

# The Potter Journal.

Devoted to the Principles of True Democracy, and the Dissemination of Morality, Literature and News.

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GOUDERSPORT, POTTER COUNTY, PA., TUESDAY DECEMBER 12, 1865.

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## POTTER JOURNAL,

W. McALARNEY, Proprietor.

Devoted to the cause of Republicanism, the interests of Agriculture, the advancement of Education, and the best good of Potter county. Owing to no special kind of Principle, it will endeavor to guide in the way of more fully Freedomizing our Country.

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## BUSINESS NOTICES.

R. A. DRAPER, M. D., Physician and Surgeon, offers his services to the citizens of this place and vicinity and desires to inform them that he will promptly respond to all calls for professional services. Office on Main street, over C. F. Mearns's Jewelry Store. Residence nearly opposite the office of the Fox & Ross' Estate.—12-25

Free and Accepted Ancient York Masons, G. W. M. Mearns, Secy. D. L. LARRABEE, W. M. M. W. McALARNEY, Secy.

JOHN S. MANN, Attorney and Counselor at Law, Goudersport, Pa., will attend the several Courts in Potter, Cameron and McKean counties. All business entrusted to his care will receive prompt attention. Office on Main street, in residence.

ARTHUR G. OLMSTED, Attorney and Counselor at Law, Goudersport, Pa., will attend the several Courts in Potter, Cameron and McKean counties. All business entrusted to his care will receive prompt attention. Office on Second street, near the Union Block.

ISAAC HENSON, Attorney at Law, Goudersport, Pa., will attend all business entrusted to him with care and promptness. Attend Courts of all judicial counties. Office on Second street, near the Union Block.

F. W. KNOX, Attorney and Counselor at Law, Goudersport, Pa., will attend the courts in Potter and the adjacent counties.

MILLER & McALARNEY, Attorneys at Law, Goudersport, Pa., will attend the several Courts in Potter, Cameron and McKean counties. All business entrusted to their care will receive prompt attention. Office on Main street, in residence.

DAN BAKER, Pension, Bounty and War Claim Agency, Goudersport, Pa., will attend all business entrusted to him with care and promptness. Office on Second street, near the Union Block.

M. W. McALARNEY, Real Estate and Insurance Agent, Goudersport, Pa., will attend all business entrusted to him with care and promptness. Office on Second street, near the Union Block.

P. A. STEBBINS & Co., Merchants—Dealers in Dry Goods, Fancy Goods, Groceries, Provisions, Flour, Feed, Pork, and everything usually kept in a good country store. Produce bought and sold.

C. H. SIMMONS, Merchant—Dealers in Dry Goods, Fancy Goods, Groceries, Provisions, Flour, Feed, Pork, and everything usually kept in a good country store. Produce bought and sold.

C. S. & E. A. JONES, Merchants—Dealers in Drugs, Medicines, Paints, Oils, Fancy Articles, Stationery, Dry Goods, Groceries, &c., Main street, Goudersport, Pa.

D. E. OLMSTED, Merchant—Dealer in Dry Goods, Ready-made Clothing, Crockery, Groceries, Flour, Feed, Pork, Provisions, &c., Main street, Goudersport, Pa.

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H. J. OLMSTED, Hardware Merchant—Dealer in Stores, Tin and Sheet Iron, Main street, Goudersport, Pa.

MARBLE YARD, THE subscriber desires to inform the citizens of Potter county that he can supply them with all kinds of marble work, as cheap and good as it can be had any place in the country. MONUMENTS and ORNAMENTS of all kinds furnished on short notice. Goudersport, Pa. C. H. BAKER.

GOUDERSPORT HOTEL, D. F. GLASSMIRE, Proprietor, Corner of Main and Second streets, Goudersport, Potter County, Pa. A Lively Stable is kept in connection with this Hotel. Daily Stages to and from the Railroads.

Potter Journal Job-Office, HAVING lately added a new assortment of JOB-TYPE to our already large assortment, we are now prepared to do all kinds of work, cheaply and with taste and neatness. Orders solicited.

1865 Philadelphia & Erie Railroad, THIS great line traverses the Northern and Northwest counties of Pennsylvania to the city of Philadelphia, Pa. It has been leased and is operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

Time of passenger trains at EMPORIUM, LEAVE EASTWARD, Erie Mail Train, 10:12 A. M., Erie Express Train, 10:17 A. M.

LEAVE WESTWARD, Erie Mail Train, 10:12 A. M., Erie Express Train, 10:17 A. M.

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J. W. Reynolds, Erie, Wm. Brown, Agent, N. C. R. R., Baltimore, B. H. BOSTON, General Freight Agent, Philada. B. W. GWINNER, General Freight Agent, Philada. L. TYLEE, General Freight Agent, Williamsport.

## THE MESSAGE!

### The Reconstruction Policy.

### SLAVERY IS FOREVER ABOLISHED

### TRAITORS MUST BE TRIED

### SECESSION BRANDED AS TREASON

### THE UNION INDISSOLUBLE.

### Present Condition of the Country

The past, should not have fully comprehended the excellence of their own work. Fresh from a struggle against arbitrary power, many patriots suffered from harassing fears of an absorption of the State Government by the General Government, and many from a dread that the States would break away from their orbits. But the very greatness of our country should allay the apprehension of encroachments by the General Government. The subjects that come unquestionably within its jurisdiction are so numerous, that it must ever naturally refuse to be embarrassed by questions that lie beyond it.

Were it otherwise, the Executive would sink beneath the burden; the channels of justice would be choked; legislation would be obstructed by excess; so that there is a greater temptation to exercise some of the functions of the General Government through the States than to trespass on their rightful sphere. "The absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority" was, at the beginning of the century, enforced by Jefferson, as the vital principle of republics; and the events of the last four years have established, we hope forever, that there lies no appeal to force.

The maintenance of the Union brings with it the support of "the State Government in all their rights; but it is not one of the rights of any State Government to renounce its own place in the Union, or to nullify the laws of the Union. The largest liberty is to be maintained in the discussion of the acts of the Federal Government; but there is no appeal from its laws, except to the various branches of that Government itself, or to the people who grant to the members of the Legislature and of the Executive Department its tenure but a limited one and in that manner always retain the power of redress.

"The sovereignty of the States" is the language of the Confederacy, and not the language of the constitution. The latter contains the emphatic words: "The Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof and all treaties made or which shall be made under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."

Certainly the Government of the United States is a limited Government; and so is every State Government a limited Government. With us, this idea of limitation spreads through every form of administration, General, State, and Municipal, and rests on the great distinguishing principle of the recognition of the rights of man. The ancient republics absorbed the individual in the State, prescribed his religion, and controlled his activity. The American system rests on the assertion of the equal right of every man to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; to freedom of conscience, to the culture and exercise of all his faculties. As a consequence, the State Government is limited as to the General Government in the interests of the Union, as to the individual citizen in the interests of freedom.

States, with proper limitations of power, are essential to the existence of the Constitution of the United States. At the very commencement, when we assumed a place among the powers of the earth, the Declaration of Independence was adopted by States; so also were the Articles of Confederation; and when "the People of the United States" ordained and established the Constitution it was the assent of the States, one by one, which gave it validity. In the event, too, of any amendment to the Constitution, the proposition of Congress needs the confirmation of States.

Without States, one great branch of the legislative government would be wanting. And, if we look beyond the letter of the Constitution to the character of our country, its capacity for comprehending within its jurisdiction a vast continental empire is due to the system of States. The best security for the perpetual existence of the States is the "supreme authority" of the Constitution of the United States. The perpetuity of the Constitution brings with it the perpetuity of the States, their mutual relation makes us what we are, and in our political system their connection is indissoluble. The whole cannot exist without the parts, nor the parts without the whole. So long as the Constitution of the United States endures, the States will endure, the destruction of the one is the destruction of the other; the preservation of the one is the preservation of the other.

I have thus explained my views of the mutual relations of the Constitution and the States, because they unfold the principles on which I have sought to solve the momentous question and overcome the appalling difficulties that met me at the very commencement of my administration. It has been my steadfast object to escape from the sway of momentary passions and to derive a healing policy from the fundamental and unchanging principles of the Constitution.

It is not strange that the framers of the Constitution which had no model in

I found the States suffering from the effects of a civil war. Resistance to the General Government appeared to have exhausted itself. The United States had recovered possession of their forts and arsenals; and their armies were in the occupation of every State which had attempted to secede. Whether the territory within the limits of those States should be held as conquered territory, under military authority emanating from the President as the head of the army, was the first question that presented itself for decision.

Now, military governments, established for an indefinite period, would have offered no security for the early suppression of discontent; would have divided the people into the vanquishers and the vanquished; and would have envenomed hatred, rather than have restored affection. Once established, no precise limit to their continuance was conceivable. They would have occasioned an incalculable and exhausting expense. Peaceful emigration to and from that portion of the country is one of the best means that can be thought of for the restoration of harmony and that emigration would have been prevented; for what emigrant from abroad, what industrious citizen at home, would place himself willingly under military rule?

The chief persons who would have followed in the train of the army would have been independent of the General Government, or men who expected profit from the miseries of their erring fellow citizens. The powers of patronage and rule which would have been exercised under the President over a vast and populous, and wealthy region, are greater than, unless under extreme necessity, I should be willing to entrust to any one man; they are such as, for myself, I could never, unless on occasions of great emergency, consent to exercise. The wilful use of such powers, if continued through a period of years, would have endangered the purity of the general administration and the liberties of the States which remained loyal.

Besides, the policy of military rule over a conquered territory would have implied that the States whose inhabitants may have taken part in the Rebellion had by the act of those inhabitants, ceased to exist. But the true theory is that all pretended acts of secession were from the beginning, null and void. The States cannot commit treason, nor secede the individual citizens who may have committed treason, any more than they can make valid treaties or engage in lawful commerce with any foreign power. The States attempting to secede, would find themselves in a condition where their vitality was impaired but not extinguished—their functions suspended, but not destroyed.

But if any State neglects or refuses to perform its offices, there is the more need that the General Government should maintain all its authority and, as soon as practicable, resume the exercise of all its functions. On this principle I have acted, and have gradually and quietly, and by almost imperceptible steps, sought to restore the rightful energy of the General Government and of the States. To that end, Provisional Governors have been appointed for the States, Conventions called, Governors elected, Legislatures assembled, and Senators and Representatives chosen to the Congress of the United States.

At the same time, the Courts of the United States, as far as could be done, have been re-opened, so that the laws of the United States may be enforced through their agency. The blockade has been removed and the custom houses established in ports of entry, so that the revenue of the United States may be collected. The Post Office Department renews its ceaseless activity, and the General Government is thereby enabled to communicate promptly with its officers and agents. The courts bring security to persons and property; the opening of the ports invites the restoration of industry and commerce; the post office renews the facilities of social intercourse and business.

And is it not happy for us all, that the restoration of each one of these functions of the General Government brings with it a blessing to the States over which they are extended? Is it not a sure promise of harmony and renewed attachment to the Union that, after all that has happened, the return of the General Government is known only as a beneficence?

I know very well that this policy is attended with some risk; that for its success it requires at least the acquiescence of the States which it concerns; that it implies an invitation to those States, by renewing their allegiance to the United States, to resume their functions as States of the Union. But it is a risk that must be taken; in the choice of difficulties, it is the smallest risk; and to diminish, if possible, to remove all danger, I have felt it incumbent on me to assert one other power of the General Government—the power of pardon.

As no State can throw a defiance over the crime of treason, the power of pardon is exclusively vested in the Executive Government of the United States. In exercising that power I have taken every

precaution to connect with the clearest recognition of the binding force of the laws of the United States, and an unqualified acknowledgment of the great social change of condition in regard to slavery which has grown out of the war.

The next step which I have taken to restore the constitutional relations of the States has been an invitation to them to participate in the high office of amending the Constitution. Every patriot must wish for a general amnesty at the earliest epoch consistent with public safety. For this great end there is need of a concurrence of all opinions, and the spirit of mutual conciliation. All parties in the late terrible conflict must work together in harmony.

It is not too much to ask, in the name of the whole people, that, on the one side, plain restoration shall proceed in conformity with a willingness to cast the disorders of the past into oblivion; and that, on the other, the evidence of sincerity in the future maintenance of the Union shall be put beyond any doubt by the ratification of the proposed amendment to the Constitution, which provides for the abolition of slavery forever within the limits of our country. So long as the adoption of this amendment is delayed, so long will doubt, and jealousy, and uncertainty prevail. This is the measure which will efface the sad memory of the past; this is the measure which will most certainly call population and capital and security to those parts of the Union that need them most.

Indeed, it is not too much to ask of the States which are now resuming their places in the family of the Union to give this pledge of perpetual loyalty and peace.— Until it is done, the past, however much we may desire it, will not be forgotten.— The adoption of the amendment reunites us beyond a power of disruption. It heals the wound that is still imperfectly closed; it removes slavery, the element which has so long perplexed and divided the country; it makes of us once more a united people, renewed and strengthened, bound more than ever to mutual affection and support.

The amendment of the Constitution being adopted, it would remain for the States, whose powers have been so long in abeyance, to resume their places in the two branches of the Nation Legislature, and thereby complete the work of restoration. Here it is for you, fellow-citizens of the Senate, and for you, fellow-citizens of the House of Representatives, to judge each of you for yourselves, of the elections, returns, and qualifications of your own members.

The full assertion of the powers of the General Government requires the holding of Circuit Courts of the United States within the districts where their authority has been interrupted. In the present posture of our public affairs, strong objections have been urged to holding those courts in any of the States where the Rebellion has existed; and it was ascertained, by inquiry that the Circuit Court of the United States would not be held within the District of Virginia during the autumn or early winter, nor until Congress should have "an opportunity to consider and act on the whole subject."

To your deliberations the restoration of this branch of the civil authority of the United States is therefore necessarily referred, with the hope that early provision will be made for the resumption of all its functions. It is manifest that treason, most flagrant in character, has been committed. Persons who are charged with its commission should have fair and impartial trials in the highest civil tribunals of the country, in order that the Constitution and the laws may be fully vindicated; the truth clearly established and affirmed that treason is a crime, that traitors should be punished and the offense made infamous; and, at the same time, that the question may be judicially settled, finally and forever, that no State of its own will has the right to renounce its place in the Union.

The relations of the General Government towards the four millions of inhabitants whom the war has called into freedom has engaged my most serious consideration. On the propriety of attempting to make the freedmen electors by the proclamation of the Executive, I took for my counsel the Constitution itself, the interpretations of that instrument by its authors and their contemporaries, and recent legislation by Congress. When, at the first movement towards independence, the Congress of the United States instructed the several States to institute governments of their own, they left each State to decide for itself the conditions for the enjoyment of the elective franchise.

During the period of the Confederacy there continued to exist a very great diversity in the qualifications of electors in the several States; and even within a State a distinction of qualifications prevailed with regard to the officers who were to be chosen. The Constitution of the United States recognizes these diversities when it enjoins that, in the choice

of the members of the House of Representatives of the United States, "the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature."

After the formation of the Constitution, it remained, as before, the uniform usage for each State to enlarge the body of its electors, according to its own judgment; and, under this system, one State after another has proceeded to increase the number of its electors until now universal suffrage, or something very near it, is the general rule.

So fixed was the reservation of power in the habits of the people, and so unquestioned has been the interpretation of the Constitution that during the war the late President never harbored the purpose—certainly never avowed the purpose—of disregarding it; and in the acts of Congress, during that period, nothing can be found which, during the continuance of hostilities, much less after their close, would have sanctioned any departure by the Executive from a policy which has so universally obtained.

Moreover, a concession of the elective franchise to the freedmen, by act of the President of the United States, must have been extended to all colored men, wherever found, and so must have established a change of suffrage in the Northern, Middle, and Western States, not less than in the Southern and Southwestern. Such an act would have created a new class of voters, and would have been an assumption of power by the President which nothing in the Constitution or laws of the United States would have warranted.

On the other hand, every danger of conflict is avoided when the settlement of the question is referred to the several States. They can, each for itself, decide on the measure, and whether it is to be adopted at once and absolutely, or introduced gradually and with conditions. In my judgment, the freedmen, if they show patience and many virtues, will sooner obtain a participation in the elective franchise through the States than through the General Government, even if it had power to intervene. When the tumult of emotions that have been raised by the suddenness of the social change shall have subsided, it may prove that they will receive the kindest usage from some of those on whom they have heretofore most closely depended.

But while I have no doubt that now, after the close of the war, it is not competent for the General Government to extend the elective franchise in the several States, it is equally clear that good faith requires the security of the freedmen in their liberty and their property, their right to labor, and their right to claim the just return of their labor. I cannot too strongly urge a dispassionate treatment of this subject, which should be carefully kept aloof from all party strife. We must equally avoid hasty assumptions of any natural impossibility for the two races to live side by side, in a state of mutual benefit and good will. The experiment involves us in no inconsistency; let us then, go and make that experiment in good faith, and not be too easily discouraged.

The country is in need of labor, and the freedmen are in need of employment, culture and protection. While their right of voluntary migration and expatriation is not to be questioned, I would not advise their forced removal and colonization. Let us rather encourage them to honorable and useful industry, where it may be beneficial to themselves and to the country; and, instead of hasty anticipations of the certainty of failure, let there be nothing wanting to the fair trial of the experiment. The change in their condition is the substitution of labor by contract for the status of slavery. The freedmen cannot fairly be accused of unwillingness to work, so long as a doubt remains about his freedom of choice in his pursuits, and the certainty of his recovering his stipulated wages.

In this the interests of the employer and the employed coincide. The employer desires in his works men of spirit and alacrity, and these can be permanently secured in no other way. And if there ought to be able to enforce the contract, so ought the other. The public interest will be best promoted if the several States will provide adequate protection and remedies for the freedmen. Until this is some way accomplished, there is no chance for the advantageous use of their labor; and the blame of ill-success will rest on them.

I know that sincere philanthropy is earnest for the immediate realization of its remotest aims; but time is always an element in reform. It is one of the greatest acts on record to have brought four millions of people into freedom. The career of free industry must be fairly opened to them; and their future prosperity and condition must, after all, rest mainly on themselves. If they fail, and so persist away, let us be careful that the failure shall not be attributable to any denial of justice. In all that relates to the destiny of the freedmen, we must not be too anxious to read the future; many incidents which, from a specu-

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