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—BY—

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CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION OF TENNESSEE.

Grand Gathering of the People.

Capital at Nashville Crowded.

Organization and Officers.

Resolutions and Report.

The President's Policy Fully Sustained.

Synopsis of the Speeches.

Radical Maneuvers to Create Confusion.

Special Correspondence of Memphis Appeal.)

NASHVILLE, Feb. 23, 1866.

The Conservative Convention of delegates from all the counties of Tennessee, assembled at the Capitol at Nashville on the 22d, the anniversary of Washington's birthday, presented somewhat the appearance of an old-fashioned meeting of the people. It might be termed a congregation of gray beards and wise heads from all parts of the State—a cool, determined, quiet, intelligent and peace-loving mass, seeking reconciliation among all classes, and denouncing sectional hatreds and animosities as prejudicial to the happiness and prosperity of the whole country. One could not but see, at a glance of the twelve hundred delegates which thronged the hall of the House of Representatives and its galleries, that the people had selected the oldest and wisest men to represent them on this occasion, with a view to the promotion of harmony and extinction of friendly feeling North and South.

A general sentiment of unity and concord prevailed among the delegates. The delegates from Shelby country—Geo. L. Holmes, W. R. Malcom, J. Mills Gaston, Lucius Chandler, B. D. Nabers, Frank Ball, John Martin, J. L. Morgan, W. D. Ferguson, J. H. Trice, J. C. Cole, Esqs., and Judge Swayne—fought hard to secure a fair specimen of the spirit of the Memphis Union Convention—man thoroughly conservative, practical, experienced in politics, wise in counsel, an patriotic in sentiment—true representatives of the intelligent masses.

The convention met at half past ten o'clock in the morning in the House of Representatives, and was called to order by Hon. Mr. Poston, representative from Shelby in the lower branch of the Legislature Assembly, calling upon Hon. Wm. Heiskell, Speaker of the House of Representatives, to take the chair, and requesting Mr. E. A. James to act as Secretary, until permanent officers were appointed. Mr. Heiskell assumed the position amid deafening shouts of approval, when the Rev. J. P. Campbell opened the proceedings by an appropriate prayer. While a committee of ten, appointed by the Chair, consisting of George L. Holmes, of Shelby; Wm. Little, of Bedford; Elijah Sumner, of Carter; Charles Higgins, of Coffee; William Stokes, of Wilson; Stokes, of Sullivan; Wm. Heiskell, of Davidson; Bailey Peyton, of Sumner; John W. Brown, of Smith; J. F. Thomas, of Coffee; W. H. Bryan, of Meigs; Fred. Heiskell, of Knox; A. A. Steele, of Marshall; T. W. Newberry and R. M. Edwards, of Bradley, were preparing the list of officers, on motion of Col. John Martin, Judge Swayne, of Memphis, rose to the vast assembly, in a clear tone and impressive manner, the following Address to Washington. The Committee then reported the following list of

Officers.

President—Hon. Henry Cooper, of Bedford.

Vice Presidents—W. H. Polk, of Shelby; Luther Caldwell, of Gibson; Dr. McFarland, of McNairy; Stanford Warren, of McNairy; W. B. Waldran, of Shelby; Wm. Sykes, of Dyer; M. Grand L. Perkins, of Hardin; John A. Grant, of Weakley; F. H. Conner, of Fayette; J. S. Mabson, of Shelby; John Martin, of Shelby; Samuel Polard, of Sumner; George W. Jones, of Lincoln; Joseph Hamner, of Bedford; J. L. Higginson, of Coffee; Anthony Polk, of Maury; G. W. Reed, of Montgomery; Alfred M. Beasden, of Lincoln; Dr. Jordan, of Maury; Levi Wade, of Rutherford; John C. Caldwell, Sen., of Bedford; William B. Lewis, of Davidson; John Hugh Smith, of Davidson; S. W. Fitzpatrick, of Marshall; John S. Brien, of Davidson; Absalom Vick, of Hawkins; John Caldwell, of Sevier; Gideon M. Hasen, of Knox; William Catt, of Sevier; Joseph Cooper, of Knox; Wm. Usson, of Monroe; David Clouse, of McMinn; Thos. H. Calloway, of Bradley; Joseph B. Foster, of Hamilton; Dr. Campbell, of Sullivan; John Williams, of Knox; Edward H. East, of Davidson; J. B. Parkhurst, of Maury, and J. H. Moore.

Secretaries—Joseph H. Thompson, of Bedford; John M. Fleming, of Knox; Wm. James, of Hamilton; Charles A. Fuller, of Davidson; D. M. O. Fertes, of Sullivan; Charles Brewer, of Shelby; and all the editors of the press favorable to the Administration of President Johnson.

Judge Cooper, on taking the Chair, returned his thanks to the Convention for the honor conferred on him by the distinguished body.

Gentlemen of the Convention: I thank you for the high and distinguished honor which your kindness has conferred on me. I recognize you as the presiding officer of this convention. I thank you for your unanimous ratification of their recommendation, and express my entire satisfaction in assuming the responsible duties of your presiding officer. I am sensible, and may I say, patriotic citizens of the State of Tennessee, with no slightly gray hairs upon my head, I am the oldest man present who would better perform the duty incumbent on the presiding officer of this large a body of intelligent men. I shall endeavor to discharge the duties of the hour in the manner I can, and I rely on your co-operation. I hope to think so then satisfactorily. We have assembled here in the Capitol of the State of Tennessee as the loyal representatives of the masses of this State, to revert our sentiments, and in behalf of a party which shall stand by the Constitution of the country as it is—the Union of the States as it appears and the relations of the laws. We have not as citizens again to mingle our allegiance to our country, our love of country, our fidelity to the patriotism, the integrity, and the statesmanship of Tennessee and Andrew Johnson, who is now the President of the United States (cheers); to say to those who would oppose the interests of the country, either by arms or in the civil mode, the whole manner of legislation, that we will stand by the Constitution of our country. Many changes have occurred to meet in large assemblies in former times are not seen here to-day, and while we deplore their absence, we would not forget that our duty is all the living have to look forward to the future, and look onward to the advancement of our country in the scale of nations. We cannot disguise to ourselves the threatening aspect of the advancement of our country, that she may be prepared to meet the whole assembled world in the family of nations. We have met to-day, not consistently, under the call of state pride, but we have met to-day to express our fellow citizens of the United States and to the world, that we are loyal to our country and to our Government. (Applause.) We have met to-day to show that we, as a father to the people, that they never agree to plunge in into treasonable and war. I conclude in a shorter time enough, that there never was a time when it was more necessary for the people of this State, more than at this time. In my mind I have not to-day the time to consider what is the remediating what the continuance civil divisions of the country have well nigh pulled down.

While we mourn the sad desertation of the war, while we mourn the gloomy which prevails in the South, we must not forget the past and hold fast to its pure government which shall command the admiration and respect of all men everywhere. I tell you, my countrymen, I have met these people when I first went among them, the spirit of the flag of our country will wave in triumph.

"That star-decorated emblem
Can never be forced,
Its blessings of life are the
Hope of the world."

In saying, my countrymen, that we are for the continuation of our country as it is, I and and must be understood as insisting to the amendment adopted in the way pointed out in the Constitution. I recognize the Constitution of the United States of America; and as a citizen under it I will stand by it to the last. With these remarks, my fellow citizens, as the objects of the meeting, and with an earnest desire that good results shall come to the discharge of the high duties which you have imposed upon me, I assume the chair, and ask your indulgence which your kindness has conferred. Thank you.

Letters were received from Gen. F. Chatham, Hon. Edmund Cooper, Hon. Cave Johnson, Hon. John B. Savage, Hon. John W. Leftwich, Judge McLain, Judge DeWitt, and Judge Goodpasture, regretting their inability to attend the Convention, but wishing success; also a letter from Horace Maynard, which was strongly tinged with radicalism.

Resolutions were offered by Hon. E. Sumner, of Carter; Judge Swayne, of Shelby; E. H. Ewing, of Rutherford; R. S. Perkins, of Giles; and A. W. Putnam, of Coffee, all endorsing the course of President Johnson. In order that the sentiment of the chosen representatives of the people, expressed in three or four resolutions, might be moulded into a harmonious whole, a committee of ten was appointed, which, after due consideration, submitted the following

Report.

The friends of the Union, and of the National Administration, have denied the recurring anniversary of the birthday of the Father of his Country to be a proper occasion on which to assemble in class convention for the purpose of declaring their continued devotion to the federal Constitution and the Federal Union; and of proclaiming their earnest approval of the policy adopted by President Johnson, in his patriotic efforts to preserve to Constitution, and to re-establish in the sisterhood of states and liberty to secure, for the whole country, the blessings of permanent peace and of republican freedom. Such a celebration on the day hereto fore peculiarly appropriate in view of the extraordinary indulgence made by Congress to the restoration of the Southern States to an equal participation in the benefits of the Union, and in view of the fact that a small portion of the people of Tennessee, possessed of sectional influence in the Government, are giving encouragement to that spirit of sectional hatred in Congress which has threatened to paralyze the arm of the Federal Executive, and which persists in holding the Federal Union in a state of virtual dissolution.

The people of Tennessee are excluded from the benefits of the Union upon the unfounded assumption that they are not sufficiently loyal to be admitted to representation in the Two Houses of Congress. The delegates to this Convention, representing the great body of the people of the State, call going as well those who participated in and sympathized with the rebellion, as those who were loyal to the Union was never questioned, come forward to place upon record their united testimony against the truth of this imputation of disloyalty made against the people of this State.

Upon the surrender of the Southern armies, the people of Tennessee accepted the result as a conclusive settlement of the issues involved in the war. By the act of laying down their arms, and surrendering to their victorious enemies, the Southern soldiers acknowledged their defeat, and pledged their honor not again to renew the conflict. This pledge was made, in good faith, by brave men. They returned to their homes, and have been peaceful citizens, and have distinguished themselves by the zeal and energy with which they have prosecuted their various pursuits.

The result has established the indestructibility of the Union, by means of separate state governments, and hence that several states which had sought to form a new confederacy, had never ceased to be members of the Federal Union. In this result the people of Tennessee acquiesced unhesitatingly, and have waited patiently for the adoption of such measures as would restore them to their former rights to the Union. In the meantime they have in time of this convention complained, to all the terms and conditions imposed upon them, as a sovereign State, had been rebellion; and have complied with all the requisitions by which their sincere loyalty to the Government and the Union could be made manifest.

To delegates to this convention, with a full knowledge of their responsibility, do not hesitate to affirm that the people of Tennessee are sincere, at this present time, more sincerely anxious for the preservation of good order and the maintenance of civil law, more earnestly united in their determination to support, defend and preserve the Constitution and the Union against all assaults, open or concealed, domestic or foreign, than they ever at the present time. They are as ready now as they ever were to draw upon, or, as are the people of any other state in the Union, to pledge their fortunes, their lives and their sacred honor, in defence of the Constitution and the Union.

In declaring their willingness to maintain the Constitution, they desire to be understood as recognizing the 13th amendment forbidding the existence of involuntary servitude, as a paramount and as avowing their determination to give to it their earnest and sincere support. They are prepared to aid in extending to the free population of color such protection as shall secure to them the undisturbed enjoyment of all the blessings of freedom, and in conceding to them all the civil and political rights that may be compatible with the best interests of both races. They insist, however, that this subject belongs exclusively to the people of the states, and that the same has not been transferred to Congress by the amendment aforesaid. They are satisfied that whenever all extraneous influences are withdrawn the relations between the two races will be established upon principles of justice that will be mutually satisfactory and beneficial.

Entertaining these sentiments, the people of Tennessee, with unprejudiced minds, have observed with unalloyed satisfaction the wise and patriotic efforts made by President Johnson to secure an early and complete restoration of the Southern States to the Union by the liberal exercise of executive clemency. He has shown that he understands and appreciates the peculiar and difficult position in which he was placed by the action of his predecessor, and by opposing to them this generous confidence he has now their hearts, and rendered their people powerful to assist him in the high purpose of securing the union of the states, and the perpetuity of the Union. Under the wise and patriotic policy of President Johnson, the people of Tennessee have complied with all the requisitions of the Federal Government, and have proceeded upon their own accord to form a State Government, which has taken the oath of allegiance, and which has ratified the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which forever prohibits slavery in the United States, upon whom the amendments are to operate have no representative will. In the Congress of the nation.

4. The guarantee of the payment of the public debt, the pensions for the maintenance of the Government.

5. The freedom of all the inhabitants of the land, and their protection by law, in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property.

6. Further we hold that the present administration of the Government of the war, through its agent in the origin, was established under circumstances which justified its creation, and which, in the interest of peace and order is still continued in existence. Since the war, which, in the interest of peace and order is still continued in existence. Since the war, which, in the interest of peace and order is still continued in existence. Since the war,