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THE
SENTINEL.

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Letter From Hon. C. M. Conrad.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 31, 1860.

Dear Sir:—Your friends in old party associations hearing that you have recently returned from Virginia are desirous of learning your views in reference to the attitude which Louisiana shall assume in the impending crisis.

Sincerely Yours,

C. W. ALLEE,
A. D. KELLY,
H. M. WRIGHT,
H. Y. LONSDALE,
C. J. MEYER,
J. LALLAND.

Hon. C. M. CONRAD, New Orleans.

NEW ORLEANS, Dec. 24, 1860.

Gentlemen:—I have received your note of the 21st inst., in which you express a desire to learn my views "in reference to the attitude Louisiana should assume in the impending crisis." I cheerfully comply with your request.

To you gentlemen, who are familiar with my political course, I need hardly say that to this moment the Union has had no more zealous and consistent advocate than myself. I did not, of course, lose sight of the fact that, viewed as a mere question of political economy, the South was greatly the loser by the Union; that it necessarily involved the abandonment by the Southern people of every branch of industry except agriculture, and the almost entire surrender of the more lucrative occupations of manufactures, commerce and navigation to their Northern brethren. But I stand in the majesty of this Union, in the dignity and strength which it gives us abroad, in the peace and harmony which it brought to give at home, enough, and more than enough to console for the pecuniary sacrifice which it involved.

So long, therefore, as it continued to offer these blessings, I was willing to make the sacrifice. But alas! we pay the price of peace and no longer obtain it.—In the last twenty years a portion of the people of the Northern States have waged a ceaseless war upon us. They have outraged our feelings, robbed us of our property, and trampled on our most sacred rights. The only excuse they offer for these outrages is, that they are not satisfied with our domestic institutions; that slavery is wrong and ought to be abolished.—I can do no more than to reply that this institution is the work of their ancestors; that it became inseparably interwoven with our social system; that its abolition would involve our ruin; and, finally that whether right or wrong, we alone are responsible for it; and that any attempt on their part directly or indirectly, to interfere with it, is justified neither by the law of nations nor by the Constitution. They are at all argument. The press, the halls of Congress and the State Legislatures, pour forth a continuous stream of invectives, denunciations and imprecations upon the Southern people. No libel upon the Southern people so atrocious as to be uttered or believed. Express provisions of the Constitution of laws passed in pursuance of it, for protection of the rights of slaveholders contemptuously disregarded, and it is only asserted that these provisions are binding upon the consciences of those who are called upon to enforce them.

The bloody drama enacted in Kansas, the still more bloody one attempted in Virginia, were practical illustrations of these principles. There is every reason to believe that these atrocities were instigated by men who were willing to share crime, but shrank from the infamy of its perpetration; that grave Senators and rever-

end clergymen were behind the scenes prompting the obscure wretches who were the immediate actors in these tragedies.—No stronger evidence could possibly be adduced of the depraved state of public sentiment at the North upon the subject of slavery than the fact that acts so criminal in themselves, and so calculated to disturb the peace of the country, far from weakening the party by which they had been prompted and encouraged, seemed, on the contrary, to strengthen it. Emboldened by this fact, and by the forbearance of the Southern people, which they mistook for timidity, the Black Republican party resolved on a still bolder measure, no less than to take possession of the General Government, and to use its powers for the accomplishment of their designs. They accordingly selected as their candidate a man whose political record was a blank; and who on that account was more likely to prove a pliant instrument in the hands of his benefactors. That Mr. Lincoln will, to the extent of his ability, sustain the principles, and carry out the views of the party which elected him, there can be no doubt.

To believe otherwise, is to suppose, not only that he will violate his pledge, but that he will adopt a different course from that pursued by any of his predecessors. We are bound to presume, therefore, that opposition to slavery will be the vital principle of his Administration.

Can the Southern States continue under a government administered on these principles, consistently either with honor or with safety? I think not. I think on the contrary, that we have reached a point where the Southern States ought to have a stand, if they intend to take it anywhere. Need I point out the dangers that would inevitably result from a different course? To say nothing of the moral influence the President derives from his position—the immense patronage at his disposal, and the millions of money that must pass through the hands of his creatures, will all be systematically directed towards the diffusion of anti-slavery opinions. Secure of the position of the party at the North, the Southern States will be the chief point of attack. "Divide and conquer" would be the maxim of the party, and every effort would be made to sow dissension among the Southern people; opposition to slavery would be the sole path to honor and promotion; and every Southern traitor would be selected for reward. Not many years would elapse before an anti-slavery party would spring up in every Southern State, and where followers exist, leaders would soon be found. The contest would no longer be between the free and the slave. Your firesides would be invaded, and the torch of insurrection brandished in your very faces. This is no fancy sketch. It is in part reality. In every one of the border States the embryo of an Abolition party already exists which under the genial influence of an anti-slavery Administration, would be rapidly developed. Recollect that Kentucky already has her Cassius M. Clay, Missouri her Bates, Virginia her Botts, and Maryland her Davis. I trust the day is yet far distant when Louisiana will add a name to this illustrious catalogue; but let us not be too confident. In public as in private affairs, those who act on the supposition that all men are honest and incorruptible, commit a fatal error. Every Greek was not an Aristides, nor every Roman a Cato.—And however great my confidence in the integrity and patriotism of the Southern people, I do not wish to see this tremendous battery of corruption brought to bear upon them.

In the latter opinion I fully concur. I admit that it is desirable that the Southern States should, as soon as possible adopt some general plan of co-operation. But, as regards a preliminary conference between them, there are several objections which appear to me insuperable. The first is the delay which would necessarily attend it. In carrying it out it would be requisite that the Legislatures of the fifteen Southern States should convene and discuss it. Supposing (what is not at all probable) that all, or even a majority of them concurred in the proposition, it would be necessary that they should authorize an election of delegates to the convention, and that this election should take place. Several months, therefore, would probably elapse before the convention could meet. As it would be a very numerous body, and would present a fine opportunity for the display of oratory, it is probable that a month or two more would elapse before the close of its deliberations.

The second objection is, that it is by no means certain that the convention could agree upon any plan that would be satisfactory even to the body itself. When we see such a difference of opinion even among the citizens of the same State, it is hardly probable that the delegates of fifteen States would find it an easy matter to come to an understanding.

Thirdly, Even if the convention should agree upon a mode of proceeding, it would have to be submitted to the States for their approval or rejection, so that, after all, we would come back to the point from which we started, to wit: separate State action.

Fourthly, But the most conclusive argument against a preliminary convention is that, if ever practicable, the time for it has passed. Two States, South Carolina and Mississippi, have already determined on separate State action. It is understood that Florida is nearly unanimous in favor of the same course, and there is every reason to believe that Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Texas will adopt the same mode of proceeding. As regards those States that have not yet moved in the matter, it is fair to presume that, if they shall determine to move they will be governed in their course by the existing State of facts, and will hardly commit the absurdity of asking of States that will have already adopted their course to confer with them on the proper course to be adopted; but, on the contrary, will co-operate with them in the only way in which co-operation can be effectual, namely, by following their example.

For these reasons I am of opinion that as matters now stand, separate State action is not only the best but the only practicable mode of proceeding.

These gentlemen, are my views on the subject to which your letter refers. It is not, I assure you, without reluctance that I have come to the conclusions I have

be committed. Why should they be, when the Constitution itself supplies the most powerful weapon for assailing your institutions? We all know that the most odious acts of injustice and oppression are often committed under color of law; and there are many modes in which the institution of slavery may be successfully attacked without violating the forms of the Constitution. The Supreme Court of the United States might be so constituted as to become a servile instrument in the hands of Abolitionists. The financial and commercial system of the Government might be so arranged as to discriminate between the products of free and slave labor. The appointing power might be so exercised as to make the possession of a slave a virtual disqualification for office and so as to fill the Southern States with Northern emissaries of the anti-slavery party, and on an anti-slavery platform.—In comparison with this, the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia—the prohibition of the slave trade between the States—the repeal of the fugitive Slave law—even the refusal to admit a State into the Union, because it tolerated slavery—would, in my opinion, be separately or all combined, of trifling importance.—However, oppressive or unjust those acts might be, they would not directly endanger the institution of slavery in the States where it already exists. But the election of the Chief Magistrate by such a party upon such principles, is the inauguration of a new system of policy; it is not only a proclamation to the world that the powers of the General Government are henceforth to be directed towards the extinction of slavery, but it affords the means of accomplishing this object. In fact, it is, in everything but in name, a revolution.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the people of the Southern States should be alarmed at this startling innovation, and should have manifested a determination to resist it. I rejoice to find this determination so universal among our citizens. So far as I can learn, there is but little difference of opinion among them on that point.—The only question is, how shall the resistance be offered? Some think that the State should take no action, except upon consultation with the other Southern States. Others think, on the contrary, that she should take separately and independently such course as her judgment may dictate.

In the latter opinion I fully concur. I admit that it is desirable that the Southern States should, as soon as possible adopt some general plan of co-operation. But, as regards a preliminary conference between them, there are several objections which appear to me insuperable. The first is the delay which would necessarily attend it. In carrying it out it would be requisite that the Legislatures of the fifteen Southern States should convene and discuss it. Supposing (what is not at all probable) that all, or even a majority of them concurred in the proposition, it would be necessary that they should authorize an election of delegates to the convention, and that this election should take place. Several months, therefore, would probably elapse before the convention could meet. As it would be a very numerous body, and would present a fine opportunity for the display of oratory, it is probable that a month or two more would elapse before the close of its deliberations.

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For these reasons I am of opinion that as matters now stand, separate State action is not only the best but the only practicable mode of proceeding.

These gentlemen, are my views on the subject to which your letter refers. It is not, I assure you, without reluctance that I have come to the conclusions I have

formed. I am not one of those who contemplate the dissolution of the Union with any thing like joy or exultation. On the contrary, it has long been the object of my cherished affections, and I would part from it with unfeigned sorrow. But we have the consolation to reflect that we have done all in our power to preserve it; that we stood by it as long as it stood by us, and only abandoned it when, like an unnatural parent, it sought to destroy its own offspring. Having discharged our duty to the Union, we have now to discharge our duty to our native or adopted State; to abide her decision, and to follow her fortunes whatever destiny may await her.

I remain, gentlemen,
Respectfully,
Your obt. serv't,

C. M. CONRAD.

To Messrs. C. W. Allen, A. D. Kelly, H. M. Wright, H. Y. Lonsdale, C. J. Meeker and J. Lalland.

Virginia Convention.

The following is the bill reported by Gen. Kemper, of the Virginia Legislature to provide for electing members of a Convention, and to convene the same. This action is against the recommendation of Gov. Letcher.

Mr. Kemper reported a bill to provide for electing members of a convention, and to convene the same. The bill is as follows, subject to amendments:

A BILL.

To provide for the Electing Members of a Convention, and to Convene the same.

1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly, that it shall be the duty of the officers who were appointed to conduct elections for county officers in May last, at the places established for holding elections for members of the General Assembly, to open polls for electing Delegates to a Convention to consider and propose such measures as may be expedient for this Commonwealth to adopt in the present crisis of State and national affairs. The said election shall be held on the 7th day of February in the year of our Lord 1861.

2. The Convention shall consist of one hundred and fifty-two members to be chosen for and by the several counties and cities of the Commonwealth, as prescribed by the second section of the fourth article of the Constitution of this State, for the election of members of the House of Delegates. The county or counties which alternately vote for delegates to the general Assembly under the said article of the Constitution, and which at the next election for delegates would be entitled to elect a delegate or delegates, shall elect the same number of members of the Convention, and in the same manner that they would be entitled to if the election were for members of the next session of the general Assembly.

3. Any person may be elected a member of the Convention, who at the time of election has attained the age of twenty-five years, and is actually a citizen of this Commonwealth.

4. The said election shall in all respects be conducted in the mode prescribed, and the officers conducting the same shall be vested with the powers, perform the duties, and be liable to the penalties prescribed by the Code of Virginia for general elections, except as herein provided.

5. The polls shall remain open for one day only; and the commissioners superintending the said election meet in their respective counties, corporations and election districts on the second day from the commencement of the election; shall then compare the polls, and decide who is elected, and shall make returns of the election, one of which they shall forthwith transmit by mail to the Governor; another, with the poll books, shall be delivered to the Clerk of the county or corporation court, to be filed in his office; and another to the member or members elected to the said Convention.

6. Upon receiving the said returns, the Governor shall issue a proclamation convening the members so chosen on Monday the 18th of February next, who shall meet at the capitol in the city of Richmond accordingly, and proceed to adopt such measures as they may deem expedient for the welfare of the Commonwealth.

In the case of a contested election, the same shall be governed in all respects by the existing laws in regard to contested elections in the House of Delegates.

In case of vacancies occurring previous to the meeting of the Convention, the Governor shall issue writs to supply the same; and after the said meeting, the writs shall be issued by order of the Convention; and the elections under such writs shall be conducted in all respects as the election herein before provided for.

The said convention shall be the judge of its own privileges and elections, and the members thereof shall have, possess and enjoy, in the most full and ample manner, all the privileges which members elected to and attending on the General Assembly are entitled to, and moreover shall be allowed the same pay for traveling to, attending on and returning from the said Convention as is now allowed to

members of the General Assembly for like services.

The said Convention is hereby empowered to appoint such officers, and to make them such reasonable allowances for their services as it shall deem proper; which several allowances shall be audited by the Auditor of Public Accounts and paid by the Treasurer of the Commonwealth, out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

The expenses in providing poll books and in procuring writers to keep the same, shall be defrayed as heretofore in the elections of members of the General Assembly.

This act shall be in force from its passage.

The Negro in Africa.

Capt. Burton, whose travels in Eastern Africa have recently been published in this country, gives a fearful account of the condition of the African in his native land. Among the coast tribes of Eastern Africa, Capt. Burton fell in with the Wamrima and the Wasawalili. The name of the last of these, according to Arab etymology, may be translated "artful lodgers."

"Supersubtle and systematic liars," says Capt. Burton, "they deceive when a duller man would tell the truth. The lie direct is no insult, and the offensive word *monogo* (liar) enters largely into every dialogue. They lie objectlessly, needlessly, when sure of speedy detection, when fact would be more profitable than falsehood, till their fiction becomes subjectively fact.—With them the lie is no mental exertion, no exercise of ingenuity, no concealment, nor mere perversion of the truth; it is apparently a local, instinctive peculiarity in the complicated madness of poor human nature. The most solemn and religious oaths are, with them, empty words; they breathe an atmosphere of falsehood, manoeuvre and contrivance, wasting upon the mere nothings of life—a pound of grain or a yard of cloth—ingenuity of iniquity enough to win and keep a crown.—And they are treacherous false. With them the salt has no signification, and gratitude is unknown even by name."

The Wamrima, though partially Arabized, are little better.

"The uncle sells his nephews and nieces by an indefeasible vested right, with which even the parents cannot interfere. The voice of society even justifies this abomination."

Farther in the interior are the Wazaramo. The head men among them are polygamists on a grand scale, and are surrounded by their slave-gangs. The crime of "black magic" is punished among them with death, and every few miles the calcined bones of the victims meet the traveler's eye. Twin children are usually sold or exposed in the jungle. A child who cuts the two upper incisors before the lower, is either put to death or sold to the slave merchant. The head men, "with the aid of slavery and black magic, render their subjects' lives as precarious as they well can; no one, especially in old age, is safe from being burned at a day's notice." "A man has a vested right in his sister's children, and when he dies, his brothers and relations carefully plunder his widow and orphans."

Pursuing his journey still farther into the interior, Capt. Burton was struck by the contrast between the beauty of the scenery and the misery and ferocity of its inhabitants.

"Can it be," he asks "that by some inexplicable law, where nature has done her best for the happiness of mankind, man, doomed to misery, must work out his own happiness?" "The Umkondokwa mountain, once a garden, have become a field and foray; cruelty and violence have brutalized the souls of the inhabitants, and they have learned to wreak their vengeance on all weaker than themselves."

The picture of the Unyamwezi is dark indeed. Their cruelties are exquisitely barbarous. As to the Wjiji, they "are a noisy, insolent race, addicted like all their lakish brethren, to drunkenness, and when drunk, quarrelsome and violent."

The Warundi virtually prohibit the approach of all exploration by their "black mail" system of plunder.

"At Muriwamba," on the borders of the great lake, which was the terminus of Capt. Burton's travels we are told that "the malaria, the mosquitoes, the crocodiles and the man are equally feared.—The land belongs to the Wabembis, who are correctly described in the Mombasa mission map as anthropophagi (man-eaters). The practice arises from the savage and apathetic nature of the people, who devour, besides man all kinds of carrion and vermin grubs and insects; while they abandon to wild growths a land of the richest soil, and of the most prolific climate. They prey on man raw, whereas the Wadoe of the coast eat him roasted. The people of a village which backed the port, assembled as usual, to 'sow gape seed,' but though

"A hungry look hung upon them all," and, among cannibals, one always fancies one's self considered in the light of butcher's meat, the poor devils, dark and stunted, timid and degraded, appeared less dan-

gerous to the living than to the dead." Such is the picture drawn by Capt. Burton of the social and moral condition of the tribes of East Africa.

Cotton is King.

To have the reign of King Cotton permanent and creditable to the South, he must rule in accordance with the dictates of sound common sense. He must not exhaust the land adapted by nature to the production of this great staple, nor give it so abundantly and clearly to the anti-slavery consumers in America and Europe that they will despise the system of labor by which it can alone be adequately furnished. Since cotton culture has been abandoned in British India as a failure, our planters should know that by withdrawing one-third of the soil and labor now employed in this growing crop, the world would give them quite as many dollars for two-thirds the quantity as they now get for their largest yield; and at the same time, the labor and land saved by this wise policy would secure to all cotton growers and not on growing States, a full supply of home-grown corn, wheat, and other grain, and all the meat and other provisions, as well as horses and mules, needed to place our system of agriculture on a broad and enduring basis. Now, King Cotton often pays two prices for his imported bread and meat, his horse feed and his horses; and he wears out his plantation by the overcultivation of the staple, sells at a very reduced price, and is then abused as the greatest sinner in all Christendom for having negro slaves to make cotton at all! The intelligent cotton growers of Tennessee have already taken action in reference to the crop of 1861, with a view to reduce the area planted in that State. Let the abolition fanatics at the North, and over a large share of the civilized world, be compelled to do with one half the cotton now annually received from slave labor, and the *sin* of growing it for the benefit of all will be marvelously lessened in their eyes. Acting purely in self defence, we should cut down at once their supply of the raw material with which to cover their anti-slavery nakedness. Let us begin now to improve instead of wearing out our cotton lands.—Let us produce much more manure, keep more and better stock, and make King Cotton an independent planter, whose wise and salutary reign shall be as lasting as the granite hills of Georgia.

There can be no sound political economy in the South which is not based on sound agricultural economy.—*Field and Fireside.*

Illinois Legislature—Message of Gov. Woods.

CHICAGO, Jan. 8.—The Legislature met at Springfield, Illinois, yesterday.

The House adjourned without effecting any organization. Gov. Woods' message will probably be delivered to-morrow. In it he recommends a complete reconstruction of the present military plan, by dividing the State into three divisions of battalion, regimental and brigade formation; that the most liberal legislative encouragement be given to the formation of volunteer companies throughout the State. He recommends that the banks of the State be required to secure their circulation exclusively by the United States and Illinois stocks. In regard to the difficulties at present existing South, he says, if grievances of any portion of our confederation have arisen within the Union let them be redressed within the Union.

If unconstitutional laws touching upon the guaranteed rights of any of our sister States have found place upon our statute books, let them be removed. If prejudice and alienation toward any of our fellow-countrymen have fastened upon our minds, let us be just to ourselves and each other. Allowing neither threats to drive us from what we deem to be our duty, nor pride of opinion prevent us from correcting wherein we may have erred. He recommends that if Illinois has passed any laws tending to obstruct the operation of federal authority, or conflicting with the constitutional rights of others, that they at once be repealed.

Speaking, not merely for himself, but reflecting what he assumes to be the voice of the whole people of Illinois, irrespective of party, as it reaches him from all quarters, he adopts the sentiment of President Jackson: "The Federal Union—it must be preserved;" to which sentiment he trusts the Legislature will give emphatic expression at an early day. The finances of the State are represented to be in a very prosperous condition.

HORRIBLE AFFAIR AT WETUMPKA.—We learn from the Montgomery Post, that on last Saturday, at Wetumpka, Ala., a man by the name of Peter Schwin, on returning to his home, found a negro man there in a very delicate situation with his (Schwin's) wife; which enraged the poor man to such a height that he immediately killed both his wife and the negro, and also a little child of his, and then fled to the woods, but was afterwards arrested and taken back to Wetumpka.