

Stanton Spectator.

STANTON, VA. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1860.

Practical Questions for Secessionists.

In the early history of our country, it became necessary for all the country lying between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi, to acquire the territory of Louisiana, because it embraced within its limits the mouth of the Mississippi river.

Now, we respectfully submit, would it be Constitutional, right and proper for Louisiana to withdraw herself from the Union, and assume (as she certainly would and ought to do, if the absolute right of secession is admitted) the exclusive ownership and right of control over the mouth of the Mississippi?

Again, in 1820, it became necessary for the common benefit and out of the common treasure of all the States, to buy Florida for the sum of five millions of dollars. The main objects were to round off our territory—to get rid of a foreign neighbor, whose immediate proximity to our borders might prove troublesome in time of war—and to obtain possession of an important key to the Gulf of Mexico.

But the case of Texas is still stronger. She had made a noble struggle for independence. At San Jacinto her gallant sons, under the lead of General Houston, had beaten back her invaders; but her independence had not been acknowledged; Mexico still claimed her as one of her provinces, and had not relinquished either her right or her purpose to reduce her to subjection; she only passed in her efforts through exhaustion; it was her intention, as soon as she regained her strength, to make another and probably a more formidable effort to force her yoke upon her.

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Under these circumstances she sought admission into our Union. Her application was formally rejected; the terms were arranged, and she was received as a sister into our family of States. Mexico was indignant, and determined to assert her rights. The war with Mexico followed. A hundred millions of money was borrowed by the people of the United States and spent, and probably twenty thousand lives of our citizens were lost in achieving her independence.

After the war was over, ten millions of the money of the people of the United States was paid, nominally, as the price of a part of her territory, but really to pay off her national debt. Now, would the most zealous friend of the right of secession say that Texas, as soon as the Mexican war was closed by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, had a right to secede from the Union, and thus leave the other States to pay the price of her liberty?

Were there not equivalents to be paid by Texas for these sacrifices made for her? Did not the United States acquire rights in her commerce and in all the multifarious relations that would spring out of her association with us? Could Texas, then, rightfully, the moment she had got all she wanted—viz: a recognition of her independence—and the security consequent on it—withdraw from the Union and leave us to pay the very money which had been borrowed to set her free?

Finally, would it have been competent for the New England States, during the last war, through the agency of the Hartford Convention, or any other Conventions, to have seceded from the Union, and set up for themselves—making peace with England—and thus escaping all the perils, privations and cost of the war, which was undertaken more for her sake than any other cause? These are plain, practical queries. Some may say they present extreme cases. Not so. They present real cases—cases which might have occurred, and may occur.

They test the principle. They show the absurdity of the absolute right of secession. It may be said, however, that whilst it would have been wrong in any of these cases, there may be circumstances under which a State may rightfully secede. But who is to judge of the sufficiency of the circumstances? Where two parties are concerned, each has an equal right to judge. If one State thinks it has sufficient cause, the other party in interest may hold a different opinion. Who, then, is to decide between them?

The truth is, unless in the mode we suggested last week, there is no right of secession under the Constitution. It is outside the Constitution—it is revolutionary. It is the right of self-dependence, and an rest on no other principle than that which authorizes a man to say his fellow when necessary for his own preservation—or authorizes a people to overthrow a government whose oppressions are intolerable. When the case is clear, the right is unqualified and absolute. When it is not palpable, States, like individuals, incur guilt of the highest character—both legal and moral—if they attempt its exercise.

Runaway. On Saturday evening last, the horses hitched to the wagon of Mrs. Skinner ran off, and broke the wagon into many pieces. As they ran by the "Spectator" Office they started the horses of Mr. Alex. Fultz, which were in the street harness to a buggy. Mr. Fultz's horses were stopped a short distance beyond Mr. Hope's store, and neither the buggy nor horses sustained any damage of injury. Mrs. Skinner's horses were stopped at the American Hotel. The horses were injured some, and the wagon a perfect wreck, the pieces being strewn along the street from Gospel Hill to the American Hotel.

The Vote of Virginia. The Governor has decided that the electoral vote of this State is divided—nine Bell electors and five Breckinridge being elected. The returns show that Bell carried the State by 258 plurality in the popular vote.

"A Daniel come to Judgment."

It will be seen by the communication signed "A County Man" that there is one who feels aggrieved at the deserved honor awarded in the last issue to the efficient Chairman of the Executive Committee of the county. We had supposed that all would have been pleased to see honor awarded where it was so justly due; but it seems that in this we were mistaken—there is "A County Man" who thinks that we have exhibited "bad taste" in designating the individual to whom we think this distinguished honor so clearly due. We can inform "A County Man" that those persons whom he mentions as being wronged by the compliment which he calls "both invidious and false," do not feel at all aggrieved, on the contrary, take pleasure in acknowledging the justice of the honor awarded to the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

We did not say that Mr. Christian felt greater interest in the canvass than many others, for we knew that there were many in every neighborhood, and many in the neighborhood in which "A County man" lives, who felt deep interest, and did great service, and we only wished to be understood as saying that the faithful performance of the duties devolved upon him, by his position as Chairman of the Executive Committee, enabled him to do more than any one else, by thoroughly organizing the party by the organization of clubs in all parts of the county. We did not detract in the least degree from the merit of any man in the county, and do not think our article justly susceptible of such a construction. The position of Chairman of the Executive Committee is one of labor and responsibility, and not of profit or emolument, and there are very few who faithfully perform the duties it imposes. In the conclusion of our notice we said:

"The services of so efficient a campaigner cannot be dispensed with. We hope that when his services are again desired that he will be ready and willing to give them to the good people of glorious 'Old Augusta.'"

We had referred, as is very clear from the purchase money. Florida has been admitted into the Union as an equal member of the Confederacy. Can it be contended now that she has a right to secede from the Union, and thus to defeat every object contemplated by the purchase?

It seems that on election day the Commissioners and other officers appointed to hold the election at precinct No. 2 known as the Town Hall precinct, as the door of that building was closed, and the property rented to a private individual, adjourned their place of session to B. E. Point's shop, about 12 feet west of the Town Hall, but on the same street and in full view of the Hall. No one approaching the Hall from any quarter, could fail to see the officers, or to know that the election was going on at the place where it was held. There has been no allegation of unfairness from any quarter, or that any one was misled or prevented from voting. The pole was fairly held and no objection was made from any quarter or by any person to this arrangement made by the Commissioners. The number of votes polled was as great, if not greater, than ever given at the same precinct; yet we understand that when it was ascertained that the contest in Virginia would be very close, an attempt was made by some of the Democracy, to throw out the Town Hall vote as having been illegally taken! We have no comment to make on the fairness of this proceeding farther than to say that it is a very apt illustration of the principles of some who profess to be the peculiar friends of the people! By jugglery of this kind, two or three hundred citizens of all parties, were sought to be disfranchised! We trust that every man whose vote has thus been assailed, will put his mark on those who have made the attempt!

Another advantage to be derived from success in this, is that it will show the people of the beginning. Debate its morality and justice as much as you please. It will stand the argument. Do not drag it down into a party political issue. Show the man who agitates slavery as a political issue, and we will show you the true enemy of slavery and the Union. I care not whether he lives North or South. The safety and peace of the slaveholder and the Union demand that this agitation should not longer be allowed.

The Valley "Democrat," published in Harrisonburg, Rockingham county, is opposed to the call of a State Convention, and expresses surprise that the presses in the Eastern portion of the State favor it, when it is evident that the West will insist upon taxing negroes as other property in proportion to its assessed value. It says: "As a State Convention can do no good at present, we see no necessity for calling it, and forcing a delicate question upon the people for a final settlement."

In view of the perils by which the country is now surrounded, we hope we will be pardoned for suggesting to our neighbors, the people of Albemarle, the propriety of electing Mr. Wm. C. Rives to fill the seat in the House of Delegates vacated by the death of Mr. Garth. The whole State would hail with satisfaction the accession of Mr. Rives to the State councils at this eventful crisis. The people of Albemarle, without distinction of party, ought to rise up as one man and demand that Mr. Rives should give the State the benefit of his wisdom and experience in the Legislature, and from our knowledge of his character, we cannot doubt that he would yield a cheerful obedience to their call.

Will our neighbors of the Review and Jeffersonian use us the favor to copy this article into their respective journals?

Congress assembling yesterday. The people throughout the Union will look with deep solicitude to the action of Congress. This body has never before been assembled under circumstances of such an embarrassing character as the present. We fear that the minds of the members will not be in a fit condition to act with that degree of wisdom and prudence which the interests of the country now imperatively demand. We fear that they will be governed by passion instead of reason, and will commit some imprudence that will tend to increase the fearful excitement which is now impelling the existence of the Union and the Government under which we live. If this Government be destroyed, the star of hope to the friends of freedom throughout the world will be extinguished—Those nations now striving to establish free Governments will be disheartened and paralyzed, whilst kings and monarchs will rejoice. If this Government be perpetuated, it will, by its example, crumble every throne in Europe; if it be destroyed, it will establish them upon firmer foundations.

At the recent meeting of the Virginia Central Railroad Company, the election of a President and two directors on the part of the stockholders was gone into. Col. Edward Fontaine, was in nomination for the Presidency, and elected unanimously. Messrs. N. B. Hill and J. R. Woods were then chosen, by 112 vote, directors, on the part of the stockholders.

The epistle of the land of Mr. John B. Rankin will take place on Wednesday, the 9th of January.

For the People to Determine.

The list of the subscribers to the "Spectator" has been regularly increasing, and has increased more rapidly since than before the election, and well it may, for the times are more exciting and are pregnant with deeper interest than during the recent canvass. These are times when it becomes the duty of every man to keep himself "posted up" in the current events of the day—These are times when it may be truly said, "no man knoweth what a day may bring forth."

That we are in the midst of stirring events and on the eve of a dissolution of the Union there can be no doubt. Congress assembled on yesterday, and the Legislature of this State will assemble on the 7th of next month. In the extreme South Legislatures are in session and Conventions will soon be to determine when and how those States should sever their connection with the Union—The events of this winter will determine the fate of this country for weal or woe. The papers cannot be otherwise than interesting to all who feel an interest in the fate of their country, and we suppose that every individual feels a deep and intense anxiety respecting it. It is for the people to determine what shall be done, and that they may know what to do, they should neglect no means of informing themselves, and should subscribe for the "Spectator" or some other paper. The people will be called upon to vote, in all probability, whether they will retain the Government as it is or change it—whether they will "bear the ills they have, or fly to others they know not of."

The Position of Maryland. Governor Hicks, of Maryland, having been requested by a number of gentlemen to call the Legislature of that State together to consider the present condition of public affairs growing out of the election of Lincoln, replies, by letter, giving his reasons for declining to comply. He thinks it would tend to increase, rather than to allay the excitement which now unfortunately exists to such a deplorable degree. In reference to the excitement consequent on the election of Lincoln, he says:

"One of the prominent causes of the excitement now pervading the Southern States, is the unfortunate result of the recent election, which has raised Mr. Lincoln to the Presidential chair. Personally I was as much opposed to his election as any other man in the country, and so far as my influence could extend, I did all in my power to defeat him. But he has been constitutionally chosen as an elective President of the United States, and the South is bound in honor to recognize and respect the result, as we would have required the North to do, had either of the other candidates been elected. So far, then, as the cause of excitement is concerned, I cannot but think it without just foundation."

The Secession Movements at the South. THE ACTION OF THE SOUTHERN STATES. The action already taken by several of the Southern States, in relation to the secession movement, may be briefly recapitulated as follows: The Virginia Legislature is summoned to meet on the 7th of January, to take into consideration the critical condition of the country.

The South Carolina Legislature is now in session. On the 8th of December delegates were to be elected to the State Convention authorized to meet at Charleston on the 20th of January. The 17th of December the said State Convention assembled at Columbia, when the question of secession will be determined, and in all probability the State of South Carolina solemnly declared its independence from the Federal Union. Various measures have been taken, and will be adopted by the Legislature to arm and protect the State after the act of secession. The Georgia Legislature is in session, and a State Convention is called for the 18th of January to take into consideration the question of secession. The Louisiana Legislature is in session, and the Legislature of Louisiana is to assemble on the 10th of December for the same purpose.

The Legislatures of Florida and Arkansas are in annual session, but nothing of importance has yet been done. THE STATE ARMY.—In our issue of Thursday last we inserted an article copied from the Stanton "Spectator," referring to the subject of fitting up an armory for the manufacture of arms under an Act of the last Legislature, and calling the attention of the proper authorities to the eminent qualifications of Mr. Jas. H. Burton of Mass. for the position. These four brief and endorse every word of the "Spectator," as we have the fullest assurance that it would be difficult to find a man equal to Mr. Burton in the knowledge of all the complicated details connected with the manufacture of arms. The reputation with which he left this country, on the invitation of the British Commissioners, to put in operation the immense armory at Enfield, which turns two thousand rifles per week, has been fully sustained in the numerous testimonials received from the British Government, on leaving their employment; and the appointment of Master Armorer had been tendered to a most competent and skillful gentleman, Mr. Adams, before it was known that the arms of the British Government were to be manufactured by Messrs. Joseph R. Anderson & Co., immediately entered into a negotiation with Mr. Burton, and have succeeded in securing his services in an appropriate manner, and directing the execution of their contract, and the people of Virginia have the fullest assurance that the best talent that the world can produce is now engaged in their service.—Rich. Enquirer.

For the Spectator. MADISON CO. VA., Nov. 28, 1860. Mr. Editor:—Distinction and excitement would be as well for Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri and Maryland, with more than a thousand miles of frontier bordering on free States, to come to some understanding with each other what course to take in their interest. These four border States have more to lose by disunion than do the other Southern States together—Would it not be better for them to meet in convention and decide this matter? Let these States be contented with their present position, and most conservative men of all parties, who shall meet in some central place and decide what we shall do. I throw out this suggestion with the hope that you will give your views upon this matter. As to a National Convention, I have no objection, and I will support it, and Alabama went into it, if every thing did not go to suit the extreme views of Yancey, Rhett & Co., they would secede from it. I am very respectfully, H. N. W *****

THE HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ITALY.—Prince Humbert, son of Victor Emmanuel, a young noble in his 17th year, has an elegant riding and first-rate marksmanship with the rifle, exhibiting skill and endurance in all manly exercises, endowed with a fair, open countenance, in which the soldier-like, honest mien of the father is blended with the delicate features of a great-grandson of the mother, distinguished by affable manners and graceful address—wins golden opinions with the multitudes as he goes along the thronged streets, bowing how bowed to, mounting his grand horse, and galloping away in blood, will have grown up into tall and glorious man by the time this fortunate youth succeeds to the throne. That throne to which so many of his race aspired in the secret of their hearts, almost ever since the days of the Emperor Napoleon, is now to be inherited by Victor Emmanuel. The only provinces not included are those held by the Pope and Venetia. The united Government is now composed of Saragossa, Lombardy, Naples, Sicily, Tuscany, Modena and Parma, having about 100,000 square miles, and 20,000,000 of inhabitants. For a long course of years Italy has been the prey of every nation, but now united will be one of the great powers of Europe, able to defend her rights and power, and to be consulted in the Congress of European nations, called to settle the questions of international policy, or those which concern the peace of Europe.

VIROINIA MILITARY.—The Richmond "Enquirer" has instituted investigations into the armament of Virginia, and finds that the State possesses 53,000 muskets, 2,600 rifles, 2,300 swords, and batteries numbering 250 pieces, besides other equipment in equal number. The cost of arming a military force, and declaring that "100,000 men are ready to spring to arms at the sound of the first gun."

THE HERALD COURIER.—The Editors of President and Vice President meet on Wednesday, December 5th, (to-morrow) at the Capitol of their respective States. If any vacancies are found to exist, they will be filled by ballot. They then proceeded to vote for ballot for President and Vice President, and the result was as follows: For President, Mr. Lincoln, 233 votes; for Vice President, Mr. Johnson, 136 votes.

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The planter desired to purchase an additional supply of negroes to pick his present crop of cotton, but he feared to do so on account of the great depreciation in their value and the alarming excitement which pervaded the South. In order to ascertain from his own lips Mr. Lincoln's policy, he visited him at his residence in Springfield. Mr. Lincoln informed him that he was opposed to any interference with slavery in the States, or with the latter State after the 1st of August in this proud position. I cheerfully acquiesced in the policy of the executive committee discharged his duty, that he exhibited a zeal worthy of the great cause in which he was engaged, but that he is to be disappointed above any of his fellow citizens for his zeal and efficiency in promoting the result I cannot admit. There are many in the county who occupied less prominent positions whose untiring efforts have contributed as much to increase the vote of the county, as any who have been prominent in the canvass. They were acting for their country and were not stimulated by the hope of public distinction (as ephemeral as it may be) but from a sense of duty to avert from our beloved land the impending ruin and save the country from dissolution and all its consequent evils. Is the zeal and ability of Baldwin, Stuart, Doyle, and Shelby displayed in the canvass to be overlooked, and the chairman of the executive committee distinguished as the man to whom the opposition owe their victory in the State, and Augusta the proud distinction of having achieved the result. Such pretensions to exclusive honor is ridiculous in public estimation as it is doubtless offensive to the modesty of Mr. Christian. The Chairman of the executive committee, Mr. Christian, is a gentleman of high standing in the community, and his name is as well known as that of any other man in the county. He is a man of unimpeachable firmness and great decision of character, insomuch that his policy, as well as all his other qualities, are well known to every man of spirit of party malice, and are well known to condemn in him. Such a man, sir, is Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois." Mr. Douglas's prophecies have been fulfilled.

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As a border people you have peculiar interest in the integrity of the Federal Government.—The result of the recent Presidential election made the pretext for an assault upon the Constitution under the form of which it has been decided. The hot and indecent haste of South Carolina in her secession, and the consequent disunion, is a bitter and unpalatable cup, which will do us no good. It affords no remedy for all our grievances, but will intensify every one of them. It may precipitate a revolution, which will end in a return to colonial dependence under the banner of the Union, or it may result in a permanent separation of the States, which will end in a return to colonial dependence under the banner of the Union.

It is not necessary now to enlarge upon these considerations. I thank God! I have lived to see you in this crisis. I shall resign my seat at the official dinner of the session, and by my vote and by my voice, I shall resist the nomination of this great wrong against the Constitution and laws.

I shall obey no command except that which comes from God, if you should differ in opinion from me; if you should think that treason to the confederacy should be dignified with the name of patriotism, and I will at once resign into your hands the official power you have so generously conferred upon me.

Your obliged fellow-citizen, SHERBARD OLDMEN. St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans, Nov. 15, '60.

THE AMERICAN FLAG.—At this juncture in our national troubles, when the flag of the Union is being treated with contempt and thrown into the gutter, it is a duty which every citizen owes to his country to do all in his power to preserve it. The flag of our country is the symbol of our national unity and honor, and it is our duty to defend it to the last drop of our blood.

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THE HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ITALY.—Prince Humbert, son of Victor Emmanuel, a young noble in his 17th year, has an elegant riding and first-rate marksmanship with the rifle, exhibiting skill and endurance in all manly exercises, endowed with a fair, open countenance, in which the soldier-like, honest mien of the father is blended with the delicate features of a great-grandson of the mother, distinguished by affable manners and graceful address—wins golden opinions with the multitudes as he goes along the thronged streets, bowing how bowed to, mounting his grand horse, and galloping away in blood, will have grown up into tall and glorious man by the time this fortunate youth succeeds to the throne. That throne to which so many of his race aspired in the secret of their hearts, almost ever since the days of the Emperor Napoleon, is now to be inherited by Victor Emmanuel. The only provinces not included are those held by the Pope and Venetia. The united Government is now composed of Saragossa, Lombardy, Naples, Sicily, Tuscany, Modena and Parma, having about 100,000 square miles, and 20,000,000 of inhabitants. For a long course of years Italy has been the prey of every nation, but now united will be one of the great powers of Europe, able to defend her rights and power, and to be consulted in the Congress of European nations, called to settle the questions of international policy, or those which concern the peace of Europe.

VIROINIA MILITARY.—The Richmond "Enquirer" has instituted investigations into the armament of Virginia, and finds that the State possesses 53,000 muskets, 2,600 rifles, 2,300 swords, and batteries numbering 250 pieces, besides other equipment in equal number. The cost of arming a military force, and declaring that "100,000 men are ready to spring to arms at the sound of the first gun."

For the Spectator.

The only article of a conservative character we have observed in the Charleston Courier within the last two or three weeks is the following, which we find in the Charleston Courier of Saturday last, credited to a Tennessee paper. It is true?

From the Charleston Courier of Nov. 23. A Southern Planter Writes:—A wealthy planter of Mississippi, a native of many county, Tenn., and a Breckinridge Democrat, passed through this city on Saturday last, and related to a gentleman of one of the upper counties, whom we know to be entirely reliable, the following. We take the liberty of giving the facts elicited publicly because of their importance:

The planter desired to purchase an additional supply of negroes to pick his present crop of cotton, but he feared to do so on account of the great depreciation in their value and the alarming excitement which pervaded the South. In order to ascertain from his own lips Mr. Lincoln's policy, he visited him at his residence in Springfield. Mr. Lincoln informed him that he was opposed to any interference with slavery in the States, or with the latter State after the 1st of August in this proud position. I cheerfully acquiesced in the policy of the executive committee discharged his duty, that he exhibited a zeal worthy of the great cause in which he was engaged, but that he is to be disappointed above any of his fellow citizens for his zeal and efficiency in promoting the result I cannot admit. There are many in the county who occupied less prominent positions whose untiring efforts have contributed as much to increase the vote of the county, as any who have been prominent in the canvass. They were acting for their country and were not stimulated by the hope of public distinction (as ephemeral as it may be) but from a sense of duty to avert from our beloved land the impending ruin and save the country from dissolution and all its consequent evils. Is the zeal and ability of Baldwin, Stuart, Doyle, and Shelby displayed in the canvass to be overlooked, and the chairman of the executive committee distinguished as the man to whom the opposition owe their victory in the State, and Augusta the proud distinction of having achieved the result. Such pretensions to exclusive honor is ridiculous in public estimation as it is doubtless offensive to the modesty of Mr. Christian. The Chairman of the executive committee, Mr. Christian, is a gentleman of high standing in the community, and his name is as well known as that of any other man in the county. He is a man of unimpeachable firmness and great decision of character, insomuch that his policy, as well as all his other qualities, are well known to every man of spirit of party malice, and are well known to condemn in him. Such a man, sir, is Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois." Mr. Douglas's prophecies have been fulfilled.

A DOUGLAS PROPHECY FULFILLED.—A correspondent of the Albany Journal states that a few evenings since, in company with one of Albany's most eloquent and reputable clergymen, he attended a meeting of the Breckinridge gentlemen said that in the year 1858, in New York, in conversation with the Hon. S. A. Douglas, Mr. Douglas remarked that he knew a man named Abraham Lincoln, who should ever be nominated for the Presidency, "would go to the White House." Mr. Douglas's prophecies have been fulfilled.

Position of a Virginia Congressman. Before the last Congressional election, I announced to you my desire to retire from public life. In repeating that determination, I have to declare to you my deep and unqualified thanks for your kind and generous offers, and for the interest you have taken in me. I am sure that whatever my future fate may be your favor shall not be forgotten.

As a border people you have peculiar interest in the integrity of the Federal Government.—The result of the recent Presidential election made the pretext for an assault upon the Constitution under the form of which it has been decided. The hot and indecent haste of South Carolina in her secession, and the consequent disunion, is a bitter and unpalatable cup, which will do us no good. It affords no remedy for all our grievances, but will intensify every one of them. It may precipitate a revolution, which will end in a return to colonial dependence under the banner of the Union, or it may result in a permanent separation of the States, which will end in a return to colonial dependence under the banner of the Union.

It is not necessary now to enlarge upon these considerations. I thank God! I have lived to see you in this crisis. I shall resign my seat at the official dinner of the session, and by my vote and by my voice, I shall resist the nomination of this great wrong against the Constitution and laws.

I shall obey no command except that which comes from God, if you should differ in opinion from me; if you should think that treason to the confederacy should be dignified with the name of patriotism, and I will at once resign into your hands the official power you have so generously conferred upon me.

Your obliged fellow-citizen, SHERBARD OLDMEN. St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans, Nov. 15, '60.

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