am amply justified in advertising to it if for no other reason than to illustrate how infinitesimal is the difference between tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee. And thus much in the shape of a few prolegomenary observations.

You are fully cognizant, my precious Charles, of the change—the great change—that has come over the spirit of my dream. Of a verity, things have changed, and is it strange that I, even I, should have changed with them? We have indeed fallen upon evil times. I assert this as a self-evident proposition. There was a time when we all got along swimmingly under the old Federal regime. Our patriotic ancestors had done and suffered much to establish our free institutions, and they had left us a rich legacy in the shape of the Union. To preserve the latter was to perpetuate the former, and this whilom agreeable task pre-eminently devolved upon what we used to call the Democratic Party. I had the honor to be a member—I am too modest to say a prominent member—of that venerable, though now defunct institution. It was coeval and identical with the Union itself. To talk of the one existing without the other, would simply be giving utterance to a political monstrosity. I loved that party as the apple of my eye, and even now I revere its memory. Many were the favors it showered upon my devoted head, and many more would it have showered there, had it not been cut off (not my head, but the party) in its career of usefulness and glory.

But as a serpent entered into Eden, so a worse than serpent found its way into the peaceful garden of Democracy, and from thenceforward Othello's occupation was gone. It is true we existed in name, but our substance was a ponderous nonentity. The last great victory which our organization achieved—and it was a victory—was in the election of myself to the Vice Presidency, and that elegant old public functionary, J. BUCHANAN, Esq., to the Presidency. That triumph indeed was something to be proud of—but it was like the last big kick of a strong man in the agonies of final dissolution. The seeds of destruction had already been sown in our glorious old party, and the grim messenger had marked it as a distinguished victim. It was doomed to die. I did not know it then, but I discovered it soon after, and I resolved to prepare myself for the worst.

This is not a fitting time for erimination or recrimination. I have no desire to inveigh against either the authors, aiders or abettors of Popular Sovereignty, or Squatter Sovereignty as it is sometimes poetically termed. But the truth must be spoken, and while I admit our success in 1856 with that odious doctrine in our Platform, yet I feared the infernal borey from the

outset, and more than once did I tell Mr. BUCHANAN that it would sooner or later be the death of us. The old gentleman, however, never seemed to realize the truth of the matter, and ever and anon would put me off with one of those knowing cocks of the eye, for which he has attained such a world-wide reputation. But the famous Lecompton controversy—bad luck to it—convinced even him that my apprehensions had not been unfounded. The schism thus introduced into our ranks, and every day becoming more formidable, led us both to the belief that, after the 4th day of March, in the year of our Lord, 1861, neither he nor I would be likely to have much to do in the administration of the government. But we firmly resolved to decapitate, if possible, the chief of the Sovereign Squatters, (who had the audacity to aspire to Presidential honors,) even if it should result in my own sacrifice.

I need not, my darling Charles, enter into details respecting the campaign of 1860, it being a fair presumption that you have some slight recollection of that most interesting period. You may remember that the nominating Convention originally convened at Charleston, South Carolina,—a village of no mean importance,—and that its sessions were so uproarious in that place, that it became necessary to adjourn over to Baltimore. At the latter place the nominations were made, and, *mirabile dictu*, the nominee for the Presidency—the highest office in the gift of the people—was the very man that Mr. BUCHANAN and I didn't want. The Convention had the impudence, too, to re-adopt the Cincinnati Platform, and to affix thereto certain other resolutions, which latter, with a solitary exception, savored about as much of genuine Democracy as a temperate man's breath would of old rye whiskey. The exception to which I refer, was the 5th resolution, which read as follows:

Resolved, That the Democratic Party are in favor of the acquisition of the island of Cuba, on such terms as shall be honorable to ourselves, and just to Spain.

But, happily, this obnoxious nomination was made, and these detestable resolutions were passed, without any participation whatever on the part of my friends. At a very early stage in the proceedings, they saw the course things were taking, and they determined not to submit to the will of a tyrannical majority. They, therefore, quietly withdrew—*seceshed* would be a more fashionable word—from the Convention, and formed a small tea-party of their own. Then, appealing to the world and everybody else, for the restitution of their intentions, they deliberately proceeded to business. They re-affirmed the Cincinnati Platform, as did the other Convention, but they took care to adopt a series of resolutions explanatory of that instrument, inasmuch as there had been some difference of opinion in regard to the true intent and meaning thereof. These "explanatory resolutions" were eminently sound, and such as no conscientious Democrat could object to, more especially Northern Democrats. The 4th resolution was very like unto the 5th resolution of the other Convention, already quoted, except that it had a decidedly better business jingle about it. For the sake of comparison, I beg leave to introduce it:

Resolved, That the Democratic Party are in favor of the acquisition of the island of Cuba, on such terms as shall be honorable to ourselves, and just to Spain, at the earliest practicable moment.

You will perceive, from the italicized words here, that this resolution meant something. The other advocated the acquisition of Cuba I admit; but when? It was entirely too vague and indefinite. But this resolution covered the ground fully. OLD BUCK, as I used familiarly to call him, had long desired a full and unequivocal endorsement of the views set forth by him in the Ostend Manifesto, and this resolution would almost seem to have been framed to meet his particular case. How the dear old soul's heart must have jumped when he read it!

But this resolution was not passed merely to please OLD BUCK. (By the way, friend Charles, let me entreat you, parenthetically, not to confound this OLD BUCK with JONATHAN.) There were other cogent reasons for its adoption. If time permitted, I would gladly dwell at length upon these, but under the circumstances, a simple statement of the more prominent ones must suffice. First, then, the Federal Government didn't have territory enough without Cuba. Secondly, Cuba, in the hands of a hostile power, was dangerous and annoying. Thirdly, Cuba was a very fine country, having a rich soil, a good climate and plenty of niggers.

These, my lovely Charles, were the principal reasons which induced the Democracy to commit themselves to the purchase of Cuba. The arguments of the Abolitionists and Black Republicans on

the subject are sheer gammon. It is barely possible, that, if the Federal Government had bought Cuba, and paid a few hundred millions for her, she might have seceded, and taken the money with her; but as Government did not buy her, it is quite impossible for Cuba to play off any such game. An argument which you will readily appreciate.

From this second or seceding Convention, I had, as you well remember, the honor to receive the nomination for the Presidency. For this mark of their distinguished consideration, I was, of course, duly grateful. But, inasmuch as our Party was divided, and I was a little dubious as to my success, I had some scruples about accepting the nomination. More than this, the Convention had placed JOE LANE on the ticket with me, and JOE being such a horrible speller, I feared that my connection with him would not improve my chances. But OLD BUCK was determined that I should run, and ever and anon would come and playfully slap me on the back, and say: "Bully for you, Breck! I'll bet my pile on you!" Yet, after all, I hesitated; and never did I make up my mind to bear the brunt of the campaign, until one day when I received a copy of the *Democrat & Sentinel*, with my name at its mast-head, and containing a heavy leader, in which you assured the world that I was the humble individual who should receive your distinguished support. The article was pen-marked, else I might not have seen it, but its perusal did my soul good. I felt then, that if human agency could accomplish anything at all, the Presidency was mine; and I assure you that had I been successful, you would have been substantially remembered in the shape of a mission to the Feejee islands.

But, alas! what a delusive thing is hope! How vain are the expectations of mortals here below! The day of election came and went, and behold the electoral figures: DOUGLAS had Missouri and New Jersey, 12; BELL had Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, 39; I had Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas, 72; while the "Old Rail-splitter" had the balance of the States, with a total of 180—thus giving the nasty Black Republicans a clear majority of 57 votes over the whole kit and kaboodle of us! I confess, my inestimable Charles, that these figures annoyed me not a little. I was especially indignant at the fact that Kentucky, my own state, went against me. And yet there was something in the result which plucked out the sting of my defeat. If I was beaten, I had the satisfaction of knowing that the great Sovereign Squatter was not elected; and I had, moreover, the happy reflection, that, in the elevation of a Black Republican to the Presidency, the people of the South were furnished with a splendid pretext for dissolving the Union!

Strange as it may appear to many, a pretext had long been desired. For I tell you, my incomparable Charles, though I prefer that you keep it to yourself, the idea of dissolution did not originate last fall. It has long been entertained in the South. For myself, I was always disposed to be conservative, and had I been elected to the Presidency, I could have saved the Union four years more at least. This I could have accomplished by giving all the good offices under my control, to the people of the South, it being their great forte to govern rather than to be governed. And herein is the great secret of the Southern revolt, it being understood, that after Old Abe's election the rule was to be reversed, and that they were to be governed instead of being the governors.

The work of secession, as you doubtless remember, was begun by South Carolina, that wonderful state having passed an ordinance to that effect, and declared her independence of the "accursed Union," so soon as she learned the result of the election. Her senators and representatives too promptly resigned their seats in Congress, and went home. All of which plainly showed the pluck of the state and the pluck of the people; and thus was set an example highly worthy of imitation.—I well knew from the "signs of the times," that secession was going to be the order of the day, and so one evening I called over to see OLD BUCK, to ascertain his views on the propriety of the thing. I found him rather morose and snappish at first, but after we had indulged in a nip or two, he became quite communicative. I then drew him out, and he expressed himself in substance as follows: "A state," said he, "has no right to secede from the Union. Such an act on her part would be a violation of the Federal compact, which was made by high contracting par-

ties,—the people of the United States acting in their sovereign capacity,—and no one state has a right to determine for herself whether that compact has been violated or not." At this point I interrupted OLD BUCK with this interrogatory: "Then I am to understand, Mr. BUCHANAN, that you will favor the abominable doctrine of coercion?" "Oh, bless your soul, no!" he replied. "While I claim that a state has no right to withdraw from the Union, I cheerfully admit that the Union has no right to keep her in if she chooses to go." I immediately drank OLD BUCK's health and departed.

The same evening, by appointment, I confabulated awhile with COBB and FLOYD of the Cabinet, than whom it would be impossible to find two more honest or reliable men. Of course, they were both sound on the goose question, and we were unanimous that OLD BUCK wasn't going to do much against secession. We then took counsel as to how we should demean ourselves respectively, each man having sworn to run his state out of the Union or die. COBB, being Secretary of the Treasury, was to get and hold on to all the funds and Government securities; and FLOYD, being Secretary of War, was to collect all the arms and ammunition he could, and ship them South. All of which were to be appropriated by, and used for the benefit of the Secessionists, if the exigency so required. Most nobly did COBB and FLOYD do their work, and at the close of their labor of love, they felt that they could not conscientiously longer hold offices under the Federal Government. Like high-minded, honorable men, therefore, they resigned their positions and went home. I witnessed their departure from Mr. BUCHANAN. It was very affecting indeed, tears being shed on all sides. The tears were very large too, and there were a great many of them.

I know there are plenty of mud-sills in the North who regard the conduct of COBB and FLOYD as synonymous with *stealing*. Such an opinion is contemptible, and the creature who entertains it is not fit to be a Southern gentleman's body-servant. *Stealing* indeed! Why COBB is a Colonel in Georgia, and FLOYD is a General in Virginia—both in the service of the Southern Confederacy. President DAVIS knows them both well, and he would be the last man in the world to give them Commissions, if he were not satisfied that they are perfectly honest and trustworthy.

From the time of the conversations referred to, I did all I could to advance the cause of Secession. The office of Vice President was very convenient for the purpose, and of course I used it (on the sly) while it lasted; and, as good luck had it, my friends had elected me to a full term in the Senate. So I went right out of one office into another. I took the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, with a mental reservation to support the Southern Confederacy. I kept quiet; I felt that I could do more in that way than by becoming boisterous, for my object was to gather information at Washington, and impart it to the people of the South—in other words, I had opened a small intelligence office for their benefit. For a long time I managed the thing so well, that the people of the North generally thought me loyal to the Union. But at last I was compelled to show my hand, and I did it boldly. My course in the extra session of Congress wiped away every doubt as to my true position. Since then I have been open and above-board, and—on the principle that the end justifies the means—I recently made a tour through the mountainous districts near the border lines of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, alarming the people by circulating big stories as to the intentions of the Federal Government, and using every means in my power to make converts to Secession. If anybody thinks the principle on which I did this an unsound one, all I can say is, that I despise his or her opinion. I have the proud satisfaction that Mr. DAVIS has approved of all my acts, he having been graciously pleased recently to reward my services with a Brigadier General's commission. I want no better vindication of my past career.

I came here not long since, in company with our mutual friends, BILL PRESTON and HUMPH. MARSHALL. Our journey was a very pleasant one indeed. The F.F.V.'s were delighted to see me; and at Richmond I was fairly lionized. I do not know yet how I shall like playing *General*. I am much better at playing *particular*. [Please forgive that wretched pun—it crept in unawares.] The great drawback with us is a want of provisions and clothing. The "boys" have generally very little to eat—sometimes not that much,—and many of them are compelled to keep their beds for want of something

to wear. Gen. BEAUREGARD comes round frequently to cheer us all up. His first name is PETER, and he is a very nice old gentleman. I have had the pleasure of taking several nips with him at his quarters, and once we indulged in a game of "mumbly-peg," at which I came out second best. JEFF DAVIS has already made his *marque*, and I feel confident that if BEAUREGARD gets a chance he will make his *mark*, too. [Another pun—confound it!]

Since I came here, I resigned my seat in the U. S. Senate. The only regret I had in doing so was that I should no longer be able to draw my pay. But, of course, it would never do for me to go to Washington again; I should be hung certain, and probably quartered, and I have no disposition to submit to any such operations. By the way, what is your *private* opinion of my Manifesto? I notice the *Louisville Journal* and *The Alleghanian* are very severe on both the Manifesto and its humble author; but I notice, too, that you have properly rebuked their insolence. The way you take PRENTICE and BARKER down should be a warning to all such offenders. The latter, particularly, has tried hard to get you to say something against me, but, thank Fortune, he has not succeeded. I have read every number of your paper carefully, and never yet have I seen a word reflecting upon me in the slightest degree. I sincerely thank you for all this, my unapproachable Charles, and, perhaps, it is more than I have a right to expect. But if you continue faithful, and the Southern Confederacy succeeds, and I succeed with it, I will make a man of you.

As I write, the news reaches me, that the Federal Court in Frankfort, Kentucky, has indicted me for *Treason*—the grand jury having found a true bill. Who ever heard of such presumption! They will have a good time trying me. In the words of that fine old song—slightly changed—I can proudly exclaim:

Hurrah, Hurrah! they are unucky. I've cleared the track from Old Kentucky!

I shall be glad to be remembered kindly to my friends in Cambria, of whom, I am informed, a few are still residing in that favored town of Ebensburg. Tell them, that I have "taken my stand in Dixie's land," not because I love them less, but because I love the S. C. more. If they remain true to me, however, I will not be unkindful of them.

I am rejoiced to know, that every state which voted for me last fall, except Delaware and Maryland, is a member of our glorious S. C. So, too, of Virginia and Tennessee. Missouri we yet want, and Kentucky we must have. Delaware and Maryland we don't care so much about. They are trifling little things at best, and we have come to the conclusion, that it would cost more to get them than they would be worth. If they choose to stay out in the cold, so be it.

But I must bring this rambling epistle to a close. I hope you will continue weekly to give BARKER jessie. Call him by any name you like. Of course, everybody knows he is not, and never was a Know-nothing or Abolitionist; still there is policy in saying he was and is. There is *policy* about it I say; *policy*. But you, my delectable Charles, understand this well, and will act accordingly.

Enclosed please find fifty cents in S. C. Postage Stamps, and a S. C. Bond for one dollar, (in all \$1.50), as an advance payment for one year's subscription to the *Dem. & Sent.* The stamps go here like hot cakes, and the Bond is perfectly safe, it being well secured on a cotton basis.—Please acknowledge receipt, and oblige, Yours as Ever, BRECK.

Capture of Mason and Slidell!

The entire country was electrified on Monday by the intelligence that Messrs. J. M. Mason and John Slidell, Envoys of Jeff. Davis to England and France, respectively, had been captured in the Bermuda Channel by the U. S. frigate San Jacinto, Capt. Wilkes. They had embarked on board an English steamer. They are probably now in New York.

More Fighting at Fort Pickens.

NEW YORK, Nov. 18.—Mr. Savage, United States Vice Consul at Havana, who returned from Key West, on the 10th inst., reports that fifteen hundred rebels were discovered by the Federal patrol on Santa Rosa Island, some twenty miles from Fort Pickens. The commander of the fleet sent a force who shelled the rebels off the island with great loss. The supposed object of the enemy was to get together a force of five thousand or more troops, and then make a forced march on Col. Wilson's camp, for another night attack. This report is brought by the steamer Cosmopolitan, arrived to-day from Havana.

THE GREAT NAVAL EXPEDITION. A Glorious Victory!

FORTS WALKER AND BEAUREGARD IN POSSESSION OF OUR TROOPS! CAPTURE OF BEAUFORT CONFIRMED. FULL PARTICULARS.

We last week gave all the news that had come into our possession up to the hour of going to press concerning the success of the Great Naval Expedition on the Southern coast. Herewith we append full and minute particulars of the glorious engagement at Port Royal, by which it will be seen that the Federal forces have achieved an overwhelming victory and struck Treason a deadly blow near its very birthplace. An important harbor is in our possession, Forts Walker and Beauregard are successfully reduced, and our Flag now floats triumphantly over the town of Beaufort! This is certainly glory enough for one day.

The first official intelligence of our success was brought by the steamer Beaufort, which was detailed from the Fleet for that service and arrived at Fort Monroe on Tuesday, 12th inst. She left Port Royal on the Sunday previous.

The gale encountered by the fleet was very severe. The Union and Osceola went ashore and were lost, as previously reported. The Governor's frigate at sea but the Isaac T. Smith succeeded in saving her crew.

The fleet arrived at Port Royal on Monday, the 4th instant. On Tuesday the smaller gunboats rounded and buoyed out the channel, under a fire from the forts, which did no damage. On Wednesday the weather prevented active operations, but on Thursday morning, the 7th instant, the men-of-war and gun-boats advanced to the attack. The action commenced at ten a. m., and was hotly carried on on both sides, and lasted about four hours, at the end of which time the rebels were compelled, by the shower of shells, to abandon their works and beat a hasty retreat. Our loss was eight men and officers, the chief engineer of the Mohican, killed and about twenty wounded. The rebel loss is not known. Fifty-two bodies were found by our men and buried.—All their wounded, except two were carried off.

Two forts were captured—Fort Walker, on Hilton Head, mounting twenty-three guns, and Fort Beauregard, on Bay Point, mounting nineteen guns. The guns were of heavy calibre. The forts were both new and splendid. The earthworks were of great strength, constructed in the highest style of military science and pronounced by our Engineers as impregnable against any assault by land forces.

The final retreat of the rebels was a perfect rout. They left everything, arms and equipments of all kinds, even to the officers' swords and commissions, all the letters and papers, both public and private; order books and documents were left in their flight, and fell into our hands affording our officers much valuable information.

Among the papers was a telegram from Jeff. Davis to the commander of the post, informing him of the sailing of the fleet, and that he knew their destination to be Port Royal.

The whole surrounding country was seized with a perfect panic. The day after the fight the Seneca and two other gunboats, under the command of Lieutenant Ammon, proceeded up to Beaufort, and found but one white man in the town, and he drunk, and the plantations up the river seemed to be deserted except by the negroes, who were seen in great numbers, and who, as the boats passed came down to the shore with bundles in their hands, as if expecting to be taken off. They seized all the letters in the post office at Beaufort.

After the capture of the forts the whole army—about 15,000 men—were safely landed, and established on shore. The forts were but little injured, but the rebels could not stand the explosion of our big shells.

The force of the enemy, as ascertained from their papers, was from three to four thousand men, under Gen. Drayton, of South Carolina. Our victory is complete—the enemy leaving everything but their lives, which they saved by running.

The boats from the Wash were the first to land after the fight, and Captain John Rodgers was the first man on shore. The boats returned loaded with valuable trophies of all kinds.

The rebels set a trap but it missed fire. When our brave fellows landed to take possession of the Forts, they found the rebel flag at the Fort in Hilton Head still flying, and just as one of our men pulled at the halyards to draw down the traitorous banner, an explosion took place in the house just vacated by the rebel officers, but doing little damage and injuring no one.

It was found on examination that the rebels had before evacuating the place arranged what they thought would prove a deadly trap to the victors. Mines had been laid and matches so arranged that when the halyards of the flag should be drawn down the mines would be sprung firing the magazines and blow up a whole work and involve the victors in a common ruin; but it did not go off and soon the brave old flag, the stars and stripes waved in triumph from the rebel flagstaff.