



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

EBENSBURG: THURSDAY MARCH 6.

Our Position.

We have recently been assailed, through the columns of certain so-called Democratic newspapers, as being an Abolitionist. For this there has not been even the shadow of a foundation, as every honest man who knows us will readily admit. To make a charge is one thing; to prove it is quite another thing. The former has been made, it is true, but the latter, we submit, has not been forthcoming, and with a sublime consciousness that it could not be adduced from any thing we have ever done, or said, or written, we have hitherto contented ourselves with merely interposing our denial against a baseless fabrication, dictated only by party spirit and personal envy. We propose now, however, to set forth our views and opinions in regard to the grave subject of American Slavery, and to discuss the position we occupy towards it; and in doing so, we will be as plain, practical and temperate as possible.

We hold that Slavery, in this country or elsewhere, is a social, moral and political evil. We deny in the most emphatic manner, that any man has a right to hold another in bondage; for every man has a natural right to his own liberty, and to deprive him of this, except for crime, is to perpetrate a most heinous wrong. In proof of this, we need only refer to our immortal Declaration of Independence, which declares as self-evident truths, "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." By placing our finger upon this admirable text, we are at once enabled to refute in the strongest manner the absurd doctrine that one man may rob another of his inalienable right to his own liberty. The principles here stated are broad and comprehensive, and it cannot be denied that they apply to Slavery, no matter where or under what form, it may exist. Such, too, were the views and feelings of WASHINGTON, of JEFFERSON, of MADISON, and of all the illustrious fathers of our Republic. They were all opposed, in principle, to the institution of American Slavery, and each vied with the other in his efforts to secure its ultimate abolition. And if we come down to a later period, we find such pure patriots as HENRY CLAY animated by the same sentiments. The "old man eloquent" was always a most ardent friend of a system of gradual emancipation. Referring to Slavery, in a speech before the American Colonization Society, in 1827, he said: "If I could only be instrumental in eradicating this deepest stain upon the character of our country, I would not exchange the proud satisfaction I should enjoy, for the honor of all the triumphs ever decreed to the most successful conqueror."

But we need not multiply authorities on this head. Our position has been like that of most Northern men, born, and educated, and residing in the free States; we have always believed Slavery to be wrong, and therefore never were and never could be its friend. Yet it by no means follows from this that we are, or ever were, an Abolitionist. The premises will by no means warrant such conclusion. While, to a certain extent, we agree with the members of that party in their opposition to Slavery, we always differed from them as to the manner of that opposition, or the mode of getting rid of the evil.

Let us look for a moment at the relation which our government sustains towards the institution of Slavery. The people of the present day are, of course, not responsible in any way for its origin; they are responsible only for the manner in which they treat it. It was imposed upon the Colonies, by the government of Great Britain, against the solemn protests of the Colonists themselves; but when the authority of the parent country came to be denied and shaken off, the evil had grown to such an extent that it could not be abolished. It presented a grave question for the founders of our Republic to meet and settle, because those

members of the Confederacy who had Slavery amongst them, would not consent to enter the Union, unless the Constitution contained some guaranty that the General Government would not interfere with the institution. The achievement of our independence had indeed been a great consummation, but the infinite variety of conflicting interests which had to be disposed of and provided for, rendered it an exceedingly difficult and delicate task to form a government which could preserve what had been so dearly won. Nothing but "compromise" could effect the great object. The old Confederation had proved lamentably defective, and its place had to be supplied by a stronger and a better system. The States being original, sovereign, and independent in everything, were exceedingly jealous and tenacious of their rights; and for a time it was feared by the great patriots of that day, that a compromise could not be made which would settle the diverse interests of the States, and at the same time promote the welfare of the General Government sought to be established. But while the enemies of liberty everywhere were anxiously hoping for failure, the Federal Constitution was finally adopted, and the Union formed.

In this great work, it became necessary to define precisely the powers of the General Government, so as to avoid any interference with, or encroachment upon, the rights of the individual States. These powers were, therefore, distinctly enumerated in the Constitution, whilst the following provision—the Tenth Article of the Amendments—was inserted for the purpose of determining State rights:—"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." From this it follows, that the several States were left entirely sovereign and independent in relation to the institution of Slavery within their respective limits, the power to control it not being delegated by the Constitution to the General Government, but reserved to the States themselves. And this, of course, applies to the States afterwards admitted under the Constitution, as well as to the original States of the Union.

We thus see where our ancestors left the question of Slavery, and, as a consequence, we must see who are the parties responsible for its continuance in our country. The free States, it must be admitted, were in a measure responsible for its origin, but they have long since made ample atonement by abolishing it within their respective limits. But in the exercise of political power, they could not rightfully go further than this. Without violating the Constitution, how would it be possible for them to interfere with Slavery in the Slave States? Neither the General Government, nor the people of the Free States, ever had that matter given them in charge, but on the contrary expressly stipulated not to assume it. They are in no wise responsible for its existence, and in a political sense, have no more right to interfere with it in the Slave States, than they would have to dictate to the Emperor of Russia, the abolition of Serfdom in his dominions.

Such have ever been our views in regard to Slavery in the States. While we have always been opposed to the institution, and have never ceased to condemn it before the world; while we have always hailed with delight the employment of moral means, and everything in the way of precept and example which could possibly lead to or in any way influence its ultimate extinction; yet we have never done, or said, or written anything in regard to it, inconsistent with our duty and position toward it as a citizen of the United States—we have never joined in a political crusade against it where we had no right to do so under the Constitution. For we have been born and reared under that Constitution; we have always conscientiously respected it, and, as a legacy of unspeakable importance, we may say that we have looked upon it with a sort of religious awe. More than this, we have taken a solemn oath to support it—and if we had not, it would be implied in our citizenship—and how then could we, entertaining these views, violate its provisions without contracting the stain of perjury? It would be impossible!

If this be so, then, how could we be a member of the so-called Abolition party? If we understand the principles of that organization (and we believe we do,) its aim has been, by political action, to bring about the abolition of Slavery, in the Slave States, in defiance of the Constitutional restriction—in other words, to treat the restriction as being of no force or effect. That party held a national Con-

vention, at Buffalo, New York, in August, 1843, to nominate candidates for President and Vice President, to be voted for in the canvass of 1844. In their platform adopted on the occasion, they declared that—"The moral laws of the Creator are paramount to all human laws;" "we ought to obey God rather than man;" "considering that, as Abolitionists, the strength of our cause lies in its righteousness, and our hope for it in our conformity to the laws of God;" "we owe it to the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe, as a proof of our allegiance to him;" &c., "to regard and to treat the third clause of the fourth article of the Constitution of the United States," &c., as "UTTERLY NULL AND VOID." Let us call attention also to a sentiment taken from a noted Abolition organ published in Boston—"This Union—it is a lie, an imposture, and our first business is to seek its utter overthrow. Let the Union be accused!—Look at the awful compromises of the Constitution by which that instrument is saturated with the blood of the Slave!" And such, too, were the sentiments of WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, a noted Abolitionist, when he declared, in a speech, in New York, on the 1st of August, 1855, that "this Union is a lie; the American Union is a sham, an imposture, a covenant with death, an agreement with hell, and it is our business to call for a dissolution."

We doubt not many, not to say all, of the members of the Abolition party have sincerely entertained these views; but however this may be, they have certainly not been our convictions at any period in our life, nor have they had our sympathy when expressed by others. We never did and never could recognize the pretended right of any body of men, acting as a political party, to set at naught "the Supreme law of the land" even in the slightest particular. To permit any part of that instrument to be so annulled or disregarded, would be equivalent to an admission that the residue might as readily share the same fate. This could only result in disrupting the glorious fabric of the Union, and involve us in Anarchy—a state of things worse even than the worst form of government that ever existed. We have always frowned upon, and raised our voice against every movement calculated to bring about Disunion, no matter in what quarter it had its origin. And as a consequence, we have always been as consistent in opposing at the ballot-box, the Abolitionists of the North who would destroy the Union to put down Slavery, as we have been consistent in opposing the Disunionists of the South, who would destroy the Union to perpetuate Slavery. We have steadily and conscientiously voted and labored against both, and we see no reason to regret our action.

We trust that we have now successfully repelled the charge of Abolitionism that has been attempted to be fastened upon us; and as we are not disposed to conceal our political proclivities, we will state that we are a Republican. Whilst we believe the Constitution is not against Slavery, we believe it is not for it, and respecting its provisions ourselves, we would have others respect them also. Whilst we would not encroach upon the rights of any of the States, we would not have them encroach upon the rights of the General Government. Whilst we would not seek, by any political action, to abolish Slavery where it exists in the States, we have always sought to prevent its extension to the territories, whether claimed as a right under the Constitution, or in any other way or manner. After a long series of encroachments, the South finally attempted to fasten Slavery upon the territory of Kansas. So great was the wrong attempted, that the Republican Party sprung up, as it were, by magic, to resist its consummation. It did not succeed in its first effort to elect a President, nevertheless it persevered till victory crowned its banners. We early attached ourselves to the organization, and ought to know something of its principles, and as efforts are frequently made, for political effect, to confound these principles with the doctrines of Abolitionism, we propose briefly to consider them as they relate to the question of Slavery.

Abolitionism, as we have shown, has been an aggressive movement made against Slavery, as existing in the States. Republicanism, on the other hand, has not in any wise interfered with it where established, but has insisted that the evil should not be extended to the territories. It has taken the position that the "normal condition of all the territories of the United States is that of Freedom; that as our Republican fathers, when they had abolished Slavery in all our National territory, ordained that 'no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law,' it becomes

our duty, by legislation, whenever such legislation is necessary, to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it." Surely there is nothing in this which savors in the slightest degree of Abolitionism.

Nor has the Republican Party ever advocated or counselled any violation of State Rights. On the contrary, it has always scrupulously respected and observed them, and set itself squarely against their invasion, whether by Executive, Legislative or Judicial usurpations, or by Abolition raids like that of Old John Brown. A political party should always be judged by its public manifestations, and the speeches and votes of its public men. If we recur to the Republican Platform, adopted at Chicago, in 1860, we find that it expressly declares, "that the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depends; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes." And if we follow the matter up, we find that, as a pacificatory measure, Republican Senators and Representatives in Congress, recently voted for an amendment to the Constitution, so as to stipulate, in express terms, against any interference with Slavery in the States—thus making plain what was before but negatively expressed—and giving the highest evidence of their desire to respect the reserved rights of the States under the Federal compact.

Nor will it do to say that the Republican Party has been sectional in its character, or to charge it with desiring, or being instrumental in any attempt, to dissolve the Union. In its Platform of Principles before referred to, it is expressly declared, that "the Federal Constitution, the Rights of the States, and the Union of the States, must and shall be preserved," and that "we hold in abhorrence all schemes for Disunion, come from whatever source they may." The public conduct of all Republican officials has always harmonized with these patriotic declarations, and the most striking proof we can offer of the loyalty and patriotism of the Party itself, is to point to ABRAHAM LINCOLN, whom it elevated to the Presidency—a man who, when he came into power, found the Union in the agonies of dissolution, and was the first to reach out his hand to save it.

We have suffered this article to grow somewhat lengthy, but we have conceived this necessary in order to vindicate ourselves and our principles. As we promised at the outset, we have discussed the questions involved, as temperately as possible, and have striven to say nothing offensive towards anybody or any Party. In what we have said, we have proceeded entirely upon the idea, that the Union, though now in peril, is nevertheless in existence, and that the present War is waged only for its preservation, and not for the purpose of unduly interfering with the institution of Slavery, or any other right which the rebellious States possess under the Constitution. But, in the language of the immortal JACKSON, we declare what we believe to be the general sentiment of the people—"the Union must and shall be preserved;" and if, in the accomplishment of this great work, Slavery shall suffer, the cause may be laid at the doors of the Disunionists of the South. In the prosecution and management of the War, which has so unjustly been forced upon us, we rely with unshaken confidence upon those who are placed in authority. We cordially endorse every act of President LINCOLN's thus far, and we feel well assured he will press onward in the good work so nobly begun, and do nothing from which any loyal or patriotic heart can withhold its approbation.

War News.

Gen Banks' army occupied Harper's Ferry unopposed, on Wednesday last, with all the necessaries for a permanent occupation. The advance took possession of Bolivar Heights yesterday, and pushed its reconnaissance to Charlestown, and occupied Loudon heights to prevent any flank movement by the enemy.

A despatch from Cairo, reports that a great light was seen in the direction of Columbus on Saturday night, indicating that the rebels are evacuating their stronghold preparatory to a general retreat down the Mississippi.

At last accounts, Nashville had been occupied by a portion of Gen. Buell's army, under General Nelson, and preparations were being made to pursue the retreating rebels under Gen. Johnson.

Brig. Gen. Lander, died at Paw Paw, Virginia, on Saturday last.

Letter From Harrisburg.

HARRISBURG, March 1, 1862.

Correspondence of The Alleghanian.

I have watched with care the proceedings of the Legislature during the last week, with the view of communicating to the people of Cambria county, through the columns of THE ALLEGHANIAN, any thing that might have transpired, which I would consider of peculiar interest to them. Very little has occurred in either House, that can be considered of importance to your readers. Of that little, I will speak.

On Monday last, Mr. PERSHING presented a petition from citizens of Cambria county, for an act requiring the poor taxes of the county to be paid directly to the poor house treasurer. In the event of such a law, the county treasurer would be deprived of the percentage on that tax, which has heretofore passed through his hands. It is a question to be decided by calculation, as to how much the county would save by the proposed arrangement. Unless such an enactment can be advocated as a measure of economy, the taxpayers have little or no interest in the matter.

Mr. PERSHING, on the same day, read in his place, a supplement to the Act "to provide for the erection of a house of employment and support of the poor of Cambria County." Not having the bill before me, I cannot inform you of its purport, but I suppose it to be based upon the petition referred to. When it is reported back from the Judiciary committee (local,) and placed upon file, I will endeavor to send you a copy.

On Tuesday, in the Senate, a bill was passed entitled "An Act to provide for the adjudication and payment of certain military claims." This bill has since been reported in the House, with sundry amendments. The proposed amendments extend the bill, so as to cover all the cases of meritorious claims intended to be provided for in five or six bills which have been read. The annexed section of the bill, as it passed the Senate, will give you some idea of its purport:

Sec. 2. That such settlement shall embrace the claims for pay of all Pennsylvania volunteers, from the day they entered an engagement or place of rendezvous, without regard to the time they were sworn into the service of the United States; and also the pay of officers from the date of their commissions, and of privates from the date of their enrollment; Provided, That no such claim shall be allowed unless the claimant has been actually sworn into the service of the State or of the United States, by one of his own officers, or by a regular mustering officer of the army.

Mr. PERSHING, also read in place a bill entitled "An Act to divide the borough of Conemaugh, in the County of Cambria, into two wards." That the balance of power may be kept in equilibrium (I allude to county Conventions,) there should be a new district formed in the North of the county.

On Wednesday, in the House, the Special Order was the act to repeal the act of last Session, entitled "An Act for the commutation of the tonnage tax," which was discussed up to the hour of adjournment. The speech of Mr. SCOTT, of Huntingdon, was decidedly the most forcible one delivered on the question before the House. As I understand his position, it was as follows: He contended that the act could not be repealed merely on the ground of its being prejudicial to the interests of the people,—that it was not within the constitutional power of the Legislature to do so. It was generally conceded that Mr. SCOTT fully proved the correctness of this view of his subject. He, however, argued that, if the repealing act infringed upon the Constitution of the United States—if the Legislature transgressed its power in passing it, it might be declared unconstitutional, by an application to the Supreme Court. He further contended that, if it had been procured by fraud, it was null and void, and that it was competent for the Court to so declare it, upon proof being made.

The investigation now progressing may result in such developments as will induce the advocates to change the direction of their efforts, by an appeal to the Judicial Branch of the Government. I am neither a lawyer nor the son of a lawyer, but I opine that, if the allegation of fraud be established, the result will be the enforcement of the original law, and not only the exacting of tonnage duties in the future, but the collection of the debt due at the time of the repeal, as well as the duties which have accrued up to the present time. I have often heard the flash phrase, "it is a big thing on Snyder."—Methinks this possible result would be a big thing on the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

On Thursday, the Special Order in the House was,

—A further supplement to the act enti-

ted, An Act for the regulation and continuance of a system of education by common schools, approved the 8th of May, was taken up.

This bill was debated at considerable length. Mr. PERSHING said: The sentiment of the State is against the section of the bill requiring four weeks to constitute a teacher's month. The effect will be to excite opposition to the common school system. The wages of teachers for twenty days, of six hours each, are too great when compared with the time of the common laborer.

During the debate, Mr. PERSHING further said:

I am not in favor of teaching six days in a week. They should be kept open five days a week, but not 20 days a month.

The vote on the amendment making twenty-two days a school month was adopted, as was also one "requiring one Saturday in each month to be appropriated to exercises or institutes for the improvement of teachers." The bill was then postponed for the present.

I most respectfully take issue with Mr. PERSHING as to the propriety of his comparison, in speaking on the question of the time to be devoted to school exercises, and his fling at teachers and their compensation. If Mr. PERSHING estimates the value of a teacher's services, by the wages of "the common laborer," for an equal length of time, I cannot perceive why the same rule should not be applied to the lawyer. A smaller investment will make a passable lawyer than is required to "bring out" a good teacher. The money expended by parents in giving the required education to a successful teacher, should, in all justice, be a source of revenue to their offspring, and he who advocates any measure, which has for its object the lowering of the compensation of the teacher, assists in lowering the standard of qualification. The bang of the Common School System has been the poor, miserable reward doled out to teachers. It has driven off ability from competition for Schools. It has made the "calling" a denier resort for talent. It has prevented its elevation to the dignity of a profession. Believing Mr. PERSHING to be the friend of education, he himself being an example of its exalting power, I am convinced that, in giving utterance to the language quoted above, he was a victim of "a slip of the tongue."

On yesterday, (Friday,) the Senate passed a bill, which repeals so much of the act of last Session as authorizes the private soldiers in the Reserve Corps to elect the company officers. It is represented, that several of the companies, under General McCall's command, have become considerably demoralized, in consequence of contentions growing out of a choice of company officers to supply vacancies. In the event of this bill passing the House, the vacancies will be immediately filled by appointment by the Governor.

The House adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the reporters of the public press, and all others, be requested not to give publicly, by telegraphic dispatches or otherwise, to the proceedings of this House in relation to the contemplated movements of the army.

Mr. PERSHING's constituents are not the only people in the State who differ in opinion on the dog-tax question. The annexed extracts from the proceedings in the House on Monday last, indicate that your neighbors of Indiana county entertain a singular diversity of views on the same subject:

Mr. Alexander presented five petitions from citizens of Indiana county, asking for the passage of a law taxing sheep in said county.

Also, two remonstrances from citizens of Indiana county, against the passage of any law taxing dogs in said county.

So soon as the result of this contest, between sheep on the one hand, and dogs on the other, shall have been ascertained, it will be published to the world, by your friend; HUGO.

JUST RECEIVED—

THREE BARRELS LAKE TROUT,

A PRIME ARTICLE,

AT A. A. BARKER'S STORE.

ONLY TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER DOZEN.

CALL AND SAMPLE THEM

Ebensburg, March 6, 1862.

DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP.

The partnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, under the firm of Wike & Gardner, is this day dissolved by mutual consent. The Books and Notes are left in the hands of Isaac Wike, to whom payment will be made. ISAAC WIKE, WM. H. GARDNER.

Wilmore, Jan. 30, 1862-41.

EBENSBURG FOUNDRY.

The withdrawal of the foreman and book-keeper from the Ebensburg Foundry, renders it absolutely necessary that all accounts shall be settled up without any delay. Persons desirous of saving difficulty, and perhaps costs, had better call and settle up further notice. E. GLASS & CO. Ebensburg, Jan. 15, 1862.